

### Upcoming events:

- **November 25 & 26:** Museum Open House
- **December 30 & 31:** Closed
- **January 27 & 28:** Museum Open House
- **February 18:** General Membership Meeting, Topic TBA
- **February 24 & 25:** Museum Open House

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### JOHN DEWITT MUSEUM

2116 TAVERN ROAD  
ALPINE, CA 91901

Open 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.  
last weekend of each month

Tom & Judy Myers, Editors  
619-885-8063



## TURKEY TALK

**T**urkeys and Thanksgiving just seem to go together, so let's take a quick look at this interesting bird and our holiday traditions.

Turkeys as a species are thought to be almost ten million years old and are related to the T-Rex dinosaur. There are six subspecies of wild turkey and all are native to North America.

The Aztecs domesticated the wild turkeys of southern Mexico, and about 1519 the Spanish explorers took the domesticated turkey from Mexico to Europe. By 1541 domesticated turkeys were being bred in England, becoming a very popular holiday dish.

At the first Thanksgiving the Pilgrims meal included wild turkeys. Later in the 17th century, other English colonists brought back the European-bred strains of the domesticated Mexican turkey to northeastern America. In the late 1800's domesticated turkeys were a valuable agricultural product. Right here in Alpine many of the early settlers, including the Foss family, the Stephensons, the Brabazons, and Nicholas Peutz were producing turkeys for market. And, as late as the 1970's, Alex Adams was raising champion white turkeys for market.

Wild turkeys were hunted nearly to extinction and by the early 1900's the population reached a low of around

30,000 birds. Now, conservation and restoration programs across North America have brought the numbers back to about seven million. In books published as recently as 1996, the wild turkey was thought to be extinct in most of California, but in 2010 we snapped this photo of a wild turkey on Viejas Creek Trail in Alpine. Today you can see flocks of wild turkeys all around the region—a good place to find them is in the meadows around Cuyamaca State Park.

If you want to liven up the holiday conversation this year, here's a bit of trivia that might do the trick. Did you know that female turkeys prefer males with long "snoods", and that the length of the snood can be used to predict the winner of a competition between two males? What is a snood? Well, it's not what you're thinking—it's that dangly appendage on the face and both the male and female turkeys have them. But, don't confuse the snood with the "wattle" which is the other dangly red bit under the chin.

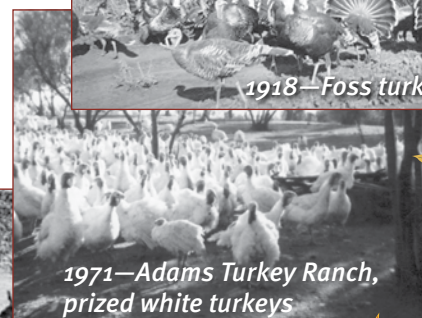
Have a Happy Thanksgiving y'all!



2010—  
Wild turkey  
on Viejas Creek Trail



1918—Foss turkeys



1971—Adams Turkey Ranch,  
prized white turkeys



1918—Pearl Foss  
with their turkey flock



## Volunteer Opportunities . . .

- **CREEK CLEAN-UP:** Several volunteers are needed to help clear invasive vegetation from the creek along the back of our museum property. We're coordinating with Jon Green with the BCLT to select a date in early 2018.
- **MUSEUM ARTIFACT CATALOGING:** Volunteers are needed to help us catalog all the photographs and artifacts in our museum. Training will be provided. Dates and times are flexible.
- **SECRETARY:** We are still looking for a volunteer to join our Board of Directors as its *Secretary*. Duties would include taking notes at our monthly meetings, held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Alpine Sheriff's Community Room. Other duties include helping with our quarterly meetings, and participating in our History Day Celebration on the first Saturday in June.



*Please contact Tom Myers at 619-885-8063 for additional information and to volunteer for any of the above opportunities.*

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

*A Warm Welcome to New Members:*

Pat Dolbeck, Edward & Sharlene Radford

*Many Thanks to the following for their generous financial donations:*

San Diego Model A Ford Club, Cheryl & Robert Eschwege, and Janet Harris

*Greetings to our newest business member: **Minuteman Press, Scripps Ranch***

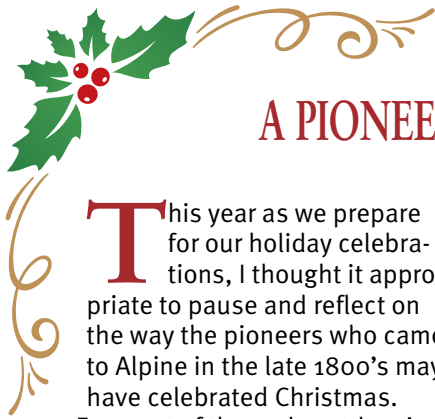
## RECOGNITION OF OUR CURRENT LIFETIME MEMBERS

