

## Upcoming events:

- **July 30 & 31:**  
Museum Open House
- **August 21:** Honey Bees & African Elephants
- **August 27 & 28:**  
Museum Open House

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*EDITOR'S NOTE: Alpine has a rich and varied history as can be learned from the stories of early Alpine writers and storytellers. For this July-August issue we present a collection of some of those stories that give us a glimpse of life in Alpine in the early days, through the words and prose of Beatrice La Force, Pearl Foss, Flora Hill, Neil Galloway and Albert Simonson.*



## BEST CLIMATE IN THE USA BY GOVERNMENT REPORT

In her book, *History of a Mountain Settlement*, Beatrice La Force describes Alpine's Climate. If you ever wondered about the slogan, "Best Climate in the USA by Government Report" here is the story.

"Climate is Alpine's claim to distinction. The slogan **BEST CLIMATE IN THE U.S.A. by Government Report**" has been used since the days of World War I when a U. S. Government Survey determined that the climate of Alpine was the most equable in the nation and very well suited for the convalescence of soldiers sometimes due to the poison gasses used in that war.

Alpine soon became known all over the country for its fine climate. Many of the permanent residents here came years ago seeking a cure for asthma, emphysema, tuberculosis, sinus and related health problems found health and remained."

Adding to this story, the editor wishes to note that at some undetermined time after the Government Report, the community erected billboard-size signs adjacent to Highway 80 at each end of town, boasting of this distinction. These signs were in place for many years before construction of the Interstate 8 Freeway, which may have precipitated their removal. To commemorate this time in Alpine history, the Alpine Historical Society erected a scale-model of the best climate sign in front of the John DeWitt Museum at 2116 Tavern Road.

**NEW DATE FOR AUGUST PROGRAM ■ SUNDAY, AUGUST 21, 2022 ■ 1:00 P.M.**

## HONEY BEES & AFRICAN ELEPHANTS

Please join Radio Personality Coe Lewis and East County beekeeper Richard Edwards as they present a program focused on the history of local beekeeping and an interesting new adaptation: using bees to create a biofence.

The earliest Alpine settlers were beekeepers, making honey production a major industry here. Though not as popular now as it was 150 years ago, honey production is making a



Coe Lewis



Richard Edwards

resurgence with contemporary apiarists.

However, the concept of using honeybees to create a biofence is a new one.

Discover how honey bees can be used effectively to keep African elephants safely within a wildlife sanctuary to mitigate the poaching problem and provide a substitute source of income for poachers. This might save thousands of elephants each year from being killed to harvest their ivory tusks.

**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)



**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

## FAVORITE FAMILY RECIPES

A favorite recipe of Miss Pearl Foss and Mr. Percy Foss is Boston Brown Bread. This recipe was brought by their mother in 1875 to Alpine in a cook book which is still cherished.

- 1 pt. of yellow corn meal.
- 1 pt. of rye meal or graham meal.
- ½ cup of molasses.
- ½ cup of sugar.
- 1 tsp. soda dissolved in 1 cup milk.

Add 1 quart milk and a little salt. Pour into steam kettle and steam 2 ½ hours. Then bake in moderate oven 1 ¼ hours.



## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

*A Warm Welcome to Our New Members:* Tom & Becky Collins, Jerry & Terri Hartman

*A Grateful Thank You to Our Renewing Members:* Carlyne Allbee, Kathy Bartonicek, Pam Lawless, Michael Lembeck, John & Corinne Lewis, Gary Mitrovich, Marilyn Moore, Beverly Ring, Gary & Scarlett Spencer, Genna Yoder

*Many thanks to the following for their generous financial donations:* Tom & Becky Collins, Jerry & Terri Hartman, Pam Lawless, John & Corinne Lewis, Beverly Ring, Kevin & Alejandra Schumacher, Gary & Scarlett Spencer

*Many Thanks of Appreciation for renewing their Business Membership for 2022:* Rose Signore – Postal Annex

## RECOGNITION OF OUR CURRENT LIFETIME MEMBERS

Carlette Anderson • Deborah Anderson • George 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 • Janet M. Harris • Lindy Harshberger • Ann Hill • Hilde Hinchcliff  
 Leslie Holben • Ken & Denise Hujing • Ben Johnson • Bill & Diane Keltner • Jill & Shawn Killion  
 John Krempp • Barbara Lea LaForce • J. Clayburn LaForce • Joanne & Martin Marugg  
 Cheryl Minshew • Carol Morrison • Tom & Judy Myers • Helen Porter • Bob & Carmen Ring  
 Kurt Scherbaum • Kevin & Alejandra Schumacher • Albert Simonson • Donna Sisson  
 Virginia Sisson • 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 ~ 109, Members up for Renewal ~ 4

## GALLOWS HUMOR FROM THE FATHERLAND . . . *By Albert Simonson*

In the late 1800's, there were lots of Germans along the old San Diego Julian Toll Road through Cuyamaca. Just consider these Teutonic names: *Bossung, Worms, Eschrich, Trimmer, Ober and Scholder*. And that's not including the gold rush Krauts in Julian itself.

