

### Upcoming events:

- **July 28 & 29:** Museum Open House
- **August 19:** Potluck Luncheon & Presentation by Michael Wilken-Robertson; “Kumeyaay Ethnobotany”
- **August 25 & 26:** 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



## Kumeyaay Ethnobotany

*Shared Heritage of the Californias*

**POTLUCK LUNCHEON & PRESENTATION—SUNDAY, AUGUST 19, 2018**

The Kumeyaay Nation was once a vast territory, spanning the U.S.-Mexican border from the Salton Sea to the Pacific Ocean and south to points beyond Enseñada. For thousands of years, native peoples lived close to the land and learned to use indigenous plants for food, clothing, protection and medicine. Some of that knowledge has been lost to time, but a surprising amount of it is preserved in the memory of elders. Today, many Kumeyaay Indians in the far-flung ranches of Baja California carry on the traditional knowledge and skills for transforming native plants into food, medicine, arts, tools, regalia, construction materials, and ceremonial items.

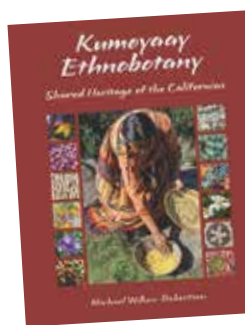
The book, “*Kumeyaay Ethnobotany: Shared Heritage of the Californias*”, explores the remarkable interdependence between

native peoples and native plants of the Californias through in-depth descriptions of 47 native plants and their uses, lively narratives, and hundreds of vivid photographs. It connects the archaeological and historical record with living cultures and native plant specialists who share their ever-relevant wisdom for future generations.

Author and anthropologist Michael Wilken-Robertson currently teaches in the Anthropology Department at California State University, San Marcos. Michael specializes in the indige-

nous people of Baja California and has documented traditional life of both the Paipai and Kumeyaay. His research and advocacy work with Native Baja Californians has explored traditional arts, ethnobotany, history, languages, and cultural landscapes of the Kumeyaay people. Through lifelong collaborative relationships with many native artists, tribal elders, and traditional authorities, he is helping promote cultural revitalization and sustainable community development.

Join us on Sunday, August 19, to hear Michael Wilken-Robertson describe his fascinating study of Kumeyaay Ethnobotany.



Please bring a potluck item to share for the luncheon which begins at 1:00 p.m. or arrive by 1:45 p.m. for the brief general membership meeting followed immediately by Michael Wilken’s presentation. Admission is **FREE**, but your donation helps to defray the cost of programs and helps us preserve historical artifacts and maintain the museum facilities.

The Potluck Luncheon and Program will be held at the Alpine Town Hall (Alpine Woman’s Club), located at 2156 Alpine Boulevard.

Seating is limited, so **please make your reservations early** by calling Tom Myers at (619) 885-8063 or send an email request to [info@alpinehistory.org](mailto:info@alpinehistory.org).



## HOW SWEET IT WAS

Alpine's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual **Queen Bee Brunch** was held at the Alpine Community Center on June 23 as a fundraiser for the Community Center and the Chamber of Commerce. The event featured a light luncheon, fashion show, themed decorations and party favors, and two exhibits celebrating Alpine Honey, past and present.

Richard Edwards, a Chamber Ambassador and local honey producer, had a table focused on modern honey production, with jars of honey gathered from his

east county apiaries. He also provided small jars of local honey as party favors.

Carol Morrison was Docent for the Historical Society's exhibit on the Harbison Hive and beekeeping in early Alpine. You can see the replica of Harbison's patented California Hive and learn how John Harbison became the world's largest producer of honey at the John DeWitt Museum.



## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

**A Warm Welcome to our New Members:**  
Patricia Cummins, Roy Hartnett,  
Wyatt Havin, James Lindeen

**A Grateful Thank You to our  
Renewing Members:** Greg and  
Patti Fox

**Many thanks to the following for their generous  
donations to the Historical Society:** Kevin and  
Alejandra Schumacher, Yolaine Stout

## 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 • Wyatt Havin • 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 Saks  
Kurt Scherbaum • 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 ~ 94, Members up for renewal ~ 1

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

- Harold Dempster's Tree House is now what?
  - Firewood
  - An Upscale Restaurant
  - A Dog Boutique and Soap Shop
- What is the name of the Clairemont High School Art Project?
  - Honey in the Hives
  - Creating a Buzz
  - None of your Beeswax
- Which of the following describes Henry Steil?
  - Born in Germany
  - Established a homestead in Alpine
  - Called his place "Rancho B Damn"
  - All of the above



