



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



Mt. San Antonio Ski Hut December 3rd & 4th

6 MRT - Strenuous overnighter. (2,200' elevation gain)

It doesn't get much better than this! The Hut is at the base of Mt. San Antonio (Mt. Baldy) at 8,200'. We'll only do 3 miles the first day and we have all day to do it. Coming back the next day is all down hill. For those who want a real challenge, you can hike to the top of Mt. Baldy, using the Hut as your base camp.

We'll spend the night in the hut. All you need to bring is food, your sleeping bag, good boots and 2 - 3 quarts of water. We will cook our food on the hut's wood burning stove.

Space is limited. The cost is \$10 if you are a Sierra Club Member, and \$15 for non-members. To reserve your place, email markinthe park@sbcglobal.net.



RSTB LOGO T-SHIRTS

Are your old logo T-shirts worn out? We still have short sleeve, long sleeve, and sweat shirts in assorted sizes and colors. Prices are:

short sleeve \$12
long sleeve \$14
sweat shirt \$18



Please call Marty if you'd like to place an order: 805-526-4414.

HOLIDAY POTLUCK

Last year's party was so much fun, we're doing it again!

This year, the
**Rancho Simi Trail Blazers Holiday
Potluck Party**

will be held on
Wednesday, December 14th

from 6:30pm

at
Al and Marty Richards' home.

Please call Marty at
(805) 526-4414

For directions to their home, and to discuss what you should bring.

WHAT THE CHUMASH CALLED SANTA CATALINA ISLAND

According to Applegate (1974), page 189, the Chumash called Santa Catalina Island "huya", which meant "soapstone". The Indians on Santa Catalina Island traded goods made out of type of soapstone, i.e., steatite, with the Indians on the mainland and other islands, including with the Chumash. Items made out of Santa Catalina steatite are common throughout the Chumash area. I have personally found steatite items as far north as the Sacramento area. Steatite is a soft material, which is easily carved into effigies, bowls, and comals. Steatite is non-expansive when heated or cooled rapidly. When used as a frying pan, cooked items did not stick to the surface. Comals were heated in a fire and then doused in water in order to boil the water.

Mike Kuhn

PEDRO FAGES' DESCRIPTION OF CHUMASH DRESS

Pedro Fages accompanied the Portola expedition through the Santa Clara River Valley in 1769. His description of how the Chumash dress, rendered in 1775 to the Vicory, represents a time before outside influences had impacted the inhabitants of this area. His words, in translation:

"The men go clothed with a large cloak made of skins of rabbits, hare, fox or otter; the garment reaches to the waist, the captain only being allowed to wear it reaching to the ankle, without other mark of distinction. The women wear skirts, made and fitted uncouthly of deer hide, either colored or white, which do not extend below the knees.

Most of them are decorated with various trinkets chosen from the smaller sea shells and stones of various colors. They wear their hair tightly bound and gathered at the back, forming a short, heavy queue, with a very handsome adornment of shells; they also wear collars and bracelets of snail shells and little sea shells.

The few men who desire to cut their beards accomplish it, not without great pain, by using a pair of shells of the clam or large oyster, which, being fastened together on one side by nature, can be given a kind of opening and shutting motion on the other. Those who like to wear their hair short, do so by burning it close to their scalp - an uncomfortable and fatiguing operation..."

Mike Kuhn



THE TAPO STREET DUMP

In the good old days people got rid of their garbage any way they could. Well into the 1960s it was common to have back yard incinerators. Anything you could burn went into those incinerators. In the beginning there were no public dumps in rural areas like Simi Valley and no garbage collection firms. On the farm, you maintained your own dump. In more urban settings, with small lots, you would haul your garbage to an arroyo and let the winter runoff carry it away. The north side of the Arroyo Simi between Erringer Road and the Dry Canyon Flood Control Channel was one of those favorite dumping spots.

Eventually a “burn dump” was established on the northern side of the Arroyo Simi east of Tapo Street on the southern side of the private Santa Susana Airport. Garbage and other waste dumped at the landfill burned continuously. Metal, glass and ash was all that survived. Between the smoke from the landfill and from backyard incinerators, Simi was a smoky place. Eventually, a new landfill was established between the Arroyo Simi and the top of the hill south of the arroyo at the western end of Simi Valley. The new dump did not include burning.

In 1950 Simi Valley had a population of about 4,000. By 1960 the population had more than doubled to 8,110. Then, in just two years (1962) the population had shot up to 15,860 – massive suburbanization had begun. During the years 1962-1965 the population of the valley grew by nearly 10,000 people per year. By 1965 the population of the valley was 43,016.

