



# Rancho Simi Trail Blazers



## THE PICO FAMILY IN 1775 AND IN THE 1790 CENSUS

Santiago Pico received the grant of Rancho Simi in 1794 at the age of 64. He and his family had originally been recruited as part of the January 1776 Juan Bautista de Anza contingent of settlers to Alta California from their home in San Xavier de Cabazan on April 16, 1775. Listed as family members are Santiago de la Cruz Pico, Maria Jacinta Bastida, his wife, age 26, Maria Josefa, age 15, Jose Maria, age 7, Jose Dolores, age 6, Fancisco Xavier, age 5, Jose Miguel, age 4, Jose Patricio, age 3, and Maria Gertrudis Tomasa, age 2. It seems unlikely that Maria Josefa was the daughter of Maria Jacinta Bastida. We do not know her relationship to the family. Imagine a trip from the latitude of the southern tip of Baja California into a virtual wilderness with seven children, six of which were seven or younger. Nonetheless, they came.

In 1790 the Spanish government required a census of non-Indian residents of California under Spanish rule. Rancho Simi had not yet been granted to Santiago Pico. Nonetheless, Santiago Pico, his wife, Jacinta de la Bas-

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CLIFF-ASTER



### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

**Kathy & Ted Weiner**

**Eric & Kim Bolstad**

### RSTB CLUB MEETING

**The monthly club meeting will be held at the Community Center  
In the B-1 Room  
1692 Sycamore Drive  
At 7:00 PM  
On  
Wednesday, July 18th.**

## NATIONAL TRAIL DAY WORK PARTY

Eight Rancho Simi Trail Blazers worked on the North Ridge Trail for National Trail Day, 2 June 2001. The trail was choked with mustard and almost impassable. Thankfully Jim Keppler of the Rancho Simi Park District had major portions of the trail scraped, as John Downey and I both ran gas powered brush cutters for the entire time, and barely finished clearing the remaining trail. The rest of the crew worked hard clearing cut brush from the trail, filling in ruts and repairing rain-damaged trail sections. We worked from 8:00 AM to 1:30 PM and everyone was tired. Many thanks to the following workers:

Arlene Altshuler, Phil Ankrom, John Downey, Joe Ferrell, Tom Frye, Mike Kuhn, Louise Pomes and John Sabol

The next 2 Trail Blazer work parties will be held Saturday 21 July and Saturday 18 August in Oak Park. We hope to finish clearing the new 3/4-mile long Rock Ridge Trail East. This effort will be a continuation of the work started on the 19 May work party and will consist of clearing a 10-foot wide path through heavy brush with loppers and saws. Meet at the trailhead in Oak Park at 7:00 AM. Directions: Drive to the intersection of Doubletree Road and Kanan Road, which is 1 1/2 miles East of the intersection of Kanan and Lindero Canyon. Go north on Doubletree. The road will go uphill and then curve east and par-

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tida, and four sons and a daughter are listed, along with other information about them.

Listing 21 for Los Angeles is: *Santiago de la Cruz Pico, cowboy, mestizo, from San Xavier de Cabazan (Sinaloa), 60; wife Jacinta de la Bastida, mulata, from Tepic, 53; two children, mulatos: Xavier, 23; Patricio, 21.*

Listings 47 and 55 for Santa Barbara are: *Miguel Pico, mulato, from San Xavier de Cabazan (Sinaloa), 20, single. Dolores Pico, mulato, from San Xavier de Cabazan (Sinaloa), 30, single.*

Listing 34 for San Diego is: *Jose Maria Pico, espanol, from San Xavier de Cabazan (Sinaloa), 27 (Jose was in the army at the time); wife Maria Eustaquia Gutierrez, espanola, (from Culiacan) 18.*

What happened to Maria Gertrudis Tomasa and Maria Josefa is not clear.

The Spanish cast system is represented in the census. Jose Pico, unlike his father, mother or siblings, is listed as Spanish. Spanish law stipulated that only those of pure Spanish blood could serve in the army. This was an impractical convention on the frontier, so it was common for all soldiers, in 1790, to be listed as "*espanol*." In later years, soldiers were listed accurately. However, once they were promoted to officer rank, their status had to be listed as *espanol*. If this seems shameful in this time

of social enlightenment, one must only recall that it was more than 70 years before "mulatos" or "mestizos" were allowed to serve in the armies of the United States, and mulatos and negros were segregated until after World War II. Pio Pico, the son of Jose and the grandson of Santiago and Jacinta, served as Governor of California from 1845-1846.

Mike Kuhn

### THE CURRIER BARN

I grew up like most rural kids whose parents had lived through the depression. When you took something apart, you reclaimed the wood for later use and you saved and straightened the nails. Those nails went into an old coffee can or peanut butter jar. My dad was still going through that routine for decades after our economic situation rendered that practice quaint. I suppose it taught me thrift. My wife, Hannah, and I are still using a hot water pot on the stove that I repaired with a small snipping from a tin can in 1966. It was supposed to last until we had time to buy a new one.

Farmers in Simi Valley did the same thing. In the early days,

allel Kanan. Trailhead is on the left, across from the Latter-Day Saints Church. We will work from 7:00 AM to 11:00 AM. Hope to see you there.

