



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers



**THE REVEREND
STEPHEN BOWERS
PIONEER CALIFORNIA
ARCHAEOLOGIST**

Arlene Benson, an archaeologist, who now resides in Nevada, was a long term resident of Simi Valley. Her masters thesis was on the field notes of the Rev. Stephen Bowers. A Methodist minister and an early archaeologist who excavated throughout the Chumash Indian area from 1875 through 1889. In 1997 she published *The Noontide Sun: The Field Journals of the Reverend Stephen Bowers, Pioneer California Archaeologist*, Ballena Press Anthropological Papers No. 44. The Rev. Bowers' work was largely financed by the Smithsonian Institute and the U.S. Department of Interior, under John Wesley Powell. His intent was to salvage the best Chumash artifacts for our national museum before private collectors and foreign archaeologists could get to them. In the end, much of what he collected was traded to foreign museums for materials from those countries. Besides artifacts, human skulls were of great interest to science at the time. While the Rev. Bowers' work did not involve modern field methods, indeed, it generally can be characterized more as the robbing of historic period graves, it must be remembered that the field of archaeology and the methodology we now know did not exist in the 1870s. Indeed, an educated person of the time would not have recognized the word

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Cold Creek Preserve Hike
Back row: Gene Clark, Tom Frye and John Sabol
Front row: Chuck Portoghesi, Bob Altieri, Margarita Marsh and John Downey

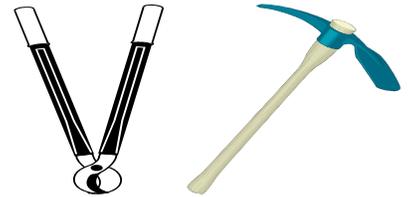


WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Susan Ko
Linda Jordan

**The November
RSTB CLUB MEETING**

The scheduled Membership Meeting will be held at 7:00 P.M. Wednesday, Nov. 17th. In the B-1 Room, 1692 Sycamore Drive in the Community Center



**BASIC TRAIL
MAINTENANCE
WORKSHOP**

A workshop designed for anyone who desires to learn basic trail maintenance skills at Franklin Canyon Park, sponsored by: SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS TRAILS COUNCIL, MOUNTAINS RECREATION & CONSERVATION AUTHORITY AND CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS.

When: Saturday, November 13, 1999

Where: Sooky Goldman Nature Center Franklin Canyon Park

Cost: \$15:00 per person, includes handbook and lunch.

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

The WORKSHOP will be limited to 30 participants. To register or questions about the workshop, contact Supervising Ranger Frank Padilla, Jr. at State Park Dispatch,

“archaeologist.” So, the Rev. Bowers was a pioneer in his profession.

His field notes, letters and unpublished manuscripts were copied by the Rev. Arthur Harrington from materials in the possession of De Moss Bowers on behalf of his uncle, John Peabody Harrington, the now famous linguist, archaeologist and anthropologist, who single handily collected more information about north American Indians than all of the other anthropologists of his time. His brother and Art Harrington’s father was Robert Harrington, a prominent pioneer farmer in Simi Valley. Art Harrington served the local Methodist community until his retirement. His daughter and her family still live in the Robert Harrington house on Wilson Road, just off of Harrington Road.

Rev. Bowers was deeply puzzled by what had happened to the Chumash Indians. He recognized that the ship logs of Juan Rodriques Cabrillo, who explored the coast in 1542, left the impression that the Santa Barbara Channel Islands and the Santa Barbara and Ventura county coasts were densely populated. Cabrillo and subsequent explorers describe coastal area that literally swarmed with Indians. He never came up with a satisfactory answer to his question.

What Rev. Bowers could not have known and what has only recently become understood in science is that the Indians of the new world lacked the immunity system to combat the effects of eastern hemisphere diseases. An infection as innocent as the common cold would impact an Indian more seriously than the person of European or of part European descent from which they contracted the disease. By the time the next two or three Indians had contracted the common cold, it became a killer disease. More serious ailments, such as small-

pox, diphtheria, measles, and influenza carried an even higher mortality. The reason for this high mortality is now understood. The effect, throughout both north and south Americas was a 75-80 percent mortality after the first sustained contact with persons of western culture. This same effect is still seen when the tribes of the Amazon River Basin are contacted and exposed to Eastern Hemisphere diseases. The inevitable result of the contact of people from the Eastern Hemisphere with the peoples of the Americas was the near extermination of those people. This holocaust, which devastated the indigenous peoples of the new world, would have happened even if the old world peoples had been content to only establish trade relations with the peoples of the new world. To a large extent it probably was the single most important factor that enabled the success of the invasion and conquest of the New World.

In his own words:

What has become of this once populous race? In Cabrillo’s day they swarmed in multiplied thousands on the islands south of Santa Barbara Channel and on the shore of the mainland. Intermediate voyagers confirm Cabrillo’s statement. There numerous village sites tell the same story. But now not one is left to tell the story of existence. The whole have melted away before the light of another civilization, as the snow melts before the noon-tide sun.

March 1878

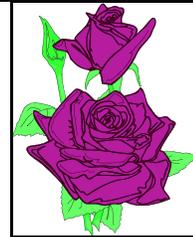
The Rev. Bowers interviewed an old Indian, named Omset, who had been removed from Santa Rosa Island

some 60 years before. Omset told him that the Indians on Santa Rosa Island were call Chumas. Bowers’ use of the name Chumash in his publications seemed to have resulted in the name being applied by others to the peoples of the entire linguistic group.

