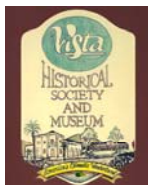


Vista Historical Society

Published Monthly
 AUGUST 2008
 E-Mail: vhm67@1882.sdcoxmail.com
 Web <http://www.vhsm.org>



P.O. Box 1032
 Vista, Ca 92084
 (760) 630-0444
 1315 Hot Spring Way
 Vista, Ca 92081

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is the exciting time of the year. Summer is here with all its glory, and your Board of Directors is planning an "Ice Cream Social" for everyone's enjoyment on Saturday afternoon, August 23, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. One of the things available at the "Ice Cream Social" will be a tour of "Rancho Minerva" from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. It is a short distance from the Senior Center where we will be holding this event.

The Board is also planning for our Dinner Downtown #8, which takes place in September. These two events have always been well attended. Be sure to make your reservations early. We don't want to run out of ice cream or food.

We are always on the trail and looking out for items of Vista's history. Make sure if you have one, or know of someone who does, to please call the museum office and make them aware of this find. It could become a valuable treasure to us.

DIANE

GENERAL MEETING AUGUST 23, 2008

The next General Meeting of the Vista Historical Society will be held on Saturday, August 23, 2008, in the Azalea Room of the Gloria McClellan Senior Center, 1400 Vale Terrace.

The meeting will begin at 2 p.m. The theme this meeting will be an Ice Cream Social. In addition, Lois Cavalier will be signing her new book, "Vista." Be sure to come and enjoy the festivities.

The Historical Society will supply the ice cream. If you want to help with the other refreshments, call the Society office at 760-630-0444. See the flyer on page 7.



MEMORIALS

As of July 26, 2008

IN MEMORY OF CATHERINE HAYDEN

Don and Eve Cole

IN MEMORY OF LLOYD TRACY

Paul V.L. Campo
Dan and Sue Carr

IN MEMORY OF DON MESSERSMITH

Paul and Diane Eckert, Kappes Fund

IN MEMORY OF BOB JOHNSTON

Paul and Diane Eckert, Kappes Fund

DONATION

Ted and Irene Huntalas
Beatrix Sullivan
M. Rouse
V. Parker
Zella Humphreys
Anne Blust

LIFE MEMBER DONATION

David and Cheryl Larkin
Norman and Elizabeth Eckert
John and Judy Miethke
Rosalie Tracy
Yvonne Askey
Jeff and Christine Brusseau
Judy Ritter

BOOK SIGNING

By Lois Cavalier

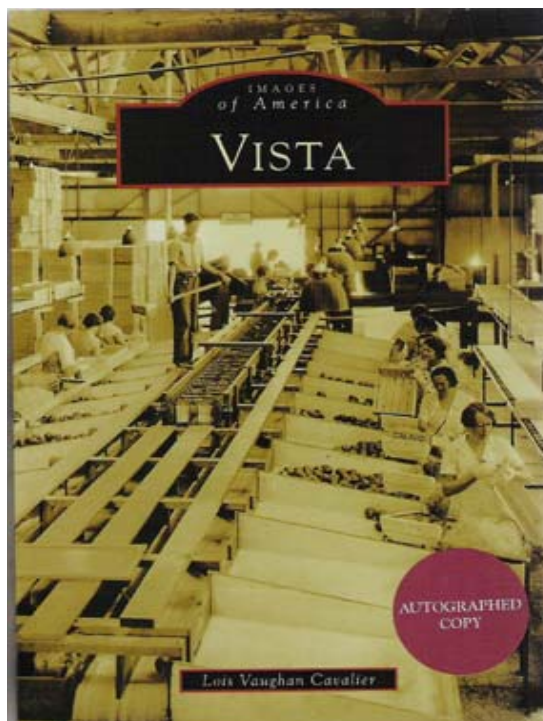
Greeting Vistans and signing copies of *Vista* at the Barnes & Noble book signing on Saturday, July 19, was a privilege and honor. My thanks to all those who showed up to lend their support.

