



## Veterans museum highlights April's quarterly meeting

Rear Admiral Rod Melendez will be our guest speaker at our quarterly meeting 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, April 22, at Nicolosi's Italian Restaurant, 221 E. Main St., El Cajon.



A California native, he will discuss the history of the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center in Balboa Park.

Rear Admiral Melendez served 35 years in the U.S. Navy as a dental officer. During his Naval career he served 10 years with the Marines, 10 years overseas, on both coasts of the

U.S., in Europe and Japan, and aboard the hospital ship USS Sanctuary.

After his retirement in 2002, he served on the Board of Directors for the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center in Balboa Park and volunteered as the Executive Director from 2003 to 2014. He currently oversees the museum's programs and exhibits.

See page 10 of this newsletter for menu selections and the meeting reservation form. More information about the Veterans Museum is included on page 2.

## Bakeless Bake Sale nets \$400

ECHS member Edie Hansen won ECHS's Holiday Bakeless Bake Sale drawing. She was the happy recipient of a \$50 gift certificate for Flour Power Cakery in Fletcher Hills donated by the Hall Family.

Held at January's quarterly meeting, all members who contributed to the Bakeless Bake Sale were included in the opportunity drawing.

ECHS made over \$400 thanks to the enthusiastic support of more than 35 of our members.

### *Still in production*

The Centennial issue of "Valley of Opportunity" is still in production. The Heritage will contain information on how you can purchase a copy as soon as it's available.



*Volunteers (left to right) Eldonna Lay, Carla Nowak, Rick Hall and Joe Klock await the start of the "America on Main Street" event last year.*

## ECHS to celebrate 'America on Main Street'

ECHS will again participate in El Cajon's "America on Main Street" to be held May 16.

This all-day patriotic event is planned to coincide with Armed Forces Day and celebrates the many diverse ethnic and historical groups in the community. Highlights include four stages with live entertainment, American and ethnic food booths, a chili cook-off, a five-story Ferris wheel, hay rides, arts and crafts for the children, display booths, a petting zoo, and more.

ECHS will sponsor a double booth showcasing the history of our region. A big thank you to ECHS members Ruth Cope, Betty Boutilier, Becky Taylor, Jack Dickens, Rick Hall, and Linda and Tom Garity who already signed up to help man our booth.

However, more volunteers are needed to represent our society. Although the event runs from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., volunteers are only asked to work a couple of hours. No special knowledge of El Cajon history is needed.

If you'd like to volunteer, please call 619-444-3800 and leave your name and number and a Board member will get back to you as soon as possible.

## President's Message



# Come join us at the Knox

by G. Carroll Rice

Hey! We're having a great time at the Knox House and, if you haven't been here for a while, we're anxious to welcome you to the activities.

We discover the details of historical events, unexpected people in old photographs and unsuspected sources of information all the time. It's not unusual to have a long-time resident or a relative, drop in and tell us stories we've never heard before. You can imagine how much we enjoy sharing our excitement and delight with those who like history.

A recent example was found in the diary of one of our earliest settlers who wrote that he'd just learned Fort Sumpter was fired upon! His son, later dubbed "The Hermit of Mt. Palomar" left a variety of such documents to his sister, Josephine Asher, whose son Eugene donated them to our archives.

Perhaps you have time to help out in the museum. Between welcoming people and accompanying them through the house (for safety reasons), we just answer their questions and give them a proper or an informal tour depending upon their ages and interest. It's easy – every room has a poster on the wall with the most important information – and most people just want to look around and comment when they recognize something they remember from childhood. (An experienced docent will always be here with you, so you're never on your own.)

For those who enjoy working with archives or sorting, identifying, or digitizing old photographs, our ECHS Archivist can always use another helper.

If you'd like to show off examples of what we have in the Knox House at off-site events such as the "America on Main Street" celebration in May, we would appreciate your help. We need smiling faces and beckoning hands to welcome foreign visitors, newcomers, and long-time friends to our displays. 'Main Street' is a joyous all-day event celebrating American culture and the revival of downtown El Cajon.

