



EL CAJON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HERITAGE

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Children from the El Cajon Boys and Girls Club visited the Knox House with their leader, Axel (in back). They toured April 19 as preparation for the essay contest.

Newsletter upgrades distribution process

Due to recent changes in bulk mail postal regulations, the *Heritage* is changing its distribution system. For those who are comfortable with electronic media, the *Heritage* will now be sent by e-mail. However, paper copies of the *Heritage* will be sent by regular mail to any member who does not have e-mail or to any member who requests to receive printed copies.

The use of e-mail will enable the *Heritage* to utilize color, shorten its delivery time, and will provide a means to get information to members during the three months between issues.

Adult Ed class visits museum

In addition to many third grade students who visited the Knox House to study local history, the museum hosted 100 senior citizens over two days in May who were in a San Diego City College class called "Rediscover San Diego." Many had never been to our museum before and most were quite charmed by it.

Third graders get awards for essays

A crowd of more than 300 parents, teachers, and friends packed the Ronald Reagan Community Center to applaud local students at ECHS's 32nd Annual Third Grade Essay Contest Awards Ceremony on June 3.

A list of award winners is included in this newsletter on page 5.

ECHS would like to thank the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians for underwriting the program for the fifth year and the Cajon Valley Union School District which has partnered with ECHS for 32 years to foster a love for history in local children.



Mrs. Knowles (builder/owner of the Hotel del Corona) aka Rebecca Taylor presented the Best of School Awards; this one to Ocean Fallow of Bostonia Elementary.



Veronica McGowan (left) donated this painting of her historic farmhouse on Penasco Street to ECHS at the 100-year-old homes presentation by Bonnie Fredensborg (right) in April.

President's Message

Meeting to showcase 100-year-old homes

Dear Members and Friends of ECHS,

ECHS's next Quarterly Meeting will be held July 25th at Marechiaro's Italian Restaurant on North Second Street in El Cajon beginning at 11:30 a.m. Lunch will feature lasagna, salad, dessert and beverages. Our speaker, Bonnie Fredensborg, spent many hours researching older homes to help celebrate El Cajon's Centennial in 2012. We are very fortunate to have her share the pictures and information from her research at our quarterly meeting.



Another item important to all our membership: our quarterly newsletter the *Heritage* is now available by e-mail and will be sent to all members who are on our e-mail list. If you do not have e-mail, or wish to receive the newsletter by regular mail, please contact us or leave a message at 619-444-3800 and it will be mailed to you. We will be going this route due to new postal regulations for bulk mailings as well as increased postage. I have been printing out my copy of the *Heritage* and find the photos print in color. Also, if you go to our website you can see older editions of the *Heritage*. Thanks to Jonna Waite for making it possible.

ECHS held the 32nd Annual Third Grade Essay Awards evening on June 3 at the Ronald Reagan Community Center. I wish you all could have been there to see the "over" 300 people – children, parents and grandparents, teachers, principals and other school personnel along with our awards presenters. There was standing room only. As ECHS President, it was my privilege to welcome everyone and make introductions. I began by ringing a bell and explaining that Josephine Asher Vacher, who was my first grade teacher in the 1930s, always opened her class in the morning by ringing the bell. Josephine, as a young girl, grew up on Castle Rock Ranch where Parkway Plaza is located. Josephine retired from the Cajon Valley Schools in 1941. You can find a booklet about her interesting life at the Knox House.

The award presenters shared information about the winning essays and also about their own experiences in El Cajon. Dressed in western attire, Jim Daniels presented the Olaf Wieghorst Award and praised the children and families for their achievements. Charles Brown, director of Community Relations for the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians, told how he grew up and attended the El Cajon Schools. One entire class researched and wrote about the Kumeyaay. Janice Cook, Ed.D., retiring Superintendent of the Cajon Valley Union School District, praised the children, parents, and school personnel who all work together to teach and keep our children safe.

