



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers



SANTA SUSANA

Anglo-American settlement in Simi Valley initially occurred on individual farms, primarily at the western end of the valley and around the Simi town center where artesian water was available and water elsewhere could be lifted with windmills. The impetus for settlement had been the promise of the coming of the railroad.

Railroads were the primary means of long distance transportation in the west up until well into the 20th Century. This was because there were no public roads at all until the last decade of the 19th Century, and automobiles were owned by few farm families. There were only "use roads". No one maintained the use roads, and they represented a slow, uncertain form of transportation. Plans for the railroad into and eventually through Simi Valley meant that crops other than grain and livestock could be marketed. The promise of the railroad meant that land holdings could be subdivided and sold as farms and town centers.

The railroad came into Simi Valley from the west in 1900, however the connection with Chatsworth via tunnels under Santa Susana Pass was not completed until 1904. Railroad stations were under consideration at the Strathearn Siding (just west of where Madera Road now crosses the railroad) and in the Tapo Street area. A free station site was offered to the Southern Pacific Railroad Company near present day Tapo Street. The railroad grade is nearly flat at that location, rendering it possible to start a standing train moving in either direction – something that would have been difficult at the Strathearn Siding. The new station was named Santa Susana.

A small community grew up along the

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Mark Gilmore
Kevin Gallagher
Carrie McCline
Bruce Severy

SIERRA BACKPACKING TRIP

This year's Sierra backpacking trip will be to the

John Muir Wilderness
on

Friday Sept 5th - Monday Sept 8th.

Due to trail quotas, there are only 15 openings available. RSVPs can be made by sending me \$5/person, on a first come, first serve basis.

Arlene Altshuler
Hiking Chair

RSTB CLUB MEETING

The monthly club meeting will be held at the
Community Center
Room B-1
1692 Sycamore Drive
At 7:00 PM
On

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

JULY WORK PARTY

Six Rancho Simi Trail Blazers turned out to finish work on the Lower Stagecoach Trail out of Corriganville. We drove up to the top trailhead at Lilac Lane and the crew split up, some going down-trail and working up and others working from the top down. It was hot and humid as we removed a lot of mustard and brush overgrowing the trail. One narrow area choked with Poison Oak was also widened.

We completed the clearing of the Lower Stagecoach. With some time left, we moved up to the Upper Stagecoach trail and found it was also choked with mustard. We did a quick pass doing major lopping only. The mustard will have to wait for another day.

We worked from 7:00 AM to 11:00 AM and met at Chuy's after finishing. Many thanks to the following workers:

Arlene Altshuler, Alan Cueba, Mike Kuhn, Louise Pomes, John Sabol and Mark Scheele.

There will be no work party in August.



**SIMI VALLEY'S HISPANIC PERIOD AS REFLECTED IN PLACE NAMES
(Part 2)**

Cont. from Page 1, Col. 1

Simi Valley's Spanish and Mexican period of settlement involved very few Hispanic settlers. Most of the people who lived in Simi Valley prior to the 1880s were Chumash Indians. Because the dominant culture was Spanish speaking, names on the land, with few exceptions, were expressed in Spanish. Many names, of course, reflect Chumash Indian names, even when in a Spanish context. What follows is a listing of those names that we know and the meaning of those names, at least to the extent that we know them. Many of the names have been taken directly from the 1887-1888 survey map of Rancho Simi that was prepared by Stow and Power for the Simi Land and Water Company as part of the real estate offering of Thomas Bard and Daniel McFarland and five others.

Bus Canyon, which comes down out of the Bridle Path Home Owners' Association's open space area, was called "*Canada Aliso*". Here the name refers to a single sycamore tree.

Stow and Power list the lowlands where the Wood Ranch Golf Course is as "*Canada Verde*". The name means green canyon. Those who remember the area before it was developed as a golf course, know that it was green year round. Mr. Wood had only to blade out a basin four or five feet deep to have a watering hole for his cattle.