I'm sure that you and your family have tales to tell about your unique past and present in El Cajon. Our residents come from all over the world and the adventures and adjustments required to adjust to life here are fascinating. We are collecting those stories and some will be published in the Heritage. We're waiting for yours.

Come in soon! We'll all be glad you did.

**Carroll**



*The Veterans and Memorial Center is in Balboa Park.*

## Museum honors those who served their country

The Veterans Museum and Memorial Center is the only museum in California that honors the men and women of the United States Armed Forces (Army, Navy Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard) and wartime Merchant Marine. Currently, in conjunction with the Balboa Park's Centennial, the museum is featuring an exhibit on the history of the military in Balboa Park from the California Panama Exposition in 1915 through the end of WWII.

The museum occupies the former chapel of the Naval Hospital on Inspiration Point in San Diego's Balboa Park. The original hospital buildings have been a familiar and nostalgic landmark to countless naval personnel and San Diegans alike since the early 1920s, although the chapel itself was not built until the World War II period.

Today the museum houses a unique collection of artifacts, memorabilia and papers, as well as a library holding more than one thousand volumes. Dedicated to veterans of all conflicts, the Museum's exhibits feature World War I, World War II, Pearl Harbor, the Korean and Vietnam Conflicts, Desert Storm, Women in the Military, and paintings by local artists of military subjects.



*Exhibits throughout the museum honor all veterans.*

# Third grade students to get awards for outstanding essays on local history

The 34th Annual Third Grade Essay Contest Awards ceremony will be held at 6:30 p.m. Monday, June 8, at the Greenfield Middle School Theater, 1495 Greenfield Drive, El Cajon. All are welcome to attend.

All students participating in the essay contest will receive a certificate and be called to the stage for recognition at the awards ceremony.

In addition to trophies, students placing 1st, 2nd, and 3rd will receive a year's membership in the historical society and cash awards as follows:

- **First Place** will receive \$35 and the Rexford Hall Perpetual trophy that is kept on display at the winner's school for one year.

- **Second Place** will receive \$25.

- **Third Place** will receive \$15.

The following special awards will also be given at the ceremony:

- **Kumeyaay Culture Award** honors the best essay about the Kumeyaay culture or history.

- **Fred & Nettie Kersten Award** winner receives a judges' choice award.

- **Virginia Stead Award** celebrates an aspect of natural history or wild life.

- **Heritage Award** is given to an English learner who describes a multicultural connection in his/her essay.

- **Olaf Wieghorst Award**, judged by the Wieghorst Museum, honors the best essay about Olaf Wieghorst, a subject in his paintings, or the development of the Olaf Wieghorst Museum and Western Heritage Center. The winner will receive \$25 and a special certificate from the museum.

- **School Awards** – a trophy will be given to one student at each participating school.

- **Honorable Mentions, Neatness and Originality** awards will also be given.

A list of award winners will be included in our July newsletter and their essays will be posted on our website at [www.elcajonhistory.org](http://www.elcajonhistory.org) (under "Education").

ECES would like to thank the Cajon Valley Unified School District for 34 years of partnership, and all the Third Grade teachers who help their students develop a love for history.

And special thanks to ECES Co-Chairpersons Alice Rodriguez and Rebecca Taylor who spearhead the annual contest.



*Bonnie Fredensborg, right, and Mike Kaszuba check in students at last year's awards ceremony*



*ECES member Michelle Braun helped staff a table for the two-day conference "Balboa Park: 1915 & Beyond" held in March. Sponsored by the Congress of History of San Diego and Imperial Counties, the event celebrated the 50th anniversary of the formation of the historical group and the centennial of the 1915 Panama-California Exposition.*

*The Congress of History is a networking organization that brings together representatives of historical organizations, groups, museums and historical archives in California's San Diego and Imperial Counties.*