This 32rd Annual Third Grade Awards was the best ever thanks to the efforts of ECHS Board members Alice Rodriguez, Becky Taylor, and Jonna Waite. I hope that in future you, too, will have an opportunity to share the joy of watching our children receive their awards as I have.

Walk In Beauty, *Fran*

Welcome New Members

- ◆ Mr & Mrs. Keith Babcock
- ◆ Sharon & Jim Dobbins
- ◆ Ryan Gittins
- ◆ Earl & Jennie Lee Irely
- ◆ Jerald and Nancy Spratley
- ◆ Betty J. Mc Millen
- ◆ Wendy Vaughn Platt
- ◆ JL Storm Water Consultants, Inc., Jane Ledford owner

Our deepest sympathy

Our condolences to Charles Brown of the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians on the passing of his 90-year-old mother Ida Brown on June 11. She was the oldest member of the Viejas Band. She was revered as a participant in tribal traditions and an educator who passed down vital ancestral knowledge to the next generations. Viejas underwrites the Third Grade Essay Contest program.



The Point Loma Credit Union provided luscious cookies for ECHS's home tour.

A Word of Thanks

A big thank you to Adriana Brunner and the Point Loma Credit Union for the delicious cookies they provided for our May home tour.

New at the Knox

by Mike Kaszuba, Curator

TWO 35MM KODACHROME TRANSPARENCIES OF MARCK MOTORS FORD, c.1968

Donated by Pat Mummert

I'm certain many of you who were living in El Cajon throughout the 1960s will recall the Ford dealership of Marck Motors. Perhaps that was where you purchased that 1964½ Ford Mustang you now wish you had never sold! Marck Motors was located at 332 E. Main Street, on the north side of Main, between Claydelle and Avocado Avenues. So what commands that real estate today? That would be a huge parking garage for the new East County Regional Center, County Courthouses and City Hall, surrounded by beautiful park-like setting. Feel free to stop by the Knox House to view these and hundreds of other archived transparencies currently being digitally scanned and transferred to our main computer!



COLOR POSTCARD DEPICTING BOSTONIA RANCH, THE LARGEST RAISIN VINEYARD IN THE WORLD

Donated by Gail Unzelman

This “vignette-style” early postcard with an undivided back was printed between 1902 and 1907 only. Prior to 1898, only the US government was allowed to print postcards, and in 1902 private companies were first allowed to use the expression “post card.” This card was printed by M. Rieder, a Los Angeles publisher of view-cards of the American West and of Native Americans. They were in business between 1901 and 1915. The entire back of the card is devoted solely to the address and stamp. On March 1, 1907, the Post Office first allowed private citizens to write on the address side of a postcard. It was on this date that postcards were allowed to have the familiar “divided back” to which we are accustomed today. The enchanting message on this card, written by an itinerant worker named Guy, remarks upon his “raisin-picking” in the Bostonia vineyard in early **December** 1906. He announces that the air is so dry, the grapes cure right on the vines! The most-gracious donator of this little beauty, Ms. Gail Unzelman, is an avid collector of memorabilia related to the early wine industry in California. When I missed this card in an eBay auction and requested whether Gail could possibly send the museum a scan for display, she actually donated her newly purchased treasure to us. We just meet the **greatest** people while working at the Knox Museum!



Winning essay captures fire's devastation

Luc Morgon's winning essay in the 32nd Annual Third Grade Essay Contest told of the role played by his great-great-grandfather in the explosive gas station fire on Main Street in 1947. At the awards ceremony, longtime ECHS board member Rick Hall was costumed to represent *his* family's past. The Rexford L. Hall Memorial Trophy is awarded to the school whose student wins first place.

When awarding the traveling trophy to Luc and his elementary school, Hall explained that Rex had been the eldest son of W. D. Hall, owner of the former Main Street lumber company and originator in 1923 of the town's volunteer fire department. He shared how the ferocity of that long-ago fire had *his* grandfather bolting from the lumber company in his business suit and racing to the scene wielding a shovel in his hand.

