

Upcoming events:

- **July 24 & 25:**
Museum Open House
- **August 22:**
Solo Bees Presentation
- **August 28 & 29:**
Museum Open House

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YAY!
We're Open!

The Alpine Historical Society's John DeWitt Museum is reopening for public visitation on Saturday, July 24 and Sunday, July 25 from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. Docents will be greeting visitors and answering questions at the museum on both days.

The museum has been closed since March 2020, but our exhibit design and production teams have been busy preparing new and updated exhibits at the historic Beaty House and Nichols House.

In the east gallery of the Beaty House, our newest exhibit, titled **Alpine's Women**, features photos and stories of more than a dozen women who contributed greatly to the development of Alpine

as it transitioned from a group of scattered individual homesteads to the cohesive community we know today.

In the west gallery of the Beaty House, the new **Alpine's Birds** exhibit and the **Native Bees & Honey Bees** exhibits are expansions of the Harbison beekeeping exhibit to include new material describing native bees found in San Diego County along with a new display for twenty of the 160 bird species often seen in Alpine. Also in this gallery is a new exhibit on **Alpine's Farms** which showcase the agriculture and animal husbandry practiced in the early Alpine area.

The Nichols house exhibits have been updated with new materials describing

the **Athearn & Foss Families**, **Alpine's Civil War Veterans**, and an extensive display of antique medical devices from **Dr. Rosten's Collection**.

The historic museum is located at 2116 Tavern Road in Alpine.

Admission to the museum is free, and there is no charge for parking. We do appreciate donations to help with museum operating expenses and to support the exhibits program. For more information, please call Tom at 619-885-8063 or Carol at 619-445-2544.



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



Exclusive Reception for Members & Guests

showcasing our NEW EXHIBITS

NATIVE & HONEY BEES *Alpine's Women* **ALPINE'S FARMS** **ALPINE'S BIRDS**
The Foss Family in Alpine **Antique Medical Instruments** **Alpine's Civil War Veterans**

Sunday, July 18 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.
 Please join us for Wine and Finger Foods

John DeWitt Museum — 2116 Tavern Road, Alpine
 Please RSVP: Tom Myers at 619-885-8063 or email info@alpinehistory.org

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

A Warm Welcome to Our New Member: Gary Mitrovich

Many thanks to the following for their generous financial donations:

A Grateful Thank You to Our Renewing Members:
 Cindy Day, Marilyn Moore

Coffey Trust, Louise Phipps,
 Kevin & Alejandra Schumacher

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 • Lisa & Dave Celeste
 Ted Christensen • James H. Cleland • James David • Rita David • 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 Johnson • Bill & Diane Keltner • Jill & Shawn Killion
 John Krempp • Barbara Lea LaForce • J. Clayburn LaForce • Joanne & Martin Marugg • Carol Morrison
 Tom & Judy Myers • Helen Porter • Kurt Scherbaum • Albert Simonson • Donna Sisson • Virginia Sisson
 Anne Tarr • Elma Terry • Rodney & Guille Tuttle • Paul & Carol Walker • Joan Waterworth

RECOGNITION OF OUR LIFETIME BUSINESS MEMBERS

Brabazon Alpine Paving and Trucking • Ewiiapaayp Band of Kumeyaay Indians
 Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians • RGT Charitable Trust • Rock Canyon Animal Rescue Foundation
 Turvey Granite Pit • Chris Wiley—Primary Residential Mortgage

CURRENT MEMBERSHIPS: Life Members ~ 50, Current Members ~ 92, Members up for Renewal ~ 14

THREE SISTERS — THREE CALLINGS

This is the saga of three sisters from Massachusetts.

Although they all found a different purpose in life, they all ended their days in Alpine.

FAMILY ROOTS

Charles Grandison Athearn (1800-1855) married Ann Thaxter (1807-1890) on November 1, 1823, uniting two families with long and deep religious beliefs. Charles was a Deacon of the Church of Christ in Tisbury, MA for 30 years. Ann Thaxter could trace her religious roots to Reverend Joseph Thaxter who fought at Concord and Bunker Hill and was a chaplain of the American Revolutionary Army. He later served as the pastor of the Federated Church on Martha's Vineyard. Charles and Ann Athearn had seven children:

Charles, Jr. (1826-1897)
Annie (1830-1912)
Caleb (1832-1907)
Sophronia (1835-1903)
Joseph (1839-1886)
Caroline (1845-1905)
Albon (1847-1919)

FIRST SISTER

Caroline, aka "Carrie", was the first of the Athearns to move to Alpine. In 1870, she married Edward Foss, an organ maker for churches and parlors. While in

Massachusetts, they had two children, Charles in 1872 and Allan Percy in 1874. Edward read about Harbison's success with beekeeping in the early 1870's, and decided to move the family to Southern California to enter this new trade.

