

THE ALPINE SUN SPOT SHOPPER – March 6, 2014
Tattered Tidbits: Alpine Historical Society

SEVENTEEN CARRIAGES MAKE THEIR WAY TO ALPINE'S CEMETERY

An old, broken headstone marks the grave of Sarah Long, the first person to be buried in the Alpine Cemetery on Victoria Hill. Her obituary, which it is believed appeared in *The San Diego Union*, reported her death, on March 13, 1899. The article, recently given to Carol Morrison, President of the Alpine Historical Society, by Alpine Cemetery's Sexton Bob Duck, reports: "Mrs. Sarah Long died on Monday, March 13, at the residence of her son-in-law, T. M. Albee, aged 82 and one-half years. The funeral services on Wednesday were conducted by Rev. J. L. Pearson and were attended by a large number of friends of the deceased, and the family. James Long of Oakland, Harry Ewing of San Diego and Ed Long of Los Angeles, son-in-law and nephew of the deceased, were among the mourners at the funeral. Mrs. Long was, 'one of the dear old ladies,' and had been a member of the Methodist church and a consistent practical Christian for seventy-two years. Seventeen carriages followed the hearse to the grave on Cemetery Hill." Can you visualize the procession winding from town and up the hill to the barren land that is now Alpine's cemetery and the mourners, in their black mourning costumes, gathering around the gravesite? The headstone, now broken from age, still can be seen in the cemetery along with the poignant words, "At rest."

Rev. J. L. Pearson served as pastor of the Alpine Congregational Church from 1898 through 1902. The church was organized in 1894 after several conferences rejected the appeal for a regular pastor. Rev. Pearson assumed the duties of pastor upon the death of Rev. John A. Rogers in 1898. The church operated out of the new Alpine Center School and the pastor resided in the parsonage, built by Benjamin Arnold, which still stands on Tavern Road.

Sarah's husband James died on July 7, 1857, in Steuben County, Indiana and was buried with his first wife, Martha Guthrie Long, at the Clark Cemetery in Steuben County. Following his first wife's death, James and Sarah married and together had seven children.

Their daughter Caroline married Timothy Monroe Albee in 1858. They were among the original pioneers to settle in the Alpine community. The Albee name appears in town records as early as 1885 and their two-story home can be seen far in the distance from the town center in old photographs of the settlement. Mr. Albee is listed as one of the original stockholders of the Town Hall stock issued by Benjamin Arnold. No record shows when Sarah came to live with Caroline and her husband. Perhaps she came west with them when they moved to the rural community.

The Alpine Cemetery was not the first cemetery in Alpine. The first, Mount Pisgah, was on land donated by Louisa Alcott Snow who homesteaded 160 acres of land in Alpine Heights in the 1880s. A remarkable woman, she homesteaded the land by herself, arriving in Alpine when she was over seventy years of age. Louisa recognized the need for a cemetery since the dead were being buried in small family plots or isolated graves on their own lands. By the time the Alpine Cemetery was established, there were fourteen graves in Mount Pisgah. The cemetery is now on private property although the public has access to the gravesites. Working in conjunction with the Alpine Historical Society, several Eagle Scouts earned badges for cleaning up and weeding around the cemetery as well as building a fence around it.

The land for Alpine Cemetery was donated by Alpine's greatest benefactor, Benjamin Arnold, in 1899 and has served the community for over 100 years. If you haven't visited this remarkable place, add it to your list of must-sees. Wandering among the graves provides a wonderful view into Alpine's history and clearly demonstrates the sacrifices made by many of Alpine's residents who served their country in the armed forces. It is definitely worth a trip.

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