

Upcoming events:

- **September 25 & 26:** Museum Open House
- **October 17:** Carmelita Campbell & Wyatt Earp
- **October 30 & 31:** 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

OCTOBER PROGRAM ■ SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2021 ■ 1:00 P.M.

CARMELITA CAMPBELL & WYATT EARP

HEARTBREAK ■ ACCOMPLISHMENT ■ EXCITEMENT



It was in 1889 that **Wyatt Earp** met a unique prospector/miner while working at the Harqua Hala Mining strike in Northwest Arizona. Little did Wyatt know that **SHE** was a politically connected, legendary Arizona miner. Wyatt and **Carmelita Campbell** formed a partnership during the Harqua Hala gold rush of 1888–1890.

Further research by historian **Garner Palenske** finds that Carmelita Campbell lived an extraordinary life, especially given she was a woman in male-dominated 19th-century Arizona.

This presentation examines the fascinating life of Carmelita Campbell, filled with heartbreak, accomplishment, and excitement.

Our presenter, Garner Palenske, is a native Californian who has lived in San Diego since 1991. Due to his

family's legacy as settlers in Kansas, he became interested in western history at a young age. In 2012 he focused that interest and began work on his first book, *Wyatt Earp in San Diego, Life After Tombstone*. Previous work included publishing many papers regarding fire protection engineering topics, which is his day job.

The Wyatt Earp in San Diego project concluded with the publishing of the acclaimed book in 2012. This was the first primary research book published on this topic. The work was well received and led to many more opportunities including articles on Wyatt Earp in *True West*



Magazine, the *Tombstone Gazette*, and the *Wild West History Association Journal*. In 2020, Garner's paper on *Wyatt Earp at the Harqua Hala* was selected to be included in the *Wyatt Earp Anthology* book published by Northern Texas University Press. This work was awarded the Wild West History Association's and True West's Historical Book of the Year Award.

Mr. Palenske's education includes a Master's Degree in fire protection engineering from California State Polytechnic University, San Louis Obispo as well as a Bachelor's degree in Civil/Structural Engineering.

Held at the Alpine Woman's Club, 2156 Alpine Blvd., Alpine

[Please note: if required by the CDC, this Program will be on ZOOM.]

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

Following CDC and SD County recommendations, please wear your mask to keep others safe.

REMEMBERING ROY ATHEY

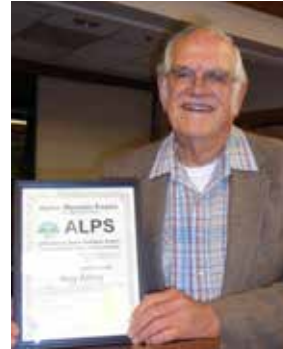
Roy Athey, a life member of the Alpine Historical Society, passed away on Friday, August 13, 2021.

Living in Alpine from 1968 to 2020, Roy and Willa Athey built their home on Alpine Heights Road where they raised their two sons. Roy was Program Director with the San Diego County Probation Department Honor Camps Office before his retirement in 1988. Following his retirement, he fulfilled his lifelong interest in model trains by building a full-size narrow gauge railroad in his Alpine back yard. Most of us save our history through family photos, genealogy and family antiques, but Roy Athey saved an entire heritage with his “Two-

Foot Gauge” railroad, which he christened the *Descanso, Alpine and Pacific Railroad*.

This mile long, two-foot wide railroad hauled over 15,000 passengers since its opening in 2000. To assemble his railroad, he imported parts from a quarry in Missouri and from mines in Arizona, California, and Nevada, as well as from France, Germany, and Luxemburg. Roy was not only the Station Manager, but he was the Engineer, Conductor, Switchman and Ticket Taker.

In 2015, Roy Athey received the Community Organization Member’s



Recognition Award, presented by the Alpine Historical Society at the Alpine Leadership and Service (ALPS) Awards Ceremony.

In 2018, Roy retired from the *Descanso, Alpine and Pacific Railroad*, but he

continued his legacy by donating his entire backyard railroad system, including the train, the tracks, flagman signals, switches, three buildings and other train-related equipment, to the Pacific Southwest Railway Museum in Campo.

We will miss Roy!

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

A Warm Welcome to Our New Members: Bill & Janet Peyton, Jennifer Tschida

A Grateful Thank You to Our Renewing Members: Corinne & John Lewis, Michael & Lorraine Nelson, Michael

Nelson II, Vonnie & Mando Sanchez, Steve & Patty Tweed

Many thanks to the following for their generous financial donations: Corinne & John Lewis, Mary Manthorne, Bill & Janet Payton, Steve &

Patty Tweed, Bill Waterworth’s Estate

Special Thanks of Appreciation

for renewing their Business

Memberships for 2021:

ALFA • Postal Annex of Alpine

RECOGNITION OF OUR CURRENT LIFETIME MEMBERS

Carlette Anderson • Deborah Anderson • George & Joan Anderson • Mark L. Anderson • Willa Athey
 Franklin R. Ball • 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 ~ 49, Current Members ~ 103, Members up for Renewal ~ 5

DROUGHT, WEATHER, CLIMATE AND WATER

According to **The National Weather Service**, drought is a period of unusually persistent dry weather that lasts long enough to cause serious problems such as crop damage and/or water supply shortages. This map shows the unprecedented drought conditions in the western U.S. as of August 17. The darkest colors indicate the most severe drought. According to the **U.S. Drought Monitor** website more than 95% of the Western U.S. is experiencing drought.

