

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

May 2016

I am pleased and feel privileged to serve as the President of the San Marino Historical Society. I am appreciative of the Board for having the confidence in me to lead our organization. I look forward to serving all members as well as those who also care about our local history. In addition, I would like to thank Judith Carter for her tremendous leadership as our President over the past two years. She will continue to contribute as she has for many years as our Archivist as well as serving in the role of our current Past President.

The San Marino Historical Society participated in San Marino Day at the Huntington Library on April 5th. Our society along with many other civic groups had a booth open with photographs and displays where residents could learn more about our organization. On April 17, the docents held the Thurnher House open and celebrated the 103rd anniversary of the founding of the City of San Marino by serving refreshments in addition to providing tours to the many guests who visited.

The Thurnher House at Lacy Park is open to visitors for tours from noon until 3:00 PM on the first and third Sunday of every month. This is the former Park Superintendent's home and a place where one can enjoy a tour and gain some insight into San Marino City and local history. The docents look forward to and are happy to have visitors.

The family of Midge Sherwood has made a second donation from her collections of papers, books photos, maps and letters to our archives. These items are an important collection of our history. Our Archivist and volunteers continue to categorize and arrange the collection.

I am very appreciative of the members who have or continue to volunteer their time to the society and on our board. It is my hope that we can attract new membership as well as encourage current members to participate in our organization in whatever capacity they may choose. If any member is interested in helping, please contact me at 626-287-3734 or email me at jvryan@pacbell.net.

I hope to see many of you at our next program or at the Thurnher House.

John V. Ryan, President

The Grapevine

Published by the San Marino Historical Society

SPRING 2016

SAN MARINO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PROUDLY PRESENTS

BEFORE THE COLORS FADE

How to Defuse a Bomb???"

by

Richard L. Graves



Dick Graves is a native of Philadelphia and grew up in nearby Bucks County. He enlisted in the Army at age 17 in WW2. He trained as a demolitions specialist for small unit operations and was attached to the 6th Ranger Battalion in the Philippines. He hopes to tell a couple of somewhat comical bomb stories from his eclectic career of which this was just the beginning.

In Japan, he served with the First Cavalry Division in Saitama and Ibaraki Prefectures de-mining key invasion beaches, locating and destroying bunkers, ordnance and weapons abandoned by the Imperial Japanese Army and disarming unexploded U.S. ordnance.

Dick also has many more interesting stories to tell based on his career with the Associated Press following his separation from the Army and education at the University of Pennsylvania. There are even more from his career in corporate America after AP. Hopefully we can entice him to share his stories with us. Dick and his wife, Teru, are regular attendees at San Marino Community Church.

Monday, May 23, 2016, 7:00pm

Crowell Public Library

Barth Community Room

1890 Huntington Drive, San Marino

Public is Welcome, Admission is Free

**San Marino Historical Society
Executive Officers and Members of the Board
2016**

From the Archives
May, 2016
Judith Carter

Officers

President..... John Ryan
Vice-President John Morris
Secretary Pat Salvaty
Treasurer Bob Houston
Immediate Past President..... Judith Carter

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Social Chairman Carolyn Chapman
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Robert and Graziella Almanza
Jim Elliott
Marilyn Peck
Peggy Winkler

Society Presidents (1974-2015)

Midge Sherwood.....	1974
Mary Smith.....	1976
Jack Sherwood	1978
Ed Ford.....	1980
Graziella Almanza.....	1982
Laverne Smith.....	1985
Jeanne Imler.....	1989
Gary Fleming.....	1991
Lillian Campbell.....	1993
Marilyn Peck.....	1995
Paul Crowley.....	1999
Gene Dryden.....	2004
Benjamin Salvaty.....	2008
Ave Maria Bortz.....	2008
John Morris.....	2010
Judith Carter.....	2014

The most recent donation to the archives came to the collection from President John Ryan. After hearing Edmond J. Clinton III speak at the Crowell Public Library, Ryan purchase a copy of his book, Clifton's and Clifford Clinton: A Cafeteria and a Crusader and donated to the Historical Society.

Volunteer Jenny Cheng is training herself in the finer points of Past Perfect Software, the Historical Society's database program. She has progressed from membership information to accessioning of materials in the collection. Her dedication to this process will allow us to more easily fill reference requests.

The Midge Sherwood Collection will keep the volunteers busy for some time. At present, the task is to go through the thirteen boxes one by one to inventory the material, protect photographs with mylar sleeves, and decide the proper way to organize the materials so that they can be of use to scholars. This is the largest single collection the Historical Society has received. Its contents will shed light on the founding of the Historical Society, the writing of Sherwood 's books, and the early history of San Marino.

Last Chance to Renew Your Membership

The arrival of this copy of the Grapevine indicates the final mailing of the organization's membership year. If you have not yet renewed your membership, a blue envelope is enclosed. Over 314 families and individuals have joined or renewed this year. Twenty-eight of those were new members. Why not add your name to that list. Your response can bump this year's number even higher.

