

The Legacy

No. 127

Fall 2016

Lompoc Valley Historical Society's Quarterly Newsletter

The Joy of Donations

By Julie Ann McLaughlin

My Dad is moving to Lompoc after living in the same house for 49 years. My mother recently passed away. So we had the double duty of going through her things and paring down for the move. And although there was a lot of emotions **during the process the one I didn't expect** was the joy and excitement of having our cast offs and discards snatched up and even cherished by others. We would set furniture and items by the side of our old **house with a "free" sign. Some things** would be gone in an hour. While others sat for a couple of days before they had a new home. But each time an item disappeared an unexpected zing of joy would run through me. On a couple of occasions we interacted with the people getting our stuff and there was joy on the receiving end too.

So imagine the collective excitement and joy that comes when items are donated **and become part of the Historical Society's** collection. Some of the recent acquisitions are featured in this issue of The Legacy. (I can just hear the oohhs and ahhs.)



Antique dolls donated by the Barker Family.
Photographed by Sherrie Chavez

Wonderful donations are made to your historical society. Some of the items **we've received have been a Victrola donated by Keith Mautino owned by George** Washington Moore dating to 1912, a lovely pink settee and chair from Tim and Lucy Thomas Harrington, a tea set from Dr. Blake Jamison's mother, a jar of rattlesnake buttons from Barbara Cabral (sure to freak out the 3rd graders), 80 items from Jasper's ceiling yearbooks, Flower Festival posters and many old photos from the Rudolph family. Recently added were Naval uniforms from the 1940's from the Friis family, the corner store diorama from the Library, old medical items from Dr. Jamison and of course the lovely toys and dolls in the photos along with 2 antique shotguns & cleaning kit from the Frank Barker family.

By Karen Paaske

Save the Date
Labor day weekend
September 2nd, 3rd, & 4th 2016
Friday, Class Reunion Dinner \$31
Saturday, Open House at
Spanne Home and Museums
Sunday BBQ at Ryon Park \$12



Vintage Toys also from the Frank Barker Family. Photos showing the details of these treasures were shot and provided by Sherrie Chavez. Sherrie has just completed a photo **catalog of the Spanne House's vast inventory and furnishings for insurance purposes.**



Lompoc Journal Sept 15, 1916

24,000 Bags Yield Of Season's Mustard

With a mustard crop far in excess of that of last year, and the largest in several years, and with exceptionally high prices paid for the yield, Lompoc Valley farmers who were fortunate enough to plant their fields to mustard last spring are patting themselves on the back and gazing with fond eyes upon the figures of their bank balances. Twenty-seven thousand bags is a conservative estimate of the amount of this grain shipped from Lompoc this season. High prices have been steadily maintained. As much as nine cents a pound has been paid by San Francisco buyers but very little went at this price and 7 1/4 cents is a fair average for the crop. Some of the mustard was contracted for early, in the season as low as 4 1/2 cents. The reason for the exceptionally large yield is the price paid last year. Farmers saw their opportunity to make money while the war lasted and European shipments were cut off and took advantage of it.

This is an old postcard, "Phelps Family Clamming. Kelly, Judy, Penny. "The Day of the Great Low Tide at Pismo Beach"



The beach was apparently closed to clamming for many seasons leading up to this day when it was opened. That's Kelly in the hat and Judy & Penny on the far left and right

The Balaam Mine

By Author G. Balaam

Excerpts from a letter dated Decemer 13, 1938
Part one of two Parts



(This is letter was in response to what apparently was a request from Johns-Manville for the history of the Balaam Brothers mining of celite in the Lompoc Valley. A.G. Balaam begins with an account of his family's arrival to the "colony" and early farming of "pink beans" before getting to as he put it the "mining operations".)