They came first to San Francisco in 1874, where two of Caroline's brothers, Charles and Joseph, had established the Athearn store. Carrie and the boys stayed in San Francisco while Edward Foss continued on to San Diego to purchase land for beekeeping. Foss then returned to San Francisco to accompany Caroline and the boys to Alpine in 1875.

Coming from a well-educated and deeply religious family, Caroline insisted that a schoolroom be added to the family home. The lean-to addition became the first school for Charles and Percy in Alpine, as well as a place for worship for the adults and a place for the

(continued on page 4)



SERIOUS JOURNALISM or FILLER MATERIAL?

The Alpine Historical Society archives contain original copies of the *Alpine Sun Newspapers* from 1952 to the present day as well as copies of the *Alpine Echo Newspaper* and the *Town and Country News* from the 1950's and 1960's. Many of these are scanned and uploaded to our website and we have plans to scan more to preserve their content. We find these newspapers a valuable research tool for writing stories in the *Tattered Tidbits*.

FROM ALPINE SUN — JULY 7, 1961

The best way to forget all your other troubles is to wear tight shoes.

FROM ALPINE SUN — AUGUST 18, 1961

It takes years of painstaking effort to study before a woman considers herself a really good cook. But all a man needs is a sack of charcoal, a tall white hat, and an apron with funny sayings printed on it.

FROM ALPINE SUN — AUGUST 18, 1961

The father played possum while his youngsters tried their best to rouse him from a Sunday afternoon nap to take them for a promised walk. Finally, his 5-year-old daughter pried open one of his eyelids, peered carefully, then reported: "He's still in there."

FROM ALPINE ECHO — JULY 13, 1961

Jack: Why did the dope buy a thermometer in the Spring?

Jill: I give up.

Jack: Because he heard they were higher in the Summer.

We do confess that when researching these documents our attention is often diverted by the "filler material". When the copy editor had a space left over at the end of a column or story they would often insert a quip or joke to fill the space rather than leave it empty. So, for your grins (or groans) we collected a few of these fillers from sixty years ago to publish here. And, for full disclosure, this is intended as serious journalism, not filler.

FROM ALPINE ECHO — AUG. 17, 1961

These days a kid who knows the value of a dollar must be a pretty discouraged kid.

FROM ALPINE ECHO — AUG. 17, 1961

Which is more important, the sun or the moon? Answer: The moon because it gives us light at night when we need it, and the sun give us light only in the daytime when we don't need it.



youngsters to gather for Sunday school.

In 1878, Harry was born, followed by Pearl in 1880, Robert in 1882, and Joseph in 1884 – a total of six children in all. Caroline made sure that all her children received a good education in grammar school as well as church school.

As the town grew, she invited other settlers to join them for worship services on Sunday. Before long, the town population required a public one-room schoolhouse that also served for Sunday worship. When the church group was large enough, Caroline petitioned several denominations to recognize the Alpine church, and with some persistence, she successfully got the Congregational Church to welcome them.

When Carrie developed an unspecified but very debilitating disease, causing her to need much bed rest, her Alpine family and extended family pitched in to help her. Although she was often bedridden, Carrie outlived Edward who died of a heart attack in 1898.

Carrie found her “calling” and life’s work in raising her six children, giving them a strong practical education, initiating Sunday school

and worship services in Alpine, and organizing the Alpine Community Church.

Caroline died Decem-

ber 27, 1905 and is buried in the Alpine Cemetery.

SECOND SISTER—

Sophonra married Joel Nichols in 1853, and in 1855, she received teaching credentials from State Normal School in Bridgewater, MA.

Sophonra had six children but only two survived, Alice Jane (1866-1943) and Wilfred (1872-1930).

To understand why her children died she was determined to become a doctor at a time when women were not accepted as practicing physicians and were not admitted to most medical schools. However, with grit and determination she was able to enter New England Female Medical College, which later became Boston University School of Medicine where she received her medical degree as the only woman in her 1874 graduating class.

