



President's Message

Richard B. Rothwell



Happy New Year to all of our members and their families! As 2009 begins, CPHS is in excellent shape, poised to become even better. We have 67 members, over \$38,000 in the bank, and no debt. \$17,500 of our money is fenced in a capital fund, earmarked for major projects such as the restoration of the Las Flores adobe. Our budget committee will present a recommended budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2009 to the Board of Directors at its March meeting. I expect that that recommendation will include a support plan for on-going Base historical programs, up front costs for our major 2009 fundraiser, administrative expenses, and, possibly, an addition to our capital fund. Since we have no paid employees, our administrative expenses are low, freeing a substantial amount of our money for direct support of Camp Pendleton historical programs.

Tom Ostensen, President of the San Juan Capistrano Historical Society (SJCHS), recently offered generous, unexpected support by joining CPHS and publishing a letter in his Society's newsletter encouraging his members to follow his lead. There are strong historical links that bind our two organizations. Thanks Tom and welcome aboard.

MGySgt James C. King, a name that many of our members may not recognize, retired from active duty on January 16. He is well known at Camp Pendleton for his tireless volunteer efforts in establishing the Camp Pendleton Mechanized Museum. He and his volunteer mechanics, who call themselves the Dirty Docents, have brought many old Marine Corps vehicles back to near mint condition. Not only are they on display at the museum, but many roll in local parades, serving as a reminder of the Marine Corps contribution to our national defense. His many admirers hope that JC will remain nearby and continue his valuable work.

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Adobe Ranch House Display

The Adobe ranch house at Camp Pendleton is featuring various displays for public viewing. The displays can be pictures of the history of the Base, or private collections of interest. Through February of this year, the interesting display is a sample of the Dolls of Alice O'Neill Avery, a daughter of the Rancho. The display not only has various dolls, but also shows doll houses, and some very interesting miniatures. Alice O'Neill Avery has been collecting dolls from a very young age. You can see her in the picture to the right playing with some miniatures when she was very young. In 1925, her father's sister brought her a Lenci doll. Lenci dolls were first produced in Turin, Italy by Enrico and Elena Scavini. The original construction of the dolls was of pressed felt and their features were hand-painted. Such detail was expensive and in the mid 1920's a small doll could cost as much as some people earned in a week. The dolls are still manufactured by the Lenci firm in Turin and they have maintained the high quality that was established by Madame Lenci. The older dolls are very collectable and, of course, the rare dolls are very expensive.



Along with the Lenci dolls, Mrs. Avery also has a Dewees Cochran doll. These dolls are custom made for the buyer and the doll that Mrs. Avery has, "was custom made for me, matching my skin, hair and eye colors! It is a collector's piece today."

Also on display are several doll houses. The Red Roof Doll House (to the right), is in fine detail and built in Germany in the 1920's. The detail of these miniatures is excellent and shows the kind of craftsmanship that was prevalent in this time period. As Mrs. Avery explains, "In the early seventies, a dear friend Mrs. Jaye (Jackie) McMahan who was and still is an avid doll house collector, was starting a group to help autistic children and she thought of having a doll house show in her garden. I had always wanted a Victorian house, so that motivated me to get involved in starting my collection of doll houses."



Another sample of doll houses on display at the Rancho Santa Margarita is an English style house (above left), and a Bliss Indian Adirondack Cabin (above right).

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Did you know that Marines were at the property of Camp Pendleton more than 165 years ago?

(Following article is courtesy of the Supplement to Oceanside Daily Blade-Tribune, October 25, 1943)

MARINES HERE 100 YEARS AGO

When the United States Navy Department, on behalf of the Marine Corps, announced the purchase of the Rancho, it did not mean that this would be the first time Marines would set foot on the land, for they had been there almost 100 years before.

Stockton and Kearney, on December 29, 1846, left San Diego for Los Angeles with a force made up of 400 marines and sailors, some 60 dismounted dragoons, and 50 California Volunteers.

While these Marines, soldiers and sailors were at Mission San Luis Rey, Captain Hansley went to Santa Margarita where John Forster provided from the stock of his brother-in-law, Pio Pico, 28 yoke of oxen for the journey north. The force then resumed its march, leaving the Mission with Kit Carson leading the advance scouting party.

The next encampment was Las Flores.

As a consequence, Marines were not strangers to the canyons, hills and mesas of the camp where they returned in 1942.

