



The Ridge Route Rambler

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Spring 2011 (May) – Eloise Richer, Editor

HONORING THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHRISTO UMBRELLAS

This year, 2011, is the twentieth anniversary of the display of umbrellas by the artist Christo that he displayed on our mountain sides and hills. These yellow umbrellas were both appreciated and made fun of as a useless display. The beauty was up to the person looking at the display. To me, it was somewhat beautiful and somewhat “why did he bother?” Below is the article written by Bonnie Kane about this celebration. Be sure, if you can, to come into the museum and see the pictures that are part of the display about the exhibit.

CHRISTO UMBRELLAS

By Bonnie Kane



This year the Ridge Route Communities Museum is celebrating the 20th anniversary of one of the most unique and spectacular events this mountain area has ever experienced. In October of 1991 the artist, Christo Javacheff of Bulgaria opened and displayed 1,760 huge yellow umbrellas along Interstate 5 from the bottom of Grapevine Canyon through Peace Valley southeast of Gorman. On the same day, Christo had 1,340 blue umbrellas opened on the almost same latitude in the rice paddies near Tokyo, Japan – an art “performance” reaching across the Pacific.

Some ten years in the planning, the fabric for the twenty foot high umbrellas was produced in Germany, and then cut by a sailboat company in San Diego with the posts and bases manufactured in Bakersfield, where the umbrellas were assembled as well. Crews, cranes and helicopters moved over the hills to assemble the umbrellas and thousands of art lovers volunteered to help on opening day so that the umbrellas could be opened simultaneously in both countries.

Visitors from throughout California and beyond came to see the exhibit. From above, the giant yellow umbrellas dotted the hillsides in a display almost as amazing as the poppies are in the spring of the year here. The display lasted about a month, and then was taken down. Look at the pictures in this issue of the display in its many views and locations. Truly a remarkable sight.

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LLOYD HERBERT BRIGHT (SPARKY)

We lost a former member of our board and one instrumental in preparing the current museum building when Lloyd “Sparky” Bright passed away on June 4. Sparky was a retired journeyman electrician and he did all of the electrical work on our current building when we converted a small home to be a museum. When we acquired the three outside lampposts from the historic Lebec Hotel, Sparky refurbished them and set them up so that they light up the south side of our building.

Sparky was born on September 12, 1927, in Hutchinson, Kansas, to parents Bliss Bright and Leda Trott. His family came to California when he was 9 years old. He worked at



several hospitals as an electrician and moved to Lebec in 1989.

Sparky is survived by his wife Irene and sister Delores Matteson of Ojai and his three children: daughter Shari (and Tom) Conner of Las Vegas and sons Steven of Grover City and Gary (with Lisa) of Canyon Country and grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Sparky participated in many organizations on the mountain. He served as president of AARP and for many years led a group that met each week to label issues of *The Mountain Enterprise* for mailing. He served as president of the Krista Mutual Water Company for 15 years. He signed up with Mary Koch to be a driver for Meals on Wheels. He loved all of his projects and

was a man who will not be forgotten on this mountain.

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Museum News

The Board of Directors has been busy since January analyzing our activities and looking for things that need attention. In the end, three groups of activities or subjects came to the forefront.

These were (1) activities to support the museum directly, (2) dues and items supporting these, (3) fitting all of this into our legal structure i.e. the Constitution and By-Laws.

Activities – As we have no paid employees with job descriptions to outline their responsibilities, it was eye-opening to list the many small activities that various people had assumed to keep the museum running. **Twenty-eight** different responsibilities in addition to those of the elected officers composed an impressive list – everything from acquisitions to web master and including such things as housekeeping, file maintenance and publicity. A brief explanation of each title was written with more detailed “job descriptions” to follow. Needless to say, we need help from you special people to keep the museum moving ahead. Volunteers?

Dues – In this economy this is a sore subject, but we need help in covering expenses. Look at the new breakdown on page 8. The normal membership status has changed only in a minor way – small incremental increases in the yearly rates effective July 1, 2011. Completely new to the schedule are the commercial and business rates with advertising allowances in the *Ridge Route Rambler*. The advertising would consist of a business card size reminder that these people are local business owners and would appreciate your business. We have never sought this type of business before, but many of the other small museums in our area have done so and their newsletters reflect this activity.