To help understand drought, we need to understand the difference between weather and climate.

Weather describes what is happening in the atmosphere and its effects upon life and human activities. Weather can change from minute-to-minute and place-to-place. The terms temperature, humidity, precipitation, cloudiness, brightness, and windiness are all associated with weather.

Climate describes the long-term patterns of weather in a place. Climate can mean the average weather for a particular region and time period, usually taken over 30 years. Climate is the average of weather over time.

Southern California experiences a Mediterranean Climate characterized by cool, mild winters and warm, dry

summers. Our rainy season often begins in October and extends through early May the following year, with more rain falling in the spring than the autumn. Does that mean we have an annual drought during summer months? No, because this is an annual cycle and for thousands of years the plants and animals in our region have adapted to the pattern of wet and dry. Native plants for example developed coping mechanisms, such as going dormant during the summer and sprouting new growth during periods of rain.

Water is the most critical element for life on earth. When early settlers arrived in Alpine, they established their homesteads as close to water sources as possible. In the late 1800's many of

the creeks and streams winding through Alpine ran most of the year and ground water was often easy to access by digging a well. When dry years came, and they often did, farmers lost their crops because there was no way to import enough water to irrigate the fields.

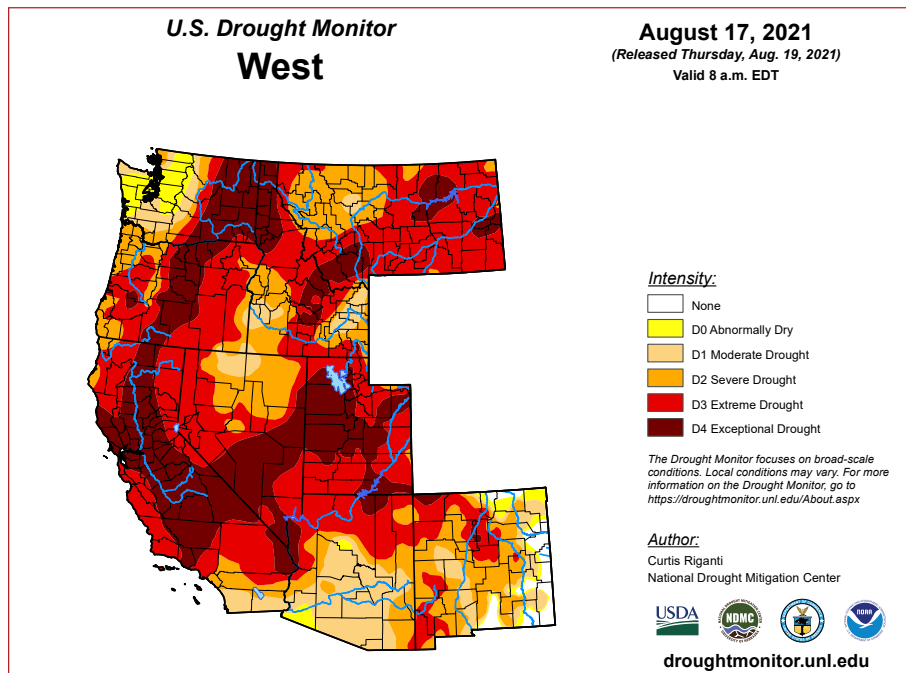
A particularly dry period occurred in 1876 & 1877 when rainfall in Alpine totaled less than four inches for the two years combined. After setting up their homestead in 1875, the Foss family strongly considered leaving this area due to the drought.

As the population grew, Alpine could not count on sufficient water from streams and wells. Between 1950 and 1960, the population of Alpine more than doubled, but

water supplies remained about the same. In 1960, Alpine citizens voted for annexation to the **SD County Water Authority**. Within two years, construction of underground water lines through the town assured that Alpine would get a share of the Colorado River water serving San Diego since 1946.

Today, the drought conditions affecting most of the Western States are causing historically low water levels in the Colorado River Basin, but now there is no easy fix. Conservation of water resources is essential as we are reminded by the following slogan that first appeared in the Alpine Sun newspaper in July 1961:

**“SAVE WATER!
The next dry well might
be your own.”**





Let's talk about *tarantulas* — those big hairy spiders that are so scary to most humans. In July 1888, Charles Foss recorded in his diary “I killed a tarantula”, and a month later he wrote that Percy Foss killed another tarantula. Charles and Percy hailed from Massachusetts where they don't have Tarantulas, so they must have considered the spiders a deadly threat. As a symbol of fright, tarantulas have become a favorite decoration at many Halloween events, but they are very rarely a threat to humans. They are solitary creatures that live in burrows and generally mind their own business. When threatened by humans or other critters, a tarantula exposes its fangs and puts its weight on its back legs. If that doesn't scare the predator, the spider may use their legs to shoot tiny barbed hairs from their abdomen

ALPINE'S NATURAL HISTORY IN FOCUS: TARANTULAS

toward their attacker. These can cause minor irritation in humans, but can kill small mammals. If tarantulas do bite a human, the venom is less poisonous than a bee sting. Although wild tarantulas are found in the southwest U.S., most are found further south in Mexico and South America.

