



EL CAJON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HERITAGE

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www.elcajonhistory.org

January 2015



Tribal cultures are represented at the Heritage of the Americas Museum.

Take a journey at January lunch

Experience a journey through time at ECHS's January quarterly meeting. The meeting will be held at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, January 28, at the Heritage of the Americas Museum, located on the campus of Cuyamaca College in Rancho San Diego.

The meeting will include visiting the museum as well as a box lunch. The cost for this quarterly meeting has been reduced to \$12.

The Heritage of the Americas Museum is a member of ECHS. An article about the museum is included on page 3 of this newsletter.

The meeting reservation form and lunch selections are included on page 10. The deadline for reservations is Monday, January 26.

Still in production

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

ECHS needs your help with 3rd-grade students

It's a new year and a new group of local third-grade students will be touring the Knox House and writing their essays on El Cajon history.

ECHS especially needs members who are interested in helping lead school tours during the week. Expert knowledge of the Knox House is not required — a "user-friendly" docent guide gives information about each room and the history of the house. It does require a love for El Cajon's history and an eagerness to share that love with children.

This spring volunteers will also be needed to read the students' essays.

Each volunteer will be given a group of about ten essays from which to select the top three. The selected three essays from each group will advance to the finals.

If you are interested in reading the essays, learning more about leading school tours, or just helping monitor a room during a school tour, please call (619) 444-3800 and leave a message for Becky Taylor.

Board installs new secretary for 2015

ECHS's Board of Directors for 2015 was introduced at its annual dinner meeting October 29.

The new Board has one new officer, Colleen White, who will serve as secretary. After a year off, Joe Klock will return as vice president.

G Carroll Rice will continue as president, Sharon Jarboe as corresponding secretary, and George Dall, C.P.A., as treasurer.

All ECHS members are invited to attend Board meetings which are held at 9:30 a.m. on the third Saturday of the month at the Knox House. If you'd like more information, please call (619) 444-3800 and leave a message. A Board member will get back to you as soon as possible.

Renewals now due for most members

It's a new year and time for many ECHS members to send in their dues. Most memberships are on a calendar year basis.

We greatly appreciate members who pay their dues in early January. By doing so, the costly expense of sending out a special billing is eliminated and the subsequent cost savings enables ECHS to make better use of its resources.

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

President's Message

A New Year brings new opportunities

by G. Carroll Rice

As we enter a new year, we will encounter new opportunities to research and explore more aspects of the history of this Valley we are privileged to call home. There are still family histories that remain unrecorded, there are still memories of our recent past that remain untold, and almost-forgotten citizens whose activities determined the direction of our City and



Valley. These should not be ignored and our Society is in a position to collect and archive these tokens of the past.

We have expanded and organized our programs to reach more school children with museum tours, to assist researchers as best we can, and to show interested visitors our collections. We will soon have new heating and air conditioning systems installed, and additional repairs have been made to the Knox House museum. Nonetheless, we lack an ingredient that will ensure continued success . . . VOLUNTEERS.

If you are not already volunteering some time each month to your Society, please consider doing so. We desperately need *docents*; we need *school tour guides*; we need men and women who can *help with clerical and housekeeping tasks*; and we need those who will *take our stories to the community*.

With the dedicated people that we have in place, and your help, we can give greater service to El Cajon and its surrounding communities. Please make your commitment to give some time and your individual expertise and volunteer for any aspect of the Society that interests you. You'll have a good time, too.

Let it be a New Year's resolution!

And, while you're at it, have a wonderful, creative, and fulfilling 2015 whatever you do, wherever you are.

Carroll

Old newspaper article tells of ECHS's first year

An ECHS member recently uncovered a newspaper article from September 13, 1973, about the newly formed El Cajon Historical Society. The article reports that the society's third general membership meeting will be held that Wednesday in the Sears community room.

An interesting tidbit is that the speaker for that meeting was Richard Pennick, the railroad buff who shared his 'bucket list' adventure at ECHS's annual meeting this past October. The news article reports that "Richard Pennick, an El Cajon city engineer, will give a talk on the early railroad history of the county".

The news article also reports about an "open house at the Knox Hotel in Judson Park on North Magnolia Avenue" and that "the furnishings committee of the society headed by Arlene Boyers is searching for fixtures, furniture and memorabilia of the 19th Century to locate at the hotel. Alice Mabel Knox, daughter of the hotel's founder, Amaziah Lord Knox, has donated some furniture and paintings used by the Knox family.

