



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

October 2017

I hope that all of our members are doing well and have had an enjoyable summer. The San Marino Historical Society has been busy over the past four months. The docents have been providing visitors with tours at the Thurnher House and a journey through local and San Marino history. Our Archivist Judy Carter and our volunteers continue to perform their important historical archival work every Tuesday with great passion. The San Marino Historical Society participated again this year in the Fourth of July Parade along with many other civic organizations in an automobile owned and driven by our Vice President John Morris. At our May program, Cathy Brown, Executive Director of The Old Mill presented an excellent and informing program on the history of El Molino Viejo. We are appreciative and indebted to Cathy for her contribution to our society that evening.

As we move into the fall season, our society will provide you with what should be another educating program on Monday, October 23rd. The speaker will be Arcadia Historical Society board member and John Muir researcher Ed Anderson. The program will focus on John Muir's visits to southern California and San Marino. John Muir was the founder and first president of the Sierra Club. He was instrumental in the formation our national park system as well as the San Gabriel Timberland Reserve which later became the San Gabriel National Forest, then the part of the Angeles National Forest and the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument.

As I write this message to you, we are in the midst of a historic heat wave here in southern California. The La Tuna Fire is the largest fire in the history of the city of Los Angeles. All of this pales in comparison to one the worst natural disasters in our country's history, from the flooding in Houston as a result of Hurricane Harvey and its aftermath. Our best hopes and wishes go out to all of those affected by this terrible event.

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 and by appointment on Tuesdays.

(Continued on page 2)

The Grapevine

Published by the San Marino Historical Society

FALL 2017

SAN MARINO HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PROUDLY PRESENTS

Tracking John Muir Through San Marino
by
Ed Andersen



A native of Santa Cruz, Ed Andersen is a fourth generation Californian. He is a graduate of Santa Clara University, and served his country as a First Lieutenant in the United States Army. After his military service, he worked for 24 years in sales for The Procter & Gamble Company, and six years afterward for one of the world's leading career management companies. He has been married to his wife Debbie for 41 years and they have lived in Arcadia since 1977. Ed has always had an interest in John Muir, coming from formative boyhood experiences he had in Yosemite National Park. He is an avid book collector and amateur historian, and he is a member of the Board of Directors of the Arcadia Historical Society. He has published two books, most recently *Lessons of the Wild, Learning from the Wisdom of Nature*.

Recent Presentations on John Muir:

- Arcadia Public Library
- Los Angeles County Arboretum Foundation

(Continued on page 4)

Monday, October 23, 2017, 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
2017**

Officers

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

Committee Chairs

Archives Judith Carter
 Historian Linda Mollno
 Membership Wayne Carter
 Newsletter Chris Datwyler
 Programs John Morris
 Publicity..... Ed Tom
 Thurnher House Docents John Ryan
 Community Liaison..... Issac Hung
 Advisor Ken Veronda

Emeritus Board Members

Robert and Graziella Almanza
 Jim Elliott
 Marilyn Peck
 Peggy Winkler

Society Presidents (1974-2015)

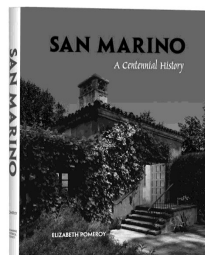
Midge Sherwood1974
 Mary Smith.....1976
 Jack Sherwood.....1978
 Ed Ford1980
 Graziella Almanza1982
 Laverne Smith1985
 Jeanne Imler1989
 Gary Fleming.....1991
 Lillian Campbell.....1993
 Marilyn Peck1995
 Paul Crowley1999
 Gene Dryden.....2004
 Benjamin Salvaty2008
 Ave Maria Bortz.....2008
 John Morris2010
 Judith Carter2014

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



President's Message

(Continued from page 1)

This is the former Park Superintendent's home and the docents look forward to having visitors.

If any member is interested in volunteering with our organization, please contact me at 626-287-3734 or jvryan@pacbell.net.