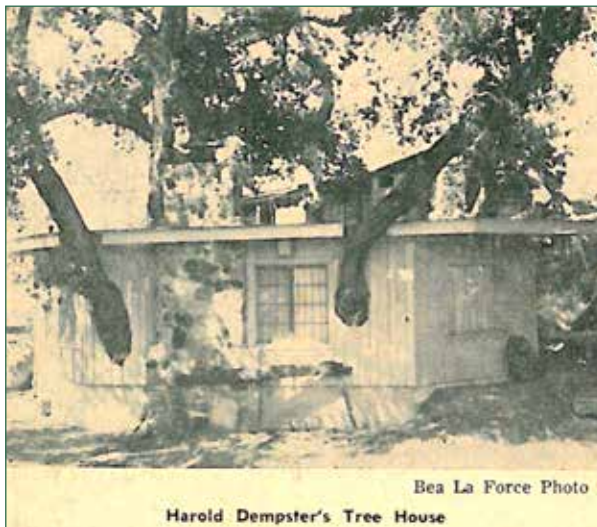
## A MINI-HISTORY MYSTERY

Many folks have asked us to reprise the Alpine History Mystery series. Unfortunately our volunteer writers have not been able to fit it into their busy schedules. But for our loyal fans, we have come up with a mini-mystery based on an article first written in the *Alpine Echo* newspaper on August 9, 1962, titled **Novelty Tree House**.

*A house built around six small oak trees stands in the center of Alpine just off Highway 80 North. It was built by Mr. Harold Dempster, owner of Pine Log Court, about eight years ago. Mr. Dempster built the court about 1947, then decided to build a storehouse and general utility room for the use of the tenants. After he began construction beside the trees, he decided to make a mountain retreat home for himself instead, so constructed the novel cottage around the small grove of oaks. Four rise out of the walls and roof of the living room, one from the bedroom and one from the back porch.*

*Mr. Dempster lives in Point Loma and is now in poor health which makes it difficult for him to enjoy his creation as much as he'd like to do. Mrs. Davey looks after his property here."*

Our mystery question today is: Do you know the location of this **Novelty Tree House**? What business occupies this unique site in a lovely shaded grove along Highway 80? You will find the answer later in this newsletter.



Bea La Force Photo

Harold Dempster's Tree House



## “CREATING A BUZZ”

In May, six students and two teachers from the **Clairemont High School Art Department** visited the John DeWitt Museum—they were on a mission.

They wanted to learn as much as they could about John Harbison, beekeeping, honey making and the native plants that support honeybees. Their goal was to produce an exhibit for the **2018 San Diego County Fair** and they only had a few weeks to complete their project. The students were well underway with fabricating some of the creative art objects to be displayed but they needed some information about bees and honey, so they came to visit the Historical Society's exhibit on Harbison's bee keeping and our native plant gardens that showcase the plants that support our delicious local honey. With the County Fair starting in just three weeks, could they finish their project in time?

**Absolutely!**—and, they were greatly rewarded for their efforts. The Clairemont High Art Department exhibit “Creating a Buzz” won a **Blue Ribbon**, earning 100 points out of 100. They also received the **San Diego Horticulture Society Award** and the **Mira Costa College Horticulture Department Award!**

Congratulations to teachers **Barbara** and **Laura**, and students **Cindy, Jessica, Karen, Paloma, Sandy, Susanne** and all the others in the Art Department who were busy as bees creating and displaying their award-winning project. Our docents reported that it was truly a pleasure working with the students who were very interested and enthusiastic.



Thank you for visiting the John DeWitt Museum!

# BOULDER OAKS STUDENTS EXPLORE ALPINE HISTORY

June 14, 2018, was a very busy day for the third-grade students at Boulder Oaks Elementary School. With classes nearly over, it was time to visit local historical sites to cement what they had learned about Alpine history in their classrooms.

The students first visited the **1899 Alpine Town Hall**, commonly known as the Alpine Woman’s Club. From there, the tour proceeded to

the **Alpine Cemetery**, on to the last remaining dinosaur at the former **Dinosaur Park**, and then finished at the **John DeWitt Museum**.

Our docents greeted over sixty enthusiastic students, along with their teachers and several parents. Docents reported that the students were very well prepared for the tour, asking smart and pertinent questions and displaying a keen interest in the water pump, buggy and

Model T Ford as well as the exhibits in the Nichols and Beaty Houses.

Thanks for visiting the John DeWitt Museum!



Photos by Jennifer Tschida

## MINI-HISTORY Mstery—SOLVED!

*Are you out of practice solving our mysteries? Did you find this a Ruff problem to solve?*



Well, we dare say you are not alone. Yes, Mr. Dempster’s **Tree House** is still standing in Alpine and has been an often visited shop offering a variety of merchandise over the years. Not too long ago, the **CHIRP Garden Club** operated a store that sold products and publications, such as bird feeders, baths, food, and houses to help Alpiners certify their

gardens for wildlife. More recently, hand-made soap products were sold here under the name **Victorian Divine Indulgence**. And, now, the **Ruff Life Dog Boutique** is sharing the space with the soap shop. The photo here shows Mr. Dempster’s Tree house as it stands today on the site adjacent to Janet’s Restaurant.



