



# The Ridge Route Rambler

Published by the Ridge Route Communities Museum and Historical Society

FALL – 2011

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## OUR FIFTEENTH YEAR!!

Time to celebrate and once again share the news of how we came to be and some of our successes. . .

Those working on the 1995 centennial celebration for the local community of Lebec, California realized that a historical society was very needed if the history of this mountain area was to be preserved. A well-attended meeting was held the following May of 1996 and the Ridge Route Communities Museum & Historical Society was founded. The name was selected to be representative of all the small communities near and along the roadway long known as the Ridge Route.



OUR FIRST BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
Back row: Dick Hardaway, Curtis Newman, Sonny & Kathy Tubbs, Mudd Means & Bert Lee. Middle row: Jeri Johnson, Eloise Richer, Alma Newman, Carol Darling & Nadine Hardaway. Front row: Karen Anthony, Caroline Means, Louella Lee & Daisy Cuddy. Out front: Bonnie Ketterl Kane. Missing from photo: Donna McDonald, Don Prosser & Don Cuddy.

Within two years a storefront museum was opened in the community of Lake of the Woods. By 2002, property with a small building on it was purchased and remodeled to begin the present facility in Frazier Park. The new museum opened in 2003 and the building provided enough room for historic displays, a small book store, office and research. Among the Museum's greatest assets are the vast collection of area maps dating back into the 1800's, a library of books that pertain to the area and hundreds of files on the local history. The outside displays have grown to include our area's first homesteader's log cabin, a mock 1920's gasoline station and a fairly extensive mining exhibit. We are in the process of establishing Native American housing, etc. in a beautiful wooded area recently vacated to us by the county.

A supportive membership and a very active Board of Directors account for the successful operation of the Society. We have attempted to encourage that members of the Board be representative of each of the some sixteen geographic settlements in this mountain area that our history covers.

We are looking ahead (when finances are available) to adding an exhibit hall onto our building and acquiring some wonderful property next door with an old barn on it. Once these might be accomplished we feel we will have a large enough facility, that is still small enough for our limited number of volunteers to take care of, to provide for future generations to continue on. . . .

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## **CIVIL WAR 150 ANNIVERSARY REMEMBERED LOCALLY. . . .**

By Eloise Richer

This year, 2011, begins the 150<sup>th</sup> commemoration of the American Civil War that started in 1861. This war divided the United States for generations and created many issues well-known in our moral and political lives. While no battles were fought in California feelings still ran strong. Here the war was one of rumor and rallies, politics and pettiness. California sent gold and silver east by sea to support the Union. California troops also built numerous camps and fortifications, suppressed secessionist activity and secured the western area for the United States.

Except for a single battle in Arizona Territory and several in New Mexico, the Union and Confederate troops did not face each other in the far west. Instead volunteer militia played a very important role. Volunteers were recruited to replace Federal troops in all the territories of the Western United States. California residents were the largest of these. Federal troops were sent east to join the Union army. Southerners resigned from the Federal troops and many joined the Confederate troops. Individuals traveled back to home towns to join the army of their choice. One of our local residents to do so was David McKenzie, who was living in Tejon Canyon at the time, and returned to fight for the south.

The California troops and the other western militia groups were used to secure the central and southern overland mail routes, and the newly installed cross country telegraph system that had arrived at Fort Tejon just two years earlier, from roving units trying to interrupt these services. They also served to protect the gold fields of California, Montana, Idaho and Colorado as the gold was needed for the war costs. The volunteer units also fought the Indian tribes as needed when some of those decided to take advantage of the situation. In other words, our volunteer units generally

protected the population and the western way of live.

But, California was a divided state. The Northern sections had been settled primarily by Midwestern and Southern farmers and businessmen. These people favored the Union although there was a very vocal group of Southern sympathizers. The Southern part of the state was strongly for secession and worked to form a California Republic. In the beginning of 1861 secessionists in San Francisco tried to separate the state, along with Oregon, into a separate northern territory. The discontent of Californians and secessionists in the south had already succeeded by vote to establish a secessionist government and had won approval of that move in the California legislature, but were prevented from establishing the separate republic by a Congress that had more important things to worry about.

With the threat of secession here in Southern California troops were quickly withdrawn from Fort Tejon, Fort Mojave and later other western forts to keep Southern California quiet and protect the valuable ports. San Francisco forts were also strengthened. This is where the California volunteers took over and aided the war effort. In all, California is credited with providing 16,000 troops for her own units plus five companies of cavalry and soldiers for the Union Army.

