

# TATTERED TIDBITS

ALPINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 6, Issue 4

Carol Walker, Editor

October 2012

## Upcoming events:

- October 21<sup>st</sup>— Annual Italian Feast
- October 27<sup>h</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>—Museum Open House
- November 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>— Museum Open House
- December 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>—Museum Open House

## Inside this issue:

Descendants' Visit 2

Preserving Memories 3

Membership Drive Update 3

ALPINE  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY  
P. O. BOX 382  
ALPINE, CA 91903-0382

## Annual Italian Feast on October 21<sup>st</sup>

Mark your calendar today for the annual Italian Feast to be held on Sunday, October 21<sup>st</sup>, at 5:00 p.m. at the Alpine Woman's Club, 2156 Alpine Boulevard. Dinner will include a choice of pasta dishes, salad, rolls, drinks and dessert. The cost of the event is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children.

Back by popular demand, Jack Innis, our speaker, is an award-winning local journalist who has made an extensive study of the wonderful, and often quirky, history of San Diego. A long-time surfer, fisherman and boating enthusiast, he is the local media relations representative of the International Game Fish Association. Formerly editor of *The San Diego Log*, Mr. Innis is a freelance editor and writer who lives in San Diego with his wife and daughter.

His interest in writing the book, *San Diego Legends*, began when he came across the story of a man hanged for petty thievery—after all, as Innis writes, "Few cities may lay claim to hanging a man for stealing a rowboat, but San Diego can." The story of James "Yankee Jim" Robinson, who was hanged in Old Town on September 18, 1852, after a jury trial that included two of the boat's co-owners, is just one of the many quirky tales that fill this fascinating book.

This evening, in honor of Halloween, Mr. Innis will be telling weird and exciting San Diego county ghost stories. He promises us a delightfully scary and fun-filled presentation.

The Italian Feast is one of the major fundraisers for the His-



Jack Innis

torical Society and is always enjoyed by all who attend. Please RSVP to Carol Morrison at 619-445-2544 or e-mail [info@alpinehistory.org](mailto:info@alpinehistory.org) if you plan to attend this worthwhile event. The Italian Feast is sponsored by the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians. ■

## Dr. Nichols' Descendents Visit to Gather and Share



Photo on left: Deborah Anderson, Donna Sisson and Carol Morrison diligently at work sorting information on the life of Dr. Nichols. Photo on right: Dr. Nichols' great-great granddaughters point to tile commemorating their ancestor, Reverend Joseph Thaxter.



See story on page 2.

## Dr. Nichols' Great-Great Granddaughters' Alpine Visit *By Carol Morrison*

We first met Donna Sisson and Deborah Anderson, the great-great granddaughters of Dr. Sophronia Nichols, when they visited Alpine with their parents in October of last year for the dedication of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) bronze plaque for Dr. Nichols as a person of historical significance. It was a wonderful event with Donna doing an historical re-enactment of the doctor's life. At that time, they did not have time to view all of the family documents or tour the town. They promised to come back and back

they came in August for four days, ready to scan, copy and see everything in town related to their family.

My original idea was to set up a card table in the museum and do the work there. But, with 90° temperatures and no air-conditioning, we boxed up all of the documents and binders, took them to my house to be spread out on the dining room table. We did not have a scanner so Deborah made a quick trip to Fry's to purchase one. Ready to start—no, the new scanner was too powerful

for Deborah's older laptop. My husband had an extra computer that he attached to the new scanner, now we are ready to start. We found out very quickly that scanning documents and adding titles to them was a very slow process. Again, we boxed up all of the documents and headed for Postal Annex for help. Within two to three hours, they were back at my house with the scanning job completed and flash drives for Donna, Deborah and the Historical Society.

Before their visit, Barbara Cater had scanned a 3-ring binder with over 80 handwritten family letters in pencil. This saved a day or more of scanning for Donna and Deborah. Barbara is the Historical Society's genealogist who researched all of the genealogy on the family and the DAR application. Since Barbara knows the family so well, she came up for two days to help with the documents and to answer questions about family members. Very enjoyable lunches together were had by all.

Donna is applying to the DAR for membership and needed birth and death certificates for her grandmother, Myrtle Sisson. A trip to the County Recorder's office in El Cajon was needed. When Myrtle was born, San Diego and Riverside were one county, so Donna will have to contact Riverside County for the birth certificate, but Myrtle was living in Alpine at the time of her death so the death certificate was obtained.

