



Ridge Route Communities  
**MUSEUM**  
& Historical Society

# The Ridge Route Rambler

We're nuts  about history.

**EDITORS: CHANDRA SARGENT MEAD AND BONNIE KETTERL KANE**

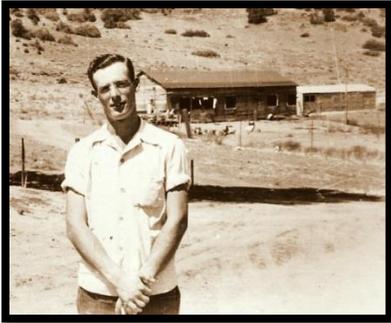
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## IN MEMORIUM . . .

Our mountain communities have lost two significant members of our founding pioneer families.

**Raymond Clifton Darling** of the Cuddy family passed away on December 5, 2017 at his home in Cuddy Valley. Born on December 31, 1926 Ray was the only child of Charles "Wesley" Darling and Julia Marie Cuddy. Julia was the granddaughter of the first non-native to settle in our mountains, John Fletcher Cuddy. John's wife, Margaret, was half Nez Perce Indian.

When Ray's parents married, they lived in Cuddy Valley where Raymond grew up. Ray attended schools in Frazier Park and later Bakersfield High School. He was inducted into the Army in April of 1945 just in time for peace in Europe the next month and Japan's surrender in September. He did serve in Korea and the Philippines, and was discharged at the end of 1946.

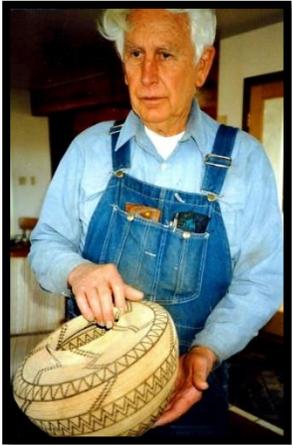


Ray Darling in Cuddy Valley; Carol & Ray (1950)

Ray returned to the "hill", went to work at the Richfield plant on Digier Road just north of Fort Tejon, and in 1952 married Carol Gardiner, whose father worked at the Mobile plant just south of Fort Tejon. The couple settled in Frazier Park and had two children, Laura and Larry. The family spent all their spare time building their beautiful home on Cuddy Valley Road. Mr. Darling served on the El Tejon School Board for 25 years and retired from Atlantic Richfield after 35 years. In retirement years, Ray and Carol often "got away" to Pismo Beach on the coast.

**William "Bill" Barnes** passed away on December 21, 2017 at the age of 94 at his home in the west Antelope Valley. Bill's grandparents on both sides homesteaded in the A.V. in the late 1800's. His parents, Mattie and Roy Barnes, had two sons, Marvin born in 1920 and Bill born in 1923. The boys grew up at the Quail Lake General Petroleum Pumping Station at the corner of Highway 138 and the Ridge Route Road. They attended the Quail Lake School, close to today's Interstate 5, and Antelope Valley High School. Bill served honorably in the Navy in World War II

Bill and his brother Marvin were partners in their Neenach dryland farming operation throughout their lives. Bill was active in many concerns related to the Neenach area, such as 4-H, Farm Bureau, West Valley County Water District, Antelope Valley Fair, Alfalfa Festival Association and Old Timers BBQ Committee.



Left: Billy & Marvin Barnes Right: Bill with a basket made for his mother by a Tehachapi Native

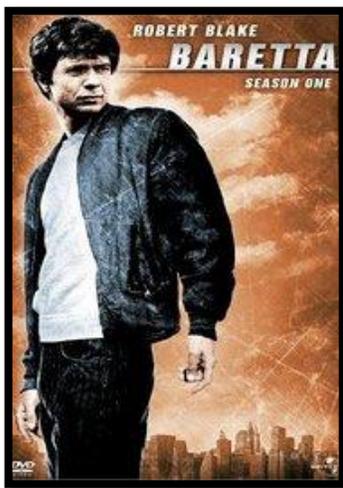
## MISCELLANY

We have three great new docents at the museum, Kevin Woten, Jane Robison and Kenna Mattox. Jane & Kenna have also been helping in our extensive history files, adding more visible labels to each folder. They have also graciously agreed to join our board of directors, and Jane is assisting as board secretary.

## THE WINTER OF 1961 . . .

When working in our history files, we come across interesting stories that have been told. The following is taken from two articles written by this area's first historian, Grace Bradley (Toenjes), for the Bakersfield Californian in the early winter of 1961. They relate to the many movies and television programs that have been filmed in our mountain area.

On Saturday, November 25, 1961, the actors, Robert Blake (later of "Baretta" fame) and Sondra Kerr, drove to Frazier Park with plans to be married in the little baptist church located on Pomona Trail (now the Reflexion 47 Church). Both Blake and Kerr had fallen in love with the Frazier Mountain area when filming locally.



It was a stormy day and somehow the local pastor, Burt Van, wrote the date down wrong and had gone out to dinner with family. So the couple waited in the snowstorm for the pastor to return. Finally, at 10:30 p.m., the minister, the bride and groom and two witnesses met in the cold church where the double ring ceremony was performed with only the sound of whirling snow and wind for music.