When the troops left Fort Tejon only three men were left behind to basically close down the facility and protect it as best they could. Wives, family, support personnel, supplies, animals wagons and all gear went south with the troops. The Fort Tejon settlement outside of the fort died quickly as it had no real purpose anymore.

While the important role played by all of the volunteer troops of the western states is usually not mentioned in the histories of the Civil War, it was important to the preservation of the union and certainly impacted our mountain area.

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## President's Message

Fall is upon us and change is in the air. There have been changes at the museum also. As the result of the sad passing of our President Dale Chitwood; I have accepted the position of President. Let me introduce my self, My name is Daisy Cuddy and I have been on the board of the Ridge Route Communities Museum & Historical Society since 1996. I moved to the area in October 1980 to be closer to family. Carl Marsee Vice-president and outside display coordinator moved to Arizona in May; Susan Amon has accepted the position of vice president, and event coordinator, Susan lives in Pine Mountain Club and travels off the hill everyday to work making for a full schedule. Chandra Mead is our new Secretary. Chandra has lived on the hill since 1993 and now lives in O'Neill Canyon (Lebec), is retired and joined the Museum in 2010. Chandra is also the Gift Shop manager.

Eloise Richer, who had been Secretary since I joined the board in 1996, has resigned as secretary and board member but thankfully will continue as docent and help as needed on special events. Thank You Eloise for all those years of excellent service to the museum. With Carl Marsee's moving, David Goodkin (who joined the museum in 2010) has assumed the outside curator position and is working to secure grants for the museum. David and his family moved to Frazier Park in January 2004. He is retired and loves the area.

Curtis Newman has been busy documenting our new acquisitions, thanks to all who donated local artifacts to the museum this year. Plan a visit this weekend to see all the new artifacts at the museum.

A big Thank You to the following members, Karen Anthony, Todd Sturdevant, Eloise Richer, David Goodkin, Susan Amon, Bonnie Kane, Pete Mack, Chandra Mead, Donna Turner, and Daisy Cuddy who served as docents during July and August.

Eloise Richer was editor of the Ridge Route Rambler for many years this position is now being filled by Bonnie Kane, Daisy Cuddy and Pete Mack.

See you at the Museum!

## BYLAWS AMMENDED

### IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT!!

#### **BOARD NOMINATIONS DUE...**

Our Secretary, Chandra Mead, and her committee, has been hard at work bringing our outdated Bylaws up-to-date. One of our changes is that we will now hold elections to the board every other year. We will form an Election Committee at our Board meeting in October of the "odd years" (this year) and at our November Board meeting nominations will be made by Board members and from the floor (that's you) for positions on the Board. A maximum of 13 positions will be open so if you aspire to be on the Museum Board, are willing to or know someone who is, come to our November meeting (Thursday evening 11/10 at 6 p.m.) to make your nomination. Candidates must be a current supporting member of the museum in good standing.

## OUTDOOR EXHIBIT NEWS . . . .

The Chumash shelter, in our newly acquired woods is progressing splendidly. Chase Hawes has taken on the project in order to earn his Eagle Scout badge. He and his workers dug a trench to place the poles, tied them all in place and are now tying on the tule to cover the outside. Our previous Ground Curator, Carl Marsee, found Chase and who is now working under the guidance of our new grounds curator, David Goodkin.



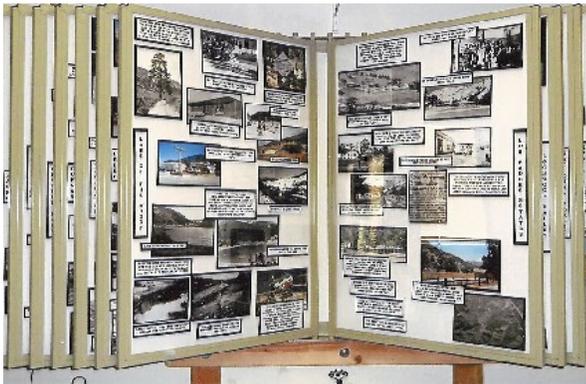
Chase Hawes (rt) and crew tie tules on "Ap"

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## INSIDE EXHIBITS . . . .

The installation of the wall display panels has been a wonderful addition to the museum. Slowly but surely our historian, Bonnie Kane, has been filling each page with pictures and captions relating to the history of our communities and major events from our past.



Slade & Cruz Knoller try out the tractor. The Knoller family has lived in Dr. Laughlin's old clinic on San Carlos Trail since 1995.

Bob Carson of Frazier Park donated pulleys that will be added to our farm display – when we get the farm shed/lean-to built. . .