These *volks* got their news from a German-language newspaper which is still around.

A few years ago I was involved in restoring a historic house in Alpine, which had lots of yellowed 1898 issues in German glued to the wall with milk as a kind of el cheapo ersatz wallpaper. Alpine had Germans, too; its first *haus* was built by Overmier, the "section roadmaster."

In San Francisco the paper is still in business, and modern issues can be had at the restaurant at Cuyamaca Lake. Up there, you *kan read ze paper weil you eaten ze sauerkraut und*



*Albert Simonson*

*bratwurst mit bier trinken, too.*

The old papers had, understandably, ads for real estate at great prices. Bonnet designs were flamboyant and fashion ads were definitely Gay Nineties. Perhaps surprisingly, the news was more cosmopolitan than what is found today in San Diego newspapers. You could read all about goings-on in Paris and Berlin. And then there were the jokes.

These jokes are not exactly belly-shakers. It may just be that people who read German were by nature humor-impaired. It may also be that reading jokes under a flashlight and magnifying glass from century old brownish paper, in Frankish type, is not the way to have a hilarious time.

One old joke did tickle my fancy though. Here it is – our gut-splitter German gallows guffaw from 1898:

*A condemned criminal is standing with a noose around his neck, and the hangman is adjusting the knot.*

*Hangman: "Before I hang you, do you have remorse for your crime?"*

*Criminal: "Verdammt (dang) – Getting hanged is bad enough! Do I have to have remorse, too?"*

Auf wiedersehen! There are more jokes almost as good on the walls of Alpine's pioneer museum (Adam Beaty's House) on Tavern Road.

*Albert Simonson has researched and documented much of the early history of Alpine and San Diego County. He has the unique ability to paint a picture of historical figures with his words. Many years ago, with Albert's permission, the Alpine Historical Society "borrowed" his "Tattered Tidbits" title for its newsletter. The name just seemed too perfect to resist. Thank you, Albert!*

## MEMORIES OF ALPINE . . . *As told by Pearl Foss to Blanche McCall*

My parents came from Reading, Massachusetts, to San Francisco by boat around the Horn, in the fall of 1874.

In February, 1875, they came to Alpine where there were just a few families. They bought our place, "Tule Springs," from Adam Beaty, who had a squatter's right to the property, as it was called in those days, and paid him \$1200 for 160 acres. He was a poor man and a gambler, and that night he went to the city and by morning he didn't have a cent left. Our receipt bears

the signature of President Grover Cleveland.

At that time there were only three stores in San Diego. Hamilton and Marston were in business together and had everything from shoes to sugar. Sugar then cost \$1.00 per 6 pounds.

When we went to San Diego it was a three day trip. We went by wagon and took one day to go to San Diego, one day to shop, and the third day to come home.

El Cajon was a lovely valley with a few people and grain fields.

Mr. Webb, who lived in

Harbison Canyon, named Alpine because the mountains made him think of the Swiss Alps. Later Mr. Stephenson got up a petition to have it permanently named Alpine.

There was no Post Office here then, nor store. The first store was held by a Mr. Whitney. Mr. Charles Emory started the Post Office, and then took over the store from Mr. Whitney.

My brother, Thaxter, and Percy and I still live here in Alpine at "Tule Springs," my brother Robert lives in Escondido, and Harry lives in Pasadena.



*Pearl Foss, age 20*



Reprinted from THE ALPINE ECHO, February 15, 1962

## ECHOES OF THE PAST: THE OLD TIMER . . . *By Neil Galloway*

In July 1909, at 25 years of age, I came to San Diego looking for U. S. Government land to homestead, and found it was all on top of a mountain. Hearing of the land now called Galloway Valley, I made arrangements to buy it, with high hopes of paying for it from crops I could raise.

To my great disappointment, the soil had been so impoverished, I did well to get one-half ton to the acre. Homesteaders before me raised wheat and burned the straw. This wheat was hauled to San Diego by teams of horses and sometimes loaded on boats in the harbor there. On the road of that time, three-quarters of a ton was a big load for two horses going East or West.

When their worn-out soil would not raise wheat any more, the old timers turned to barley. Next they raised oats and sold the hay. The land had been mortgaged and lost several times and I came near to being the next victim and realized I must rebuild the soil or quit. Then began the long process of reclamation. This was done by years of hard work and good soil practices as known at the time. Coming from a citrus district in Western San Bernardino County, I knew much of what had to be done. Galloway Valley is now a productive piece of land which will probably be covered with houses.

One of the old-time families that homesteaded before I came was named Hancock. They came from Australia to Oregon. The father was so madly crippled with rheumatism that they drove to San Diego in a covered wagon seeking a drier climate. He died before I came to Alpine, leaving three daughters and a niece, none married. They were not young, except for the niece. Mary did the cooking and housekeeping; Elizabeth did the farming; Anna did a little bit of everything, and worked out some, too. They always had a few head of cattle which Minnie, the niece, herded on the mountains. They were herding them in the valley here when

I came. It had been lost to the bank for mortgage. The bank failed and Melicaton Barnett got it for his part of the bank assets that were left.