# NEW AT THE KNOX

by Mike Kaszuba, Curator

## LARGE GROUP OF MISCELLANEOUS VINTAGE ITEMS

### Donated by: Joe and Gloria Flynn

**Description:** Many old and neat items were included with this sizable donation. Included in the group were:

- A 1920s-ish ornate record cabinet.
- Two old mirrors, one of which has decorative twisted “rope” spindles similar to American Chippendale style, and a second assembled with wooden pins that we thought would complement the office area.
- An old commercial gas-heated pressing iron, New York made and salvaged from an Omaha, NE, Jewish laundry.
- A handsome pre-1900, 5-gallon stoneware jug that will fit in well with the Knox kitchen or porch area.
- An unusual 3-faces doll (1950s?) clad in white full-slip, long-sleeved dress & matching bonnet.
- A decorative, cast metal boot jack for the back porch.
- An old sad iron marked Sensible/ 5 No 2/NRS. These Nelson R. Streeter irons were made in Groton, NY, between 1876 and 1900. This item may go well with the Knox parlor’s 1894 Puritan oil heater.
- A Crescent pot metal & tin repo salesman sample stove (probably 1950s or 60s).
- A fine stereoscope with 43 stereocards that is already being used by Becky Taylor with our annual 3rd-grade school tours.

The Museum always welcomes donations that either fit in with our period decor, or that can be sold to raise money for the purchase of archival items. We thank the Flynn family for this generous donation.



*Many third-grade students tour the museum each year in preparation for ECHS’s annual Third Grade Essay Contest. The youngsters are especially interested in the toys and are fascinated that 3-D is not something new, as demonstrated by the stereoscope (shown at right) that was recently donated.*



## Another Addition

Also added to the archives this month was a program from the Rock ‘N Ride Riders 1946 Horse Show held in El Cajon. This program is packed with advertisements from local merchants, as well as owners of stables and award-winning horses at stud. Thank you to our recording secretary Colleen White for this seldom-seen donation.

## Readers still needed for essay contest

Volunteers are needed to read the student’s entries in the annual Third Grade Essay Contest. Each reader will receive a bundle of 10 to 15 essays as well as guidelines for judging the essays.

The essays will be available at the Cajon Valley School District from Linda Irvine on **Tuesday, May 2**, and must be returned to her no later than **Friday, May 15**.

If you’d like to help, please call (619) 444-3800 and leave a message for Becky Taylor.

# El Cajon says goodbye to historic settler buildings

Settler buildings on Fuerte Drive's historic curve have been removed. The 1892 Paul family barn was the last to go. Its removal was the only one done with dignity, for on March 14 and 15, it was carefully disassembled and the lumber and old paraphernalia sold.

The Vacher and Hooper families' buildings and ranches were bulldozed and scraped for redevelopment. Fortunately photographs of each were taken by family and neighbors and donated to ECHS's archives.

Plans call for the Hooper ranch to be filled with a raised tract of houses. No word on what will replace what was the ranch owned by early school teacher Josephine Asher Vacher, her French husband Eugene, and their son, Eugene, who passed on recently at 100 years of age. The son did, however, donate the family archives, diaries, sales receipts and personal letters between his grandfather Josephus Asher and his wife Mary's celebrity offspring and friends. In one of Josephus' diaries, he had written that Fort Sumpter had been fired upon. Other inclusions are of early Josephus records of his years as a pre-and-post official in Horton's Old and New Town, as an early El Cajon settler, as a nurseryman, and along with Kate Sessions, as a Balboa Park participant. In addition, Eugene gave the Society the personal papers and manuscripts of his uncle, Robert Asher, the Hermit of Palomar.

With the financial aid of the East County Arts Association, ECHS published a series of 40-some paged soft-back books. All but one, a fictionalized telling of Christmas on the East County frontier, were dictated by descendants and backed by records.

