



Ridge Route Communities
MUSEUM
& Historical Society

SPRING 2020

The Ridge Route Rambler

We're nuts  about history.

EDITORS: Chandra Sargent Mead and Bonnie Ketterl Kane

PANDEMICS, THEN AND NOW

Although it's been slightly more than 100 years, since the "Spanish flu" ravaged the world in 1918-1919, it certainly was a different picture than the COVID-19 (corona virus) pandemic we are in the midst of now. The corona virus (SARS-CoV-2) is not actually influenza; it is more like a chronic acute pneumonia. The cause of the 1918 influenza pandemic was an H1N1 virus, with genes of avian origin. It was dubbed the "Spanish flu" because it was thought at the time to have originated in Spain. Another theory is that neutral Spain was not subject to wartime news blackouts, and that the first published reports of flu came from Spain's wire service. Even Spain's king, Alfonso XIII, reportedly contracted the flu. Later research suggests it may actually have originated in Kansas or New York. One commonality between the Spanish flu's H1N1 and the COVID-19 coronavirus is that both are considered "novel," which is to say, they are so new that nobody in either era had any immunity to them. Approximately 500 million people (one-third of the world's population) were infected with the Spanish flu and an estimated 50 million (2.7% of the world population) died. About 675,000 died from it in the United States.

The first wave of the 1918 pandemic occurred in military personnel in the spring of 1918 and was generally mild. The sick, who experienced such typical flu symptoms as chills, fever and fatigue, usually recovered after several days, and the number of reported deaths was low. However, a second, highly contagious wave of influenza appeared with a vengeance in the fall of that same year. Victims died within hours or days of developing symptoms, their skin turning blue and their lungs filling with fluid that caused them to suffocate. In just one year, 1918, the average life expectancy in America plummeted by a dozen years. The most vulnerable populations were generally young.

In September of 1918, Philadelphia relaxed the flu quarantine to throw a parade to boost morale for the war effort. 200,000

people lined the streets, and within 72 hours, every bed in the city's 31 hospitals was filled. 4,500 people died within a week. A few weeks prior, a rally in Boston had spread the disease from sailors and soldiers to the local population. Those sailors shipping out to Philadelphia in turn spread it at the parade.



There were no vaccines for the Spanish flu; the first flu vaccine was still more than 20 years in the future. One reason the Spanish flu was so lethal, was that there were no antibiotics to treat secondary bacterial infections. Control efforts around the globe were limited to non-pharmaceutical responses like isolation, quarantine, disinfectants and limiting public gatherings, although then as now, they were applied erratically. One of the primary treatments for the Spanish flu was aspirin. Bayer's patent for aspirin expired in 1917, allowing companies to manufacture it during the pandemic. At the time, recommended daily dosages were up to 30 grams, which we now know is toxic—doses above four grams are unsafe. Aspirin poisoning symptoms include hyperventilation and pulmonary edema (fluid in the lungs), so many medical historians believe many of the deaths attributed to the Spanish flu were either caused or accelerated by aspirin poisoning.

(Above info was borrowed liberally from biospace.com, cdc.gov, smithsonianmag.com and history.com)

Information on the impact of the Spanish flu in the local area has been hard to find. After all, the Ridge Route Road, between Los Angeles and Bakersfield, had only opened three years before the onset. Little road stops had sprung up, and small settlements but none with a population to warrant its own news sources. The development of cabins for Frazier Mountain Park & Fisheries Co. was still seven years in the future.

Dr. Russell Moodie, shown here in 1969, moved to and started his practice in Taft in 1917, only to find himself in the middle of the pandemic. He had a vacation home in Frazier Park and eventually semi-retired here, continuing practice from his home.



Young people gather at a Willow Springs picnic in 1918 (courtesy of Dayle DeBry from the Glen Settle/Antelope Valley Rural Museum Collection)

Garth Milam of the Bakersfield Fire Department, (from a lecture to the Kern County Historical Society in 2012) related that Kern County had the highest rate of deaths per capita in the state- largely due to all the young men in the thriving oil industry, especially Taft and Oildale. Interestingly, the effects of the flu lasted well into the 1920s; survivors struggled with neurological problems, filled insane asylums and died from strokes. Even President Woodrow Wilson caught the flu, hampering his work in ending World War I. He died of a stroke in 1921, at age 56, leaving Warren Harding to finish the term.

EVENTS

Before the shutdown, we were able to have a speaker on February 29; Barbara Schultz made a presentation on her book, "Pioneering Aviation in Kern County". Since then we have had to cancel our spring basket weaving class, the Ridge Route Road tour, another speaker (Michael Ballard of the Ridge Route Preservation Organization), a private tour, vendor booths at two events, and the June tea.

Still up in the air are:

Sat. June 20: Frazier Mountain Tour/Picnic/Solstice
Sat. June 27: Kids Night at the Museum, and Saturdays in July; History on the Patio program.

We will try to keep you posted; most likely by email, and on Facebook. Those of you that have email addresses but haven't shared them with us, please do so, so that we can better keep you up to date.

MANY THANKS TO

Tejon Mountain Village 

FOR THE PRINTING OF OUR NEWSLETTER!!!

WHAT IS IT?

Last issue we asked you to guess what this object is. We had a few guesses, interesting, but none of them correct.

It is: a walnut huller (removing the outer skin from the shell).



ATTENTION!!!