A family photo shows him among others determinedly shoveling dirt to dam up Forester Creek (today, channeled under City Hall and the County Courthouse), thereby stopping the raging, gasoline-driven conflagration from spreading to nearby businesses and homes.



Rick Hall's grandfather, Rexford, still dressed in hat and suit, digs dirt to dam up Forester Creek adjacent to the gasoline station fire.



1ST PLACE

'Great Balls of Fire' in the El Cajon Valley

by Luc Morgon, Meridian Elementary School

Have you ever heard about the great explosion that took place in El Cajon? On January 6, 1947, there was a fire at 271 East Main Street, El Cajon, California (now the location of Homestyle Furniture). The gas tanks behind the Langley Distributing Company were exploding! All of El Cajon Valley was filled with dark, black, puffy clouds.

The Langley Distributing Company was owned by my great-great grandfather, Earl Langley. He leased the property to a Mobil Gas Station manager. Earl Langley's home was located directly behind the gas station on the corner of Claydelle Avenue and Douglas Avenue.

An oil truck was unloading gas into a tank and a spark started a fire causing three explosions. When the first gas tank exploded, it trapped citizens, knocked others down, and caused some people to run in extreme panic. Two more tanks exploded minutes later. The fourth tank had stove fuel in it that shot a flame over 200 feet in the air. One explosion broke a window of a store 100 feet away from the explosion. The entire business district was closed to motorists.

Twelve people were burned. One person was critically injured. A church was destroyed. The main power and telephone service was out of order for three hours.

In *The San Diego Union*, dated January 7, 1947, Sgt. Elmer Rowe of the La Mesa Police Department, reported that the explosion "hurled great balls of fire 500 feet into the air".

The fire was put out by firemen from El Cajon, La Mesa, San Diego and the Forestry Department. Volunteers also helped put out the big fire.

My great-great grandfather's house caught on fire and Albert Dominguez Jr. helped fight the fire. He was seriously burned. Mr. Dominguez was given a 50-50 chance of survival. Thankfully, he lived.

This event was very heart-breaking for the people of El Cajon. They were in fear of losing their lives and everything they worked so hard to acquire. They may have thought that they would lose the entire city of El Cajon. Hopefully, something like this doesn't happen in El Cajon ever again.





Theodora Birdeye aka Eldonna Lay presented the Virginia Stead Award to Nicholas Nance of Fuerte Elementary.



This year participation certificates were given to the third graders when they arrived which streamlined the award presentations.

2013 Third Grade Essay Contest Winners

	STUDENT	ESSAY TITLE	SCHOOL
1st Place	Luc Morgon	Great Balls of Fire in the El Cajon Valley	Meridian
2nd Place	Riley Chavez	El Cajon in the 1900s	Bostonia
3rd Place	Savanna Davis	The Mother Goose Parade	W. D. Hall
Nettie Kersten Award	Beckett Rice	El Cajon Settlers	W. D. Hall
Virginia Stead Award	Nicholas Nance	Red Diamond Rattlesnake	Fuerte
Heritage Award	Ryan Asmar	My Family History of El Cajon	Vista Grande
Olaf Wieghorst Award	Geoffrey Gardner	The Western World of Olaf Wieghorst	Avocado
Judges Award	Dante Luna-de-Alva	Kumeyaay	Rancho San Diego
Honorable Mention	Elle Fishwick	El Cajon Farm Land to Private Airport	Fuerte
Honorable Mention	Kelly Stramat	Rocking with Taylor Guitars	Meridian
Originality	Makenzie Ayres	History of the El Cajon Cemetery	Vista Grande
Neatness	Bricen Humphrey	I Experienced the Knox Hotel	Fuerte