Two are on the life of Josephine Asher from her birth in Old Town, the family's move to the site of today's



*Looking straight east from the Hooper Ranch is the former site of the rare plant, fruit and farm ranch owned by Josephine Asher Vacher and her French husband, Eugene, and then their son, Eugene. Currently, nothing is known about its future use. Always before, neighborhoods along the road's 4+ mile route have been composed of custom-designed and built homes.*



*The 1892 Paul family barn on east Fuerte Drive was removed in March.*

Parkway/Westfield Plaza for a home, nursery and vineyard, and her life as a teacher in Redlands, El Cajon and Tecate during the Mexican Revolution. Her son Eugene told of his mother's life on that ranch – of her and her winning first prize for raisins in the 1893 Chicago's World Columbian Exposition, of the year when he lived with her in Tecate while she taught school, of his adult life as a U.S. Army bandmaster and his French grandfather's official role during that country's revolution. The fourth book was told by San Diego artist George Paul who retells summers spent on his Paul grandparents' ranch in the 1930s. Although written to be read to children by teachers – or by themselves – each book, including the Christmas story – provides serious resource material for adults and researchers on the frontier period of Southern California history after the Civil War.



*Directly south of the Hooper's old gate and egg ranch is the high ridge that geographically divides Rancho San Diego from the easternmost flank of the County's sign welcoming people to a "Mt. Helix Community." Since Colonel Ed Fletcher first mapped Grossmont, the mountain's primary road has been named Fuerte Drive, even when its two-lane route eastward crossed Avocado Avenue and went past east Fuerte's historic curve to merge with east Chase Avenue's final run down to and across Jamacha Boulevard.*

**Editor's note: This information was taken from the manuscript of the extended Centennial edition of the "Valley of Opportunity: The History of El Cajon."**

# GROWING UP IN EL CAJON

by Ralph H. Peterson

On January 11, 1934, the *El Cajon Valley News* announced the arrival of our family in the Valley. We didn't know that we had come to stay and that our lives would be anchored here on the acres my father named the 'Hills of Home.'

That newspaper article reported "Mrs. Walter Peterson, cousin of Mrs. Harry A. Wright, with Mr. Peterson and their four children arrived with the New Year in El Cajon to make an indefinite visit here and in San Diego. They have rented the J. L. Ballantyne cottage on north Magnolia. Mr. and Mrs. Peterson are from Wilson, N.Y., and have orchard interests on Lake Ontario. They have spent the last several winters in Florida and are favorably impressed with El Cajon valley."

There were about two thousand residents spread throughout the valley when my mother, Ruth Peterson; my father, Walter Peterson; and my three sisters, Brenda (now Brenda Gibson), Jean (Jean Conrad), and Anne (Anne Helland) arrived.

In spite of the implications of prosperity in the Valley News article, our finances were cutting very close to the bone. My father had been gassed in World War I and had been told he had only a year to live if he went through another winter in New York. With his life at stake, my parents disposed of our apple orchards as best they could, packed up what we could bring in a car and started toward Arizona where the weather was reputed to be ideal for lung ailments. When we arrived there, the heat and barren landscapes appeared too forbidding for my parents and my mother kept on driving until we arrived in El Cajon. It turned out to be a good choice. The weather suited my father and he lived for another 40 years.

We soon found a cottage on an estate now covered by Highway 67 for \$50 a month and set up housekeeping. A telegram sent by my mother on our arrival read "located at El Cajon California...pleasant cottage..." My grandmother sent a reply letter addressed to my mother c/o Pleasant Cottage, El Cajon, and the town was so small then that the letter was delivered anyway.

In another letter to her mother, my mother wrote: "We are a mile from center of town but there is a store on the road just about ¼ mile where we can walk for groceries. We had avocado salad tonite and liked it real well. I bought an avocado in La Mesa and had three clerks concerned and picking out a ripe one and telling me just how to fix it. I just asked for a peck of potatoes and they said "Oh, you're from the East." They never sell by peck

or bushel and don't even seem to know how much they would be in pounds. Then I was startled to have to have them tell me something was two bits when I asked the price. El Cajon is a small town with little more than a main street and the population is scattered all over the valley. There are lovely trees and orange groves and it is a very pretty valley. Today we drove to some of the groves which were just golden with fruit against that glossy green. We saw a man working and Walter called out, "A wonderful sight!" The man called to us to stop and asked us to get out and come pick some. I told the children to each pick one, but he insisted we should take more and loaded us down with oranges, so we all had our hands full. It does seem as though the people here are very friendly with strangers. The store keeper nearby gave each child a huge peppermint stick for their stocking and put a gaily Xmas wrapped ½ bacon in with our grocery order."