Now that all of the scanning, copying and documentation was completed,

we had time to do some touring of Alpine. Betty Nelson/Jenson, the owner of the Edward and Caroline Foss property, gave us a tour of the Foss house and the surrounding area. The house is believed to be the original Foss house, but has not been fully documented yet. Caroline Foss and Sophronia Nichols were sisters, so Caroline is Donna's and Deborah's great-great-grandaunt. We also viewed the large oak tree where Edward Foss is supposedly buried.

Next, I gave them a complete tour of the museum with special emphasis on the Nichols and Foss artifacts. Then, off to the Wall of Honor at the Alpine Community Center to see their great-great-great-great grandfather's tile—Rev. Joseph Thaxter, Chaplain, American Revolutionary War. Deborah asked Donna, "If he was alive today, what would we call him?" Donna replied, "4 G's". The last stop was the cemetery to view the gravesites of their great-great-grandmother, Dr. Nichols; great-grandmother, Alice Jane Anderson and the Foss Family. Donna's grandmother, Myrtle Sisson, is also there.

Donna lives in Mariposa, CA and works for the National Forest Service at Yosemite National Park as a Community Advisor. Previously, she did search and rescue. Deborah is a middle school teacher in Anaheim, CA. I look forward to working with them more in the future.

Thanks to Ayres Lodge for the hospitality during their stay and to Postal Annex for their very helpful staff. ■



**Top Photo: Deborah and Donna at the grave of their great-great grandmother, Alice Anderson—Dr. Nichols' daughter.**

**Bottom Photo: Donna and Deborah at Dr. Nichols' grave in Alpine Cemetery.**

## Preserving Memories *by Carol Morrison*

Did you grow up in Alpine?

Did your parents grow up in Alpine?

Any type of documentation of your family's life in Alpine is important to **preserve**. So, please remember to **donate** photos, letters, diaries, and other historic memorabilia to the Alpine Historical Society so this information is not lost as a part of our community's history.

We can scan your documents so you can keep the original.

Thank you for helping to **preserve the past**.

**Editor's Note:** *Barbara Cater, shown on the left, performs valuable genealogical research for the Society. Carol Morrison, on right, is unbelievable in her dedication, energy and resources.*



**Barbara Cater and Carol Morrison in front of The Dr. Nichols House**

## Membership Drive Update/Volunteer Opportunities/Donations

Since the last newsletter, the following members have renewed their memberships: Linda Dean, Russ and Dawn August and Stanley Wilson. Karen Donoghue recently became a member of the Society. Thanks to all!

The annual membership drive is scheduled for December. Please remember to pay your dues—due December 31, 2012.

The Historical Society consists of many dedicated, hard-working volunteers; however, we are always in need of others. Currently there are board positions available. The positions of board secretary and membership chairman are both open and we are in need of folks to fill these important roles. There are a myriad of other tasks—from occasional gardening, cleaning files, grant writing, organizing artifacts, helping with print products, clerical activities, and so on—and this just names a few.

If you have a desire to become involved, please call

Carol Morrison at 619-445-2544. You would be welcomed and soon find that this is a wonderful group of dedicated individuals—a very satisfying volunteer opportunity.

During the annual membership drive, it's always time to ask members to consider making a monetary donation to the Society. Funds used from donations enable the Society not only to maintain the two pioneer houses but also to preserve and document the history of the community. Your continued monetary support is critical to the success of the organization.■



**"Your continued monetary support is critical to the success of the organization."**



### Please Help Keep Our Records Up to Date

If you have moved, changed your name or had any other changes in your membership status, please let us know so that our records can be updated.

A call to Carol Morrison at 619-445-2544 or an e-mail sent to [info@alpinehistory.org](mailto:info@alpinehistory.org) is all it takes!

Thanks for your help!

### Museums Open Last Saturday and Sunday of Month

The next time you're out and about on the last Saturday or Sunday of the month, make a point to stop at the museum for a visit. We are constantly updating displays and renovating the houses—it's worth even a special trip!

Our pioneer houses are located at 2116 Tavern Road and are open from 2:00—4:00 p.m. the last Saturday and Sunday of each month.

Alpine Historical Society  
P. O. Box 382  
Alpine, CA 91903-0382  
Address Correction Requested

PRSR STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
ALPINE, CA  
91901  
PERMIT NO. 18

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Address/City/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Send notices via: E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ U.S. Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Category (Please check one):

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

Amount Enclosed:

Membership \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Areas of Interest for Volunteers:

Building Preservation  
 Technical/Clerical  
 Where Needed

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

ALPINE HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

2116 Tavern Road  
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)