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

John Ryan
 President

**A New Year Begins
for the
San Marino Historical Society**

The Fall 2017 of the Grapevine is the first issue of this membership year. Please use the enclosed blue envelope to join or renew your membership. The society's current fiscal year begins on October 1, 2017 and ends on September 30, 2018. If you prefer to renew online, please go to the website:

sanmarinohistoricalsociety.org.

Members who have elected to receive a copy of the Grapevine via e-mail only will find a printed copy of this issue delivered by the USPS. Each fall we mail a copy to each individual household in San Marino and to the families in the San Marino Unified School District. We are unable to filter out the email only members. Subsequent issues will be sent by email. We thank you for your understanding.

We encourage you to renew or to join for the first time. Your membership allows us to continue to present outstanding programs on the history of San Marino, to field reference questions and to provide docent tours twice a month. If you belong to a community group that would like to schedule a special tour, that can be arranged by calling the office.

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/>

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 SAN MARINO, CALIFORNIA 91118-8222
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Preserving the Past: Can One Person Make a Difference?

By Linda Mollno, PhD.

In the case of murals painted on the walls of Stoneman School's Kindergarten room in 1930, the answer is a resounding YES!

One day in 1988 an art student arrived at Stoneman School looking for the Lucile Lloyd mural. No one knew anything about it. Vern Ishgar, the Director of Maintenance for SMUSD was curious. He and principal Bill Langton began looking and when they spotted a tiny bit of colored paint under the institutional beige wall in the kindergarten room they invited the Executive Board of the San Marino Historical Society to visit.

A preservation project was in the making. Over the next nine years Marilyn Peck, supported by the Historical Society, led a one-woman campaign to research and restore the mural. Peck painstakingly read old San Marino Tribune issues from the 1920s and 1930s on the microfilm reader at the San Marino Public Library. Finally, after two years, she discovered a two-sentence reference. She celebrated with the library staff that day.

Encouraged by Peck's discovery, the Historical Society provided funds to restore one section of the mural. They had faith community donations would appear if they could uncover and restore one section. Marilyn Peck now had two tasks. Find an art preservationist in California capable of taking on this project and research the mural artist Lucile Lloyd.

She learned that the architectural firm of Marsh, Smith & Powell commissioned Lloyd to paint the mural and frieze at Stoneman, a task completed in 1930. Lloyd, according to the architectural firm, painted murals in many public buildings, churches, businesses and private homes. The three large murals titled "California's Name" in the Senate Committee Room in Sacramento are Lloyd's work. A collection of her work resides in the archives at the University of California Santa Barbara.

Marilyn Peck's diligent research included interviewing a member of Lloyd's family.

An old photograph showed many changes in the Kindergarten room. There once was a lovely fireplace with a tiled painting in the center. Institutional fluorescent tubes replaced lovely old lighting fixtures and beautifully stenciled beams on the ceiling were covered over. Peck was determined to restore the mural and give this one piece of history back to the kindergarten room.

An extensive search brought Peck in contact with preservationist Nathan Zakheim, son of muralists and father of two artists. He agreed to take some paint samples and test them to determine if the mural could be saved. Results were positive and work began. Zakheim, his son Nartom and daughter Shakuntala worked in the evening, sometimes until midnight, to ensure students were not disturbed. The process was slow, tedious labor. Covering the mural was oil-based paint that did not adhere well to the wall – that was good news. Unfortunately, the mural paint had not attached itself well either and with every chip of industrial paint removed there was a distinct possibility of also removing the beautifully colored mural paint.



Zakheim credits his daughter with a simple, yet tricky solution. She used an X-acto knife, just the point, and with the precision of a gem-cutter flicked one tiny piece of paint off at a time. Marilyn Peck claimed the work took on a life of its own and she spent many evenings mesmerized by the process. The beige paint slowly disappeared and brilliantly colored woodland creatures, children, elves and flowers materialized. The images are Lloyd's interpretations of fairy tales and one of the best examples of her work. Zakheim also restored a Lloyd mural at Hollenbeck Middle School in Los Angeles but the Stoneman mural was his favorite.

The Historical Society held a reception for the community once Winken, Blinken and Nod, a gingerbread man and an elf were uncovered. They wrote letters, and spoke to city groups requesting donations. When the project became public knowledge some curious folks started chipping paint away in other areas of the room. It was clear that the mural was being vandalized and the effort to restore the entire piece moved into full gear.

