

Federation of Orange County Historical Organizations *Newsletter*

www.ocparks.com/historicalcommission

VOLUME 27, No. 1 JANUARY/FEBRUARY/MARCH FIRST QUARTER 2007

Light Impressions Workshop

An Ounce of Prevention: Disaster Preparedness for Archival Collections was held at the Old Courthouse this fall. Attendees had a choice of several all-day classes. An Ounce of Prevention was sponsored by Light Impressions, one of the leading providers of archival supplies, the Orange County Historical Commission, and the old Courthouse Museum. The next workshop is scheduled to take place on Saturday, October 13, 2007 at the Old Courthouse. Registration material will be available soon.

Dianne Brooks Retires from Commission

*By Doris Walker-Smith,
OC Historical Commissioner*

For eight years, Historical Commission meetings have been pleasantly punctuated with the exuberance of Dianne Brooks' personality. She and her husband left California this summer to retire to Washington State.

When Dianne came to us in 1998, she had served as past president of the Amigos de la Colina docent group at Heritage Hill Historical Park. She had conducted hundreds of historical tours there and chaired several committees. Dianne and Michael, then residents of Lake Forest, had even themselves become a living historical exhibit by hand-churning butter at many of that county park's special events.

While serving on the OCHC, Dianne remained a member of both the see "Brooks" on page 5

WELCOME BRADLEY FLYNT!

The Old County Courthouse Museum is happy to welcome Bradley Flynt as our new Historical Education Coordinator. Bradley graduated from Occidental College with a major in history. He brings previous experience as Museum Coordinator of the Kirkman House Museum, an Italianate Victorian home located in Walla Walla, Washington. Completed in 1880, the home interprets Victorian domestic life in the Northwest to its visitors through guided tours, period craft demonstrations and annual community events.

Bradley oversaw the daily operations and special events for this historic home, duties which included activities as diverse as conducting tours, coordinating building restoration and repairs, performing in living history companies, and occasionally modeling Victorian beach attire. With the Courthouse, Bradley will be seeking to establish volunteer docent resources for the school tour program at the Old County Courthouse, and assisting Old Courthouse Museum Curator Marshall Duell in the daily museum operations.

Individuals interested in volunteer opportunities or tours at the Old Courthouse can contact Bradley at (714) 973-6610.

Bradley Flynt



ORANGE COUNTY DOCENT LEAGUE SPRING EVENT

By Pamela Harrell

The Orange County Docent League Spring Event was held at the National Historic Landmark, Arden-The Helena Modjeska Historic House and Gardens, on Tuesday, May 9, 2006.

This was the 13th event co-hosted by OCDL and the second by the Helena Modjeska Foundation. The theme for the day was “Strengthen the Ties That Bind” . . . Building the Relationship between an Umbrella Organization and the Docent/Volunteers.

Around 130 arriving Docents from a variety of organizations were greeted by Victorian clad ladies and smartly uniformed County of Orange Park Rangers. The day began with a delicious continental breakfast under the oak trees, followed by a panel discussion, luncheon and tours.

Pamela Harrell, OCDL President, presided over the gathering and began by introducing Beth Newell, Friends of Arden docent chair. Beth welcomed the assembly and shared a brief history of Helena Modjeska, America’s most distinguished and beloved Shakespearean actress of the nineteenth century. Beth attributed the success of the Helena Modjeska National Historic Landmark to historian Ellen K. Lee. Ellen’s life’s passion was the collection, education, teaching and story-telling of Helena Modjeska and her life in America. She was a founder of the Helena Modjeska Foundation and the Friends of Arden docent program. Though Ellen is no longer with us, she will be remembered for years to come as being the individual who brought back the heart and soul of Helena Modjeska to Arden.

Next on the agenda, Pamela introduced the panelists: Mike Brajdic, Chief of the OC Park System’s Special Programs; Rob Selway, Manager of OC HBP Historical Parks and Programs; Barbara Flynn, OC Public Library Regional Services Manager and; Kelly Elliott, State Park Ranger at California Citrus State Historical Park. Among the topics discussed were: How do Docents communicate their wants and desires, and how do management changes affect Docents? Panelists recommended volunteer groups have mission statements of their own that spell out their purpose, focus, the commitment that is expected from them by management, and require dues of some sort showing personal support. In America it is common for one out of every ten citizens to volunteer in some way; in contrast to most European countries where being an unpaid volunteer is rare. A question and answer period followed and then a tasty lunch and tours of the house.

Many thanks go to the panelists, the Helena Modjeska Foundation and the hard working Friends of Arden docents, Park Ranger Diane Wollenberg, and the Heritage Hill Amigos de le Colina docents for a very successful Orange County Docent League “Gathering under the Oaks.”