Now, I needed someone to help plow part of my land. I asked Liz, as Elizabeth was called, if she knew of anyone. She said, "What's the matter with me?" She was then about 60 years old. So she followed a walking plow several days for me from daylight till dark. These were hardy pioneers that made our early day's history.

Liz could sling a wicked black-snake whip. If one of the horses got balky, she sure could dress him down. They always raised a pig or two. Many times I was asked to get the life out of a pig, but from there on they did not need anybody's help. They raised a few chickens and a good garden most of the year. They had a spring on the south end of their property, between them and Harbison Canyon, that always ran. The water was carried from the spring in a pail. In later years they had goats instead of cattle. The brush had encroached on the land, and other settlers moved in, so there was not much feed for cattle anymore.

Mr. Hancock had a very complete set of blacksmith tools all, or nearly all, handmade. He even made drills to drill iron. I expect he did a lot of smithy work for the early settlers.

For all that Liz' hands were badly malformed by arthritis, she did some beautiful needlework, and when she was 70 years old, I've seen her mount to horseback from the ground many times.

The Hancocks worked for me quite a bit. I had 27 acres of nice raisin muscat grapes. They picked them for me. I got \$10 a ton, paid them \$6. Freight from Lakeside to San Diego was \$2. This got \$2 for me and team all day hauling to the Cuyamaca and Eastern railroad that then ran as far as Foster where Joe Foster, the

supervisor, lived and ran a stagecoach from Lakeside to Julian with mail and passengers. The old timers did not drive or ride a horse every day to the store. There was a store in Dehesa and a church, and a store and Town Hall at Alpine, the Woman's Clubhouse, still standing.

*[continued on page 5]*



*Neil Galloway*



*Galloway Valley — Neil's house in center of photo*

## ALPINE MEMORIES . . . *By Flora E. Hill*

*Mrs. Tom Hill, Sr., came to Alpine with her family in 1927 from San Diego. Previously they had lived for seven years in Imperial Valley. Mrs. Hill was active in the Alpine Woman's Club, having held all the different offices at one time or another, and before the PTA was organized, was a member of the Mother's Club.*

**A**pril, 1951, marks the 24th year of our residence in Alpine. I truly believe that change is the surest thing in life; certainly there have been many changes in Alpine in those years.

Our little school house was a one-room building then. There were seventeen children who attended. We saw it grow and unionize. Mr. Hill built the first school bus and drove it for a number of years.

In those days, we had rains in Alpine – real rains. Sometimes they even closed the school on account of the rain. Tavern Road was not paved in those days and often in rainy weather Mr. Hill would have to leave the school bus at the neighbor's ranch (now Howard Ball's

ranch). The 'dobe stretch up the hill from Dr. Ball's ranch past our ranch would be so slippery and sticky that Mr. Hill could not make it with the bus. We were often marooned a week or two on our ranch. We had to ride out on horseback or walk to get our groceries, believe it or not. I don't know what became of our rains in recent years, but I do know that it really rained in those early years that we were here.

We also dry farmed and our orchards flourished. Some of the finest peaches and other fruit were produced on our ranch. We'd have as much as twenty-five and thirty ton a season. But the last five years the drought has taken its toll, and our beautiful orchards are no more.

The trees have all died and had to be pulled out. We still pump from three wells and we are irrigating our orange grove of a hundred trees. But they, too, are beginning to show their lack of water and I'm afraid if we don't get some



*Alpine's first school bus built by Tom Hill, Senior. Tom Hill, Jr. and grandfather in front. Picture taken in 1930.*

*[Echoes of the Past, continued]*

The Hancocks used to drive a wagon to El Cajon, maybe once or twice a month. I did the same. It took all day to make the 25-mile round trip. There was not much there, either. W. D. Hall company was just getting started. There was a general store—Stell Burgess, two blacksmith shops, a barber shop, a butcher—Bascombe, two hotels, a drug store—Bower's, a harness and shoe repair shop, a few groceries kept by Mrs. Stanisfield in her front room across the street from where Weinstock's radio store is now. That building held the first El Cajon bank, and later the telephone exchange.

The present generation don't know what hardship is. They see too much, hear too much, and want too much, are never satisfied.



*One-room School House*

real rain soon they, too, will disappear from the ranch.

However, with all of our loss of lovely trees, we still love Alpine, and we can say we have no regrets. We have all gained our health and above all we have given our children a beautiful childhood on the ranch in Alpine. The ranch and Alpine always remains the bright spot in their minds as the years go by.

### ALPINE HISTORICAL & CONSERVATION SOCIETY

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President:** Tom Myers

**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Programs:** Corinne Lewis

**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Membership:** Carmen Ring

**3<sup>rd</sup> Vice President, Property:** Bob Ring

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**Director:** Janet Harris

**Newsletter Co-Editors:** Tom & Judy Myers

**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](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.