Vista Historical Society Director Jack Larimer and his wife, Sharon, were there as were board members Janice Klafehn and Richard Sepulveda. Friends and co-toilers from the Vista Writers Group showed up en masse.

It was like “old home week.” Some long-time Vistans and descendants of early families were there. Among them were Brent Jobe, whose



Author Lois Cavalier at book signing for her book “Vista” July 19, 2008, at the Oceanside Barnes & Noble.



family owned historic Breeze Hill Ranch; Linda Petterson, daughter of former mayor Kenneth Annin; and Christine Minegar, daughter of former Vistan Arnella Ahrens, who came from Temecula to get a copy of the book for her mother, who now lives in Eureka.

Vista is a collection of historic photographs and captions. My plan is to create booklets that will tell some of the charming and history-creating tales of early Vista. I may be knocking on your door.

MURAL BIOGRAPHIES WANTED

Biographies of the persons depicted on Vista's downtown mural are being sought by Vista Historical Society curator Janice Klafehn.

Under an agreement with the Vista Village Business Association, the Vista Historical Society has agreed to complete a book incorporating information and photographs regarding subjects on the Vistacado Mural.

As author of the forthcoming book, Klafehn is appealing to those depicted on the mural as well as family members and friends who may have information or photographs.

Klafehn can be reached by phone at (760) 724-4460 or by e-mail at jklafehn@aol.com. A message for her can also be left at the Vista Historical Society, (760) 630-0444. The following is a list of biographies still needed.

Aguilera, John	McHale, Jay
Aguilera, William	Mendez, Robert R.
Ahlswede, Jack	Mojado, Carmen
Andrews, Nancy Wolfe	North County Fire Fighters
Barnabee, Albert	Pipe & Drum
Bates, Greg	Optimists
Bronson, Charles	Pet Lion
Colony Maple Furniture	Pierce Arrow Car
Duran, Luz	Pope, Bob and Miriam
Duran, Margarita	Porter, Jim
Eckert, Diane	Red Barn
Eckert, Paul	Richardson, Bob
Eckert, Robert	Romaro, Frank
Elder, Bill	Romaro, Josie
Elsinger, Bob	Roncane, Alexander
Farmer, Bob	Roncane, Bridgette
Files, Barbara	Roncane, Dr. Christopher
Flores Son	Roncane, Dr. Tinou
Flores, Lioette	Roncane, Ella
Flores, Maria Lopez	Roncane, Erik
Follis, Ernie	Roncane, Jonathan
Gallegos, Rose	Roncane, Mia
Gladue, Art	Roncane, Sheila
Haines, Dick	Roth, Mr.
Hinrichs, Marie	Salsido, Chelo
Hinrichs, Rudy and Marie	Sheppard, Charles
Indian Rock	Sheppard, Shirley
Jakeway, Norman	Tanaka, Mary Jane
Jakeway, Yondell	Vista Art Foundation
Knight, F.J.	Vista Chamber of Commerce.
Lopez, Erlinda	Vista Lions Club
Lopez, George	Ward, Dirce
Lucky the dog	Wray, Amy
Luisenos Indian	Wray, Dan
Mackenzie, Jo	Wray, Lindsay
McHale, Gayla	Wray, Wesley

MEET OUR NEW DOCENT: MARY DOLNIK

Mary Dolnik is achieving two goals as a Vista Historical Society and Museum volunteer: helping people and learning more about the history of Vista.

She found out about the Society's need for volunteers through a newspaper article in late 2007, at the same time the Vista branch of the San Diego County Library was seeking help, so she offers her talents in both places. She had already been a volunteer in Vista for 18 years and felt she was ready for some new opportunities.

Mary and her husband, Edward, came to Vista 22 years ago after they retired from the family business in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

"We followed our children," Mary said. "We vacationed here in winter whenever we could, and when we retired we were ready for the warmer climate."