Stow and Power label present day Happy Camp Canyon as "*Canada de Somis*". Happy Camp Canyon was the location of the Chumash Village of "*Kimishax*" (*Quimisac*). The canyon was the trail from the Chumash village of "*Somna*" (present day Somis) to the village of "*Kimishax*".

Stow and Power show Alamos Canyon as "*Canada de los Alamos*", so the name of the canyon has not changed. "*Alamos*" is another name for sycamore trees. Today, one lone but massive sycamore tree is present just north of the freeway in Alamos Canyon. Many more sycamore trees are present about a mile to a mile

and a half up the canyon.

Brea Canyon was known as "*Canada de la Brea*". "*Brea*" references the oil and tar seeps in the canyon. Those seeps were important to the Chumash and to the Spanish because the material was used as a sealant and for other uses.

"*Tierra Rajada*", as in Tierra Rejada Valley, means cracked earth and reflects the heavy clay soils that have developed on the Conejo Volcanics Formation. Sometime since 1888 the spelling of the name was changed to Tierra Rejada. The name is derived from the Chumash Indian name for the Tierra Rejada Valley, which also means "cracked earth".

The marshy area northeast of Chain Drive off of Easy Street is labeled on the 1842 *diseño* as "*Cienegas del Tejon*", i.e., badger marsh.

The name "*Cuchillo de Huarace*" appears on the Stow and Power plat and in the 1915 Moran geological report. As shown elsewhere, this was the name for the landform feature that we now call "Whiteface". The correct Spanish spelling would be "*Cuchilla de Huarache*", which means sandal escarpment, and probably is another carryover from the Chumash name for the landform. The implication is that if you want to take the trail over the escarpment (The trail is still there.), you should wear sandals.

Finally, there is the "*Tripas*". The term "the *Tripas*" refers to a large valley deep within the Santa Susana Mountains between Whiteface on the south and Oak Ridge on the north. The term was used by both the Spanish and Harrington's Chumash informants as though it was a district or distinct geographical area in the same way that they referred to "the Simi", "the Tapo", "the Hummingbird", and "the Verde" as districts. On the face of it, the term refers to the intestines of an animal. However, another meaning refers to the insides of anything. In this case, it may refer to the interior space, i.e., valley, within the Santa Susana

southern side of Los Angeles Avenue (the main road through the valley) near the station. By 1907, according to R.E. Harrington [*Early Days of Simi Valley* (1961), page 28], Santa Susana consisted of only four buildings – the train station, a section house, a grain warehouse owned by the Southern Pacific Milling Company, and a one-room school. In 1912, the owner of the "town center", H. J. Crinklaw, built a large masonry store and hotel building using sandstone from the eastern end of the valley. Located on the southern side of Los Angeles Avenue, the building eventually had to be torn down following severe damage during the Sylmar Earthquake in 1971. About 1915 a new brick two-room school house was built. Some homes and other buildings followed. An oil strike in Tapo Canyon in 1913 stimulated development in the town center.

Eventually, the Marr family (they had purchased the Marr Ranch and the eastern side of what is now Tapo Street) tried unsuccessfully to subdivide an expanded town center. Eventually, some development did expand up either side of "Tapo Road". So, the railroad became the reason for a town center to develop around the intersection of Tapo Street and Los Angeles Avenue. However, the rise of public roads and concrete and asphalt paving lead to the decline of the railroad as a means to move people and crops in and out of the valley. The train depot closed and, as an act of historic preservation, was eventually moved the Santa Susana Knolls Park. To a degree, the presence of two town centers, one at Simi and the other at Tapo Street, has led to a lack of any town center in Simi Valley at all. The City has made a major effort to revitalize the commercial districts along Los Angeles Avenue west of Erringer Road and Tapo Street south of Cochran Street, while providing for a new commercial district north of the freeway along Tapo Canyon Road abutting the Civic Center. However, none of

CHUMASH CLOTHING ACCORDING TO FERNANDO

[from Travis Hudson (ed.), *Breath of the Sun*(1980), p.5]