"In addition, window coverings for the hotel are being provided by Parlor 320 of Native Daughters of the Golden West. Parlor 298 of the Native Sons of the Golden West is building display racks to handle some of the exhibits."

The article further reports that "San Diego Gas and Electric Co. also is providing plans for lighting of the hotel that is typical of the period and several local families have donated or agreed to loan articles of local history."

The article concludes that the society plans to rotate some of the exhibit to provide coverage through the East County area.

2015 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President	G. Carroll Rice
Vice President.....	Joe Klock
Treasurer	George Dall
Recording Secretary.....	Colleen White
Corresponding Secretary	Sharon Jarboe
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Maintenance	Rick Hall
Membership	Christy Klock
Essay Contest	Becky Taylor
Heritage Editor.....	Anita Tinsley
Members at Large	Gloria Chadwick, Jack Dickens, Fran Hill, Dick Lay and Carla Nowak

Telephone Messages (619) 444-3800

Museum showcases art, artifacts to document past

The Heritage of the Americas Museum, located on the campus of Cuyamaca College in Rancho San Diego, is an educational and cultural center featuring the prehistoric and historic art, culture, and natural history of the Americas. Artifacts and art serve as a documentation of life and civilization throughout the ages. Five wings divide the building into areas of Natural History, Archaeology, Anthropology, Art, and Education.

The Natural History wing has a magnificent display of meteorites and quartz crystals. There is also an emphasis on seashells of the world. Fossils capture the story of life, representing marine specimens up the evolutionary chain to vertebrates. A new addition is a remarkable pair of Duckbill dinosaur eggs that will captivate children and adults alike.

Colors seem to dance throughout the anthropology wing where eagle feathered headdresses and dance regalia along with buckskin clothing and accessories give a glimpse into the daily life of the Cheyenne, Eskimo, Hopi, and many other historic Native American cultures.

As you enter the Archaeology wing, you will see the paleo and archaic projectile points made by early man in the Americas, as well as pre-Columbian treasures from Mexico and Peru. There are more than 500 necklaces in the collection. Beads of jade, stone, ivory, shell, gold, silver, copper and pottery range in age from 600 BC to AD 1200

The Art wing of the museum includes many excellent examples of Western art, including El Cajon's Olaf Wieghorst, and a myriad of colorful paintings from a wide variety of artists. The wing also has an outstanding collection of Chinese artifacts including a 2,000-year-old jade burial suit from the Han Dynasty.

The Education wing houses a library of reference books—many of them rare.

The museum also affords a tropical paradise featuring exotic palms from the South Seas island locations consisting of Plumeria, Bird of Paradise, Bamboo Palm, and Majesty and King Palms. It has a collection of more than 200 exotic trees from as far away as Madagascar and Chile and features a broad spectrum of palm tree species.

The concept behind the museum is to take visitors on a journey through time. As they discover the past, their imaginations will be challenged, and they will be encouraged to further explore areas of interest at the major museums. Because of its relatively small size, the Heritage of the Americas Museum is not a competitive facility, but a supportive program for other county museums.



The Heritage of the Americas Museum is a cultural and educational center featuring the prehistoric and historic art, culture and natural history of the Americas.



LET'S HEAR IT FOR YOUR FAMILY IN EL CAJON

by G. Carroll Rice

The ancestors and families of many in our Society made their mark on the history of El Cajon and their stories should be told. They may have been among the movers and shakers of the Valley community or in a quiet unassuming way contributed to its growth, culture and economy.

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.

If you're not comfortable with writing for publication, submit your story anyway. Some of us are experienced writers and editors who can help 'polish' your submission for the *Heritage*.

Included in this newsletter is a story of the Vanatta brothers who settled in the Valley in the late 1920s. The house, now designated as 525 S. Third Street, was built in the period between 1928 and 1929 for Elmer Ellsworth Vanatta (11/6/1863 – 5/8/1947) and his wife Abbie Tory (Steere) Vanatta (8/4/1862 – 10/2/1946). The house fronted on Third Street (unpaved until the mid-1930s), with orange groves to the south, east and north. A long driveway led to a garage, horse corral, and chicken coop near the center of the property. A storage tank for orchard heating oil was added much later.