The Dolniks' son, Jim, and daughter, Kathleen Ziccarelli, live in Carlsbad. Mary and Ed have three grandchildren: Kathleen's daughter, Andrea, 31, who has a degree in environmental and civil engineering from Cal Poly at San Luis Obispo; and Jim's two sons, Christopher, 22, a senior at Chico State University, and Stephen, 16, a junior at La Costa Canyon High School and an accomplished trombonist.

Mary was born in Europe, in what is now Slavonia, and moved to Kenosha, Wisconsin, with her parents as a young child.

After her marriage to Ed, the couple owned and operated their own Mobil service station and Mary remembers happily the times she helped out pumping gas, checking oil and cleaning windshields.

What does she like best about volunteering at the Vista Historical Society and Museum?

"Working with the people," she said "They are all wonderful, and they have all been so nice to me. I really appreciate it."

And we appreciate you, too, Mary!



Our new docent:
Mary Dolnik

DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR REISSUED

The Vista Historical Society is reissuing its Downtown Walking Tour, which was first presented in 2000.

The new version is in color. It continues to cover Main Street and Broadway and now also includes South Santa Fe Avenue from Main Street to Escondido Avenue.

The self-guided Walking Tour information is free and is currently available at the Vista Historical Society Office, 1315 Hot Spring Way, Suite 110. It will be available elsewhere soon. A sample page from the new Downtown Walking Tour is on page 5 of this Newsletter.

DINNER DOWNTOWN VIII

The eighth Dinner Downtown will be celebrated this year on Saturday, September 20, 2008.

The dinner will be held on South Citrus Avenue for the third time. The theme this year will be Western, and the meal will be a barbeque. We will again have live music provided by David Larkin and his Band.

Keep the date open. You will receive a flier and there will be more information in the next newsletter.

NEWSLETTER BY E-MAIL

Our newsletter is available by e-mail as well as by regular mail. Sending the newsletter by e-mail reduces our cost and it arrives sooner.

MAIL, PHONE AND E-MAIL

Please address any mail for the Vista Historical Society to our post office box:

**VISTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 1032
VISTA, CA 92085-1032**

We will not receive mail addressed to our new location. We cannot guarantee that we will get any mail not addressed to our post office box. Our phone and fax number remains (760) 630-0444.

Our new e-mail is vhm67@1882.sdcxmail.com.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If you change your mailing address, please notify the Historical Society. Because our newsletter is mailed at the bulk-mail rate, the post office charges the first-class letter rate to return undelivered mail to us.

Also, you will not get the newsletter,

VOLUNTEER LUNCHEONS RETURN

The monthly luncheons of the Historical Society Volunteers have returned. The next Volunteer Luncheon will be at the Vista Denny's, 540 West Vista Way, in the patio on Wednesday September 3, 2008 at 11:30 A. M.



Top picture is the Volunteer Luncheon at Hennessey's in March 2008. Bottom picture is the luncheon at California Pizza Kitchen in November 2007.

MAIN STREET AREA FROM SANTA FE AVE. TO CITRUS AVE.

1



First Vista Irrigation District building opened 1930. The VID moved 1963. The building was removed 1999 . The site is now vacant (100 Block Main St.)