It was customary at the time for wedding announcements to describe what the bride and groom wore. Mrs. Bradley wrote:

*"The bride was attired in several sweaters, slacks and very wet shoes and socks. The groom had on an Indian style leather jacket well penetrated by the wet snow. They spent their wedding night at a local motel and plan to return to Frazier Park again for a honeymoon."*

The second story took place just a few days later when Grace Bradley wrote about filming taking place on Mt. Pinos. In her words:

*"In the same location where thousands of people played in the snow over the weekend, making snowmen, throwing snowballs, and sliding down the*

*slopes of Mt. Pinos and surrounding mountains, German soldiers and British war prisoners took over the area the following day for the filming of a new War II story.*

*"The Mark VII Studio, a Jack Webb production, is filming a new television series at the snow gate leading into the Mt. Pinos winter sports area. The series is based on articles published in the Life Magazine concerning letters written to President Roosevelt in 1942. The letters gave information regarding 'Heavy Water'." (The Heavy Water War was waged in January 75 years ago in Norway to prevent Hitler from obtaining the resource in the manufacture of the German atomic bomb.) "The site chosen on the Mt. Pinos Forest Highway represents a Norwegian forest. A prison camp is set-up right at the snow gate and the surrounding forest is filled with German, British and Norwegian soldiers. An airplane stands nearby for a crash landing episode.*

*"The series will be called 'Jack Webb's True'. The first series is entitled 'The Pilot'. Jack Webb was on hand for the first day shooting."*



Snow Gate on Mt. Pinos – early 1960's

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## CLASS OF '67

Three gals from the Lebec area recently attended the 50<sup>th</sup> reunion of their Bakersfield High School class of 1967. (Bakersfield High School celebrates its 125<sup>th</sup> year of operation this year). There were 800 graduating seniors in the class of '67 – the largest graduation class in the state that year. Jacki Rummel, Kathy Thurber and Joanne Rocha had gone to school together since the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, graduating together from El Tejon School in Lebec before going on to BHS.



Former Bakersfield High School students (L-R) Kathy Thurber Mayfield, Joanne Rocha Putnam, Jacki Rummel Groll.

One of the foremost memories of students who attended Bakersfield High School in those years was the long bus ride to and from school – much of it in the dark. Students in Lockwood and Cuddy Valleys were picked up by 5:30 a.m. in order for the bus to pick up others all the way down the Grapevine by 7 and arrive at the school before 8 a.m. Jacki Rummel remembered the noisy, bumpy and overcrowded ride, which often meant three to a seat.

Many of the students stayed after school to take part in extracurricular activities and had to find their way home by catching a Greyhound bus in downtown Bakersfield, to the Gorman Café (on its way to Los Angeles), where their parents would pick them up. The alternate choice was that one of their parents would drive to town to pick them up. Either way it made for some very late nights – and early mornings for those hardy kids.

Jacki Groll wrote that it was not always easy being one of the "Frazier Mountain kids". "We were sort of looked down on by the kids from town, except for when a messenger would come around to the classrooms to report that our bus would be leaving immediately due to a storm moving into the mountains and we would get to leave school early." There was always the risk of spending the night at the Grapevine when Highway 99 would be closed. The teens of today would be amazed at the dedication of earlier teens such as Jacki, Kathy and Joanne.

The high school district later offered an alternate choice of Maricopa High School, which was not a shorter bus ride, but a smaller school for students from the rural Frazier Mountain area to attend. That long bus trip finally ended in 1995 with the opening of Frazier Mountain High School, thus ending the long days that several generations of Frazier Mountain high schoolers had to endure while growing up in the southern mountains of Kern County.



Shown above is their graduating 8<sup>th</sup> grade class of '63 from El Tejon School. Kathy Thurber is in the back row, 2<sup>nd</sup> from the right. Jacki Rummel is in the second row, next to her teacher, Mr. Curnett, on the left. Joanne Rocha is in the front row, 2<sup>nd</sup> from the right.

## COMING EVENTS

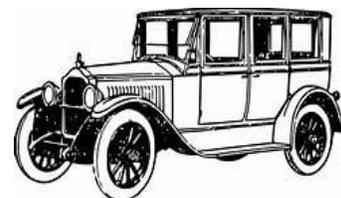


Sat. **March 10** Bonnie Kane will once again offer her **Pine Needle Basket Weaving Class** beginning at 10:00 at the museum; the cost of \$10 covers materials; call in advance to sign up.

Sat. **April 14** will be a "two fer":

At 10:00 we once again offer our famous **Ridge Route Tour**; the cost of \$15 includes handout; sign up required.

At 5:00, come to the museum to hear **Stephen Provost**, author of our newest book, "Highway 99", speak. Free admission, donations encouraged.



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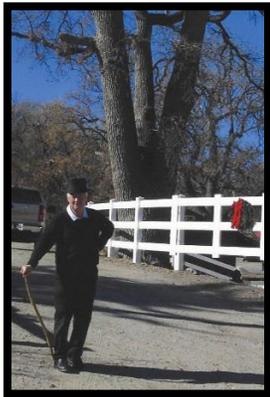
Thrift Store 245-1436





## VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS TEA

December marked the first (we hope) of many teas hosted by Frazier Park resident Dianna Andrews, with many scrumptious yummies. Dawn Burns spoke at the tea and raffled one of her amazing quilts. Dianna's husband, Gail Andrews, volunteered as greeter and parking attendant. Our servers were Dianna Andrews, Dawn Burns, Sylvia Vega, and our Vice President, Barbara Lederman. The quilt made by Dawn Burns was won by Virginia Harris.



## DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR DUES!

### Ridge Route Communities Museum & Historical Society

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and to

**BARBARA & SCOTT ROSEN** of  
**FRAZIER MOUNTAIN**  
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**FOR THEIR SERVICES AND SUPPORT!**



Snowfall on Mt. Pinos in 1962 where the snowblower truck has cut into it

\*\*\*\*\*

**Museum Location:** 3515 Park Drive, Frazier Park, CA  
**Museum Hours:** Fri. Sat. & Sun. Noon-4:00; Summer Noon-5  
**Museum Phone:** 661-245-7747  
**Museum Website:** [www.ridgeroutemuseum.org](http://www.ridgeroutemuseum.org)  
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