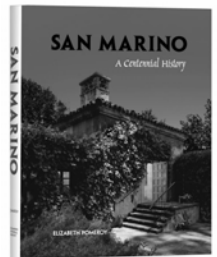
Please fill out all the information on the flap of the blue envelope, make out a generous check and mail it to help us keep the momentum going. If you prefer to pay on line, go to the website sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org and make your payment via PayPal. Either way, you can choose to receive the Grapevine via e-mail.

Order San Marino Centennial Book Now

\$55 per copy + 4.95 tax = \$59.95. Add \$7.50 if you wish the book to be mailed to you for a total of \$67.45.

Order on-line via PayPal at www.sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org or by stopping by the Thurnher House on the first and third Sunday from 12-3 or on Tuesdays from 9:30-3.

Books are also currently available for sale at San Marino Toy and Books, Julienne, A Stitch in Time, Diana D's, The Old Mill, The Huntington Store, Vromans, Sweet and Savory, Fedde Furniture and the Pasadena Museum of History



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A Myth Named California

By Linda Mollno, PhD.

The origins of California, land of Hollywood myths and Disneyland fantasy, are mythic, alluring, colorful. Our state's name is derived from a work of fiction, appropriate since California's history is interwoven with romance and tall tales. Guided by rumors of great wealth to the north and west of the Aztec empire, Spanish explorers set out to investigate the northwestern shores of North America.

One such tale originated in a Spanish novel written about 1500, *Las Sergas de Esplandián* by Garcí Ordóñez de Montalvo. This work of fiction contained several references to an island lying on the right hand of the Indies at the gates of a terrestrial paradise. Queen Calafía ruled the island. Its inhabitants were black women with weapons of gold – gold being the only mineral on the island. It is known that the popularity of this novel reached the Americas and Hernán Cortés since his letters to the king of Spain reference the book and suggest it as motivation in the search for gold.

Mineral wealth proved elusive along the west coast and throughout the deserts north of Mexico, however *Las Sergas de Esplandián* is significant in naming California. Not only did it give name to our state but suggests one reason sixteenth century mapmakers presented California as an island. Perhaps the Spanish soldiers laughed as they named this desolate land for Esplandián's fictional paradise. They did not have the last laugh. Although California's wealth lay hidden from Spanish explorers, history later proved that indeed this was a land of gold – the "golden" state.

The first expedition in search of Queen Calafía's island left Mexico in 1533 but it was the voyage of Juan Rodríguez Cabrillo in 1542, sailing north to San Diego, that planted the Spanish flag. Spain claimed California but it would be a long time before Spanish settlers arrived. There was little interest in settling such a remote territory with no visible means of support. Even procuring supplies was an enormous challenge. To travel to Alta California by land from Mexico City took months and to sail from Spain even longer. The indigenous population was thought to be peaceful but there was no guarantee and as a result California remained unsettled by Europeans for over two centuries. Asian trade and foreign enemies eventually resulted in settlement.

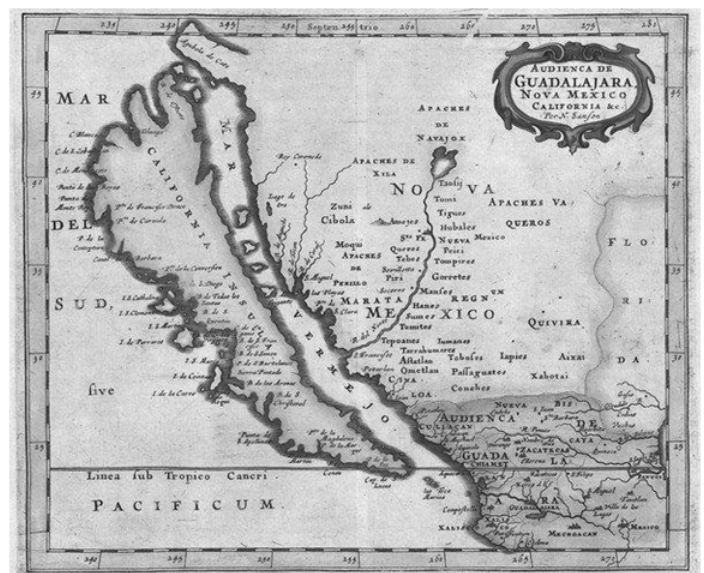
Spain's empire in the sixteenth century extended to Asia and Manila Bay in the Philippines became the hub of Spanish trade. The Manila galleons were enormous cargo ships sailing east from the Philippines laden with riches from the Far East. These goods headed for the Spanish court were offloaded in Acapulco and carried overland by mules and wagons to Vera Cruz where they were again loaded onto ships and sailed to Spain. Crossing the Pacific was a dangerous proposition. Trade winds and currents were often cooperative but storms could arise and battered ships with weakened crews proved vulnerable to English pirates as they neared the coast of North American.

English pirates were not the only threat to Spain in North America. Her other great European enemy at the time was Russia and fisherman and whalers from Russia had been steadily making their way down the west coast of

North America. They built fortifications as they went, eventually coming as far south as Fort Ross just north of San Francisco. Spain feared England or Russia would settle California first. Once Spain did settle the coast the four presidios they built, in San Diego, Santa Barbara, Monterey and San Francisco, all had their cannon pointed at the sea, to fend off potential attack by foreign enemies.