Carlette Anderson • Deborah Anderson • George & Joan Anderson • Mark L. Anderson • Roy & Willa Athey  
 Franklin R. Ball • Pat & Joe Brunold • David Carey • Ted Christensen • James H. Cleland  
 Peggy & Jim Easterling • Beverly Falor • Katie & Brian Ford • Vincent Fritts • Paul Gonya • Gail Wilson Guth  
 Janet M. Harris • Linda Harshberger • Ann Hill • Leslie Holben • Ken & Denise Hujing • Ben & Kirby Johnson  
 Bill & Diane Keltner • Jill & Shawn Killon • John Krempp • J. Clayburn LaForce • Joanne & Martin Marugg  
 Carol Morrison • Tom & Judy Myers • Helen Porter • Paul & Paula Saksa • Kurt Scherbaum  
 Pauline Silver • Albert Simonson • Donna Sisson • Joseph Sisson • Virginia Sisson • Anne Tarr  
 Elma Terry • Rodney & Guille Tuttle • Paul & Carol Walker • William & Joan Waterworth • Stanley Wilson

## RECOGNITION OF OUR LIFETIME BUSINESS MEMBERS

Brabazon Alpine Paving and Trucking  
 Ewiiapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians • Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians  
 Tom Dyke Drilling • John Garbaczewski Family Foundation  
 Chris Wiley—Primary Residential Mortgage • Turvey Granite Pit • Tuttle Charitable Trust

**CURRENT MEMBERSHIPS:** Life Members ~ 51, Supporting Members ~ 99, Members up for renewal ~ 11



## A PIONEER CHRISTMAS



This year as we prepare for our holiday celebrations, I thought it appropriate to pause and reflect on the way the pioneers who came to Alpine in the late 1800's may have celebrated Christmas.

For most of the early settlers in Alpine, times were hard. Their celebrations were very different from the sparkling displays that we have come to expect today. On the other hand, Christmas was celebrated in much the same way—with family and friends. Absent from their celebrations were the huge malls and toy stores, the twinkling electric lights, the abundance of food on the shelves of grocery stores and the convenience foods all packaged and ready to go. Imagine a pioneer woman's amazement if she were to see what is available to us today!

Pioneers prepared for Christmas by making gifts for one another. Some would take weeks to make, so preparation began early. The



children's toys were made by parents and grandparents. Dolls were fashioned of scraps of cloth, left over from clothing made by the women, button eyes and yarn hair. The bodies and heads were stuffed with whatever material was available. Careful stitches outlined the doll's facial features. Clothing was fashioned, again from scraps of material left over from other projects. Wooden toys for the boys were carved from wood and put together in secret for that happy day. Sachets, pillows, footstools and embroidered hankies were made and scarves, hats, mittens and socks were knitted. Since money was scarce, materials used to fashion gifts was from whatever was available. If the harvest had been good that year, stockings were hung and filled with presents along with cookies and fruit.

If there was room in the tiny homes, the men and boys and sometimes the entire family would go out and search for a Christmas tree. When the perfect tree was found, it was set up in the home and decorated with loving care. The ornaments used for these trees were simple. Scraps of paper or yarn, strings of popcorn, cones and nuts from trees, homemade yarn or corn husk dolls and cookie dough ornaments could be found on these lovely trees. If paper was available, the children would cut stars, snowmen, angels and paper rings to decorate the tree.

Sometimes some of the families had ornaments which had been handed down from another lifetime. Hand-blown glass ornaments may

have come from Europe, carefully packed and carried, when their grandparents or great grandparents came to this country. These ornaments were very precious as they represented Christmas past from other places and other times and they always took a place of honor on the family's tree.

Christmas Eve found the family gathered together singing the age-old Carols of Christmas and preparing for the excitement of the coming day.

The Christmas dinner was planned and preparation of the food began weeks ahead of time. Wild turkeys were hunted and fruit from their own trees was baked into wonderful pies. Bread was baked in the fireplace. Often several families got together to share their feast, with each family supplying a dish. Always, they attended church and then visited with neighbors and friends. The excitement of love shared on Christmas day helped to make up for hardships suffered during the past year. For a while, these pioneer families could relax and forget their everyday problems. They could remember and talk of the Christmases of their childhood and the Christmases yet to come.

I reflect on the Christmases past and wonder at the fact that the most wonderful memories are based on simple things—making cookies with the kids, creating homemade ornaments for the tree, going for a walk after Christmas dinner. The glitter fades and ceases to be important when we consider the true meaning of the holidays—family, friends, loved ones all!