"Look at the baby!" and "Sissy!" were just of a few of the names I was called on my first day of school in El Cajon. I was sent to school wearing shorts, as was the custom in New York, but obviously not in California. When I got home, rumpled and dirty, I told my mother I would not go back to school unless I had jeans as all the other boys wore. My mother (bless her heart!) understood and took me shopping immediately for my first pair of coverall jeans. I was forced by my parents, however, to wear shoes to school. Oh, how I envied the poor kids who went to school barefoot during those depression years.

My awareness of the depression came during our first Christmas season. The "Wish Book," or more correctly, the Sears Christmas catalog, was an object my sisters and I spent hours fantasizing over. I remember I wanted the fancy toy tool kit that was pictured and let my parents

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## LET'S HEAR IT FOR YOUR FAMILY IN EL CAJON

The ancestors and families of many members of the historical society made their mark on the history of El Cajon and their stories should be told. This is *your* invitation to contribute *your* family's stories to the *Heritage* and help preserve the names of those men and women whose names and deeds should be remembered.

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know my desire. I never got the tool kit and was devastated. I never said anything, though, because I came to understand we couldn't afford fancy presents at that time.

Four months after we arrived in El Cajon, my parents purchased and split 20 acres of land in the foothills with distant relatives Aunt Sara and Uncle Dick Wright. They became our closest friends and we spent many happy years as neighbors. The cost of our 10 acres was \$2,000 and an old miner's shack. The house had no electricity and water was obtained from an open flume bordering the property. The landowners begged my parents to take more property by just paying the back taxes, but they felt they couldn't afford this added expense. The old home, with many improvements, still stands. My three sisters and their families all live on portions of the original acreage while I own the old homestead.

Carroll Rice helped me defend myself against the bullies on the first day of school and became my best friend. I got my first bicycle when I was seven years old and naturally wanted to show it to Carroll. The bike was a basic one-speed blue Elgin with a big "tank" and wide balloon tires, and I *loved* it. One morning, I asked my mother if I could ride to "Carroll's." She said yes, thinking I meant our nearby neighbor Carol Clark. I, however, had Carroll Rice in mind, and he lived two and a half miles away. This was further than I had been allowed to ride before, but I found his house because the school bus went that way. Carroll's parents called my mother who came and brought my bike and me home.

Throughout the years I was always impressed by a very wise Indian who told Carroll and me some of the traditions of the native people. Born in a *rancharia* or village occupying what is now the Singing Hills Golf Course, he grew up to be a graduate of the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania and served as an interpreter for non-English speaking people in the County courts for over 20 years. His official name was George Aguirre, but he was known to many as "Paisano" (Spanish for 'fellow countryman'; the name was also pronounced 'Pasiano' or 'Passano' by non-Spanish speakers). Not only conversant in English, Spanish, Yaqui, and the Kumeyaay dialects, he played the violin at Tribal gatherings and was recognized by the Bureau of Indian Affairs as 'Spokesman for the Sycuan Band of Mission Indians' as they were called in those days.

I can remember only the gist of those stories ranging from the secrets of lost treasures to 'just-so' myths such as how Rabbit lost his tail to an evil spirit while escaping from a trap . . . and ever since, rabbits have only a little stumpy white tail. Paisano was truly a bridge between white and native cultures. For example, I once found a broken Indian grinding stone near a mountain by our house, and while



*Unfortunately family photos were not available, however, Ralph Peterson and his family visited local orange groves, such as the one shown above, which filled the eastern and northern sides of the valley.*

exploring on the other side of the mountain, I came upon the other half of the stone. When I showed Paisano the matching parts of stone, he shook his head and said I had done a very bad thing. The breaking of the stone and placement on each side of a mountain was a ritual done during bad times. It was believed that if the pieces should ever come together, it would bring very bad luck. Much impressed, I made sure the stones were replaced on the mountain where I had found them. Another time, Paisano pointed to some mountains near El Cajon and said, "Those three hills are haunted. You must whistle when you go near them or a ghostly monster will attack you." He also spoke to me of 'Kuuchamaa' now known as Tecate Peak. All young Kumeyaay men had to spend a night praying on that holiest of mountains as they entered manhood. He bemoaned the white man taking of this monument as a communication center and predicted that it would come to no good.