We rolled out **new membership rates** and sponsorship opportunities in the last issue. We have added a Gold level General membership, as well as three levels of Business membership: Silver, Gold and Platinum. We have **increased** Lifetime memberships for an individual to **\$500** and now offer a Couple's Lifetime membership for \$750. And now you can sponsor events and exhibits, too. See page 3 for details.

WE ARE SORRY FOR THE ABBREVIATED VERSION OF THIS ISSUE OF THE NEWSLETTER DUE TO LIMITED RESOURCES AND STAFFING



Ridge Route Communities
MUSEUM
& Historical Society

Personal & Business Memberships

Membership	Cost	Rambler	Discount*	Ad† Rambler	Online Ad‡	Travel Mug	Tickets*
Senior (62+)	\$15	•					
General	\$25	•					
General Gold	\$50	•					1
Lifetime	\$500	•				•	1
Lifetime x2	\$750	•				•	2
Business							
Silver	\$50	•		•			
Gold	\$100	•		•	•		1
Platinum	\$250	•		•	•	•	2

Annual Event, Exhibit & Acquisition Sponsorship Opportunities

Events	Cost	Events	Cost	Events	Cost
Speaker	\$50	Cuddy Cabin	\$500	Prehistorio	\$1,000
Tea	\$75	Gas Station	\$750	Chumash	\$3,000
Patio Evening	\$100	Chumash Exhibit	\$1,000	Bell Tower	\$6,000
Tour	\$150	Landsoaping	\$2,000	East Side Property	\$20,000
Tour w/ Lunch*	\$300	Irrigation	\$3,000	Barn Property	\$100,000
Destination Dinner*	\$500	Lebec Hotel Patio	\$4,000	2 nd Exhibit Hall	\$100,000
Speaker	\$50	Cuddy Cabin	\$500	Prehistorio	\$1,000

* Discount on purchases of in the museum store.

† Business Card ad in our quarterly Rambler newsletter.

‡ Online Ad post our social media or a post on our website (with link).

^ Special Events

We're nuts  about history.

Museum membership, sponsorship, & gifts are tax deductible;
please check with your tax preparer or CPA for details. FIN 77-0431597

Membership Options

Personal

- \$15 Senior (62+)
 \$25 General
 \$50 General Gold
 \$500 Lifetime
 \$750 Lifetime Couple

Business

- \$50 Silver
 \$100 Gold
 \$250 Platinum

Sponsorship

Events & Exhibits

- \$50 Speaker
 \$75 Tea
 \$100 Patio Evening
 \$150 Tour
 \$300 Tour w/ Lunch
 \$500 Destination Dinner
- \$500 Cuddy Cabin
 \$750 Gas Station
 \$1,000 Chumash
 \$2,000 Landsoaping
 \$3,000 Irrigation
 \$4,000 Lebec Patio

Acquisitions

- \$1,000 Prehistorio
 \$3,000 Chumash
 \$6,000 Bell Tower
- \$20,000 East side property
 \$100,000 Barn property
 \$100,000 2nd Exhibit Hall

Mail-in Form

Name / Company _____

Mailing Address _____

City, State, ZIP _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Newsletter Format: Email US Mail

Return to

Ridge Route Communities Museum & Historical Society
PO Box 684, Frazier Park, CA 93225

For more information
please contact us
at 661-245-7747 or
info@ridgeroutemuseum.org

Ridge Route 3515 Park Drive
Communities Frazier Park, CA 93225
Museum 661-245-7747
& Historical ridgeroutemuseum.org
Society Fri-Sun 12:00 PM - 4:00 PM

COVID-19 Update

We are closed until further notice due to the shelter-in-place order for the COVID-19 virus.

Not being open for the past many weeks has caused us to see a shortfall in our income. We would be very grateful for donations to help offset this shortfall.

SPONSORSHIPS AND DONATIONS

With the rollout of our new sponsorship program in the last newsletter (see page 3), some of you lost no time in stepping up to the plate. William (Tony) Waters of Ventura sponsored a tour, and Jeff Robin of North Hills sponsored a speaker.

Those of you with email addresses will have already received the letter we sent out to members and supporters on March 20th:

"In light of the "stay home" order by the Governor of California, the museum intends to close for the next 2-4 weeks, and postpone scheduled events. We do intend to check our mail, respond to voice mail & emails and send out book purchases regularly.

With the loss of income from walk-in donations and book sales, and from events, please consider buying books from our website, renewing your membership early, upgrading your membership to a Lifetime membership or making a

donation "just because". Regardless of whether we are open or not, we still have ongoing expenses like insurance and utilities. So please help us while we're closed, so that we can open again when it's time.

**Stay well,
Bonnie Kane and Chandra Mead"**

And some of you jumped right on our request with a donation (Mary Sitts, Darlene Sumner, Mona Engvig, Bob & Lynette Lame, Kevin & Lori Woten, Donn Marinovich & Sherrin Grout). Another member renewed his membership for the next three years.

For those of you who haven't sent in a donation or membership renewal, we have made it easier for you to do so by enclosing an envelope with this issue.

We don't, at this point, know when we'll be able to open again or be able to put on events, but it is members like you that will make it possible.

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
Museum Email: rrchs@frazmtn.com or info@ridgeroutemuseum.org



**RIDGE ROUTE COMMUNITIES MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O.BOX 684
FRAZIER PARK, CA 93225**

**PLEASE CHECK YOUR
LABEL FOR MEMBERSHIP
RENEWAL DATE!**