When mating, the pair performs a courtship dance and, if the female decides if she likes the suitor, they will mate. The male dies within a few months of mating but females can live 25 to 30 years. Females lay up to 1,000 eggs after mating, then guards them for 6 to 9 weeks before hatching. Two or three weeks later, the youngsters strike out on their own.

FUN FACTS:

- 1—Tarantulas are solitary spiders, living alone in burrows and hunting for food at night. If you see a tarantula during the day it is probably a 5 to 7 year old male seeking a mate.
- 2—Tarantulas eat a variety of insects, spiders, small lizards, snakes and frogs. When tarantulas bite their prey, the

venom is deadly and dissolves tissues that the spider slurps for its meal.

- 3—When tarantulas molt, they shed their strong exoskeleton through several growth cycles until they become mature. If they have lost a leg, they may grow a new one before the next molting.

A natural predator of the Tarantula is the Tarantula Hawk, which is not a hawk at all but a large black wasp with orange wings. When this wasp is pregnant, it will sting a tarantula and lay an egg in the live spider. When the egg hatches, the larvae eats the spider from the inside out. **Caution!—their sting is very painful to humans!**



LESSONS FROM OUR NATURAL HISTORY

Strange plants—wildfires—drought—snake-eating birds that run 20 miles an hour! These spectacles and more may have been a surprise to the original settlers of Alpine who came here from the eastern U.S. and Europe. But the Kumeyaay who lived here for more than 10,000 years understood the seasons, the indigenous plants and animals, and the threats that wildfires pose, and they learned to build their life and culture in harmony with the natural world around them. Following their example, learning all we can about the Natural History of our region, helps guide us in understanding our world.



That is why the Natural History of our region is just as important as the cultural and creative history of Alpine's population both past and present.



TIMELINE: 1915–1987

THE LOG CABIN CAFÉ

It was about 1915 when Mr. Sherman purchased a retired streetcar from San Diego and had it delivered to Alpine. He parked this relic of the San Diego streetcar system under a big oak tree in the center of town on what is now a vacant parcel between the Alpine Inn Liquor store and the Chic Boutique. It was here that Mr. Sherman set up his business to sell ice cream, soda pop and sandwiches on weekends and holidays to travelers passing through Alpine. The success of this business enterprise was not recorded, but we do know that there were several health resorts drawing visitors to Alpine in those days.

In 1921, Warren and Emma Foster purchased the streetcar and executed a major transition. They covered the outside with split logs, added a dining room on the west side and even enclosed the big oak tree leaving the top to grow through the roof of the new structure. On the inside,

they installed real log stools at the long dining counter and they equipped a first class café kitchen. They named their new restaurant the *Log Cabin Café*, and it was a welcomed stop for town folks and travelers along Highway 80 for many years. The *Log Cabin Café* changed owners several times over the years, but people said they always served good food at a fair price.

As transportation by motorcar was becoming more popular by the early 1920's, Mr. Foster installed gasoline pumps, selling Red Crown Gasoline. The Fosters and later their son, Clarence, and his wife Gussie, ran the restaurant until 1946, when they sold it to Agnes and Barney Ratliff. The Ratliff's acquired a liquor license and converted the streetcar portion to a bar, making them very popular in the town.

About 1965, Mildred and Jim Rorie formed a new business in Alpine and called it the *Fiberglass Menagerie*. They



specialized in making life-sized reproductions of animals such as horses, livestock and wildlife. One of their creations, a life-sized gorilla, was installed on the roof of the *Log Cabin Café*.

In 1987, after more than 70 years in Alpine, the former San Diego streetcar that became

the *Log Cabin Café* was demolished and removed from Alpine forever. The John DeWitt museum in Alpine has a small collection of memorabilia from the Log Cabin including photographs, a menu, and the fiberglass gorilla that once stood ferociously on the roof of the *Log Cabin Café*.



ALPINE HISTORICAL & CONSERVATION SOCIETY

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: Tom Myers
1st Vice President,
Programs: Corinne Lewis
2nd Vice President,
Membership: Judy Myers
3rd Vice President,
Property: Dave Smith
Secretary: Janet Harris
Treasurer: Lisa Celeste

Director, Archivist: Carol Morrison
Director, Social Media: Jennifer Tschida
Director-at-Large: Norm Kling
Director-at-Large: Barbara McCurtis
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.

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

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):

- 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.