### 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:** Lisa Celeste  
**Archivist:** Carol Morrison

**Director:** Janet Harris  
**Director:** Norm Kling  
**Director:** Dave Smith  
**Director:** Anne Tarr  
**Director:** Jennifer Tschida, *Social Media*  
**Lifetime Director:** Elma Terry  


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**Webmaster:** Pene Manale  
**Caretakers:** Baltazar & Laura Marquez

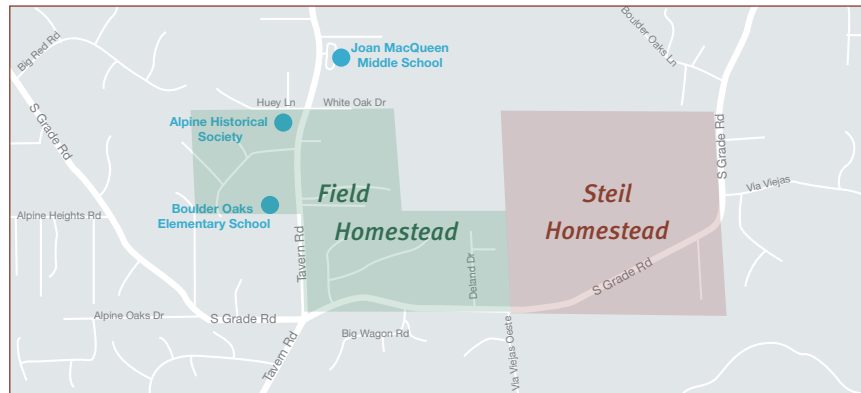
#### MISSION STATEMENT

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 1882

In 1882, two new families staked out homesteads in this east county settlement that within three years would be called Alpine. Researching the Bureau of Land Management records reveals Land Patent awards to **Hugh Field** (1889) and to **Henry Steil** (1890). To earn a homestead, or land patent, settlers must file a claim to the property, establish a home, improve or “prove up” the land and provide evidence that they lived on the land for at least 5 years.

We don't know much about the Field family, but the BLM maps show us the boundaries of their 160-acre homestead. Roads have changed since then but today we would find the Field homestead to be bounded by Huey Lane and White Oak Drive on the north, South Grade Road on the south, Deland Drive to the east, and Yucca Hill



Road to the west. Charles Foss wrote in his diary in 1888 that Mr. Field kept cows in the pasture, and that daughter Alice Field would soon receive a Christmas gift made by younger brother Harry Foss. A group photo of the 1888 Community Church picnic includes Emma Field, perhaps the wife of Hugh. It is interesting to note that the John

DeWitt Museum currently stands on land at Huey Lane and Tavern Road that was originally part of this homestead.

Fortunately, more information is available for Henry Steil, who coincidentally was a neighbor of Hugh Field. Although Henry Steil was born in Germany, he became a U.S. citizen in 1873. When Steil first moved to this area he worked for Nick Overmier on land located behind the present day Post Office at Olivewood Lane. Albert Simonson, a respected Alpine historian and storyteller, reports that Steil obtained the land from Cayetano Cota complete with an existing house and farm buildings. Then Henry and his father built a new home measuring 12 feet by 26 feet. In order to get legal title, he had to file for homestead. BLM records show that the boundaries of the Steil Homestead were South Grade Road to the south and the east, Boulder Oaks Lane to the north, and Hugh Field's property to the west. Simonson also tells us that Steil named his place “**Rancho B Damn**”, alluding to a tendency for things to go wrong while Henry was away. Henry died in 1921 and is buried in Alpine Cemetery beside the grave of Anna Steil who passed away in 1903. We have no records for Anna Steil and her gravestone does not list a birth year, but with side-by-side graves, we assume these pioneers were husband and wife.



### Community Church Picnic ~ 1888

*BACK ROW (left to right): Caroline Athearn Foss, Mrs. Snow, Mrs. Tartt, Nelson Whitney, Alfred Fields, Mr. Snow, boarder at Snows, unidentified person, Percy Wood, Bert Snow, Charlie Foss, Albon Athearn, Paul Yunker.*

*SECOND ROW (left to right): Mrs. Woolgast, Lua Pennoyer, Bessie Pennoyer, Adelia Pennoyer, Grace Wood, Lottie Snow, **Emma Field (tall hat and bangs)**, Ida Tartt, Mrs. Sherwood Gilbert Pennoyer, Mrs. Frank Bozza, Mr. Frank Bozza, Mrs. Calvin Maples Wood.*

*FRONT ROW (left to right): Mable Wood with dog, Mrs. Louisa Alcott Willett, Pearl Foss, Ethel Bozza, Emma Blake, Bertha Bozza.*

*CHILDREN ON GROUND (left to right): Fred Snow, Thaxter Foss, Robert Foss, Woolgast boy, Harry Snow, Harry Foss.*

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

*Address Service Requested*

**ALPINE  
HISTORICAL &  
CONSERVATION  
SOCIETY**

P. O. Box 382  
Alpine, CA 91903-0382

Phone: 619-659-8740  
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.