2

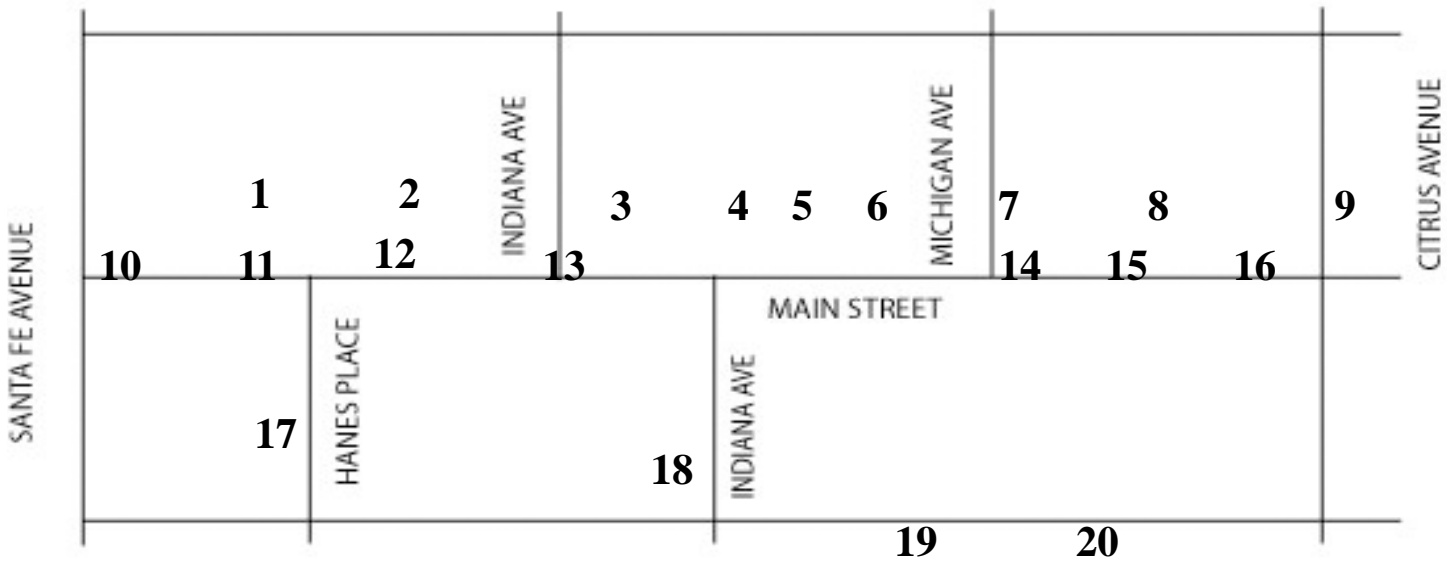


Pechstein Building opened 1926. It was the first major commercial building in Vista. The building was removed 1999 . The site is now vacant (100 Block Main St.)



Current view of the site of the VID and Pechstein Buildings. A mixed use project is planned for the site.

VISTA VILLAGE DRIVE



EAST BROADWAY

3



Vista Pharmacy/Safeway 204-206 Main Street Built in 1936.

4



Vista Pharmacy current view



Sheffield's, 224 Main Street Built 1948. This store was later Breen's and Jazzercise.



Sheffield's current view.

THE SWIMMING MAILMAN

Headlined “South Seas Swimmer Coming to Vista To Be Rancher,” a front-page story in the December 8, 1932, edition of *The Vista Press* announced Charles Stuart Ramsey’s arrival in Los Angeles on the steam liner *Niagara* and his intention to head for the good life as an avocado and chicken farmer in Vista.

Widely known among shipping and passenger lines as “the South Seas swimming mailman,” Ramsey had left his native England eleven years earlier to live and work on the tiny island of Niua-Fou in the Tonga group.

There was no way for mail-bearing steamships to come near the island, or even for a small boat to brave the high surf and reefs to get to and from shore. So Ramsey would strap a 40-pound biscuit can to his back, swim the shark-infested mile to the ship, exchange mail and pick up occasional supplies, and then swim back to Niua-Fou.

Asked if he feared the sharks, Ramsey replied that they kept him company.

“They always seemed playful,” he said. “They never molested me.” However, in a May 4, 1933, interview in *The Vista Press* soon after his arrival here, Ramsey admitted that an island native who decided to accompany him on one trip was immediately and brutally killed by these same sharks.

“Passengers of several steamships have been deprived of a monthly exhibition of daring and skill hard to equal,” the May 4 story read, noting that everyone on board the ships cheered the arrival and departure of the swimming mailman.