Anyone wishing to visit Arden for a Docent-led tour of the house and grounds please make advance reservations by calling 949-923-2230.

PUTTING COUNTY HISTORY IN ITS PLACE

By Doris Walker-Smith, OC Historical Commissioner

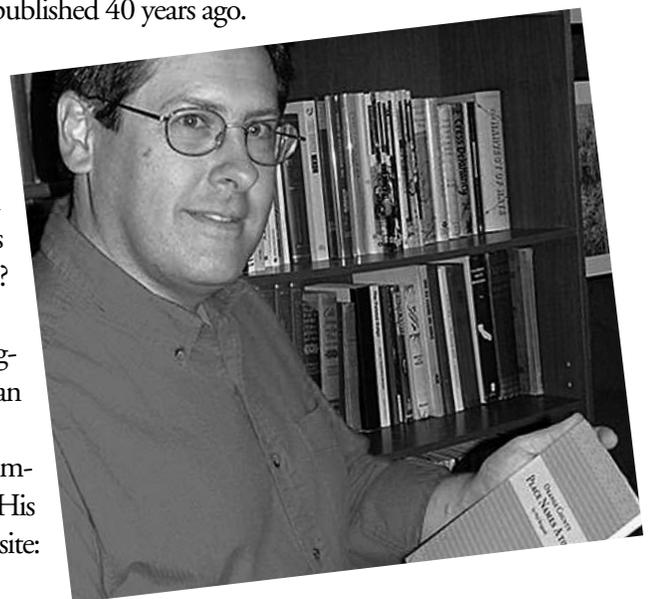
“Every place name has a story” is the thesis of Phil Brigandi’s new book: *ORANGE COUNTY PLACE NAMES A TO Z*. The author, who has served as Orange County Archivist since 2003, has painstakingly researched the obvious and many, many less obvious names associated with this county’s geography. He calls them “reminders of eras, activities and personalities that make up our local history.” His book builds on the late Don Meadows’ *Historic Place Names of Orange County*, published 40 years ago.

From Indian villages to modern master-planned communities, our local place names take us through the entire history of our county. Spanish land grants, Mexican ranchos, pioneer settlements, crossroads communities, and early post offices are included, and locations given for spots no longer on modern maps.

Brigandi, author of numerous other books about Orange County, has given these hundreds of names the stories they deserve. The 500 alphabetical entries cover nearly 1,000 sites. Can you place El Modena? Galivan? Greenville? Olive? Poche?

This new book is not only a valuable reference addition to any county bibliography, but a fun reader – to “spotcheck” names of immediate interest or to offer an intriguing browse from A to Z.

Brigandi previously served as a member of the Orange County Historical Commission and a director of his hometown Orange Community Historical Society. His book has been published by Sunbelt Publications and can be ordered from their website: www.sunbeltbooks.com.



GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOUR WEBSITE

By Guy Ball, Santa Ana Historical Preservation Society

Your society's website speaks to who you are. It can announce your upcoming events and most recent successes. It can be used to further your mission and educate the public about your community. It can be used to build your image with members and donors. With a web-savvy community, it can help you speak to the world 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Over the last few years, I've volunteered as webmaster for the Santa Ana Historical Preservation Society, helping to create a site that has grown to include scores of articles, hundreds of vintage photos, and lots of neat features for users. (Even including a new "Kids' Zone.") Our traffic stats are up to 3,000 visitors a week which is great for a local society that just wanted to post upcoming events.

I'm not particularly a professional web designer, but I've picked up a few tips and tricks to share that might help you improve both the visibility and usefulness of your site. This translates to more people visiting and returning to your site, who then learn more about your society and its activities.