Now getting down to the mining operations of this mine, my father had always looked upon **your mine and your deposit as "The Old White Hills", which in his opinion, was not worth the taxes he was called on to pay.** As I grew up, and went through school, I had taken up a course in mineralogy and geology, and thru my reading on these subjects, had discovered that infusorial earth, or kieselguhr was mined from the beds of the lakes of Germany and was taken thru a flotation process and put upon the market as insulating for heat.

In the latter part of the year, my first wife's father and other people about us, had discovered that by taking small blocks of this infusorial earth and wrapping wire about it, leaving enough wire extended for a handle that

the material could be dropped into kerosene and it would absorb enough kerosene almost instantly so that it could be used for the purpose of lighting fires. This practice became quite common among the people of our immediate locality. Seeing the usefulness of the **material for this purpose, my wife's father,** (John Bradley) made up a goodly number of these fire lighters and started north to sell them to people who cared to use them. He sold a goodly number and a gentleman in Salinas, I do not recall his name, took one of these fire lighters to San Francisco where it came into the hands of Captain William Barrow, who at that time was grinding and using magnesite, mixed with tulle fibre, for the insulation of steam pipes and boiler coverings. Captain Barrow tested this material, obtained this fire lighter, and found that it would take the place of magnesite, was easier ground, and had as much resistance to heat, or more than magnesite.

Captain Barrow first wrote me a letter inquiring in regard to the quantity of the material, and as to whether or not it could be obtained in sufficient quantities for his use. This letter was immediately answered, and upon receiving this answer Captain Barrow came down to Lompoc to interview me in regard to mining and furnishing him infusorial earth for his purposes .



Balaam Home on West Pine
June 17, 1909
Taken

Upon his visit, in February 1893, my brother John F. Balaam and myself, entered into an agreement with Captain Barrow to furnish him during that year, 1500 tons (in the raw) sacked and delivered to the shipping point at the price of \$7.00 per ton. This contract was based upon the condition that Captain Barrow should be furnished a carload of this raw material for the purpose of a test, and I, with my own hands, dug from a bluff at that time about forty feet high and situated about 150 or 200 feet south **of your present brick warehouse or "Ten Hill" as you now designate it.** This material was dug out of the bank at that point and it was very wet. However, we sacked it up immediately and on May 12, 1893 shipped it to San Francisco and upon its arrival there, Captain Barrow placed it on a rack of some kind and soon dried it out to a consistency where he could grind it with his grinder. This he did, and with the combination of this infusorial earth and the tulle fibre which he gathered from the sloughs of the San Joaquin river, he made a mix which in his opinion was better than the magnesite and tulle fibre mix he had been using. He then notified us that the material was very acceptable, and we could go on with our contract with him.

Of course my brother and I were green-horns in the mining of infusorial earth, but previously had had some experience in hard rock mining and knew the effects of different grades of powder and what might be expected by explosion of each. We knew we had to rely on the mining of this material, by blasting and throwing down the material from the bluff in as large chunks as possible, and doing the same without the necessity of shattering the material to any extent. Our method was to put men to work on these large chunks and with shaper tools and wedges, break the larger chunks into smaller chunks which might be hauled into the drying yard and have the water dried from the material in as short a time as possible. This we realized was the only method and means by which we could possibly hope to have the material bleached out and put in condition where it would not contain such an amount of moisture that the material would be useless and could not be ground by the mill.

We selected, the location for mining above named, from the fact that there was a tall perpendicular bluff, and the lamina of the material had an angle so that by putting our blasts back behind the bluff eight or ten feet, it would break loose and lift the material, at that point, and dump it off over the edge of the bluff. This method was chosen from the fact that the slope of the seams of the material were down from the location of the blast and thus aided materially in permitting the large chunks blasted loose from the mass, to drop to the bottom of the perpendicular bluff.

