



Rancho Simi Trail Blazers

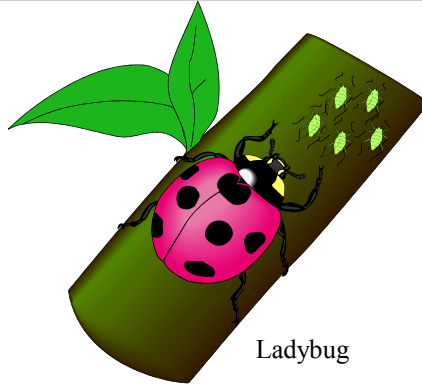


THE NORIEGA TRAIL

In 1858 the federal government surveyed Simi Valley and other areas to establish the Township and Range system, complete with section numbers. The survey was horizontally precise. The map is exhibited on the wall of the north-most room of the Simi Adobe at the Strathearn Historic Park. At the time of the survey, Jose De la Guerra still owned El Rancho Simi. On the map is shown a trail between the Simi Adobe ("Simi Ranch House") and the De la Guerra Adobe ("Noriegas Tapo"). The trail ran down Tapo Canyon, then westerly north of the first ridge on the northern side of the valley, just below the Whiteface escarpment ("Cuchilla de Huarache"), down Dry Canyon to its mouth (north of the Simi Valley Hospital), then hugged the foot of the mountains westerly to the mouth of Sand Canyon (west of Erringer Road), and finally south-westerly to the Simi Adobe ("Francisco de la Guerra y Noriega").

This trail represented the shortest route between the two adobes and included several sources of water between Tapo Canyon and the head of Dry Canyon. It also was the most logical and well watered route between the historic Chumash villages of *Ta'apu* and *Simi'*.

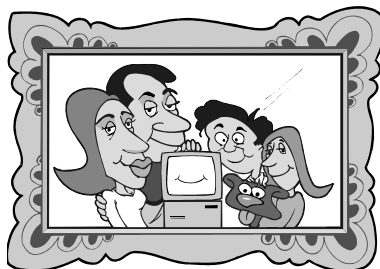
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Ladybug

RSTB CLUB MEETING

**The monthly club meeting will be held at the Community Center
In the B-1 Room
1692 Sycamore
At 7:00 PM
On
Wednesday
June 21th.**



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Ray Martinez
Sandy Sumpter
Carl, Cynthia, Carrie &
Heather Brewer**

Sespe Creek Backpacking Trip

The weather was expected to be warm. Each day prior to our Friday, May 19th, departure we scanned the 5-day weather forecast. No doubt about it. Temperatures into the nineties. By the time we met at Kmart parking lot, fought the traffic out of town, and drove to the Ojai ranger station, half the morning had passed. We paid for National Forest parking passes and obtained the free campfire permit, signed in, and were off. Route 33 north of Ojai winds up into the mountains through Wheelers Gorge. Countless six foot bushes of Spanish Broom covered with yellow blossoms lined the roadway as we reached the summit and turned East on Sespe River Road. The trailhead at the roads end at Rose Valley Gun Club was empty but for one vehicle. Soon two gals arrived with a horse trailer and prepared for the trip into the canyon. It was 11AM and getting warm.

We numbered thirteen. Mike Kuhn, John Sabol, Arlene Altshuler, Bill Cespedes, Martin DeGoey, Marguerita Marsh and her friend from Lancaster, Terry Conrad and Dee his 12 year old daughter, Jodine Downey and 16 year old son, Ken, Carol Tucker, Gary Cremeans, and myself. It was a span of ages into the seventies.

The trail formerly started at Lion Camp, another 1 1/2 miles, but the road is now closed to vehicles to protect the endangered Arroyo Toad. It was a pleasant walk downhill. Mike warned us the walk back might not be so pleasant! The panorama of the Sespe stretched out to the east and what a view it was. Enormous white,

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Since nearly all of the residents of Simi Valley at that time were Chumash Indians, it undoubtedly followed the path of the Indian trail between the two villages. The increased opportunity for water was important, because during the prehistoric period, the primary source of transportation was by foot. Walking remained a primary source of transportation during the Spanish/Mexican period.

A trail seems to have existed from that trail near the divide between Tapo and Dry canyons which extended to the north over the first saddle in the Whiteface escarpment (Cuchilla de Huarache) east of Whiteface itself. That trail represented the shortest way into "the Tripas," which refers to the interior valley in the mountain range. A rock cairn of unknown origin is located near the trail junction.