NEW AT THE KNOX

by Mike Kaszuba, Curator

Tis the Season ... and we certainly all had occasion to be jolly at the Knox recently with these wonderful end-of-year acquisitions.

A 130-YEAR-OLD HAND SEWN, STYLIZED CRAZY QUILT TOP WITH MATCHING PILLOWCASE

Donated by: Midge Palmatier

Description: This fantastic example of 1880s household handiwork was crafted by Cora Pefley Chase, wife to San Diego druggist Charles A. Chase. (Charles was the son of Major Levi Chase, the lawyer hired by Isaac Lankershim in 1868 to settle all land disputes related to his enormous 47,000 acre purchase of Rancho El Cajon from the Pedrorena family.) Cora was born in Ohio in 1857, and fabricated this marvelous artwork in San Diego at the age of 27, only four years before her untimely death. The quilt is complete except for backing, and measures 83" wide by 97" deep. It is an assemblage of embroidered squares highlighting various styles of period stitch work. The fabric remnants used are of silk, brocade, velveteen and satin. The only



Cora Chase's quilt displayed atop the bed of Amaziah and Illa Knox.



Quilt square with embroidered signature and date.

cotton employed for this showpiece is in the thread. The individual squares are

bordered by black velvet or velveteen. Included with this great donation is a 13" x 17" pillowcase done in the same style.

This quilt was passed from Cora and Charles to their daughter Estelle Chase Smith (born 1876), then on to Louis Sydney Chase, a grandson of Cora and Charles through son Harlan Wheeler Chase. When Louis died, the quilt was passed to his sister-in-law, Elizabeth H. Chase, Midge's mother. She moved to Utah towards the end of her life, and from her the quilt passed to her daughter back in San Diego. Louis, Harlan and Elizabeth all resided in El Cajon. So except for a brief spell in Utah, this quilt has passed from generation to generation in San Diego County for over 130 years!



Close-up of fancy stitchery with embroidered monogram for Charles Albert Chase.

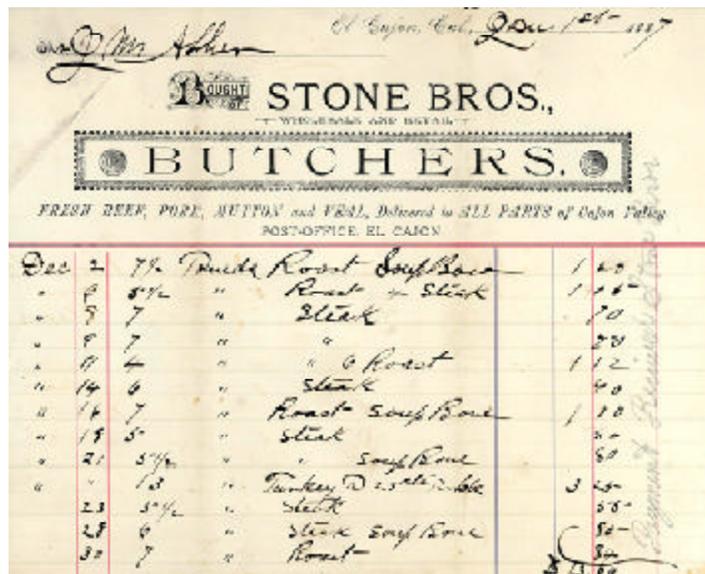


A special prize awaits the first member to correctly identify this musical phrase that held singular importance for Cora.

**PHOTOS AND DOCUMENTS
RELATED TO THE ASHER-VACHER FAMILY**

Donated by: George Lavas

Description: George mailed us this surprise package of papers which included receipts from an El Cajon butcher; an E.S. Vacher customer book for magazine subscriptions he sold; numerous newspaper clippings related to the family; and two photographs related to Robert Asher on Mount Palomar.



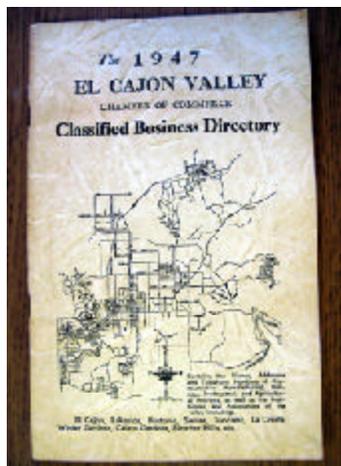
One of several butcher receipts donated by George. Check out these 1887 meat prices in El Cajon! Sirloin 12¢/lb; Turkey 25¢/lb; Roast 10¢/lb; Porterhouse Steak 15¢/lb; Entire Leg Mutton 75¢

1947 EL CAJON BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Donated by: Wayne H. Frazier, CPA

Description: Booklet entitled *The 1947 El Cajon Valley Chamber Of Commerce Classified Business Directory*.