Constitution – This review is still going on and we expect to complete the necessary revisions and updates by September 1. The update will reflect how we operate now.

This planning is a very important activity to bring our Historical Society and Museum activities into the new era of operation. This is our fifteenth year of operation and the “same-old-way” doesn’t always work now. To remind you – we need docents for when the museum is open to supervise visitors and at least three new members for the Board of Directors. Perhaps many of you do not realize that all of these activities have over the years fallen to the board members as others have left their helping position. Please help us with a few hours of your time each month. Call Daisy Cuddy at 245-2339 to register your desire to help.

Other News –

Officers – With the passing of Dale Chitwood, Sparky Bright and then Carl Marsee moving to Arizona, we had several openings on the board. As prescribed in our By-Laws, the board elected Daisy Cuddy as president and Susan Amon as vice-president. The other officers remained as they were.

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Events – Susan Amon has also taken the very new and interesting position of Events Chairman. She will supervise the museum's yearly activities and see that the chairperson of each event has the necessary support. She is open to suggestions for activities and programs from anyone who wants to offer one to her. What would you like to see the museum offer to members and the general public to promote the museum? Meetings with speakers? Tours of other museums? Or what?

Outdoor displays – We are moving ahead with our outdoor displays. Kern County has granted the museum the use of a small piece of county land that is contiguous with our land. This piece of land is oddly shaped and has nice shade trees. We are placing our Native American village here. It will consist of a typical shelter called an AP and other associated shelters. Chase Hawley, a Boy Scout trying for his Eagle Scout status is organizing and supervising the project with the help of David Goodkin. We hope to have this project completed by the fall. We had help from the local Young Marines group to clear the weeds and generally clean up the outside of the museum. Look for the picture of this group elsewhere in this issue. We really appreciated their help in this endeavor.

Looking to the Future – As with all reviewing of activities and goals, the subject of the future came up. What is next? Well, first is the completion of the outdoor displays. Then we hope to enlarge the museum with a much larger display area than we now have. This is our next major goal. No timing is suggested. We first have to acquire our funding for such a project. If you would like to help please indicate building fund on the membership form or on your check.

Remember – All board meetings are open to Historical Society members. We meet on the second Thursday of each month at the museum at 6:00 p.m. If you want a part in what we do, join us then.

Coming Events – Our next event is the Community Picnic on July 16 at the museum. We will gather at 5:00 p.m. This is a potluck supper with hot dogs and hamburgers provided as well as lemonade and ice tea. Bring your own special side dish or desert to share. We are planning a program and music and you can browse the museum and try some of the interactive displays. Bring your own chairs. We have very little ability to seat groups. Members of the staff of the Three Falls Boy Scout Camp will be joining us to do their impersonations of local historic characters, Ron Edsall will entertain with old time music and there will also be a display by Route 66 Gold Diggers.



2010 Community Picnic photo by Pete Mack

Craft Faire

On November 4 and 5 we will hold the annual Arts and Crafts fair. If you are a craft person, come and display and sell your items. Information 661-245-2339 or 661-245-7747.

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Events in May and June – We had several interesting and useful events during these months. In May we had an event for children headed by Michi. She used the story of the “Condor’s Egg” as the basis of the activities. On Memorial Day weekend we participated with a booth at the car show held in Frazier Park.



Jennifer Guerrini pricing treasures for the Barn sale

In early June, we had our annual Barn Sale to help support the museum. We earned close to \$1900. This included the sale of a car that someone donated. We want to thank everyone who donated items for this event. It was a big boost to our funds as May was the smallest income month that we have ever seen. However, your donations are starting to come in again and we appreciate each one.

Upcoming Events:

July 16, 2011-Membership Picnic

August 5th, 6th, and 7th-Frazier Park Fiesta Days

September 17, 2011-San Andreas Tour

October 29, 2011-Ghost Story readings-Museum

November 4th and 5th –Craft Faire-Community Park Building

December 2011 – Frazier Park Festival of Lights

This beautiful handmade quilt was donated to the museum by Alice Chitwood for us to raffle off to some lucky winner. Alice is the skilled quilter who made the quilt. The tickets you received with this newsletter issue are for you to enter the raffle. They are \$1.00 each or the six tickets you received are just \$5.00 (one extra chance!). Complete the ticket stubs and return to us the half with your name and phone number and your donation. Include the area code, please. The drawing will take place at the Arts and Crafts fair in November. All funds are to support the museum’s activities.