“Every year in Mission times the priests gave cloth to the Indian women to make dresses. The yearly ration was some cloth for a silk shawl, eight feet long and four feet wide of various colors and fringed [The silk shawls were derived from the Manila trade.], a piece of cloth for sheets, and a piece of cloth, maybe two, three, or four yards long, also of various colors. The nuns (unmarried women) were given better cloth, for they belonged to the priests. Each man received three yards of yellow muslin for a G-string, and six yards for a sheet for wrapping about himself. A man also received a serape, with a hole to put his head through. Children were given, say, two yards of yellow muslin for G-strings, according to the needs of the child. The priests gave the vaqueros a saddle, a vest, pants, jacket, and several yards of yellow muslin for sheets and for handkerchiefs. [The clothing consisted of coarse wool or sack-cloth. The men wore a short tunic, called a *coton*, G-string (about 1.5 yards long by 0.5 yards wide) and a blanket. The women also received a blanket, a white cotton blouse, and a woolen skirt, the latter in any of several colors. Alcaldes (An *alcalde* was an Indian official or the mission, elected by the neophytes each year. His duties consisted of acting as justice of the peace as well as bring before priest anyone accused of a crime. He also carried punishment and was exempt from corporal punishment) received the same type of clothing that the Spanish or Mexican people wore. This included leggings, hat, boots, and a *manga* blanket.] The vaqueros were the only ones who wore short pants; the Indian men ...wore only a G-string and a blanket. It was only in 1847 that Indian men in Ventura began to wear pants, and then they wore the G-string underneath.”

In most cases Indians possessed only one set of clothing. Men, for example, washed themselves with a sweat, washed their G-string, then returned to the *temescal* (sweat house) while their G-string dried.

The pattern of clothing reflects the strict

class structure in colonial Spain and Mexico. Indian men wore G-strings, while the Spanish and later Mexicans wore pants. Vaqueros, while Indians, were of higher status, having horses, as were the Alcaldes. Indians went bare-foot, while mestezos wore sandals and Spaniards and Mexicans wore shoes or boots (vaqueros were an exception). If Indians were caught making sandals for

NELSON BIGHORN SHEEP OF NORTHERN VENTURA COUNTY



Nelson, i.e., desert, bighorn sheep range through northern Ventura County.

Over-hunting and perhaps other environmental factors led to their demise here. Between 1985 and 1987 the California Department of Fish and Game relocated 37 bighorn sheep from the San Gabriel Mountains north of Los Angeles to northern Ventura County, that is south of Lockwood Valley and north of the Sespe River. High winds that followed the original transfer scattered the herd, and by the mid-1990s fewer and fewer sheep could be located. High predation by mountain lions and bobcats had been anticipated. The high country where they were released is generally covered by old-growth chaparral, much of which has not burned for 70 years. Any population census is hampered by the near impossibility of seeing the sheep in the dense brush. While the brush provides good cover for the sheep, like all old-growth vegetation, it does not provide good forage.

The most recent survey by land and by air spotted 22 sheep – six lambs, 11 ewes and five rams. This is good news since the dense cover is thought to have resulted in a significant undercount.

The U.S. Forest Service has formulated plans for controlled burns, probably in the Cobblestone Mountain area, in order to improve forage. The results of



Santa Susana Tar Plant (Hemizonia minthornii) is blooming this time of year. Although common on the Rocky Peak trail and occasionally found in the Santa Monica mountains, this plant is on the California rare plant list.



This tarantula was found on Rocky Peak during one of our Sunday evening hikes.

growth chaparral, approximately 20 percent of the original cover, for wildlife cover. Nutrients now bound up in the mature vegetation would be released and would contribute to a much enriched vegetative landscape from which all large species would benefit.

Now comes the Wolf fire of June 2002. Thousands of acres burned in a portion of the range for the bighorn. Whether the Forest Service will carry through with controlled burns in the range of the bighorn sheep over the next few years is uncertain at this time. Certainly the Wolf fire will benefit the sheep and other wildlife species.