This 36-page pamphlet is essentially a complete Yellow Pages for the Valley 67 years ago! It includes a 7-page El Cajon street guide, 18 pages of El Cajon and surrounding area businesses, and a special 5-page Lakeside section.



Another cool little item that just appeared in our mail one day. Thanks, Wayne!

This is a good opportunity to remind everyone that the ECHS archives would welcome any donation of local telephone or business directories ... and the older the better!



Olaf Wieghorst addressing an appreciative gathering.

PHOTOGRAPH OF OLAF WIEGHORST

Donated by: Mulvaney's Wagon Wheel Bar

Restaurant via Santee Historical Society

Description: An 8x10 photo of Olaf discussing his artwork during an exhibition at the Wagon Wheel. Thank you to Carol Crafts and Rita Lee at Santee Historical Society for calling us on this one.

A VICTORIAN-STYLE HAT FORM & SHAKER-STYLE PLANT STAND TO PLACE IT ON



Donated by: Eldonna Lay

Description: Our museum co-curator felt that the Knox was in need of a way to display the occasional hat that Illa may have donned, so she donated this nifty period mahogany plant stand overlain with leather. The diminutive table stands 20" tall and is 8 3/4" square; it will be topped by an early 20th Century commercial iron hat rack that telescopes from 14-21". Thanks again, Eldonna!

A perfect fit for the master bedroom.

NOTE: The ECHS Board of Directors wishes to offer a special heartfelt "Thank You!" to everyone who has so generously donated their precious time and possessions this past year. This spread-too-thin archivist hopes that he hasn't forgotten anyone, but if so is prepared to be sternly berated. Happy New Year to all!

THE VANATTA LEGACY

by G. Carroll Rice

Albert ('Bert') Lincoln and Elmer Ellsworth Vanatta were born in Muscatine, Iowa into a large farming family during the Civil War era. The family was a northern extension of a numerous family of Dutch descent which had originally settled in southern Pennsylvania. I know little about them other than that their father was a strict disciplinarian who worked his sons hard . . . as my great-uncle Elmer put it, "The horses were entitled to rest after hard work, the boys were not." Even my grandfather who

suffered from migraine headaches was not immune from his demands for constant work.

Eventually, when they became young men, the Vanatta boys broke free from their father's tyranny (perhaps by threats of violence) and created some adventures for themselves. Ambitious, thrifty, and hard-working, they looked for any chance to make money. At first, they found jobs on farms around Iowa and Missouri and then ventured west to harvest wheat in California's Central Valley. Wherever they traveled, they had a wonderful time at whatever they did.

In the mid 1880s, they married sisters, Abbie Tory and Emily Deborah Steere, daughters of a wealthy Wellsville, Missouri farmer. The girls had attended Stevens Christian Female Seminary (later called Stevens College) and had become country school teachers. (I should mention that the girls were removed from the college a week before graduation ceremonies by their Quaker father lest they become 'proud' of their accomplishments.)

Married into the possession of excellent sections of farmland and basking in the influence of their father-in-law in central Missouri, the Vanattas prospered. They acquired farms and livestock, but they were still ambitious and restless and they dared to put dreams into action.

They were married and had children, but in 1898, they trekked off to Alaska to join the throngs seeking wealth in Canada's great Kondike/Yukon gold stampede. While their quest stalled at the town of Dyea and the only 'color' they found was from mosquito bites, they had an abundance of adventures. For example, when the great April 3, 1898, avalanche roared down Chilkoot pass killing 60 people, Elmer was drafted to wash bodies for burial. After many frustrations, they returned home, shaggy and bearded, but with tales to last a lifetime.