Best of School Awards

SCHOOL	STUDENT	ESSAY TITLE
Anza Elementary	Michelle Sleman	El Cajon Library
Avocado Elementary	Gracie Goebel	Conserving Water
Bostonia Elementary	Ocean Fallow	The Knox Hotel
Chase Elementary	Kaden Castle	Honey Bees in El Cajon
Flying Hills Elementary	Ivory Simmons	My Life in El Cajon
Fuerte Elementary	Jack Worlie	Gillespie Field
W. D. Hall Elementary	Chandler Boyer	Over 70 Years at Gillespie Field
Lexington Elementary	Noiel Yacob	The Old Flume
Madison Elementary	Michael Whitebread	Gillespie Field
Meridian Elementary	Richard Chavez	Pepper Drive
Naranca Elementary	Steela Marooki	The Kymeyaay and Me
Rancho San Diego Elementary	Jocelyn Herrera	Edward Fletcher
Rios Elementary	Vanessa Ballow	The Flood on the Ranch
Vista Grande Elementary	Monique Dawisha	Amaziah Knox and the Knox Hotel

The winning essays are posted at www.elcajonhistory.org (under "Education") and will be included in upcoming issues of this newsletter. Since the third graders conduct their own research, the Historical Society cannot guarantee that all of the information is historically correct.

Recent donations enhance book collection

by Mike Kaszuba

Our research library continues to grow at a steady pace. Four new books of mention were recently acquired:

■ The City of El Cajon donated a numbered first edition hardcover of Eldonna Lay's *Valley of Opportunity*, THE reference work on the history of El Cajon through the year 1987. If you have not seen much of Eldonna lately, it is because she has been commissioned to provide us a 25-year update to this tome! Wish her well ... we hear she has been locked away in a secret location and is only being thrown a stale crust of bread and dirty cup of water daily until she completes this undertaking.

■ Member Jack Dickens was recently engaged in docent activity at the Knox when he noticed that our library did not have a copy of *La Mesa*, one of the Images of America series. So Jack promptly went out and bought us a brand spankin' new copy ... Thank you Jack! It's a fascinating picture-book assembled by Jim Newland, resident historian of the La Mesa Historical Society. A great number of the outstanding photographs hold common interest for both our organizations.

■ Member/docent/author Carroll Rice has donated two choice books. The first is entitled *Golden Mirages*. This is a wonderful 1940 compilation of desert tales of gold mining and searching for legendary lost treasures and mines, containing as it does the history and personalities of old California and our Southwest desert. Here's your opportunity to bone up before striking out for the lost Pegleg Smith Mine or the legendary Three Gold Buttes!

Carroll also donated the *Dictionary of Mesa Grande Diegueño*, published by Malki Museum Press. The Malki Museum Press, located in Banning on the Morongo Indian reservation, strives to publish quality literary works on past and present California Indian cultures. I have never seen one of their efforts be anything but excellent. Thank you Carroll! We expect some of our Kumeyaay friends will make use of this outstanding resource.

Let's keep these great donations coming!

Recalling Our Past

Compiled by Jonna Waite

Here's what was happening in El Cajon 100 years ago as reported in the El Cajon Valley News of July 1913.

■ Hans Schumann-Heink is making extensive improvements on the ranch recently purchased by his mother at Lakeside. The old house is to be torn down and replaced by a new bungalow of mission style to cost about \$3,000. It is also the intention to develop more water and obtain an amply supply for the ranch.

■ No. 4 branch of the County Free Library is at Crabb's Drug Store. Ask for a membership card, free.

■ Ice cream, pure fruit juices and crushed fruits served at Crabb's fountain.

■ Mary Wilkerson celebrated her ninth birthday with a party for her little friends at the Knox Hotel last Monday, June 30. There were refreshments, games of various kinds, and music; and among the attractions was a large birthday cake decorated with candles. The guests were Alice LaSha, Marjorie Hall, Ola Hall, Evelyn and Mae Lloyd, Robin Dale and Gene McKinney, Alice and Anna Grube, and William Porter Adams.

■ Beekeepers in the Valley are NOT popular with the fruit growers. The annual destruction of peaches and other deciduous fruits by bees is great, as the insects burrow through the skin of the ripe fruit and dig out the interior.

At the Knox House

Through July, the dining room exhibit features a typical 1900's Fourth of July picnic basket with edibles introduced in that era.