The Chumash name of the trail between the villages was probably "Ta'apu" after the village that it went to. After all, Ta'apu was the largest village in the area, with a population that may have been about twice that of Simi'. The village of Ta'apu was the only village in Simi with a resident chief ("wot"). Then, too, there was already a Simi' Trail, which ran between the Conejo Valley and the village of Simi'.

The Lost Canyon Golf Courses now occupy that route off of Tapo Canyon and through Dry Canyon. So, you have to be a golfer to see it.



sun bleached rock formations extending hundreds of feet long. Lush, green forests covering the mountains, especially the north facing slopes. After an hours walk to Lion Camp the remnants of the campgrounds, abandoned out houses and a few grills, were choked with weeds. The rush of water grew louder as we walked through the grounds to the trailhead.

Down a steep embankment was the swiftly flowing Sespe Creek. Some donned sandals and others hopped rocks. It took awhile to get everyone across. It was a scene we would repeat many times this weekend. The path was well defined, having at one time been open to four-wheel drive vehicles. Now, only foot traffic is permitted (includes horses). Along about 3:30 just as I was looking to take an extended break and find a shady spot under a grove of Oak trees to regain my strength it was announced "WE'RE HERE!" The cars were five miles behind us.

Bear Creek Camp is an ideal backpacker's destination. Situated between the trail and the Sespe is an area that could comfortably hold 20 or so tents. A relatively flat rock eight feet tall and twenty feet in diameter provides comfortable seating above the sandy soil and dominates the camp. A substantial fire ring and flat rocks for the stoves are at the base of the rock as is a log to rest on. Going down to the creek, we found the most beautiful swimming hole! Over a hundred feet from the tumbling waters at the head to the shallows at the end with places as deep as 7 feet but mostly from waist to shoulders and a large flat rock in the middle to lay on and get some sun. Trout to 12 inches and bluegill swam cautiously by. We also spotted catfish and watched a turtle swimming upstream, staying close to the bottom.

All the tents and bivies were set up in the shade of trees, stoves set out, food hanging ropes tossed over limbs, and then into the swimming hole. At first it was chilly and some had a harder time than others getting in but once immersed and moving around the water temperature was comfortable and oh so refreshing after the hike. We spent the rest of the day lounging about and filtering water and rehashing the adventure-some water crossings of the hike in.

Friday night was cool but not cold. A cloudless sky allowed many of us to leave the fly off the tent. During the night some were awakened as the full moon passed directly over head and made you feel like you were sleeping under a street light- very, very bright in the clear air of the mountains.

Saturday morning we left for a hike to Willetts Hot Springs. After several hours and many stream crossings it appeared that it was further than most of us wished to hike. Gary and Martin continued on and the rest had a leisurely stroll back to camp, stopping at one memorable crossing were the stream shot threw a solid bench of rock with a deep pool below. Off came the days packs and into the churning water. We tried sliding some chutes but they weren't steep enough to carry us down. Once back at camp we repeated Friday's routine and awaited the return of Gary and Martin. They came in at dinnertime and had enjoyed the venture. Gary had taken many photos with his digital camera and shared the scenes with us.

Sunday morning came too soon and we packed up, tidied the camp and made our way back to Lion camp. It was hot. My thermometer was in the sun on my pack and read 114 degrees!!! at Lion Camp. The trudge up the hill on the paved road was as close to hell as I've been in some-time. In the shade of the few trees the thermometer read 94. The cars were a welcome sight at the top. All agreed it had been a wonderful outing and we headed for milkshakes and food at McDonalds in Ojai.

Bob Altieri
P.S. I lost eight pounds!

MAY TRAIL WORK PARTY

The southern half of the "North Ridge Trail" was completed in spite of hot weather at the May work party. The trail is now finished from the north-east corner of Flanagan Drive and Yosemite Avenue to a gated trailhead at the intersection of Geronimo Avenue and Broken Arrow Street, in the Indian Hills Ridge housing tract. On the lower portion of the work section, one last mustard forest had to be conquered. In addition, a lot of dirt had to be moved on a long traverse of trail, that had to be 1 / 2 bench cut due to the steep slope. The upper work section was nearly flat but occupied by countless Sawtooth Goldenbush shrubs that had to be dug out along the trail path. Special thanks to Al Bandel for helping me with that exhausting task.