During the 1960s the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District was formed. Backyard incinerators and burn dumps were about the first sources of air pollution to go.

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. The old dump site remained vacant for many years. The property was used for several years by grading contractor and heavy equipment operator George Harvout. Mr. Harvout continued to dump unwanted car bodies, old wash machines, tree trunks and other debris on the property, including in the Arroyo Simi. Eventually, the Ventura County Flood Control District initiated a project to channelize and straighten the Arroyo Simi from its confluence with the Arroyo Las Llajas to Tapo Street.

The property drew the interests of industrial developers. Soil test were completed on several occasions to determine the extent of the remains from the landfill and other unwanted materials and to determine whether or not hazardous materials were present. Subsequently the site was cleaned up, and it has been developed as an industrial park.

Mike Kuhn



SETTLEMENT OF CALIFORNIA

The Treaty of Paris (1763) ended the Seven Year War and left most of North America in the hands of England. The weight of the British Empire seemed to weigh down on the weakened New Spain. At the same time rumors of Russia’s entry into the north Pacific were passed on from New Spain to the Marques de Grimaldi, Spain’s first minister of state. In 1768 Grimaldi responded by letter to the viceroy of New Spain:

“The Russians have several times made attempts to open a route to America and have recently carried out their intention through navigating in the northern part of the Pacific. We are certain they have succeeded and that they have reached the mainland... The King has ordered me to inform Your Grace of the danger so that the governor named for California can be made alert and be given instructions with regard to the watchfulness and concern he should exercise in observing the attempts the Russians are able to make there, thwarting them however possible and providing immediate information of everything to Your Grace for His Majesty.”

Visitor-General Jose de Galvez of His Majesty’s Supreme Council of the Indies responded in 1768 by setting up a group to develop plans for the settlement of Alta California. Galvez first planned entry by sea from the port of San Blas to Monterey where a presidio was to be established. He also recommended an expedition by land to Monterey. The two expeditions were to meet up at Monterey and would gain more complete knowledge of Upper California. (It is interesting that only the name of Monterey is mentioned. The myth of the “noble harbor” begun by Vizcaino in 1602 was alive and well and would frustrate the early efforts at settlement. Monterey Bay provides an open anchorage – unprotected from the northwest winds. San Diego Bay was known but was too far south to serve as a barrier against the Russians. San Francisco Bay was unknown to the Spanish.)

The sea expedition was to start first, using three ships: the *San Carlos* (the flagship), the *San Antonio*, and the *San Jose*. The crew of the flagship included a crew, Lt. Pedro Fages and 25 Catalan soldiers, a military engineer, a surgeon and a cartographer. The ships were to sail to San Diego, where a presidio was to be established as a way station before going on to Monterey. The land expedition was to be divided into two parts. The first was commanded by an army captain with 27 soldiers, who would drive a large herd of cattle, horses and mules. The second was under the command of Gaspar de Portola, the governor of Baja California. Portola was the overall commander of the land expedition and would become the governor of Upper California. Both land and sea expeditions were proceeding as an invasionary force into an already settled world occupied by at least 200,000 natives. It seems a remarkable leap of faith that they thought they could pull it off.

The settlement of California was a military venture to protect Spain’s northern frontier. Nonetheless, Spain’s new world experience had taught the advantage of the pacification of the indigenous population through the conversion to the Catholic

faith. As a result, Fray Junipero Serra, Franciscan father-president of the Baja California missions was assigned to the land expedition in order to establish a mission system – first in San Diego, then in Monterey and then others as needed. The land expeditions did not get started until early 1769. The ships were built on the western coast of Mexico and were crude by European standards. While they departed the western coast of Mexico in 1768, they leaked badly and had to be immediately careened for repairs when they reached La Paz, Baja California. Food and religious supplies were stripped from the existing missions.

The San Carlos left Baja in February 1769 and the San Antonio left Cabo San Lucas in March. When the San Antonio arrived in San Diego Bay, no ship was there. The San Antonio had no soldiers on board in that they assumed that the San Carlos would arrive weeks before they did. The capitán of the San Antonio dared not land since the Native Americans had often proved hostile on the Mexican frontier. Finally, the San Carlos arrived on April 29, having drifted for weeks in the calm of the Horse Latitudes. In addition, the captain's ancient and inaccurate charts had resulted in his sailing as far north as the Santa Barbara Channel before realizing that he had gone too far. His crew was in a bad way due to scurvy and a contaminated water supply. When they arrived in San Diego Bay, most of the crew had to be carried ashore. Hospital tents were erected. Soon most of the crew of the San Carlos also came down with scurvy. The *San Jose* never appeared and is assumed to have been lost to the sea. The well organized military expedition was fighting for its very survival.