*Note from the Editors: This article was first published in the Alpine Sun Shopper on December 4, 2008. It was written by Carol Walker, the Society's secretary, membership chairman, and newsletter editor from 2004 to 2014.*



## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ALPINE INN

The Alpine Inn is one of the iconic structures in Alpine. Its Tudor styling and stone façade are intended to remind us of similar buildings in the European Alps. We recently received a request for information about the origins of this landmark and our archivist, Carol Morrison, quickly responded with this brief history. We thought all our members might enjoy reading about the beginnings and evolution of the Alpine Inn.

The history of Alpine is not one of events but of the people of the land who built homes and businesses. The Alpine Inn represents many people who had various businesses on a small corner of land in the center of town.

The first building on the corner of what is now Alpine Blvd and Marshall Road was Slack’s Grocery Store, Alpine’s second grocery store, built by S. M. Marshall in the 1930’s.

After WWII the building was partitioned into two stores and given the addresses of 2223 and 2225 Alpine Blvd. Over the years 2223 became Ratliff’s liquor store, Rexall Drug Store, Alpine Cleaner’s, U-Wash and the Echo newspaper Office. The store at 2225 Alpine Blvd became the Nola Coleman Store, Coldwell Store and the Alpine Café.

In the 1970’s Barney Ratliff opened his Liquor Store on Alpine Blvd and combined it with the Alpine Café. The new business was named the Alpine Inn. Later,

the Alpine Inn was taken over by Frank Harris, who remodeled and redecorated it as it now stands. The Inn was very popular with the local people and out-of-town crowds.

The Inn was sold in 1990’s with several other owners following. After being closed for many years, the Alpine Inn reopened in 2018 with new owners offering traditional steak house cuisine.

If you have a question about Alpine, please send it to [info@alpinehistory.org](mailto:info@alpinehistory.org), and we’ll search our archives for some answers.



**POP QUIZ:** Answers can be found in articles in this newsletter.

1. What did the early settlers in Alpine use to decorate their Christmas Trees?
  - a. Paper cut-outs
  - b. Strings of popcorn
  - c. Doll ornaments made with yarn
  - d. All of the above
2. Turkeys are a native species in which continent?
  - a. North America
  - b. Asia
  - c. Antarctica
  - d. Australia
3. In the 1870’s, John Harbison was the world’s largest:
  - a. Sumo wrestler
  - b. Wagon maker
  - c. Honey producer
  - d. Turkey

### ALPINE HISTORICAL AND CONSERVATION SOCIETY

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President:** Tom Myers  
**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President,**  
**Programs:** Vikki Coffey  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President,**  
**Membership:** Judy Myers  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President,**  
**Property:** [position open]  
**Secretary:** [position open]  
**Treasurer:** Fred Barker  
**Archivist:** Carol Morrison

**Director, Gift Shop**  
**Coordinator:** Anne Tarr  
**Director:** Janet Harris  
**Director:** Norm Kling  
**Director, [open position]**  
**Director, [open position]**  
**Lifetime Director:** Elma Terry  
**Webmaster:** Pene Manale  
**Caretakers:** Baltazar & Laura Marquez

#### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the *Alpine Historical & Conservation Society* is to encourage the community in an effort to retain structures and sites of historical significance, conserve natural resources and parkland, make available the visible evidence of the history of our community, and develop historical programs which emphasize the contributions of the various cultural, ethnic, religious and social groups that comprise the Alpine area.

## TIMELINE: ALPINE 1874

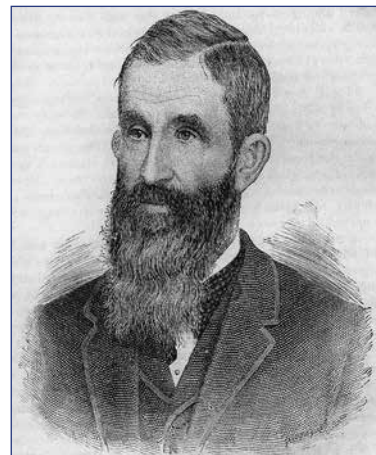
John Stewart Harbison grew up in Freedom, PA where he learned the nursery trade from his father. In 1854, when a severe drought nearly ruined their business, John moved to California to search for gold. That life didn't suit him, so he moved to Sutterville, CA, to work in a sawmill. But his interest was more agricultural so in 1855, he ordered some orchard stock from back East and later imported bees for pollinating the fruit trees and producing honey. He spent the next 14 years importing honey bees, developing new techniques and technologies for beekeeping, and designing his patented "California Hive", a sectional honey box that forever changed the industry.