- Go through back issues of your newsletter (and other sources) and post old articles on your site. If you have some vintage photos, scan them and post at a reasonable resolution and size. (Visitors love looking at old photos.) You don't want to post a high-resolution copy (to avoid it being copied) but make the photo large enough to be enjoyed. (I'd be happy to offer some additional thoughts on this. Contact me.)
- Post membership forms, sales flyers, event brochures, and ticket forms on your site. This saves you trouble from mailing things if someone calls you needing one. (Yes there are some people who don't use the internet, but this will help all those that do – and save you time and mailing expense.)
- Your site doesn't have to look fancy to be helpful. I am not a graphics person – I am a technical writer by trade. So my sites generally are plain looking. People come to your site for the content (articles, photos, information) not for the flash and dazzle. A neat design can help make a site memorable, so if you can have that and good content, great. But don't feel you must have it.
- Search for other local historical sites and see what you like or don't. A few of my best ideas have come from things I've seen on other sites. Some I copy, some I avoid, some I improve on.
- If you have more photos or information than you can fit into your newsletter (winning essays, event photos, special lists), the web is a great place to publish them.
- If you have a house museum or facility, include photos and information on what people can see. Be sure to include museum information like hours, location, parking, and visitor requirements. Maybe even a map or link to Mapquest.
- If you don't have a site or domain name (site address) already, try to pick one that's easy to remember and easy to type in. Rather than www.santaanahistoricalpreservationsociety.com we choose www.santaanahistory.com. It's simpler, less prone to spelling mistakes, and still says who we are. Since caps don't matter on the web, we promote it as www.SantaAnaHistory.com to help people remember it.
- If you're paying more than \$15 per year for a domain name or \$150 per year for simple hosting services, contact me and I'll be happy to let you know the companies we use. (If you pay a company to also create/maintain your site, the prices will be higher.)
- When you pay for domain names, pick up more than just the single .com or .org address you thought of. By picking up all 3 (.com, .org, and .net), you will guarantee that no one will be able to take advantage of your main domain name. (We have our non-used addresses "forwarded" to our main .com URL address at no extra charge.)
- Be sure to put the website address on everything you print. This is a cheap form of promotion and builds name recognition (and traffic).
- If you don't have someone who will maintain the site regularly, try not to include too much dated information on your website. We've all seen sites where nothing has been changed for a year. We knew that because last year's "upcoming event" announcement is still on the site as "new" information.
- If you do have a reliable person to update your site, be sure to post upcoming events with lots of information on each. Have a second person proof it soon after you update the site. Correct errors promptly.
- Include a links page and include all the local and regional societies you know about – regardless of if they link back to you or not. Become a resource for your visitors and they will come back when they need that information again. As a courtesy, let the societies you link to know what you're doing so they can add a link to you. (Most will.)
- Test your site by viewing it on a variety of computers – from home/business systems to the ones in schools and libraries – and with friends of varying skill. You might be surprised how a great design you came up with has glitches on certain systems. (I'm speaking from experience here.)

I hope these ideas help. Let me know if you need more details on anything I've stated. I'm hoping we can start some dialogs between fellow Orange County historical societies and share what works (and what doesn't) to build our native organizations even stronger.

*Guy Ball is the author of **Santa Ana in Vintage Postcards** and co-author of **Images of America: Early Santa Ana**. He's a board member for the Santa Ana Historical Preservation Society and also volunteers his time as webmaster for www.SantaAnaHistory.com as well as for the Conference of California Historical Societies www.CaliforniaHistorian.com. If you have questions, Guy invites you to email him at guyball@pacbell.net*

AUTHORSHIP OF 'EARLY ANAHEIM' MARKS STEVE FAESSEL'S TRANSFER FROM HISTORICAL TO PLANNING COMMISSIONER

By Doris Walker-Smith, OC Historical Commissioner

To know Steve Faessel as long as we fellow commissioners have – for 10 years – is to know that he is the logical Anaheim resident to author a book about that keystone city's early history. The new book is part of the series of pictorial editions in Arcadia Publishing's "Images of America" series.

While we applaud Steve's publishing accomplishment, we are saddened to realize that he has had to retire from the Orange County Historical Commission – to assume a very important role in his native city's structural life. This industrious man has been appointed a planning commissioner for the City of Anaheim.

Steve planned his role as the local historian perfectly, being the descendant of Anaheim citrus pioneers. In his own right, he has served as treasurer of the Anaheim Museum, as well as president of the city's historical society and of the Mother Colony

"Steve planned his role as the local historian perfectly, being the descendant of Anaheim citrus pioneers."

Household – and chairman of our Orange County Historical Commission. Of the latter appointed office, he says that "I will always be proud of the part I played in the actions to recognize a number of county locations as significant historical sites and their plaquing accordingly."

While "Early Anaheim" began as a wine colony, Steve's book reflects the fact that only one of the original 1857 colonists was an experienced winemaker, though the determined colonists would go on to produce 300,000 gallons of wine a season. The author points out that those dreamers "were a talented group of well-educated, refined gentlemen and ladies. Once relocated to this desert environment, the need to establish cultural arts opportunities gave rise to an opera house, social clubs, lodge halls, meeting rooms, and the requisite churches and schools."