The two arms of the land expedition arrived on May 14 and June 29. Father Serra, suffering from severe foot sores from which he never fully recovered, did not arrive until July 1. The expedition was near collapse. Nonetheless, Portola insisted on departing for the fabled Monterey Bay about two weeks after he arrived at San Diego Bay – taking nearly every abled body man with him. Fray Juan Crespi represented the Franciscan contingent on the Portola expedition.

Portola followed a route roughly along the present day U.S. Route 101, crossing the Santa Lucia Mountains and passing down the Salinas Valley to Monterey Bay. The expedition had fulfilled its goal – but did not recognize Monterey Bay as the body of water described by Vizcaino back in 1602. They continued north. Finding further progress blocked by San Francisco Bay and running low on supplies, Portola returned to San Diego, arriving on January 24, 1770. Interestingly, Portola was so fixed on finding Monterey Bay, as described by Vizcaino, that he failed to recognize the attributes of San Francisco Bay – seeing it only as a barrier to finding Monterey Bay. Fray Crespi did recognize its potential as a great harbor.

At San Diego, Serra had founded his first Alta California mission but had failed to gain a single convert. The men who had remained in San Diego were still sick and dying. The mood was dismal. In February, Portola sent the San Antonio back to Baja California for supplies. When it returned in March, he sent Serra, Crespi and some soldier in the *San Carlos* to Monterey, while he, accompanied by 12 men, set out

to retrace their previous route north. Portola finally recognized Monterey Bay as that “noble harbor” identified by Vizcaino. As a harbor, it wasn’t much. A presidio and a mission were constructed and dedicated by June 1770. Portola bestowed the governorship of Alta California on Pedro Fages and returned to Mexico. Serra and the military commander at presidio, San Carlos Borromeo, succumbed to bickering, and in 1771 Serra moved his mission south to the Carmel Valley, along with the few Indians that he managed to convert, in order to remove them from the corrupting influences of the soldiers at the presidio. The Franciscans simply failed to accept the political reality that the military was in control.

In this atmosphere of death, suffering and internal friction, Spain’s foothold in California was tenuously established. Two tiny settlements, some 400 miles apart, inadequately garrisoned and poorly equipped, were set in the midst of a potentially overwhelming native population, which was notably reluctant to accept Catholicism. These two settlements were 240 miles north of the nearest Spanish settlement in Baja California, which was in turn isolated from the nearest settlement in Mexico. Portola’s report back to the Visitor-General Galvez suggested that if Russia wanted California, perhaps Spain should let her have it.

By the beginning of 1775 there were about 80 soldiers, 20 helpers, four blacksmiths, four carpenters, and three or four muleteers in all of Alta California distributed between the presidios of Monterey and San Diego and the garrisons for the Carmel, San Antonio, San Luis Obispo, San Gabriel missions. There were about two dozen married men, their wives and some children. There were also about 170 colonists, as well as 32 neophytes from northern Mexico. Of the soldiers, 43 were in northern California at San Luis Obispo, San Antonio and Monterey, 39 in southern California – 31 of which were in San Diego and eight at San Gabriel. In January 1776 Juan Bautista de Anza arrived in San Gabriel with approximately 200 soldiers, colonist, wives and children. This contingent nearly doubled the number of settlers from Mexico in Alta California.

Among those new arrivals that accompanied de Anza were: Santiago de la Cruz Pico (a soldier – later to be granted El Rancho Simi and the grandfather of Pio Pico, the last Mexican governor of California), age 38, his wife Maria Jacinta Bastida, age 26, and children Jose Maria, age 7, Jose Dolores, age 6, Francisco Xavier, age 5, Jose Miguel, age 4, Jose Patricio, age 3, Maria Gertrudis Tomasa, age 2, and Maria Josefa, 15 (a daughter of Santiago’s first wife). Most had walked to California. Some of these family members would be the first Spanish settlers in Simi Valley, though none would occupy the rancho before 1795.

By 1790 there were about 1,000 non-Indians in California. By 1794 the number had increased to about 1,250. In 1800, the number had increased to about 1,790. Between 1790 and 1820 nearly all of the increase in population was due to natural increase (i.e., births over deaths) with some new arrivals as well as departures.