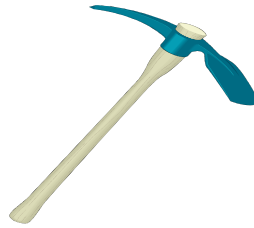
We worked from 7:00 AM-11:00 AM and again everyone did a super job and a great deal of work was accomplished with relatively few people. Many thanks to the following workers:

Arlene Altshuler, Al Bandel, Gary Cremeans, John Downey, Robert Foster, Tom Frye, Michael Kuhn, Marilyn Mansell and John Sabol.

On 23 May, Bob Altieri and I re-flagged the northern half of the North Ridge Trail using bright pink flagging tape rather than the greenish yellow which is difficult to see after being bleached by the sun for a few weeks. We spent the remainder of the morning finishing leveling the upper portion of the southern trail half and constructed a turning pad on a trail switchback turn that was just too sharp as originally constructed.

The second (northern) half of the North Ridge trail cutting will be started during the next work party on June 3 in conjunction with National Trail Day. The developer has scraped the road cut from Evening Sky Drive in the Silverthorn housing tract to the top of the ridge. The Park District has cut another trail path from the trailhead at Geronimo Avenue and Broken Arrow Street,

Bear Creek Backpack: Left to right: Gary Cremeans, Dee Conrad, Terry Conrad, Arlene Altshuler, Martin DeGoey, Bob Altieri, Marguerita Marsh, Ken Downey, John Sabol, Bill Cepedes, Jodine Downey, Carol Tucker and Mike Kuhn



through the meadow area to the top of the hill to the northwest. We will be cutting the trail on the remaining portion between the above two sections. This section of trail will have to cross 3 concrete drainage V-ditches that are 3 ft. wide. The Park District will supply crossing bridges at a later date.

Meet at the trailhead at the intersection of Geronimo Avenue and Broken Arrow Street. (Go north on Yosemite, right on Flanagan, the first left on Klamath, immediate left on Sitting Bull, right on Geronimo Avenue to Broken Arrow, trailhead on your left). We will work from 7:00 AM to 1:00 PM. Hope to see you there.

Work Parties Chair
John Sabol

THE GIANT BLUE GUM

Charles Hoar purchased and occupied the "Hummingbird Nest" in 1873. Mr. Hoar, true to the tradition of the time, experimented with all kinds of plants, especially fruit trees, making "the Hummingbird" into a horticultural show place. Surviving today from those plantings is a blue gum (*Eucalyptus globulus*) tree with the largest trunk of any tree of its species in Simi Valley. The tree has either been trimmed back in order to avoid a hazard to the main ranch house - after all, that species is notoriously self-pruning - or much of the upper structure of the tree has been lost to natural attrition. It probably is the older tree of its species in the City. Perhaps someday you will have the privilege to see it.

Mike Kuhn



JUNE

2000



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Chumash Trail Hike Meet at 6:00 pm See schedule Happy Birthday Denis Feehan	2	3 National Trails Day, North Ridge Trail Work Party Read Schedule 7 am to 1 pm
4 Rocky Peak Trail Hike Meet at 5pm Read Schedule	5	6	7	8 Chumash Trail Hike Meet at 6:00 pm See schedule	9 Happy Birthday Augusto Trujillo	10 Solstice Canyon Trail Hike Meet at 7 am Read schedule
11 Rocky Peak Trail Hike Meet at 5pm Read Schedule	12	13 Happy Birthday Carol Tucker	14	15 Chumash Trail Hike Meet at 6:00 pm See schedule	16 Happy Birthday Eric Rasmussen & Maria Henriques	17 Long Canyon to Simi Peak Hike Meet at 7:30am <u>Read Schedule</u>
18 Rocky Peak Trail Hike Meet at 5pm Read Schedule Happy Birthday Beverly Boys	19	20	21. RSTB JUNE Meeting at 7pm Community Center Room B-1 1692 Sycamore Happy Birthday Phil Ankom	22 Chumash Trail Hike Meet at 6:00 pm See schedule Happy Birthday Karia Kay Torkelson	23	24 Calabasas Peak Hike, meet at 7pm Read schrdule
25 Rocky Peak Trail Hike Meet at 5pm Read Schedule	26	27	28	29 Chumash Trail Hike Meet at 6:00 pm See schedule Happy Birthday Al Bandel	30	