STACK N WHACK QUILT

BY ALICE CHITWOOD



VISIT OUR WEB SITE WWW.RRCHS.ORG
for up to date information on Museum activities.

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We have a new publication for your reading pleasure. It is *Growing Up in Wheeler Ridge* by Robert Dorsey. Wheeler Ridge was a small oilcompany crossroads settlement that was once located on the east side of interstate 5 just north of Grapevine Canyon. Mr. Dorsey adventures begin as a toddler and end as an adult. The stories are both humorous and sad and tell clearly what life was like in those years of the 1930s and 1940s in our area. Check our website or call the museum for information regarding price and mailing costs.

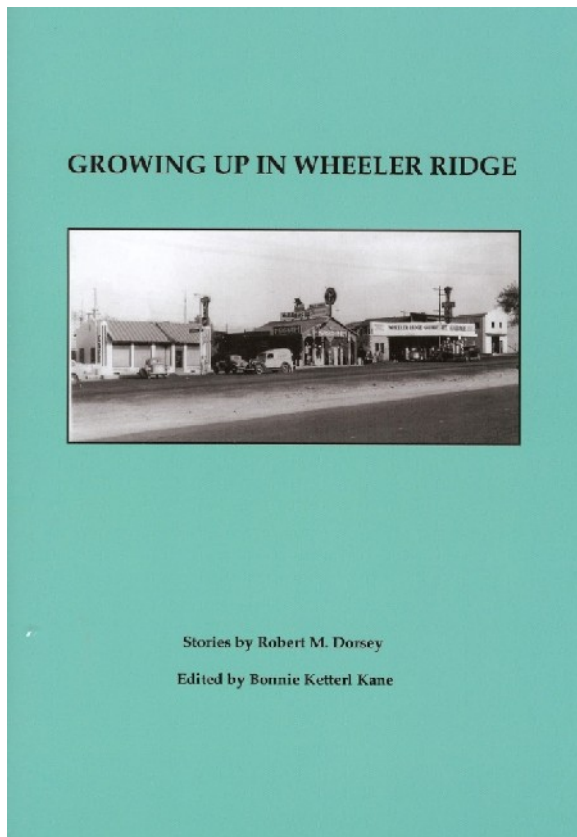


The old Gas Company building, later the post office, served as the Christo headquarters in Lebec.

These young men helped clean the museum grounds May 21, we send a big Thank You for all their help.



Dave Goodkin Grounds Curator with Young Marines, Austin Belardes, Justin Jones, Jonathan Warren and Wade Jones, Leader.



VISIT US ON THE WEB RRCHS.ORG
EMAIL rrchs@frazmtn.com

Don't forget the Community Picnic!

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Crews unfold umbrella for Christo exhibit in sag pond along Gorman Post Road.



Umbrellas along Interstate 5

OPEN FRIDAY, SATURDAY, SUNDAY
12 – 4 PM

Officers and Board of Directors

President.....Daisy Cuddy
Vice President.....Susan Amon
Recording Secretary.....Eloise Richer
Corresponding Sec.....Donna Turner
Treasurer.....Daisy Cuddy
Website.....Pete Mack
Historian.....Bonnie Kane
Outside Curator.....David Goodklin
Inside Curator.....Bonnie Kane
Gift Shop Manager.....Chandra Mead
Acquisitions.....Karen Anthony
History Files.....Chandra Mead
Publicity.....Barbara Briggs
Membership.....Jessie Jamar

Contact: RRCMHS:

Phone: 661-245-7747

Email: rrchs@frazmtn.com

Web: www.rrchs.org

Mail PO Box 684

Frazier Park, Ca. 93225

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Ridge Route Communities Museum and Historical Society

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

_____ Annual Individual Membership (\$20.00) _____ New Member _____ Renewal

_____ Annual Couple Membership (\$30.00) _____ New Member _____ Renewal

_____ Annual Senior Membership (62+) (\$15.00) _____ New Member _____ Renewal

_____ Annual Business Membership (\$50.00) _____ New Member _____ Renewal

_____ 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