Searching for a solution to safeguard the Manila Galleons from pirates, the Viceroy of New Spain settled on establishing a west coast port where the trade winds brought ships to land along California's coast. When the Viceroy failed to find settlers, his plan ran into trouble. Eventually a plan was designed to send the "Grey Friars," Franciscan padres, to create a system of missions whereby the indigenous population would be turned into gente de razon or "people of reason," civilized Spanish citizens. If he could not convince Spaniards to move to California the Indians would be turned into Spanish citizens. The padres would convert them to Roman Catholicism, teach them to speak Spanish and convince them to be loyal to the King.

In 1769 Father Junípero Serra and Captain Gaspar de Portolá set out from Baja California on their sacred expedition to Alta California. When they arrived in San Diego two months later only half of the party had survived. Their first objective was to build a mission and a presidio at San Diego. Eventually twenty-one Spanish missions were built in Alta California with the fourth being Mission San Gabriel Arcángel in 1771. A decade later Alta California's second pueblo was established and named El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Angeles del Río de Porciúncula. With a population of 44 impoverished pobladores, no port and no visible resources this little pueblo with a very long name was established on September 4, 1781. Early settlement was precarious but big things were in store for the little pueblo. And the rest, as they say, is history.



A 17th century map showing California as an island

30 Years Ago in The Grapevine, March 1986

Ken Veronda challenges the Society to "document the history of World War II, before the colors fade".

"SAN MARINO AT WAR"

For all those attending Ken Veronda's talk on "San Marino at War" in January, reminiscences crowded in until closing time at the San Marino Public Library. As Ken spoke, memories were jogged about such things as rationing, victory gardens, salvage drives, blackouts, neighborhood patrols, air raid brigades and even the mysterious "air raid."

As a youngster at Southwestern Military Academy, Ken has vivid memories of General George Patton's visits to San Marino during the war years. The General came to the Academy grounds to ride his horse. Perhaps many residents remember his last visit to San Marino, when he addressed a gathering from the steps of the City Hall.



Ken issued a challenge to the Historical Society to document the history of World War II in our community "before the colors fade" (as he put it.) He brought an "assignment" for anyone who was here during those years. If you would like to have a copy, please call (818) 792-9914.

Memorabilia from World War II would be welcomed by our Archivist, Monty Wilson, (818) 286-4252.

Michael White Adobe Update

Restoration of the Michael White Adobe on the San Marino High School Campus finally got underway during Spring Break. The work in progress consists of removing damaged adobe block in the lower portions of the east and north walls of the easterly room of the adobe which had been constructed in the 1840s, more than 100 years before the High School was built around it. The costs of the repairs are being borne by the Friends of the Michael White Adobe with assistance from grant funds provided by Supervisors Mike Antonovich and Zev Yaroslovsky. The work is being performed by Marc Sauer Construction and is expected to take several more weeks to complete. See the photograph for an outside view of the work being done.



Arnold Zahn San Marino Historical Society Scholarship Winner for 2016

At the April board meeting the members approved the granting of a \$200 scholarship to Arnold Zahn, a graduating senior at San Marino High School. His social studies teacher said the following:

Arnold Zahn is among the top students that I have encountered in a career spanning 34 years, thirty-two at SMHS. His insights represent those of a student well beyond his years. His passion for learning led to provocative classroom discourse. He is an articulate young man who possesses an uncanny ability to think on his feet. He is quite skilled at shaping any argument reflective of his considerable background. Arnold has certainly taken advantage of the educational experiences found at SMHS. Arnold will continue his studies at Columbia University next year.

2016 Calendar of Events

- May 11 6:30 p.m., "To Climb Gold Mountain", a film by Alex Azim that traces the story of four Asian women who immigrated to the US from the 1850s to the present, Crowell Public Library.
- May 14 12:30, "Terminal Island, Lost Communities of Los Angeles Harbor", lecture by Geraldine Katz, Huntington Westerners, Women's City Club 160 North Oakland Pasadena, \$25 luncheon. Call (626)345-9069 for reservations.
- May 19 7 p.m., Forbidden City USA: Chinese American Night Clubs 1936-1970, author lecture by Arthur Dong, Crowell Public Library. A book signing will follow.
- May 23 7 p.m. "How to Defuse a Bomb???" by Richard L. Graves, San Marino Historical Society Program Meeting, Crowell Public Library.
- October 24 7 p.m. Barth Room of the Crowell Public Library. San Marino Historical Society Program Meeting, TBA.

Thurnher House Hours

The Thurnher House is open on the first and third Sunday afternoon of each month from noon to 3:00pm. It is also open for tours by appointment. If you would like to visit the house on Tuesdays, please call 626-304-9375 or info@sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org for an appointment.

WEBSITE

Visit our website to learn more about your Society's programs and activities as well as viewing current and past issues of our newsletter – the "Grapevine":
<http://sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org/>