Continued in the next issue of The Legacy No. 128



Queen For A Day
July 24th, 2016

Yesterday we crowned my 97 year old grandma, Mary Cabral (Silva) the unofficial "Big Queen" for the 2016 Lompoc Portuguese Festa! The crowns have been in my family for over 100 years. My great-grandma, Maria R. Silva (Olivera) kept and cared for them

prior to handing them over to my grandma to take care of. Every year my grandma had the crowns ready for the queens to wear in the celebration. My grandma was always a side maid and never a queen, until this year!

20 something years ago I was the "Big Queen" with Corinne Ford (Satterfield) and Christina Alvarez (Hain) by my side. I wore that same cape & crown. Some years before that they were worn by Lori Morss (Mendez). It was fun to pass on the crown to someone who has kept our heritage alive, someone who is first generation born in America and so proud to be a Portuguese-American. My son Mason & I were happy to be in her court! #LongLiveQueenMary ~Tawnee Armenta (Cabral)

Ronald Kenneth Fairbanks
1944-2016

LVHS Member, Ron Fairbanks died expectantly April 30th, 2016. Ron was born June 9, 1944 in Lompoc, California to Kenneth Clyde Fairbanks and Mary Emily Dettamanti Fairbanks, farmer-ranchers here in the Lompoc Valley.

Ron and his wife of 51 years, Bonnie Alice (Hurlbut) raised two children, Dean and Devin. They take their grandkids on some of their many traveling excursions.

He enlisted and served in the Navy during the Vietnam conflict which is when he first learned to scuba dive becoming a lifelong pursuit.

What began in the Navy developed into careers in construction, plumbing, heating and even solar power. He started Ocean Sports, became a well known scuba instructor. Built the boats he used in his chartering business. In 1996 he earned his US Coast Guards Captains license, there by officially **becoming "Captain Ron"**.

Ron belonged to many organizations over his lifetime including the 4-H Club, Boy Scouts, the Shrine club, Grange as well as the Masonic and Elks lodges. He and Bonnie have been Life Members (a gift from his parents) the whole family have been staunch supporters of our organization. He will be missed.

Oldest living Lompoc High School Graduates: Class of 1933, Lawrence Archer is the only survivor of that Class and living in an assisted facility in Medford, OR, but is in pretty good health at about 101.

Then Lucy Pensa, of the 1934 Class is the only survivor there, second oldest graduate: Lucy married Mario Raffetto, and is doing quite well in Idaho at age 100, and is near her daughter Connie Cook.

In 1935 Class, Margaret Canfield and Jean McArthur are doing quite well at age 99. Jean is in Gold River near her daughter Dr. Bonnie Drumwright. She married Al Bodine of the Class of 1932. Margaret married Lloyd Kalin, also of the Class of 1932. She is doing quite well in her Buellton home.

1936 Barbara Rhodes, Maida Tolman and Senta Tognetti survive. Barbara is in the Meridian care facility. Her first husband, Ed Salzman, Class of 1937, died in WWII, and she married again to Tom Linn. Maida is still in Lompoc. She married Bill Ratcliff, who was a Lompoc Postmaster. Senta lives in Santa Barbara; married James Foulon. and I had a visit from her niece recently who told me she's doing fair.

Oldest cont. page 7

May, June, July 2016
 Memorials & Membership
 Members that have passed away
 MB Dale Staggs
 John Poloni
 Betty Ruffer
 Barbara Wilson
 Geraldine Young
 Ron Fairbanks
 Total Number of Members: 438
 Memorial Contribution in Honor of
 Ron Fairbanks
 Pat Hamlin
 Domenic Signorelli

Karen's Chronicles

The yard looks like a hunt for buried treasure! Yes, the french drains are progressing with thanks to Rodney Eckert, Duane Schulyer, Bob Manfrina, Jesse Jones, Harvey Wynne and others.

Hope you will all come to the Elk's September 2 for the celebration of Lompoc High with special recognition of the 50 year class, 1966, who had a reunion mid August.

The Model T had a mechanical issue, so didn't get into the Flower Festival parade. Thanks to Joe Avila and Brian Donelson, she runs beautiful and was on exhibit at Old Town Market.