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Libraries, Libraries, Libraries!

by Eldonna Lay



ECHS's curator Eldonna Lay shares her love of El Cajon history at local libraries.

Remembrances of teaching at Fletcher Hills School in 1957 by then-Eldonna Peterson were shared with members of the *Friends of Fletcher Hills Library* during their celebration of the City's Centennial

From there, our curator raced across the valley to the *Rancho San Diego Library* to be part of the County Library's celebration of East County *Legends*; those individuals who've made our community a more interesting and pleasurable place to live and work. Among the five honored were El Cajon's own library and social-change supporter Rita Cloud and celebrated painter and ECHS supporter Phebe Burnham, each of whom – along with the other *Legends* – were memorialized with oversized portraits painted by artist Mona Mills.



Portraits of Phebe Burnham, above, and Rita Cloud.



Gone but not forgotten

Members and non-member readers are invited to add to a list of bygone local organizations, buildings and/or events from the last 25 years. Each may be included in the City's commissioned Centennial reissue of the extended *Valley of Opportunity: the History of El Cajon*.

Among those already noted are the Cuyamaca Bank building at Main and Magnolia, the El Cajon Women's Club, and the Sister Cities Organization.

Please mail those you remember to the El Cajon Historical Society, Attention: Eldonna Lay, P. O. Box 1973, El Cajon, CA 92022-1973.

If you'd like to include photos, we'll add them to the Society's collection file.

Teachers go the extra mile

ECHS would like to compliment the third grade teachers at Naranca School, who walked their students to the museum. Now that is dedication and great exercise!

And, along with their visit, each student submitted an essay on their unit topic of the Kumeyaay people, eliciting an offer from Charles Brown of Viejas of a personal visit to their classes. Naranca's participation in the essay contest raised the number of student essays from about 240 to 340 – that's a lot of essays to read.

The next morning brought the opening of the new *Lemon Grove Library*, designed by Raul Diaz. At the opening ceremonies, the VanZanten family was honored for saving and protecting the original bell from that city's first school house. A former Lemon Grove teacher/City of El Cajon councilman, Al VanZanten passed on his clear-sighted appreciation of local history to his daughter, ECHS Vice President Jonna Waite.

And it was to the clear, ringing sounds of that 1890's bell from high in the building's elegant new tower that the doors of the mission-style building opened for the waiting crowd to move inside.

There they were greeted with spanking new and beautifully arranged furniture, shelves, tables, floral bouquets and the current *Legends'* portraits. Boldly, they hung against the western wall.

Note: East County painter Mona Mills' spectacular portraits of this year's *Legends* will be put on exhibit in the El Cajon Library in August. Don't miss this joyous and delightful event.



El Cajon Citrus during the Depression Years

by Milman Youngjohn

Introductory Note by G. Carroll Rice

Personal narratives, such as this essay by guest writer Milman Youngjohn, are precious resources for our Historical Society. His experiences parallel those of many El Cajon Valley residents through the 1930s when all of Southern California was in transition from an agricultural base to a modern world of industries, tourism, military support, technical laboratories and accompanying infrastructures.

As Milman's parents's Pepper Drive property was devoted to citrus and poultry production, he was in a unique position to observe two phases of Depression era agriculture, and furthermore, the Youngjohn family home was later remodeled to reflect Victorian grandeur and named 'Lindenwood.'

Citrus Growing on Pepper Drive

This farm was owned and operated by my parents, Ramiel and Lucile Youngjohn, from 1930 to 1945. It was a 43 acre-tract containing a large but derelict Victorian house that my parents renovated and lived in until it was sold after World War II.

If you look at farming during those years, you have to factor in the devastation of agriculture by the Depression. Oranges had been profitable for the growers in the 1920s but prices collapsed in the early 1930s. Many groves in the El Cajon Valley were neglected and went out of production. Some hardy souls, among them my parents, soldiered on through the punishing times to be finally rescued by high wartime prices.