There were many Indians, too, in the early days. Some of the descendants of these early residents of the Rancho now reside at Pala.

More memories from Maj. Randall L. Mitchell, USMC (Ret.)

The Camp Pendleton Rodeo was quite an experience

I'm not certain when it began, but the Rodeo ended abruptly in either 1962 or 1963 some 15 or more years after it began when some Lieutenant Colonel reportedly told Margaret Chase Smith (Senator from Maine) that Marines and Marine resources were being used to raise money for a private charity. As Public Affairs Officer I was a paid member of the Western Fairs Association, representing the Rodeo. My Rodeo responsibilities included, among other things, publicity before, during and after the event, all the midway acts that were free to the public and assisting Ace Bowen with the Grand Entry. The Grand Entry was well-to-do men, friendly to the event and the Marine Corps. They rode through the boondocks from Camp Pulgas where they had a base camp and were fed, etc. They contributed heavily (\$50,000) to Navy Relief which also benefited from the Rodeo and the carnival which also occupied the area during the weekend. The Rodeo always took place the first weekend in June. My job also included obtaining Hollywood talent who would appear in the Grand Entry and at breakfast at the Ranch House Sunday morning.

One major benefit to the Marine Corps was that the Rodeo riders all were service personnel stationed at the Base, who used it as a

Unlike most American Indians, the natives of the Rancho were not tribal in character, which accounts for the absence of tribal names. Instead of tribes, they were organized by towns. Those affiliated with Mission San Luis Rey were known as Luisenos, speaking the language of Mission San Juan Capistrano. They had no written language.



When President Roosevelt dedicated Camp Pendleton, he suggested that the romantic flavor of this old Mexican land grant be preserved. With this as his cue, General Fegan summoned his staff and drafted plans to secure for posterity the historic aspects of this old California scene. The Santa Margarita residencia, the adjacent winery, and the bunkhouse were dedicated as the Museum Reception Center for visitors. These adobes, the best preserved in the southwest, have echoed to serenades, voices of Yankee traders from sailing vessels bartering silks and satins for hides and tallow, toasts of hospitable hosts who thought nothing of giving departing guests gold coins for luck pieces.

The 24-room Santa Margarita adobe is a hospice for distinguished guests. Twelve miles over the sweeping hills to the westward is the Las Flores adobe, built in 1867. It stands about 500 yards from the Las Flores Mission ruins. One of the rooms of this substantial two-story ranch house once was the telegraph office for the first railroad built along the coast.

recreational event, riding the bucking bulls and bucking horses, roping the calves, etc.

I recall the first Rodeo I worked on, which probably was 1961. I had made friends with a gentleman who sold tack in one of the desert communities. I had never seen so many people at any public event and learned from the MPs that automobile traffic heading in the Base was stacked bumper-to-bumper from the back gate to past Mission San Luis Rey. I asked the MP how many people did he think were present and he estimated at least 10,000 on the Rodeo grounds alone. We never knew for certain, but I suspect his was an under estimate.

I believe the two-day rodeo each year netted some \$100,000 for more for the Navy Relief. The Marine Corps received outstanding publicity from the event. Losing it left a big void that never has been filled. To my knowledge it never was released publicly why it was cancelled. Local friends still recall it and regret its passing to this day.

Editor's note: We appreciate letters and articles from readers. The opinions expressed by the writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of Camp Pendleton Historical Society (CPHS). CPHS neither endorses nor disagrees with such views. Moreover, CPHS makes no representations as to the accuracy or completeness of the information provided by the writers.

HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS FIRST QUARTER

Jan	17	1991	Operation Desert Storm began
Jan	17	1973	Signing of Vietnam Peace Accord
Feb	13	1943	Official beginning for Women Marines
Feb	15	1898	Sinking of USS MAINE
Feb	19	1945	U.S. Marines landed on Iwo Jima
Feb	23	1945	U.S. Marines raised flag on Mt. Suribachi
Feb	24	1991	Operation Desert Storm Ground Campaign began
Mar	1	1942	Sinking of USS HOUSTON
Mar	2	1965	Operation Rolling Thunder began
Mar	3	1931	“Star Spangled Banner” made U.S. National Anthem
Mar	19	2003	Operation Iraqi Freedom began
Mar	25	1994	Remaining U.S. Ground Forces leave Somalia
Mar	31	1995	Operation Uphold Democracy ended

Camp Pendleton Historical Society Needs Your Help

(This article was written by Tom Ostensen, President of the San Juan Capistrano Historical Society. This article will appear in their newsletter.)

