

THE ALPINE SUN SHOPPER – April 1, 2010
Tattered Tidbits: Alpine Historical Society

THE MCCALL FAMILY OF ALPINE

Carl and Blanche McCall turned their ranch into McCall's Ranch School for Boys in 1941. There were 20 boys who lived there at a cost of \$35 per month. Some had asthma and came to Alpine for their health as well as an education. Besides school work, they offered different activities for the boys. There was horse back riding, archery, hunting and working with the ranch animals. They also had a summer camp for children.

In 1955 they built one of the first swimming pools in Alpine. That same year they opened the school for girls. They needed a place for the girls to stay so they built a house from the rocks in Wright's Field. It is located at 2754 Alpine Boulevard. Mr. and Mrs. Nicklaws bought the house in the 1980's and turned it into Star Video. After they closed the video store, in 2004, they had the house totally renovated.

Mrs. McCall's son, Brian, worked at the school from 1964 until it closed in 1974. After it closed they built a two-ring rodeo arena. It was located on Tavern Road where the Mormon Church is today. There were two big rings and they called them McCall's Ranch Rings. They were very popular and were also used for horse shows.

When the Old Log Cabin Café was torn down in 1987 Brian and Mike McCall saved the gorilla. He was perched on top of an oak tree that stuck out of the café. They put him in their garage for safe keeping. Then in 1997, when the Alpine Historical Society had their museum, Brian ask them if they would like to have the gorilla. It was such a surprise. Everyone thought the gorilla was lost. Brian McCall helped make arrangements to have the gorilla placed in one of the eucalyptus trees on the museum property. This is where he is today.

Since the gorilla did not have a name the Alpine Historical Society had a "Name the Gorilla Contest." After many names were submitted they chose the name Rorie, after Jim and Millie Rorie, the couple who made him in their shop called the Fiber Glass Menagerie. It was located on Alpine Blvd. where the NAPA store is today.

Our dear friend Brian McCall had a heart attack and passed away on March 14th. Brian was born in La Jolla on June 30, 1940. His father Carl was born on the same date 30 years earlier and his grandfather was also born 30 years earlier to the day. Brian attended Alpine Elementary School and Boydens Academy and graduated from Grossmont High School. In 1969 Brian started the first surfing camp in the area called Brian McCall's San Diego Surfing Camp. Brian was very active with the Alpine Historical Society and the Alpine Founders. He was a fourth generation San Diegan. Brian was preceded in death by his parents Carl and Blanch McCall. He is survived by his three sons Mark, Todd and David of San Diego County and former wife Janet Gordon. He is also survived by his brothers Bruce of Newton Miss; Mike of Alpine; Barry (Randa) of Borrego Springs; his sister Elizabeth "Betsy" McCall of Dehesa; many grandchildren, nieces, nephews and a lifetime of friends. Memorial service is set for April 11th at 12pm at the Alpine Community Center Park. In lieu of flowers please help the family with final expenses, details

pending. Please contact Mark McCall at 619-443-0091.

Carlette Anderson and her husband JC have lived in Alpine since 1993. She is a past president of the Alpine Historical Society and author a "My Alpine," a history about Alpine for children. She is also Alpine's Honorary Mayor. Ms. Anderson can be reached at myalpinehistory@aol.com



Brian McCall with Alpine's Gorilla.