Next, they turned their thoughts toward more practical venues and opportunities. A little over 60 miles from Wellsville, the city of Columbia, Missouri, beckoned with its University, cultural activities, and the conveniences of city living. The Vanattas kept their farms, renting them to experienced farmers and share-croppers, while they moved their families into the city to take advantage of the schools and business opportunities. Elmer went to the University of Missouri at the same time as his son Earl, and became an instructor in chemistry at the School of Agriculture. My grandfather, Bert, became a machinist, opened a machine shop and purchased an automobile agency (Ogden & Vanatta, featuring Buick, Reo, and Oldsmobile vehicles).

(continued on page 7)



The Vanattas were my great aunt and uncle, the brother and sister of my grandmother and grandfather – brothers had married sisters. In the accompanying photograph, taken in 1929, I am the baby in my mother's arms. Her mother, Emma Deborah (Steere) Vanatta, standing by my mother, Mabel Steere (Vanatta) Rice, was widowed in 1927 and lived with her sister and brother-in-law.

The photograph shows my father, George Carroll Rice, Elmer E. Vanatta, and his son, Earl Steere Vanatta, seated (left to right) on the steps. The upper row, left to right, shows Abbie T. Vanatta, one of the twin granddaughters (Virginia or Vauceil Vanatta) and Earl's wife, Genevieve B. Vanatta. The other twin is standing to the right of my grandmother. Earl and Genevieve's sons, Earl and Jack, are not shown.

THE VANATTA LEGACY

(continued from page 6)

In the 1920s the brothers decided to semi-retire in Southern California, establishing themselves in either the poultry or orange industries. In 1922, they were joined by couple named West and drove from Columbia, Missouri, to San Diego, California, in a combination grand vacation and exploratory trip.

They customized their cars, adding storage boxes on the sides and back which they filled with extra fuel cans, food and camping equipment. Following the "Yellowstone Highway," then marked by stones with yellow paint splashed on them, they set their itinerary to take them through the then primitive Yellowstone Park.

The caravan consisted of a Buick touring car with my grandparents, my mother and her sister Helen. They were followed by Elmer and Abbie in the second car, with the Wests trailing behind in a less powerful vehicle (it had to be backed up the steeper grades). Their adventures were many, including wild weather, washed-out bridges, an utter lack of roads, and getting stuck in salt pans while following the railroad tracks across Utah.

After crossing the desert on the plank road from Yuma, they rented a tent at Coronado's famous 'Tent City.' My mother, who was enrolled in San Diego High School for her Junior year was utterly humiliated to have to admit that her home was a tent.

I'm not sure of the details of the family explorations, their travels back to Missouri, or living arrangements during that period. I know that my mother graduated from Columbia High School and the University of Missouri, receiving a B.S. in Home Economics and a lifetime teaching certificate. Rather than becoming a teacher, however, she went on to postgraduate studies in dietetics and became a dietician at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington D.C. There she met my father, a sergeant in the Medical Corps. When she was transferred to Letterman General Hospital in San Francisco, she continued her correspondence with my father and, when his service was completed, he followed her to San Francisco where they were married.

Some time in the late 1920s, the brothers bought and split two lots beginning at the northeast corner of Third and Lexington Streets. (Both bordered the Cunningham property.) My grandfather took the north 1/2 of each lot, and Elmer the south 1/2; both lots were partially planted in orange trees.

My grandparents moved into an older existing 3-room house on the northern property. A large garage/storage building with an integral horse stall stood east of the house, and just beyond the garage, my grandfather built a substantial chicken house where they raised fryers and broilers for the market. With a good well that furnished

plenty of water for trees and gardens, Bert and Emma felt that the good life was indeed theirs.

The future looked bright and the brothers purchased a Caterpillar 10 tractor and generally operated as a partnership; and, in 1928, Elmer and Abbie chose to build on their property bordering on Third Street.

There were orange trees, planted about 1898 on both properties, and my father, great uncle, and grandfather continued planting more trees on the western and northern areas of the ten acre properties.

The plan for a long and prosperous retirement suddenly ended with the death of my grandfather, a victim of liver cancer in 1927. My parents moved into the small house on the northern acres, and my grandmother moved in with Abbie and Elmer. She lived there until she passed away in 1939.

In the meantime, my mother resigned her job in San Francisco and my parents moved into the old house in the center of my grandparent's property.

The arrangements regarding my parents as caretakers were supposed to be temporary, with my grandmother retaining full property rights. It had been her plan through the years to sell the place, but the bottom had dropped out of the market and there were no buyers. Eventually, my parents became the owners of it and it was there that I spent the first 23 years of my life.