An example of 1930's economics: Our grove contained a small patch of grapefruit. Dad was expecting at least some money from that. I remember the puzzled expression on his face as he studied the contents of an envelope from the Sunkist packing house. Instead of the check he was expecting, it was a bill for the \$27 that the sale of the grapefruit fell short of covering the expenses of picking, packing and shipping.

The California Navel was and is the best orange for fresh consumption. I know of no other orange that will deliver the peeling and eating experience of a mature Navel. But the Navels are not good for processing because the juice develops off flavors. The alternative is the California Valencia. When mature, it has the best juice there is.

The Pepper Drive grove was planted mostly in Navels. In 1930 Dad added more Navels purchased as small trees from local nurseries. By the time these trees started to bear, at three or four years old, the market collapsed.

Dad thought the Valencia market would be better and he "hatracked" or sharply pruned all of these young trees and grafted them over to Valencia. Grafting consisted of making three T-shaped slits at the end of each branch, inserting a bud and taping it over. Most of these buds would grow, and the largest of the three would make the new Valencia branch. After a couple of years, the tree would be back to where it was before being grafted and production would commence as Valencias.

I don't know how profitable this change in varieties was but Dad continued to add new acreage always in Valencias. All of the orange trees were on sour orange rootstock. On these regrafted trees, the roots would be sour orange, the trunks Navel, and the bearing surfaces Valencia. Sometimes "suckers" would emerge from the roots and these would be long shoots with vicious thorns. Once in a while you would see fruit on these suckers and there was no need to ask whether it was sour orange.

Water availability was always a concern. In the early years, water was run down furrows between the rows of oranges. About 1936 the furrow system was replaced with 22 foot lengths of galvanized pipe with a Rainbird sprinkler on one end. The pipes were connectable to each other and were disassembled and moved to the next row of trees after each irrigation. Water was lifted by an old jack pump from a well near Pepper Drive up to a concrete reservoir above the grove. From there gravity delivered water through an underground pipe system to faucets throughout the grove (and the house) through which water flowed to the furrows or the Rainbirds.

The well was a study within itself. It was between five and six feet in diameter and was hand dug with picks and shovels with no blasting or other aids. At 160 feet, after all this work, the well was a dry hole. Then the diggers augured radial holes at the bottom of the shaft like spokes on a wheel which they called "laterals". Miraculously one of these laterals struck some kind of a water vein and that well supplied most of the water for the entire place from then on.

The well was located not without the comedy of "water witching" as it was called in those days. People would go around with forked sticks that would bend as they passed over water, or maybe a long strand of hair from the tail of a horse attached to the end of a stick!

If we needed more water that the well could supply, the Hawley Pipeline was available. This was a significant enterprise in the history of the groves along Pepper Drive. This greatly simplified maintenance, eliminating open flumes over draws, leakage, root invasion, etc. I don't

know how the water got to the Hawley Pipeline or from where it got its name.

Not all of the properties that the pipeline transversed had access to the water. Somehow it was determined who got water and who didn't. Dad had some voice in the pipeline's affairs, which were not always amicable. Each place on the pipeline had a meter and was billed accordingly. The entire pipeline had a master meter so that its reading could be reconciled against the sum of the users' meters. When it didn't an investigation revealed that someone up the line had tapped into the pipeline with a small pipe and was diverting water surreptitiously into his well. We didn't draw much water from the pipeline because it was expensive and we had that good well. When we used the pipeline, the water went into the reservoir the same as water from the well. If I hadn't seen it, I wouldn't believe that fish could travel through that pipeline including the master meter and our meter and survive. Yet there they were swimming contentedly in the waters of the reservoir.

Frost or freezing weather was another of the demons challenging Valley growers. There was a rule of thumb that it would take four hours at 26 degrees or the equivalent to cause significant damage. Dad had a thermometer out in the grove that would ring a bell in his bedroom when the temperature became threatening. Some official agricultural agency maintained a weather recording setup in our grove just a few rows in from Pepper Drive. It was a hutch on stilts containing weather instruments. During the winter months a man would come by daily about 4 p.m. and take readings of the temperature and humidity. These data would be translated into temperature forecasts which would be broadcast over the radio about 10 p.m.