My favorite places in town were the two drug stores. At the soda fountain, I could order a lemon Coke for 5 cents or get a three dip sundae for 10 cents. Other businesses I remember were the Black Diamond Market where the stands were open onto the sidewalk. They would plug a watermelon to show it was ripe. That is, they would cut a small plug out of the melon to test it. Then there was the Dew Drop Inn, which I never visited because of its seamy reputation. A small candy stand stood near the elementary school. My friends and I could buy a pack of five sticks of gum for a penny on our way to a YMCA-sponsored Friendly Indian meeting at the Presbyterian Church. It had a great grape flavor, but I recall the gum stuck to your teeth and left your mouth purple colored. Then there were the five for a penny fruit juices that came in wax containers that you could chew while drinking the sweet liquid. Jawbreakers were two for a penny and were so big you had a hard time getting one of them in your mouth.

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W. D. Hall Hardware was a fascinating place. You could find just about anything there. They even had a full time barrel maker or cooper.

There was one movie theater. The first film I remember seeing was a movie starring Joe E. Brown. My mother said she was so embarrassed because I kept jumping on the seat and roaring with laughter. Prizes were given away on special days. Most of the winnings were glassware and other kitchen items, but they had one really big drawing for a new Chevrolet car. My sister Anne's best friend was the winner of that car. During the depression, for a teenager to have her own car was like heaven on Earth. During World War II, the roof of the theater burned off, but they continued to show movies open to the sky. El Cajon Appliance was a place that lasted until a few years ago. You could always find a part or get appliances fixed. There were several car dealers and second hand stores. There must have been other businesses, but I don't recall them.

I was 13 years old when on December 7, 1941, we heard the radio announcement that Japanese planes had bombed Pearl Harbor. My friends and I boasted about how we were going to knock the heck out of this second-rate power that had unfairly attacked us. We thought the war would be over in a matter of days after we showed them our stuff. What a shock it was to hear about one defeat after another in the following months and years.

In a field near our home the army had set up a strange device which none of us could figure out. It would slowly spin and we heard reports that some people's garage doors would open and close when it was operating. Later I was to find out that this was a secret radar installation.

I was a Boy Scout and as part of the war effort helped man a watch tower where we civilians watched for Japanese war planes. We were sure that we would be the first to sight enemy planes in those pre-radar days and be

heroes. We collected aluminum and rubber, and the scouts were even helped by the army which donated trucks and drivers to round up scrap metal of any description. In one day there was a two-story-high pile of old cars and other sources of recyclable metals near the corner of Douglas and Magnolia. There were also drives to collect paper, and our mothers saved grease from cooking – it contained glycerin, a vital ingredient in explosives.

School activities were particularly affected by the War. Our seventh grade teacher, Mr. Wilson Hunt, joined the Navy and Mr. Eugene Vacher, the music teacher, joined the Army. School assemblies emphasized the war efforts, and we listened when President Roosevelt asked Congress to vote for war on December 8, 1941. No one could forget the day we were told that we were going to be let in on a big military secret. That got our attention! In actuality, the people at churches had been told the day before that the Japanese were attaching fire bombs to balloons that prevailing winds brought over the U.S. The authorities didn't want the Japanese to know that some had drifted as far as Oregon and Washington and started fires. We were told what to watch for and how to report it if we sighted one. Sadly for our egos, we never found any bombs, but we did keep the secret and nothing came out about it until after the war was over.

When two training planes collided over El Cajon on February 27, 1942, one crashed in a vacant lot off Magnolia and the other buried its nose near Main and Marshall. After school I went with a group of fellow students and dug around the crash sites looking for souvenirs after the wreckage had been removed. I found a handle of some kind and became the envy of my chums. The thing I remember most, though, was the smell of gasoline and how it made us light-headed.