The same might be said for a certain creative individual who, with a single mouse as his inspiration, would redefine Anaheim as a world-class destination a century later. That story will find itself into Steve's sequel to "Early Anaheim," which is itself bursting with accomplishments of the pioneer colony in creating orange orchards and neighborhoods when the vineyards failed and building well for the future with the cultural icons he has indicated. The city, we learn, also suffered setbacks in the form of earthquakes and floods. The book even offers a peek at how Anaheim embraced baseball long before there were any Angels.

The text of "Images of America" editions is told through in-depth photo captions. Steve's copy flows so well, the descriptions of the images tell the chronological history with ease. The Faessel family photo collection played an important part in compiling this book, as did the Anaheim Museum and the Anaheim Public Library Archives.

Now that he has transferred his talents and expertise from reviewing the history to planning the future of Anaheim (both roles as commissioners), we wish him well in all he does – which also includes a seasoned 20-year career in Anaheim's serious business of hardware and building materials. He is also a specialist in utility infrastructure and rail transportation.

THREE NEW MUSEUMS FOR NORTH COUNTY

Olinda Historic Museum and Park

4025 Santa Fe Road, Brea, CA 92823

Located near the site of Olinda oil well #1, drilled in 1897, this museum is located in the field house office and headquarters of the Olinda oil operations. A growing collection of oil field equipment can be seen on the grounds, including a jackline pump, which once provided power for many active wells nearby. Jointly operated by the city of Brea and the State of California, docents at the interpretive center provide educational opportunities for visitors to learn more about the geology of the area, the formation of oil, and the production of petroleum products. An extensive nature trail into the adjacent hills is being prepared for adventure activities. Admission is free. Hours of docent tours: Wednesdays, 10:00-3:00. For further information call (714) 990-7124.

Brea Museum and Heritage Center

495 Brea Blvd., Brea, Ca 92822

Officially opened on July 4th in the old American Legion Building, this new museum has displays reflecting Brea's diverse history. Among the many interesting exhibits is a model of the Humming Bird, a tiny, but very fast, aircraft designed and built in Brea in 1926, advertised

see "Museums" on page 5

"Brooks" from first page

Heritage Hill and the Arden-Modjeska Home and Gardens Advisory Committees, as well as an active member of the Saddleback Area Historical Society.

A New York native and college political science major, Brooks also stayed active in her city's contemporary affairs through the years, including serving as president of the board of her homeowners association and as its liaison to the city council, as well as a member of the City Parks and Recreational Committee. She had also been active in that city's move to incorporation in 1991.

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

Old Courthouse Museum.....	714 973-6605
Rob Selway-Chief, Historical Programs.....	714 973-6606
Marshall Duell, Old Courthouse Museum.....	714 973-6607
Bradley Flynt, Tour Programs/Special Events.....	714 973-6610
Griselda Castillo, Historical Commission.....	714 973-6609

NORTH COUNTY HISTORICAL FACILITIES- KEY RANCH/YORBA CEMETERY/PERALTA ADOBE

Office.....	714 973-3190
Sam Edwards.....	714 973-3191

SOUTH COUNTY HISTORICAL FACILITIES- HERITAGE HILL/IRVINE RANCH HEADQUARTERS/MODJESKA

South County Office (Heritage Hill).....	949 923-2230
Joanette Willert.....	949 923-2231

EXHIBITS

Old Courthouse Museum-Exhibit

The Courthouse Museum is located in the landmark Old Orange County Courthouse at 211 W. Santa Ana Blvd., in downtown Santa Ana. The museum is normally open Monday through Friday 9am to 5 pm. For tours or further information, please call the museum at (714) 973-6607 or (714) 973-6610.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A Hundred Years of Yesterdays Second Edition Now on Sale

<http://www.ocparks.com/historicalcommission/>
(714) 973-6609

The Federation of Orange County Historical Organizations Newsletter is a quarterly publication of the Orange County Historical Commission.

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"Museums" from page 4

as the smallest airplane in the world. A Saber Tooth fossil is another exhibit. The building has been completely refurbished, but has retained much of the original design. Many enlarged photos of early scenes of the Brea area, including those featuring the famous baseball game where Babe Ruth and Olinda's Walter Johnson played are displayed. Space is offered for meetings and gatherings on the lower level. For further information call (714) 256-2283.

La Habra Old Settlers' Historical Museum Old Library, La Habra Blvd at Main Street Civic Center La Habra, CA

Planned for opening in the summer of 2007, the La Habra Old Settlers' Historical Society has successfully leased the old library building from the city of La Habra to establish La Habra's first historical museum. Staff from the La Habra Children's Museum has been hired to plan and organize the exhibits. Many of the photos and historical artifacts which have been in storage will be used to create educational displays. Colorful murals tracing La Habra history are in the planning stage to introduce visitors with a "Pathway to the Past."



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