The reference room often gets asked for information. Recently a man asked about a Sloan home on north H as his father, Joseph Gemignani, now almost 100, lived in the **basement and worked there in the 30's**. He remembered little Jimmy Sloan. Well, Jim Sloan remembered him and had photos of Joe to share with the family which were emailed.

Last week, Ron Hooker asked about a classmate who was killed in Korea in 1950. **Seems he couldn't find any information** about him through the Korean Memorial or on any lists. But Myra knew, and Justin Crowell was a ward of Clyde Crowell and his legal name was Cpl. Homer L. Sisk, Jr. Now we are trying to figure out how to prove that Justin and Homer are the same person so that his name can be put on memorials. Justin is listed in the 1940 census and photos of him in the 1947 yearbook. His mother lived with the Crowells in 1930 when he was born, so he probably lived here all during his youth. If you have any information please let us know.

The fabulous display of wedding dresses will be on exhibit during the open house August 27 and September 3. Be sure to see it, as it will be coming down for Christmas decorations!



The yard readied for the new drains

Oldest cont. from page 6

1937 I find two - Mary Silva who married Pete Cabral and Lucille Schuyler Harman, who lives in Stockton.

1938 I haven't researched well -- but Dorothy Briggs, Wilson Burrill and Geraldine Lewellyn are doing okay.

In my class of 1939, Yaeko Iwamoto, Velma Kolding and Myra Huyck, all age 95, are ok. If anyone knows of others in these classes who I've missed, please let us know --
mm21@impulse.net By Myra Manfrina

From the Treasurer's Desk....

Jeannette Wynne

August has arrived! For those of you who are members on an annual basis, I will be mailing out membership renewal notices later this month. As you know, our Fiscal Year runs from Sept. 1 to Aug. 31 the following year, so your dues will be due on September 1st of this year. There is always an addressed envelope enclosed for your convenient and timely reply.

If anyone would like to make a special donation to our ongoing renovation projects or a memorial donation in honor of a loved one or friend, your donations are fully deductible according to our Federal 501 (C)(3) status as a Charitable organization.

All mail for the Society should be sent to P.O. Box 88, Lompoc, CA 93438. If you have any questions, please email me: cybernana@verizon.net or call 737-1170.

Up and Coming Events...

Executive Board

Karen Paaske - President

Ardeane Machado Eckert - 1st Vice President

Harvey Wynne - 2nd Vice President

Julie Ann McLaughlin - Secretary

Jeannette Miller Wynne - Treasurer

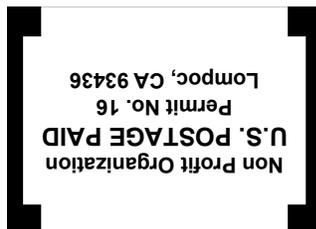
Jan Webb - Corresponding Secretary

Directors

Barbara Mundell Cabral, Myra Huyck Manfrina, Dan Dutra, Rose Machado Roberts, **Readon "Donnie" Grossi Silva, Carolyn Huyck Strobel, Jesse Jones, Brian Donelson,** Irma Gadway, Lyla Sechrest, Don Fletcher, Sherrie Chavez, Debbie Schuyler Manfrina and Lynn Benedict Romine

- AUGUST 27 open house
- SEPTEMBER 2 Dinner at the Elks
- SEPTEMBER 3 open house
- SEPTEMBER 4 BBQ at Ryon Park
- Labor Day (Monday, Sept 5)
- SEPTEMBER 24 open house
- OCTOBER 22 open house
- Halloween (Monday, Oct 31)

ATTEND THE LABOR DAY
WEEKEND FESTIVITIES
FRIDAY NIGHT - DINNER
SATURDAY - OPEN HOUSE
SUNDAY - RYON PARK BBQ



Lompoc Valley
Historical Society
P. O. Box 88
Lompoc CA 93438

