

## AN ALPINE NATIVE & THE J.A. COOLEY MUSEUM

**O**ur April 10th program speaker is Carmen Cooley Graham, speaking about her time in Alpine in the early 1970's, and the J.A. Cooley Museum created by her parents and now curated by our speaker. A third generation San Diegan, Carmen was born in Alpine in 1971.

A year before Carmen was born, her parents, Jim and Carmen, lost their first home in the 1970 Laguna fire, just five months after their marriage. With the insurance and FEMA money they were able to build a new family home on Foss Road. Alpine was still a small town and riding horses on Alpine Blvd was the usual. In 1978, the family decided to move to Normal Heights to be closer to schools.

In 1982, Jim's best friend Frank Cox, asked Jim to take ownership of his "Frank the Trainman" business, which Carmen still operates today. Then in 1997, their passion for collecting led them to open the J.A. Cooley Museum in University Heights. This private museum and foundation is Jim & Carmen's way of giving back to the community.

The museum is 10,000 sq. ft. of early American history and inventions. Most of the collection has significance to San Diego including the horse buggy made in Alpine by E.A Gardner. The Cooley's are the third owners of this over 100 year-old treasure.



*The Cooley Family*

Carmen's philosophy is that not only is history important to know but it is a blessing to share it with others.

The J.A. Cooley Museum is located at 4233 Park Blvd., San Diego. Their collection includes cars from 1886 through 1933 and over 25 different categories of collections including lamps, bells, irons, purses, trains, clocks, spittoons, posters, cameras, cast iron toys, typewriters, household appliances, music machines, telegraphs, telephones, and phonographs.



*Aftermath of the 1970 Laguna Fire — the remains of their house*



*Horse buggy made in Alpine by E.A Gardner*

**Program held at the Alpine Woman's Club, 2156 Alpine Blvd., Alpine**

Admission is **FREE** (donations appreciated) but seating is limited, so **please make a reservation** by calling Corinne at (619) 417-1306 or send an email to [info@alpinehistory.org](mailto:info@alpinehistory.org)