After his 125th mail pickup in that 11th year, Ramsey had apparently had enough of derring-do and isolation. He swam back to the island, packed up his belongings and boarded the *Niagara*, the next ship to weigh anchor near the island.

In the first months after his arrival in Vista, Ramsey paid \$12.50 a month rent for one of the small bungalows that were built in 1932 by Andrew DeWilde and still stand in the 600 block of South Santa Fe Avenue. Among his neighbors were Dr. Vernon Steen, Vista’s first dentist; George and Emily Sexsmith, who for many years owned and operated one of Vista’s first markets; and Dr. Arthur Joel, a soil expert, and his wife, Nila, who taught leather tooling at Palomar College. Restless for more wide open spaces. Ramsey purchased 10 acres of land and

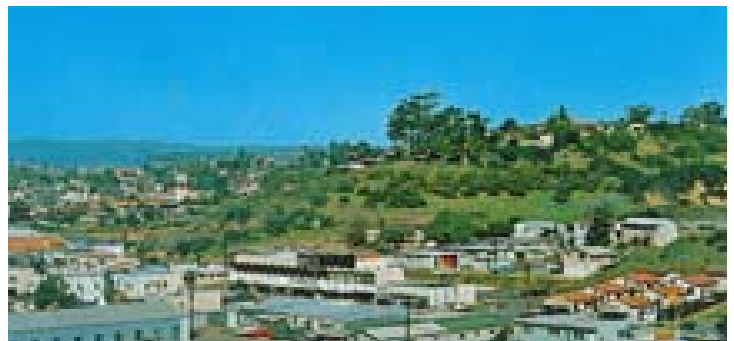
planted an avocado orchard, where the addition of chickens as planned made his new life complete.

It is not known why he chose Vista out of all of the places in the world in which he could have settled.

A cursory examination of later issues of *The Vista Press* found no further mention of Ramsey’s life.

Were chickens and avocados exciting enough as a replacement for swimming among sharks with a 40-pound biscuit can strapped to his back?

Do any of the members of the Vista Historical Society know what happened to this intriguing gentleman?



This picture is from a 1972 postcard. It shows the bungalows where Charles Stuart Ramsey lived in the lower right-hand portion of the picture. When this postcard was sent, these buildings were used for commercial purposes, not residential as they were 40 years before. When these bungalows or cottages were built in 1932, they replaced the Otis Dandy real estate office on the site.

These buildings are addressed as 614 South Santa Fe Ave. Today the view is more or less the same. The most significant change is the demolition of the large building in the center at the corner of South Santa Fe Ave. and Terrace Drive. Named the Granada Building and later the Terrace Building, it was completed in 1928. The building housed some of Vista’s earliest and most important businesses such as the Sexsmith Market. It was remodeled in 1959 and demolished in 1994. The site is now vacant.

Commercial uses were downstairs. Upstairs was used as apartments and meeting halls.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to new Society members, Dale and Rita Geldert.

Thanks for joining!



**YOU ARE INVITED TO THE
VISTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S**



FREE

ICE CREAM SOCIAL

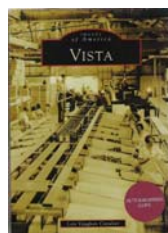
**SATURDAY, AUGUST 23
2 TO 4 P.M.**

**IN THE AZALEA ROOM
GLORIA MCCLELLAN
SENIOR CENTER
1400 VALE TERRACE
REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED**

FEATURING

**LOIS CAVALIER
SIGNING HER NEW BOOK**

“VISTA”



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PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

Programs are available for presentation on request for schools, clubs and other organizations. In addition, other presentations can be customized to fit your needs. For more information, call 760-630-0444.

The next newsletter will be published in SEPTEMBER 2008. Please submit articles by AUGUST 15th.

**DON'T FORGET DINNER DOWNTOWN 8
SEPTEMBER 20, 2008**