Gary & Lois Lee donated a wonderful old oil lamp from the Plush-Lee Turkey Ranch in Lockwood Valley.

## RECENT ACQUISITIONS. . . .

To catch up. . . early this year Betty Cook of Bakersfield donated a number of items to enhance this year's annual emphasis display on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Christo Umbrella Exhibit through Tejon Pass (covered in last month's newsletter). As well, Barry Ailetcher of Pine Mtn Club donate some large pieces of the yellow and blue umbrella fabric to add to our Christo collection.

Douglas Petzold of PMC donated a wonderful antique child's toy riding tractor that many children visiting the museum have enjoyed trying out – on the carpet of course.

Andy Benz of the Benco Mining Company has graciously donated many items to make the outside mining almost complete (there's always room for more!) The most exciting item was a rather hand-made ore cart – shown below. Benco is working at a historic mine site to the south of Liebre Mountain – believed to have been one of the elusive Los Padres mines. The mine was later claimed by Annie Rose Briggs and her husband and then by Mr. Gillette of the Gillette shaving supplies dynasty. Annie was the daughter of Wm & Anna Rose who for many years ran Rose Station just north of Grapevine Canyon.

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Andy Benz's mother Ellen Duggin of Newhall donated some wonderful Indian grinding stones and as well, Wynnde Hanson of Lebec and Neenach, donated some great Indian baskets all of which will add much to our Chumash exhibits.

Joey Dillon of Frazier Park was able to dig up (literally) an old sign from the Lebec Hotel and Coffee Shop which was a very exciting find and will go along beautifully with the Lebec Hotel lamp posts' exhibit.



A touching donation was when Nancy Killgrove Cush brought in a pair of her recently deceased father's boots from the Civilian Conservation Corp days and his beautifully carved walking stick with

"buckbush", his initials and Frazier Park carved on it as well. These items can be seen in the old Cuddy Cabin.



The most recent donation came from Mel & Christine Frykholm. They have given us the sign that long hung out in front of Mesa Valley Farm and a mirror from the old farm house. The items were given to them to save by Oscar & Hilda Laswell, longtime caretakers of the Ranch.

We were pleased to have recently gotten a call from Jim Baxter in Idaho. He let us know that he had some information on Annie Rose Briggs and her mine south of Liebre Mountain. Mrs. Baxter's father had done some work for Annie in the 1950's and they became friends. Among the items that Mr. Baxter shared with us was this picture of Mrs. Briggs. We are wondering if it could have been taken in the ruins of the old Rose Station that once stood just north of Grapevine Canyon – where Annie lived as a child.



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If you have items that you are interested in donating or loan to us please realize we can't accept everything and try to keep to items pertinent to the local history. If you have other items that can help us out for fundraising purposes they are always welcome as well.

## EVENTS - LOOKING BACK. . . .

In **April** the Museum participated for the first time in an Earth Day event sponsored by the Arts for Earth Foundation of Frazier Park. Our president, Daisy Cuddy, gave a talk about the history of our local mountain communities and a walking tour of the park.

Local children's story teller, Michi Knight held one of her monthly story and craft days at the Museum in **May**. She read a children's book about condors and the children made condor puppets. Also in May, the museum hosted a "T-Bird" car club that was touring through the area.

**June** brought about the annual fundraising rummage sale. With thanks to Don & Daisy it was once again held at the Cuddy Barn in Cuddy Valley.



Our annual Museum Picnic in **July** was a fantastic success – so well attended and the weather was perfect. After the great potluck, complete with free hotdogs and hamburgers, a short program on gold mining was presented to highlight our newly expanded outdoor mining exhibit.

In **August** the Museum had their usual spot with all the other vendors at the Frazier Park Fiesta Days. Books from our museum book store were on display and sold as well as a very interesting display of "what is it items" from the museum – which turned out to be great fun for the visitors and some of the guesses were priceless!

## EVENTS - LOOKING AHEAD . . . . .

The museum will have a table at the local Sierra Club NatureFest on **September 17<sup>th</sup>** with once again, a display of interactive artifacts from the museum, children's nature books and freshly made elderberry jam.

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Also on **September** 24<sup>th</sup> we are sponsoring our annual San Andreas Tour with geologist, Tim Elam (from Bakersfield & Pine Mtn Club). Tim will guide us through the mountain communities pointing out geologic sights indicative of earthquake activity.

In **October**, Michi Knight will be back with a Halloween story and craft on Saturday the 29<sup>th</sup> from 1-3 pm at the Museum.