In their later years, the Vanattas derived income from the orange groves through membership in the El Cajon Valley Citrus Association which managed the picking, packing, and shipping of fruit. (The Citrus Association was associated with Sunkist Growers, a 'cooperative' marketing and services enterprise for California Fruit Growers.) They also received income from at least four large farms in Missouri which had been leased to tenant farmers.

The Vanattas were founding members of the First Baptist Church of El Cajon at the corner of Prescott and Douglas Streets. Elmer was Church Treasurer for many years and Abbie taught Sunday School classes and was a Deaconess. Elmer and Bert were both Masons and Abbie and Emma were associated with Eastern Star. If they participated in Masonic activities after settling in El Cajon, it is unknown to me.

Upon Elmer's death in 1947, the property passed to Earl Vanatta and was sold by his widow (Gertrude – his second wife) after his death in the early 1950s.

The El Cajon as seen by the Vanattas has changed beyond recognition. The vast vineyards and open grain fields are gone and the orchards and produce farms have disappeared. The very mood of the Valley has been altered by the homes, apartments, industrial complexes and civic buildings that have replaced them. This is to be expected, but it should not be forgotten that not too long ago the basis of this activity was initiated in a rural, agricultural, and tranquil valley by families like the Vanattas.

Essays highlight Cowboy Painter & Indians

Students from 15 elementary schools submitted essays covering various aspects of El Cajon's history in the 33rd Annual Third Grade Essay Contest. The winning essays are posted at www.elcajonhistory.org (under "Education") and are included in this newsletter as space permits. The following are three more winning essays.



Kumeyaay Culture Award

THE KUMEYAAY'S LIFE

Eh Decem Paw, Johnson School

Have you ever heard about the Kumeyaay? I have heard about them. In Ms. Hammand's class, Ms. Reed's mother-in-law taught us all about the Kumeyaay and she told us that they lived in El Cajon. And that got me so interested. If you want to learn about the Kumeyaay I can tell you about them.

The Kumeyaay are Native Americans, they had been living in El Cajon for thousands of years. When they were here there were no malls, and no stores. They lived in many places, they lived in San Diego County, Imperial County, Baja

California, and Mexico. Some of the Kumeyaay lived in mountains, foothills, and in the deserts.

The Kumeyaay ground acorns in a rock that has a hole. They ground acorns because they can eat it. The Kumeyaay hunted animals, insects, fish, and acorns.

When the Kumeyaay were hunting, they used bows and arrows. To make arrows they used woods and stones, but they used stones more. And when they make arrows they also need to use a arrow shaft straightener. To make a arrow shat straightener they need to use a soapstone.

The Kumeyaay has a house that is called a ewaa and it's a shape of a dome. The Kumeyaay build their house of willow leaves, or other type of brushes. They have two holes in their house. One is for the door so they can get out or get in. The second hole is up on the roof and that one is for the smoke to escape so it doesn't fill the house with smoke.

Try to imagine if you were a Kumeyaay living in El Cajon and be part of El Cajon history. Wouldn't that be great?

Honorable Mention

KUMEYAAY INDIANS IN EL CAJON

by Sura Ibraheem, Naranca School

Good morning! I just woke up from a late night sleep. I get out of bed and go find some acorns for breakfast. Kumeyaays like us are hard-working. We normally never get to rest during the day. The clothing is made of deerskin, and plants. The skirts for the women are made out of willow tree bark and seagrass. The men wear their hair loose or tied up in a bow. Kumeyaay tattooed themselves by painting their body. Women painted their chins and sometimes their arms or chests. Our home are both made of winter and summer. It's because we migrated at certain times of the year. When choosing a village we have to see the amount of food and water. Food that we make is obtained in several ways. We hunt, fish, garden, and gather. Men used bows and arrow to hunt deer, antelope, and bighorn sheep. My family and other families fish in bays. The women gather food like seeds, fruits, and berries. At certain times of the year, food and water is hard to find so when it rains we find a way to keep the water.

Women make baskets and pottery. We use them for trading. Well, I decided to make one basket and for some reason it turned out great. It was a basket with grass stripes and flowers inside. It's a long story but I better get to work.

I'm such a good dancer and singer. Wanna know why? My parents taught me. The moms teach their girls how to weave clothing and baskets. That's probably why I made such a good basket. Dads taught their boys to hunt animals and make fishing equipment.