One day one of us may get lucky and spot a bighorn while backpacking in the great outback of Ventura County. I for one would cherish the moment.



August

2003



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1	2 Cheesebro Cyn See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Elfriede Cespedes</i>
3 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	4	5	6	7 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	8	9 Ferndale See Schedule
10 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Bob Altieri</i>	11	12 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Kevin Gallagher</i>	13	14 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule	15	16 Las Virgenes See Schedule
17 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	18	19	20 RSTB Meeting See Page 1 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Mark Scheele</i> <i>Tom Frye</i>	21 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Al Richards</i>	22	23 Newton Cyn See Schedule
24 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule	25	26 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Frieda Vandenberg</i> <i>Laura Altieri</i>	27 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Kristina Elaine</i>	28 Chumash Trail 6pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Jean Whittle</i>	29	30 China Flat See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Robin Stone</i>
31 Rocky Peak 5pm hike See Schedule <i>Happy Birthday</i> <i>Jack Archibald</i>						



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

Hiking Schedule



- August 2 Cheesebro Canyon to Sulfur Springs**
Easy to moderate 6 MRT hike. Walk among the oaks and follow a stream to Sulfur Springs. Bring two quarts of water and snack, wear boots. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. Meet 7am near
- August 3 Sunday Evening Hike**
Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 5 MRT)
- August 7 Thursday Evening Hike**
Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flana-
- August 9 Ferndale**
Approx. 6 MRT, moderate hike through St. Thomas Aquinas College to Ferndale. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. Meet 7am near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and Royal. Wear boots,
- August 10 Sunday Evening Hike**
Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 5 MRT)
- August 14 Thursday Evening Hike**
Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flana-
- August 16 Las Virgenes Trail**
Moderate 4.8 MRT hike with 500' elevation gain/lose. Good views of the Santa Monica mountains. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District. Meet 7am near Donut Delite at the corner of Madera and
- August 17 Sunday Evening Hike**
Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 5 MRT)
- August 21 Thursday Evening Hike**
Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flana-
- August 23 Newton Canyon**
Moderate 6 MRT hike with approx. 1200' elevation loss/gain. This hike is not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park district. Bring snack and 2 - 3 qts of water, bug juice. Wear boots. Meet 7am near Donut Delite at the
- August 24 Sunday Evening Hike**
Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 5 MRT)
- August 28 Thursday Evening Hike**
Meet at 6pm at Chumash trailhead. Directions - take 118 Fwy to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite, turn right on Flana-
- August 30 China Flat to Simi Peak**
Strenuous, approx. 6 MRT with 1000' elevation gain. Bring 2 - 3 quarts of water and a snack, wear boots. Directions: take 101 Fwy to Lindero Canyon. Follow Lindero Canyon to King James Court. Park on one of the side streets near the arroyo,
- August 31 Sunday Evening Hike**
Meet 5pm at Rocky Peak trailhead at the end of Rocky Peak Rd off Santa Susana Pass. (Strenuous, 5 MRT)

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.

RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS

EXECUTIVE CHAIR:	MIKE KUHN	HM (805) 583-2345, WK (805)583-6776
TREASURER:	PETER ELY	HM (805) 523-1409
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WORK PARTIES CHAIR:	JOHN SABOL	HM (805) 583-2541
WORK PARTIES VICE CHAIR:	BOB ALTIERI	HM (805) 526-6749
HIKING CHAIR:	ARLENE ALTSHULER	HM (805) 581-9735
WAYS & MEANS CHAIR:	MARTY RICHARDS	HM (805) 526-4414
WAYS & MEANS VICE CHAIR:	CONNIE ANKROM	HM (805) 526-2747
COMMUNICATION / PUB.CHAIR:	ARLENE ALTSHULER	HM (805) 581-9735

-----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 630399, Simi Valley, Ca 93063-0399



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