And we are honored to have been asked to put on a display of historic interest in the brand-new Frazier Park Library for the opening on the 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The annual Community Holiday Craft Faire will be held at the Park Community Center on **November** 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>; from 12-4 on Friday and 9-4 on Saturday. If you are a craft person, come and display and sell your items. To reserve a table, call 661-245-7747 or 661-245-2339. Tables will cost \$30 for museum members; \$40 for non members.

There is still time to purchase raffle tickets for the beautiful quilt made by Alice Chitwood. The drawing will be held at the Craft Faire.

**December** is the annual Frazier Park Holiday of Lights and open house at the Museum.

Come join us for all the above events. . . .

## **NEW ARRIVALS... (for the kids)**

“Nature's Yucky! Gross Stuff that Helps Nature Work” by Lee Ann Landstrom & Karen Shragg.

The popular “Who Stole the Animal Poop?”, first in the Buck Wilder Adventure series, is out of print. However, we have been able to get #2, 3 & 4 in the series, which we had not had in the store before. The titles are intriguing as well: “The Work Bees go on Strike”, “The Ants Dig to China”, and “The Owls Don't Give a Hoot”.

## **NEEDS - LOOKING FOR. . . .**

Volunteers to build a back porch on the museum- paint the sheds- build a lean-to for storage of farm equipment- someone who can find or build us a windmill- someone to build a replica of the old community fire-bell tower.

## **OUR NEIGHBORS WRITE...**

The West Kern Oil Museum at Taft is having its “Boomtown Days” on October 22<sup>nd</sup>. No admittance charge but the fundraising BBQ, which begins at 11:30, is \$10 & includes drinks and a huge array of homemade desserts.

The Tehachapi Museum is holding their “Apple Cider Workshop” on November 12<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 to 3:00.

The Kern Co. Historical Society has scheduled a field trip to the Shafter Depot Museum, Minter Field and Allentown Historical Park on October 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **Officers and Board of Directors**

President	Daisy Cuddy
Vice President	Susan Amon
Recording Secretary	Chandra Mead
Treasurer	Daisy Cuddy
Correspondence Secretary	Donna Turner
Web Site	Pete Mack
Historian	Bonnie Kane
Outside Curator	David Goodkin
Inside Curator	Bonnie Kane
Gift Shop	Chandra Mead
Acquisitions	Curtis Newman
Publicity	
Membership	Jessie Jamar

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OPEN FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY

12 – 4 PM

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Ridge Route Communities Museum and Historical Society

Membership Form -2011      Mail to: RRCMHS, PO Box 684, Frazier Park, Ca. 93225

<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Individual Membership	(\$20.00)	<input type="checkbox"/> New Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Couple Membership	(\$30.00)	<input type="checkbox"/> New Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Senior Membership(62)	(\$15.00)	<input type="checkbox"/> New Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal
<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Business Membership	(\$50.00)	<input type="checkbox"/> New Member	<input type="checkbox"/> Renewal
<input type="checkbox"/> Lifetime Membership	(\$300.00)		

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Names(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive my newsletter by  E-Mail  U.S. Mail

Gift Membership given to, Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Memorial Gift in the name of \_\_\_\_\_

(Please give the name and address of the family so an acknowledgment may be sent)

DONATIONS:  Building Fund  Publication Fund (book publishing)  General Fund

If you are not into on-line ordering, these are some of the books we have available

TITLE	COST	SHIPPING
The Art of Gathering & Making Elderberry Jam	\$3.50	\$1.25
Cuddy Cattle Drive	\$1.50	\$1.25
Dawn to Dusk (Poems of Florence Cuddy)	\$1.50	\$1.25
Growing Up in Wheeler Ridge	\$8.00	\$3.50
Heap of Eatin' Cookbook	\$10.00	\$3.75
Heap of Livin' (McKenzie family history)	\$20.00	\$4.25
Homesteaders Heyday (Lockwood Valley – 1920's)	\$12.00	\$3.50
Mines, Murders & Grizzlies (Lockwood Valley)	\$12.00	\$3.50

A View From the Ridge Route:

- Vol. 1 The First People **(back ordered)**
- Vol. 2 The Fort Tejon Era \$15.00 \$3.75
- Vol. 3 The Ranchos \$18.00 \$3.75
- Vol. 4 The Resources \$22.00 \$4.25

Ordering more than one book call for shipping and handling cost.

QUANTITY	NAME OF BOOK	COST	SHIPPING	TOTAL

Make checks payable to RRCM&HS

Total Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_