Well this is life for me and other Kumeyaay Indians here in El Cajon. Okay I better get to work and make more of the baskets because a whole line is trying to get one of the baskets I made. There were a lot of people. Guess I have to make more baskets so I can sell them but Bye-Bye.

Wieghorst Award

OLAF WIEGHORST

by James Renk, Fuerte School

Do you know who Olaf Wieghorst is? Well I will tell you about his life. He really loves horses. He made paintings of them and became a famous painter because of it. Olaf even had one of his paintings in the White House office when President Eisenhower was president.

Olaf Wieghorst was born on April 30, 1899, in Denmark. Olaf had an amazing life. He had a lot of different interests and things he was good at. He was a child acrobat, he played the cymbals in the Copenhagen boys club marching band, and he took up oil painting at age twelve. He even sold post cards of his drawings. His parents made him study business and farming.

When Olaf was 18 years old, he really wanted to come to America. On December 14, 1918, he left Copenhagen on the Danish Steamer, United States, and ended up in New York City. He later joined the United States Cavalry. He was sad to leave his girlfriend Mable in



New York. A few years later, he left the army and worked on a ranch. This inspired pencil drawings of horses, cattle, corrals, barns and ranch houses.

He was really missing Mable, so he went back to New York. He wanted to marry her, but he didn't have a steady job. In 1924, he joined the New York Police Department and on October 25, he got married to Mable. He was excited because he was accepted to the Mounted Division of the Police Department where he could continue his love of riding horses.

During all this time, Olaf was still drawing and painting. He believed to be a really good artist, you need to know your subject well. Olaf knew what horse ears and nostrils looked like when they were flared and angry, and how their muscles in their body looked.

In 1944, Olaf retired from the Police Department so he could paint full time. The good part for us is that the next year, he and his family decided to live in our own city of El Cajon! By 1947, his artwork was shown and sold all over the United States. Two of his best painting sales were the "Navajo Madonna" which was resold for \$450,000 and "Navajo Madonna" and "Navajo Man" sold as a pair for \$1,000,000. As I said before, Olaf had an amazing life. He even became an actor for a short time, and many of his paintings were used as backgrounds for the movies.

After this incredible artistic journey of life, Olaf died at the age of 88 years old. His art work will live on forever.



Deputies Slim (left) and Shorty (right), aka Bob Callen and Jim Daniels, from the Olaf Wieghorst Museum presented the Wieghorst Award to third-grader James Renk at the Third Grade Essay Contest Awards Ceremony. Each year the Olaf Weighorst Museum and Western Cultural Center provides the award to the student with the best essay about the painter.

Editor's Note

Since the third grade students conduct their own research, ECHS cannot guarantee that all of the information is historically correct.

Bakeless Bake Sale deadline extended

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

There's still time to contribute to our Holiday Bakeless Bake Sale.

The deadline to return donation slips in time for the opportunity drawing has been extended to January 21. The winner of the drawing will receive a \$50 gift certificate to Flower Power Cakery.

Members were sent donation slips and return envelopes last month. The suggested donation is \$10.

If you misplaced yours, you may simply put your name and phone number on a slip of paper and send it, along with your donation, to the El Cajon Historical Society at the address above.

To:

Welcome New Members

The Al Vildibill Family

Special museum visit to highlight January's meeting

ECHS's next quarterly meeting will be held at 11:30 a.m. Wednesday, January 28, at the Heritage of the Americas Museum, located at 12110 Cuyamaca College Drive West in El Cajon. (Use the Cuyamaca College Drive West exit from Jamacha Road.)

The meeting will include a box lunch. Three sandwich options are available.

- Turkey and Provolone
- Roast Beef and Cheddar
- Veggie

All box lunches include fresh fruit, macaroni salad, cookies, and a canned drink. They will be prepared by Cupid's Catering.

The cost of this meeting will be reduced to \$12 per person.

Reservations are mandatory and must be received by Monday, January 26.

January 28 Meeting Reservation Form

Number Attending _____ (\$12 each)

Amount Enclosed _____ *Reservations not kept
become a donation*

Name _____

Address _____

City, Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Dinner Choice

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

Turkey & Provolone _____ Roast Beef _____ Veggie _____

**RESERVATION DEADLINE
MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2015**

Mail reservations and checks to:
ECHS, P.O. Box 1973, El Cajon, CA 92022-1973