Work Parties Chair

John Sabol

there simply wasn't much money around. You often borrowed until the crops were in, then you paid off your debt, or as much of it as you could, and did with little until the next year. You produced what you needed to eat and otherwise made a good life with very little. Neighbor helped neighbor and everyone was part of the community.

The last piece of the old Currier Ranch, complete with the ranch house and two barns and various other structures was proposed for development during 1998. The remnant parcel was less than three acres in size - just enough room for ten houses on pretty good sized lots. The ranch had produced apricots, with a "cot" cutting and drying operation, and walnuts. That much is apparent from examining the shed on the property.

The barn was unique. The two storied addition to the original pre-Currier one storied barn was covered primarily with the bottom slats from apricot lugs.

## THE CHAPARRAL

The chaparral plant community is found at higher elevations around the valley and on north-facing slopes. Characterized by evergreen shrubs with small hard leaves, chaparral species are a fire climax vegetation, successfully sprouting from the root crowns with the first substantial rains following wildfire. Chaparral species grow on thin infertile soils and, when mature, present a solid leaf canopy. Many chaparral species produce seed germinating inhibitors, which preclude other plants from competing for the limited water and nutrients.

Throughout the late-spring, summer and fall the chaparral is extremely dry and loaded with volatile hydrocarbons. When ignited, especially during Santa Ana winds, devastating wildfires can result. Many of our worst fires, driven by northeasterly winds, do not burn out until they reach the ocean - the ultimate fire break.

Chaparral can be seen along the upper half of the Chumash Trail and along the Hummingbird Trail.

Characteristic plants of the chaparral include:

**Chamise**  
*Adenostoma fasciculatum*

**Hoary-leaved ceanothus**  
*Ceanothus crassifolius*

**Buckbrush**  
*C. cuneatus*

**Hairy-leaved ceanothus**  
*C. oliganthus*

**Greenbark ceanothus**  
*C. spinosus*

**Hollyleaf redberry**  
*Rhamnus ilicifolia*

**Black sage**  
*Salvia mellifera*

**Yucca**  
*Yucca whipplei ssp. intermedia*

**Yerba santa**  
*Eriodictyon crassifolium*

**Laurel sumac**  
*Malosma laurina*

**Sugar bush**  
*Rhus ovata*

**Lemonade berry**  
*Rhus integrifolia*

**California mountain mahogany**  
*Cercocarpus betuloides*

**Toyon**  
*Heteromeles arbutifolia*

**Bush monkeyflower**  
*Mimulus aurantiacus*

**Hollyleaf cherry**  
*Prunus ilicifolia ssp. ilfolia*

**Santa Susana Tarplant**  
*Hemizonia minthornii*

**Scrub oak**  
*Quercus berberidifolia*

**Silk-tassel bush**  
*Garrya veatchii*

**Eastwood manzanita**  
*Arctostaphylos glandulosa*

Mike Kuhn

These thin slats were nailed vertically to the side of the barn with horizontal batons covering the top and bottom joining points. It looked rather neat and tidy. The ends of the older part of the barn, over the sliding door and windows, was covered with opened up and flattened smudge pots. The metal was galvanized with approximately one inch air holes along the bottoms. One slat was stenciled on the inside of the barn "Harrington Santa Susana." The Robert E. Harrington place was nearby south of the Currier place.

The Simi Valley Historical Society has acquired the shed and it has been installed in the Strathearn Historical Park. Thanks to profit from *Simi Valley: A Journey Through Time* (1997), there was monies to save that little bit of history.

Mike Kuhn



# JULY

2001



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>1</b> Rocky Peak 5pm Hike Read schedule	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Chumash 6pm Trail Hike See schedule	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> Romero Canyon Loop Hike See schedule Meet at 7am
<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> Chumash 6pm Trail Hike See schedule Happy Birthday Michelle Marnier & Karl Meyers	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> Pt.Mugu Cabin Trail See schedule Meet at 7am  Happy Birthday Mike Kuhn
<b>15</b> Rocky Peak 5pm Hike Read schedule	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> RSTB Meeting 7pm at the Community Center B-1 room, 1692 Sycamore	<b>19</b> Chumash 6pm Trail Hike See schedule	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> Oak Park Work Party See Schedule 7am to 11am
<b>22</b> Rocky Peak 5pm Hike Read schedule Happy Birthday Lorraine Ferrall & Doug Temple	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Chumash 6pm Trail Hike See schedule	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> Zuma Canyon Hike Meet at 7am See schedule
<b>29</b> Rocky Peak 5pm Hike Read schedule	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>				



**RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS**

EXECUTIVE CHAIR:	MIKE KUHN	HM (805) 583-2345 WK (805)583-6776
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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
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COMMUNICATION / PUB.CHAIR:	BYERS (JOHN) DOWNEY	HM (805) 526-8588

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**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) \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Birth Mo. \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_ Phone wk/hm \_\_\_\_\_

How did you find out about the RSTB \_\_\_\_\_

Please make out tax deductible member dues check for the year Sept.-2000/Sept.-2001 to:

“Rancho Simi Foundation” mail it to “RSTB, P.O. Box 630399, Simi Valley, Ca 93063-0399

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

Check out our Web Site at ...<http://rstb.homestead.com>



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**Simi Valley, CA 93063-0399**

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