Attending the Historical Society's final open house were former kindergarten students, unaware of the treasure beneath the paint. Based on their stories it was determined that the mural was painted over in the early 1960s. As anticipated, the open house brought in the necessary funding to complete the project. Today a plaque commemorates the project's completion in 1997 and the \$28,000 in contributions from the community.

This was a project of the San Marino Historical Society but its success was due to the determined work of Marilyn Peck. Although funding was uncertain, she believed so strongly in historic preservation she persevered until community spirit was awakened and financial support gained. Peck has a long history of community service but it is this one project – the Stoneman murals – that she often refers to as "her baby." One beautiful piece of San

(Continued on page 4)

Preserving the Past: Can One Person Make a Difference?

(Continued from page 3)

Marino history was preserved thanks to the efforts of "one" devoted member of the community.

In 1997 Marilyn Peck described her nine-year odyssey in *The Grapevine*. It was "filled with interesting people, hard work, much research and a great determination to get the job done and bring some justice to [the artwork of] Lucile Lloyd." Almost twenty years later a grateful community thanks this one lady for her tireless effort in this preservation. One person CAN make a difference.

Speaker...

(Continued from page 1)

- Arcadia Rotary Club
- Sierra Club of Pasadena
- San Gabriel, Church of Our Savior

The year was 1877 when a young Scottish vagabond named John Muir first arrived in Southern California via steamship in the harbor of Los Angeles. After spending the night at the old Pico Hotel, he sauntered along through the Arroyo Seco to the fledgling City of Pasadena, where he found lodging with a former college classmate. He was soon treated to a buggy ride through the prospering citrus groves of what was to become the City of San Marino. The people he met there and the sights he saw have been carefully recorded through Muir's writings and in the work of Muir's friend, pioneering photographer Carlton E. Watkins.

Ed Andersen is a book collector, historian and board member of the Arcadia Historical Society. He has been tracking John Muir for the past two decades and will present his findings on John Muir's travels through the area during those early days. In addition to Muir's colorful accounts of the San Gabriel Valley, Mr. Andersen's presentation will feature Watkins' invaluable photographs of early San Marino. When looking at history, there is always a "story behind the story" and this presentation will reveal why Muir visited us so many times during his later life.



John Muir

From the Archives

October, 2017, by Judith Carter

Archive volunteers have focused on several areas in the past few months. Julie Fedde finished the inventory of the Sherwood Collection and began updating the real estate collection. Judith Carter visited realtor open houses on Sunday afternoons to collect brochures of homes currently listed for sale in San Marino to add to the archives. Judy Newell and Jenny Cheng continued updating the obituary file and have established a spread sheet to make the file easy to use. The purchase of a new HP copier/scanner/fax machine has helped move that project along. Jenny has become proficient in entering information into Past Perfect, the database that allows us to track membership and acquisitions. Daniel Clarke is scanning photographs and historical postcards. He also trouble shoots issues related to the computer.

Over the years the archives collection has grown. We are now working to keep only material on the history San Marino before incorporation as well after it became a city. With that in mind, we have begun to donate materials to other historical societies. Recently, we gave a selection of books on California history from Midge Sherwood's library to the Huntington Westerners. Sherwood founded that group and it seemed fitting to give her books to them. They were originally from a donation made to the Crowell Library Book Shoppe by Sherwood's family.

Michael White Book

The Story of Michel White a California Rebel Pioneer 1801-1885 by Dorothy Jenkins

Ross is a fascinating story which provides a unique view of the San Gabriel Valley's development during this notable period in California history. The book may be purchased at the Crowell Public Library, San Marino Toy and Books or by contacting the San Marino Historical Society. The price of the book is \$27.20 for a hardcover copy including sales tax and \$19.57 for soft cover.



2018 Calendar of Events

January 22 Monday 7 p.m., San Marino Historical Society Presentation, Crowell Public Library, Barth Community Room, 1890 Huntington Drive, San Marino

Thurner House Hours

The Thurner 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.