By 1869, John Harbison was already one of the largest honey producers in California, and he also sold bee colonies and his Harbison Hives to other producers. That year he entered a four-year contract with R. G. Clark to develop apiaries in San Diego County. Harbison supplied 110 bee colonies and all the supplies and financing needed and Clark had complete control of the

local operations. By the time the four-year contract expired, Clark & Harbison had nearly 1,200 colonies of bees in four San Diego apiaries and they produced over 30 tons of comb honey. By 1873, California was producing more honey than the markets could manage, so Harbison initiated the practice of shipping excess comb honey to eastern markets.

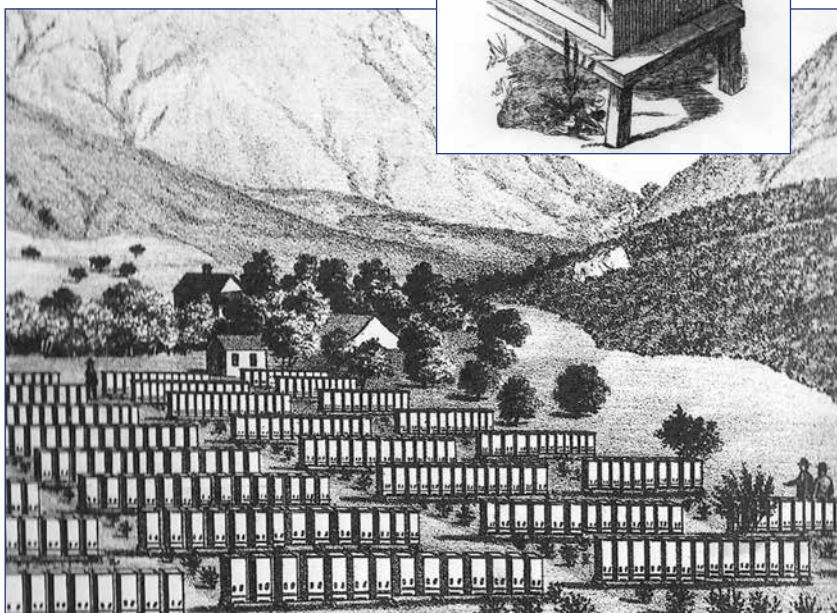
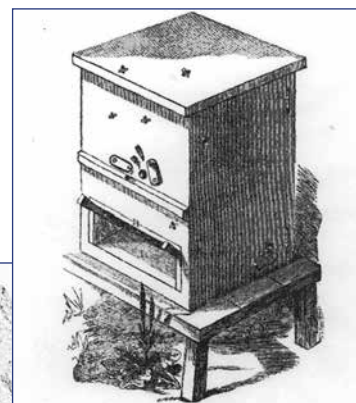
In 1874, John Harbison, with his wife Mary Jane, and his daughter Florence, moved to San Diego County, to establish a homestead site along the Sweetwater River, in an area now called Harbison Canyon. Harbison had over two thousand colonies of bees in the county, stretching from the Mexican border all the way up to the Fallbrook area and he employed as many as 15 men to take care of the bees. Two years later, the quantity of honey produced at all his apiaries throughout California earned him recognition as the largest producer of honey in the world.

In 1876 the family moved into a new house in San Diego at the



corner of 12<sup>th</sup> and C Streets, where they lived until John passed away October 12, 1912 at age 83.

Harbison continued to produce honey from his Sweetwater Apiary for many years, and in 1884 the *Troy (New York) Times* reported: "The first honey ever to grace the table of Queen Victoria came from a Harbison aviary."



Alpine Historical & Conservation Society  
P. O. Box 382  
Alpine, CA 91903-0382

*Address Service Requested*

**ALPINE  
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CONSERVATION  
SOCIETY**

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Alpine, CA 91903-0382

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E-mail: [info@alpinehistory.org](mailto:info@alpinehistory.org)

**We're on the Web!**  
[www.alpinehistory.org](http://www.alpinehistory.org)

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address/P.O. Box: \_\_\_\_\_

City/ST/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Send Newsletters via:  E-mail  U.S. Mail

**Membership Category** (Please check one):

- Student \$5     Individual \$25     Nonprofit \$30     Business \$50  
 Senior (1) \$15     Family \$35     Nonprofit Life \$600     Business Life \$1,000  
 Senior (2) \$20     Life \$500

**Amount Enclosed:**

Membership \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Volunteer Opportunities:**

- Museum Open Houses     History Day  
 Programs & Events     Oral Histories  
 Exhibit Development     Archival Data Entry  
 Garden Maintenance     Other \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this form and include your check made payable to the Alpine Historical Society, a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.