Mike Kuhn



RSTB Calendar

December 2005



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	2	3 Mt. San Antonio Ski Hut See Schedule
4 Mt. San Antonio Ski Hut Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule Happy Birthday Linda Travis	5	6 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	7	8 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	9 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Judy Garris	10 Simi Peak via Long Canyon See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> Robert Galletly
11 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule Happy Birthday Rae Knapp	12	13 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule Happy Birthday Gary Valle Bill Cespedes	14 Holiday Pot Luck See Page 1	15 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	16	17 Work Party Chumash Trail See Schedule
18 Rocky Peak 4pm hike See Schedule	19	20 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	21 <i>Happy Birthday</i> Tom Travis	22 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	23	24 Rocky Peak via Hummingbird See Schedule
25 Christmas Day First night of Chanukah No Hike	26	27 Long Canyon 6:30pm hike See Schedule	28	29 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	30	31 Sandstone Peak See Schedule



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

Hiking Schedule



REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES

(Rain cancels – No hikes on holidays)

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak

Meet 4pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 4.8 MRT)

Tuesday Evening - Long Canyon

Meet at 6:30pm in Long Canyon parking lot. Directions: Take First Street South. Continue when the road's name changes to Long Canyon Road. The parking lot is at the intersection of Long Canyon Road and Wood Ranch Pkwy. (Moderate, 3.0 MRT)

Thursday Evening - The Chumash Trail

Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan Dr. Trailhead is at the end of Flanagan Dr. (Strenuous, 5.2 MRT)

DECEMBER HIKES

December 3rd – 4th, Mt. San Antonio Ski Hut**

6 MRT - Strenuous overnighter. (2,200' elevation gain)

See page 1 of the newsletter for details. Meet at 8 AM, near Donut Delite on the corner of Madera and Royal. Adventure Pass is required. We'll cancel if there is bad weather, so please be prepared for a substitute hike.

December 10th – Simi Peak (via the Long Canyon trailhead)**

9 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1300' elevation gain/loss)

Directions: take 118 Fwy to First Street exit. Take First Street south (it becomes Long Canyon Rd) approx. 4 miles, until it intersects Wood Ranch Parkway. Meet at 8 AM at the intersection of Long Canyon Rd and Wood Ranch Parkway. Bring 2 - 3 quarts of water and lunch. Wear boots.

December 17th – Chumash Trail Work Party

Help maintain one of the most traversed trails in Simi Valley. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flanagan. Trailhead is at the end of Flanagan. We will be working from 8am – noon. Tools will be provided. Bring 2 - 3 quarts of water, hat, sunscreen, and gloves to work on the trail.

December 24th – Rocky Peak (via the Hummingbird Trail)

8 MRT - Moderate to Strenuous (1750' elevation gain)

Meet at 8 AM at the trailhead. From Highway 118 Simi Valley Freeway, exit on Kuehner Drive and go north. Trailhead is on the right. Bring 2 quarts of water and lunch. Wear boots.

December 31st - Sandstone Peak (via the Mishe Mokwa Trail)**

7 MRT - Moderate (1500' elevation gain/loss)

See a wide variety of vegetation, spectacular rock formations, and the highest peak in the Santa Monica Mountains. Meet at 8AM near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Bring 2 quarts of water and lunch. Wear boots.

** These hikes are not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District.

For more information on hikes/work parties, contact the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District at 805-584-4400.

Special Note: - On all hikes and work parties, bring water and wear lug-soled boots. Hikes will be cancelled if it rains.

<http://www.simitrailblazers.com>

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation

Executive Chair:	Mike Kuhn	HM (805) 583-2345	hannahmike@adelphia.net
Treasurer:	Peter Ely	HM (805) 523-1409	
Park District Liaison:	Colleen Janssen	WK (805) 584-4453	volunteers@rsrpdu.us
Work Parties Chair:		*** OPEN ***	
Hiking Chair:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	markinthepark@sbcglobal.net
Vice Hiking Chair:	John Sabol	HM (805) 583-2541	jtsabol@sbcglobal.net
Website:	Mark Gilmore	HM (805) 529-5581	markinthepark@sbcglobal.net
Ways & Means Chair:	Marty Richards	HM (805) 526-4414	
Publicity Chair:	Judi Sevcik	HM (805) 581-4340	judisevcik@earthlink.net
Newsletter Editor:	Arlene Altshuler	HM (805) 581-9735	arlene.altshuler@mindbox.com

—cut out and return with your payment—

MEMBERSHIP

Please enroll me as a New () or Renewing () member of the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers for the annual donation fee of:

Single.....\$10

Family..... \$15

Name(s) _____ Birth Mo. _____ Day _____

Address _____

Email Address _____ Phone wk/hm _____

How did you find out about the RSTB _____

Please make out tax deductible member dues check for the year to:

“Rancho Simi Foundation” mail it to “RSTB, P.O. Box 630445, Simi Valley, Ca 93063

Please list any extra names and birthdays of more than one member (Month & Day Only)



U.S. Postage

RSTB
P.O. Box 630445
Simi Valley, CA 93063-0399