Much has changed in El Cajon, but there are stark remnants of the not-too-distant past. A gnarled grape stump, a twisted olive tree, or a lonely, scaly-barked orange tree stirs my wondering about time's twists and turns and about the unpredictability of the future.

Once I found an old newspaper dated April 1, 1936. The headlines confirmed that reports about Hitler rearming Germany were an April Fool joke and that official sources scoffed at these rumors as ridiculous. (Just as unpredictably, I saved this old newspaper along with others bearing headlines of major incidents of the war. When I was drafted during the Korean conflict, my mother found the stack of old papers, thought they were trash, and threw them out.)

Oh, how little we know! Does human activity have some meaning? Is today a mirror of the past? My mind has always asked questions and raised doubts. Is it any wonder that I became a history teacher?

## 2015 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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# Historic marker denotes site of ancient springs

A new park and historic marker were dedicated in March to memorialize an ancient Indian site of an ancient natural springs. The memorial was installed by Shea Homes, a valued new life member of ECHS, in the new Everly housing development at Avocado Boulevard and East Chase Avenue.

After at least ten thousand years of Indian use, Spanish explorers named the springs El Granito Springs. It was next catalogued in 1906 by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in a report to Washington D.C. on California's waterways. By then it had been settled by an American who built a large adobe room for curing olives grown on local trees most likely planted by the padres during San Diego's mission era.

The Spring's waters continued to run until slowed by the original paving of Avocado Boulevard, and then stopped after the boulevard's widening during the 70s.

Eventually, the land sold and later owners added a wooden house and ranch buildings.

Since then the property has been a home for increasing numbers of horses, fowl, goats and other animals, the latest owner using the barn as a riding stable and home for a reindeer and a camel named "Jasmine." People driving by automatically tried to catch glimpses of the camel, horses and the unlikely reindeer until the old barns were torn down in 2014. Jasmine and the reindeer now live with their owners up along the Washington-Oregon border.



*Eldonna Lay examines the rock bearing a plaque marking the site of the ancient El Granito Springs. The old olive tree in the background was also saved.*

# Members enjoy a journey through time



*ECHS members Judi Littrell (from left to right), Joe and Christy Klock, and Rick Hall check out items that give a glimpse into the life of historic Native Americans.*

January's quarterly meeting included a tour of the Heritage of the America's Museum at Cuyamaca College. The museum features prehistoric and historic art, culture, and natural history of the Americas.



*Tom and Linda Garity (from left to right), Becky Taylor, and Meghan Lay listen to the museum docent in the Natural History wing.*

**From:** El Cajon Historical Society  
P. O. Box 1973  
El Cajon, CA 92022

## *Have you renewed your membership?*

If you haven't already renewed your ECHS membership, please do so now to continue receiving this newsletter.

And a big "thank you" to all the members who have already paid their dues. Most memberships are on a calendar year basis.

Membership dues for 2015 are \$12 for Individual, \$20 Family, \$30 Organization, \$40 Business, and \$500 Enhanced Life. (Life members never need to renew.)

**To:**

## Honoring veterans to highlight April quarterly meeting

ECHS's next quarterly meeting will be held at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, April 22, at Nicolosi's Italian Restaurant, 221 East Main Street, El Cajon. Lunch will be served at noon followed by an outstanding presentation on the Veterans Museum and Memorial Center.

Parking is available behind the restaurant off East Douglas Avenue.

Four lunch options are available:

- Eggplant Parmigiano
- Baked Lasagna
- Torpedo Special, or
- Charbroiled Chicken Salad

Each lunch entree comes with a dinner salad and coffee or tea. The cost for the meeting, including lunch, remains \$15.

Reservations are required and must be received by Monday, April 20.

## April Meeting Reservation Form

Number Attending \_\_\_\_\_ (\$15 each)

Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

*Reservations not kept become a donation*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

### Lunch Choice

*(if more than one person, indicate number of each)*

Eggplant \_\_\_\_\_ Lasagna \_\_\_\_\_ Torpedo \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken Salad \_\_\_\_\_

**RESERVATION DEADLINE  
MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2015**

Mail reservations and checks to:

ECHS, P.O. Box 1973, El Cajon, CA 92022-1973