Recently, I had the privilege of seeing Col. Jim Williams, USMC (Ret) at the local Java Metro Coffee Chat on a sunny Friday morning. It was a perfect opportunity to thank Col. Williams again for the wonderful narrative tour he gave to a bus load of our Society members during the annual December visit to Rancho Santa Margarita y las Flores at Camp Pendleton. I must admit that I get narrow minded when it comes to discussing other Historical Society's struggles since I know how difficult it is to raise funds and I am overly protective of our Historical Society. However, the Rancho Santa Margarita y las Flores cannot be separated from the history of the Capistrano Valley and the Forster, O'Neill, Averey and Moiso families. Nor can we separate it from our faithful retired servicemen and other members who families were tied to the former grand ranchos or our areas. Tony and Ann Forster were married in the Ranch Chapel and I have such fond memories of that day.

Jim is a board member of the camp Pendleton Historical Society and they need our support. The Vaquero membership is \$50 per year and you get a very nice Certificate of Appreciation and its newsletter. They need more members and docents to keep their goals of preserving the Ranch House, the Chapel and the Adobe y Flores. For more information on the Camp Pendleton Historical Society and its membership levels, visit its Web site www.camppendletonhistoricalsociety.org I dropped my check in the mail today. If you are interested in donating time as a docent, give Gwen a call (949-493-8444) at the Historical HQ's in the O'Neill Museum and she will give you Jim's contact numbers. Please join me in supporting Col. Jim Williams and the Camp Pendleton Historical Society.

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A distinguished group of advisors is helping to guide us as we grow. We are pleased to acknowledge their support.

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MISSION

The Camp Pendleton Historical Society is a non-profit, 501(c)(3), corporation dedicated to supporting and promoting the historical programs of Marine Corps Base, Camp Pendleton by,

* raising funds for the preservation of Base historic sites and museums,

* promoting public pride and patriotism through an understanding of the historical, cultural, and architectural significance of the Base as mission land, a working ranch, and an amphibious training base, and

* increasing public awareness of the Marine Corps role in preserving this national treasure.

Continued front page, Message

As our organization grows, so does our requirement for talented volunteers. While some needs can be best filled by local residents, others can be accomplished via e-mail. One of our several needs is a person to help Howard Blair, the editor of "The Groundbreaker," publicize CPHS. We also need grant request writers. While training is not essential to be a successful grant request writer, it can be helpful. CPHS is working on a way to obtain it. Publicity and grant writing are only two of several opportunities.

If you or someone you know would like to be a hands-on part of our team, helping CPHS make a difference, step up to the plate! You can reach Howard by e-mail at hgblair@cox.net (put CPHS in the Subject line) or you can call me directly at (760) 747-1046.

Thanks for your continued support. Together we will keep the story of Camp Pendleton alive.

Richard B. Rothwell

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Continued front page, Dolls

Mrs. Avery was also always interested in apprentice pieces of furniture, porcelain, etc. "When I was really getting into the china collection, I put all of my 'pieces' together and discovered I already had a very large distinguished collection of Miniature Worcester. The china, created by Dr. Wall along with a colleague was the first porcelain china created in England, outside of China in the mid 18th century and he formed a company that became Worcester China in England." As you look at the display (above right) you can see the detail in the design of furniture that is on display.



It is certainly worth the time to visit and see part of Mrs. O'Neill Avery's collection. For a tour, contact Faye Jonason, History and Museums Officer on the Base. Telephone is 760-725-5758.

Get on Board

One of the keys to building awareness of CPHS is networking with our friends. To help members become familiar with our story, we are offering two brochures for distribution. Please order your free copies by e-mail to [Howard Blair at hgblair@cox.net](mailto:Howard.Blair@cox.net) or phone 858-583-0067.

Stay Tuned

We invite our readers to contribute stories of their experiences aboard Camp Pendleton for publication in future issues. Humorous pieces would be particularly welcome. Please e-mail your 300 words or less to hgblair@cox.net, subject line "CPHS." Submissions may be subject to editing.

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Preserving a Rich and Colorful History

www.camppendletonhistoricalsociety.org

Camp Pendleton Historical Society, Inc. is a non-profit 501(c)(3)