REI DISPLAY

REI in Northridge is now displaying our trail brochures for Mt. McCoy, Hummingbird, Chumash, Stagecoach, Rocky Peak and Corriganville. Drop by and pick some up next time you are out that way.

Colleen Janssen



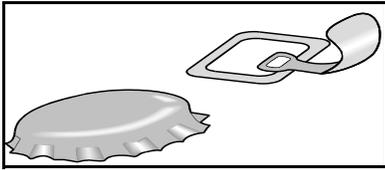
Thank you Sharon Hamilton!

Your donation is greatly appreciated as are the kind words you wrote us in your letter earlier this month. For those who don’t know

Sharon, she is the person that planted all the seeds to get our organization started in 1993. Sharon was the Park District Lisa to all the volunteers that helped the Park District. Her inspiration and dedication to our community helped us pave the way in creating the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers and we will always be grateful for that. We wish Sharon and her family all the best in Illinois.

Your friends, the RSTB

Lisa Klockenteger



TRAIL UNDER TAPO STREET BRIDGE

While the Tapo Street Bridge over the Arroyo Simi has been under construction, the Arroyo Simi multipurpose recreation trail has been blocked off. Well, the trail under the bridge is now open.

One of the more interesting things to see when you take that route, i.e., under the bridge, can be observed on the north side of the path just east of the bridge. Until 1962 a “burn dump” operated south of the old Santa Susana Airport. Domestic waste was deposited at the dump and was burned. Essentially, the fires burned continuously. It must have added a lot of haze to our valley. The community was small in those days but had begun the massive suburbanization that marked the early 1960s - adding nearly 10,000 people a year between 1962 and 1965. In 1960 the population of Simi Valley was 8,110 and by 1962 it was estimated to be 15,860. By 1965 the population of the valley had swollen to an estimated 43,016.

Now, both the airport and the burn dump are only memories. The airport is memorialized by a street named “Runway” - now part of an industrial park - and the end product of the burning

process is exposed in that north bank along the trail. Ash, bits of broken and fire damage glass bottles and other non-ephemeral materials are what remain of that by gone era when nearly all communities burned their waste.

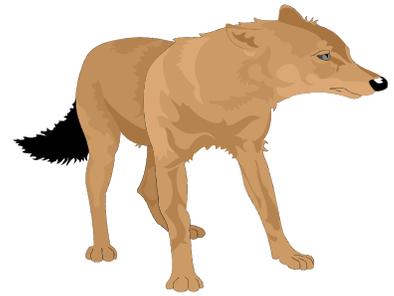
When I first observed the debris in the bank, I was a bit horrified. After all, responsible hikers do their bit to pick up the trash along our trails. Well, it simply won't be possible in this case. Modestly speaking, what you see is just the tip of the iceberg. I guess that it should best be appreciated as a marker of history. Who knows what might weather out of the bank?

Mike Kuhn

THE NOTCH

If you stand at the southern end of Tapo Street and look to the ridge to the immediate east, you will observe a notch in the ridgeline. Sometime, I believe that it was the early 1970s, a small aircraft crashed high on the western side of the ridge. The crash was associated with an operation around the Santa Susana Airport. The notch was created when a bulldozer was sent up from the more gentle eastern side of the ridge and cut the notch in order to retrieve the airplane. What happened to the airplane, I don't know. However, the notch is still there - a scar on the hillside - one with a story.

Mike Kuhn



THE COLLARED COYOTE

Even our wildlife isn't free any more. On October 15, 1999, I jumped a large coyote on the southern side of Simi Valley. To my surprise, it was wearing a heavy-duty baby blue collar and radio transmitter. I had unknowingly walk within 20 feet of the coyote a few minutes before. With my second pass, on the other side of the animal, it ran off in a hurry. If it's still transmitting, it can't hide.

It may have been part of a coyote tracking study that started in Oak Park early this year. One of those animals is said to have traveled into the Santa Susana Mountains via Santa Susana Pass.

Mike Kuhn



The End



NOVEMBER



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 HAPPY BIRTHDAY Don Hunt	4 Chumash Trail Hike 6 pm Read Schedule	5 HAPPY BIRTHDAY Jim Keppler	6 Eagle Spring Loop Hike, Meet at 8 am Read schedule
7 Rocky Peak Hike, 4 pm Read schedule	8	9 HAPPY BIRTHDAY Linda Jordan	10	11 Chumash Trail Hike 6 pm Read Schedule	12	13 Corriganville High Trail Loop Hike Meet at 8:30 am , Read Schedule
14 Rocky Peak Hike, 4 pm Read schedule	15	16 HAPPY BIRTHDAY Agnes Dachtler	17 RSTB Club Meeting 7 pm See page 1	18 Chumash Trail Hike 6 pm Read Schedule	19	20 Corriganville High Trail Work Party 8 am to Noon Read Schedule
21 HAPPY BIRTHDAY Pat Seifert Rocky Peak Hike, 4 pm Read Schedule	22 HAPPY BIRTHDAY Nona Young	23	24 HAPPY BIRTHDAY Arlene Altshuler	25 HAPPY BIRTHDAY Arther Stelzer Chumash Trail Hike 6 pm Read Schedule	26 HAPPY BIRTHDAY Isabel Johnson	27 Lang Ranch Exploratory Hike Meet at 8 am Read Schedule
28 Rocky Peak Hike, 4 pm Read schedule	29	30				