Growers tried to protect their crop by using orchard heaters of various types. One of these was a simple metal tube maybe 10 inches in diameter and three feet long standing vertically. It was filled and fired with coke, a cheap smudgy relative of coal. In fact this type of heater was called a "smudge pot" with good reason. Then there was a more advanced heater that burned some kind of fuel oil. It had a three-foot stack sitting on top of a rectangular tank holding perhaps five gallons of fuel. Dad used neither of these and instead burned old tires that were placed in the center of the rows between the trees. There was always a pile of old tires on the farm waiting to be positioned at the ready when frost threatened. You can imagine the environmental calamity resulting from a really cold night when the smudge pots, heaters, and tires got going in unison. A black pall of sooty smoke would hang over the entire Valley.

Growers also had to protect their grove from pests such as the red spider by spraying it occasionally with an oily emulsion. The spray rig consisted of a truck with about a 300 gallon wooden tank on the bed under a 10 foot tower. A man with a hose and nozzle occupied the



Orange groves adorned El Cajon's Pepper Drive in the 1930s. (Photo courtesy of the San Diego Historical Society)

tower and sprayed the tops of the trees. Two men with hoses and nozzles followed the truck on foot and sprayed the sides. There was a pump attached to the tank that provided the pressure needed to operate the system.

Pocket gophers were also a real problem. They would tunnel around under the trees feeding on the roots. The leaves of the tree would start turning yellow and people would say "that tree has been gophered". Sometimes the gophers would come to the surface and completely girdle a young tree, killing it before the farmer had time to act. Gophers show their presence by pushing up easily recognizable mounds of earth. Once these appear, farmers must act quickly with traps or poison to prevent serious or fatal damage.

Dad's oranges were picked, packed, shipped, and sold by the El Cajon Valley Citrus Association, a Sunkist house and one of scores of such facilities throughout California. Sunkist was an enormous grower-owned cooperative. Agricultural cooperatives frequently have rancorous relations between the growers and management and El Cajon was no exception. This was exacerbated by the hard times of the 1930s when growers were struggling to stay in business. On one occasion the pickers went on strike and the growers banded together to harvest the fruit themselves resulting in some ugly threats.

The growers soon learned that picking was not their thing and the pickers realized that paltry Depression wages were better than nothing and things went back to normal.

The farm contained a few prolific lemon trees in addition to the previously mentioned grapefruit. Dad also planted a row of Fuerte avocados. They grew and produced well but there was a marketing problem. Many people did not even know what an avocado was, and it was one or two generations before the discovery of guacamole by the American public. There was a fine two-or-three-acre olive grove on the property in 1930 but again no market. The olive grove was pulled out and replaced with oranges.

A complete copy of this essay and many others are available at www.elcajonhistory.org.

Do we have your e-mail?

If you received this printed copy of the *Heritage* in the mail, we don't have your e-mail address. Please send us your e-mail address at echs0997@att.net so that you can receive updated information.

July's meeting features photo tour of historic homes

The El Cajon Historical Society's July Quarterly Meeting will begin at 11:30 a.m. Thursday, July 25, at Marechiaro's Italian Restaurant, 854 North 2nd Street, El Cajon (parking in back).

Lunch will feature lasagna, salad, dessert, and beverages.

Lunch will be followed by the highlights of a photo tour by Bonnie Fredensborg on homes in El Cajon that are 100-years-old or more. The presentation was a big hit when it was originally presented in April as part of the "Journey to our Historical Past" speaker series.

The cost for the meeting remains \$15.

Members will also have the opportunity to participate in, or contribute to, an opportunity drawing.

Reservations are mandatory and must be received by Monday, July 22.



Bonnie Fredensborg at April's presentation.

July 25th Meeting Reservation Form

Number Attending _____ (\$15 each)

Amount Enclosed _____ *Reservations not kept
become a donation*

Name _____

Address _____

City, Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

DEADLINE MONDAY, JULY 22, 2013

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