She set up her first practice in Corry, PA in 1875, but was not well received. Her brother, Charles, living in San Francisco, told her that the West Coast needed more doctors and encour-

aged her to move. By 1876, she was estranged from her husband and she moved with Alice and Wilfred to San Francisco. She left her son “Willie” with Charles and moved north setting up practice in Washington Territory. By 1877, both her children were living with sister, Caroline in Alpine while Sophronia had a success practice in Oregon. In 1878, she contracted Malaria and sold the practice, returning to

California, where she

received medical license #26. As a practicing physician in successive California communities, she finally settled in Alpine in 1894, where she was the first doctor to establish a medical practice in

the town. She practiced in Alpine until she had a debilitating stroke in 1902 and passed away in November 1903.

Her “calling” was to defy convention and pursue medicine as a career. She was a strong advocate for women’s rights even before the suffrage movement began, and expressed strong opinions about the role women should play in society.



THIRD SISTER—

Annie never married; instead she spent much of her adult life caring for other family members. When her father, Charles, died in 1855, she continued to live with her mother and younger siblings on Martha’s Vineyard. Sometime after 1875, when Carrie and her family moved to Alpine, Annie and her mother, Ann, moved to San Francisco where they stayed with brothers Charles and Joseph. Annie provided care for her mother as she advanced in age.

Meanwhile, her youngest brother, Albon, moved to Alpine, to live with Caroline and Edward Foss until he could establish a homestead on adjacent property.

In 1890, Annie’s mother Ann died and after the burial in San Francisco, Annie moved to Alpine to live with and provide care to her ailing sister, Caroline. After Carrie died in 1905, Annie lived with her brother Albon at his homestead in Alpine. Albon suffered from a respiratory disease called Catarrh, which improved with the clean air of Alpine, but he was never completely well.

Annie died in Alpine in 1912, having fulfilled her “calling” to provide care for members of her family.



TIMELINE: 1885-1950's ALPINE, THE BEST CLIMATE IN THE USA

The healthy climate of Alpine was legendary from as early as 1885. In her memoirs of growing up in Alpine, Hattie Hurd Kaufman connected the presence of a sanatorium with Alpine's clear air with these words:

"We also had a kind of sanitarium there with lots of tents with beds in them – we had ten or twelve tents at a time. We never had less than ten or fifteen people there, with tuberculosis; they were sent up there as early as 1885. These people had been sent out from the east for their health. As there were no facilities to take care of them in San Diego and as there was so much fog there, the doctors would send them on up to Alpine where there was no fog. The tents were all alike, with wooden floors, sides, and canvas tops."

About 1887, Benjamin Arnold, a wealthy businessman living in Connecticut, was sent by his doctors to San Diego to seek a cure for his asthma, only to find that the fog in the city exasperated his condition. San Diego doctors advised him instead to spend some time in Alpine. Finding relief here, Mr. Arnold purchased property in 1888 and built a large home on Alpine Boulevard, naming the home "Los Robles" for the abundant oak trees on the property. After his death, his home became the **Los Robles Hotel**.

During World War I, a government survey determined that the Alpine climate was very well suited for the convalescence of soldiers with respiratory diseases caused by poison gasses used in the war. About this time, Alpine adopted the slogan: *Alpine, best climate in the U.S.A., by government report*. Billboard signs were erected at each end of town proudly proclaim-

ing the motto, and these remained until the 1950's.

In 1918, as the war was ending, Dr. Lichener purchased the Los Robles Hotel and established a sanatorium using the big house as a hospital for patients with lung disease and pitching tents for tuberculosis patients on the grounds. He hired Dr. Barkema to be his associate physician. In 1923, the Los Robles sanatorium burned down and soon afterwards Dr. Barkema built the Alpine Sanatorium and General Hospital at 1539 Tavern Road incorporating a central hospital surrounded by small cottages, each housing two patients. This facility operated until 1942 when new owners replaced it with the Alpine Villa apartments.

Unfortunately, sometime in the 1950's the signs were removed, and we have no record who removed them or why.



ALPINE HISTORICAL & CONSERVATION SOCIETY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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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.

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

Address Service Requested

**ALPINE
HISTORICAL &
CONSERVATION
SOCIETY**

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Alpine, CA 91903-0382

619-485-0625

E-mail: info@alpinehistory.org

We're on the Web!
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):

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student \$5 | <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit \$30 | <input type="checkbox"/> Business \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior (1) \$15 | <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$35 | <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit Life \$600 | <input type="checkbox"/> Business Life \$1,000 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Senior (2) \$20 | <input type="checkbox"/> Life \$500 | | |

Amount Enclosed:

Membership \$ _____

Donation \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

Volunteer Opportunities:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Museum Open Houses | <input type="checkbox"/> History Day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Programs & Events | <input type="checkbox"/> Oral Histories |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exhibit Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Archival Data Entry |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Garden Maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

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