



The Clarksville COURIER

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Clarksville Region Historical Society
www.edhhistory.org

Spring 2016

The President's Letter from CRHS President Jim Vindler



Hello Members and Friends,

I am pleased and flattered to be asked to serve as the president of Clarksville Region Historical Society. I thought that it would be in order for me to tell you a little bit about my background.

I spent my younger days in New Jersey, where I was born, and then in my twenties I moved to Southern California to work in purchasing and customer service positions for several big aerospace and high tech companies there. Here I met Erlinda, and we happily wed soon thereafter.

Erlinda and I moved to El Dorado County in 1988 in order to raise our four children in a small town environment. Here we founded our successful real estate company, Vindler Real Estate & Acquisitions, which we operated until last December, when we merged the business into the Century 21 Select real estate group. Erlinda and I are now working as broker associates, leaving us more time to pursue our hobbies and interests.

Starting as a young child I was always very interested in history. I recall staying up late at night reading with a flashlight under my covers about the finding of the lost city of Troy, Mayan temples, lost Spanish gallons full of treasure, and dreaming of having such adventures.

When I was young, I wanted to be Indiana Jones before there was an Indiana Jones. When I went to college

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CRHS AWARDED GRANT TO INSTALL CEMETERY BENCHES



Members of the CRHS Board pictured with members of the El Dorado Hills Cabinet of the El Dorado Hills Endowment at the awards ceremony. Rear, Doug Hus, Jim Vindler, Bill Roby (El Dorado Foundation), John Thomson (holding certificate), Jeff England, Alan Priest; Middle, Georgi Knight, Betty January, Fran Thomson, Shelby Burnet; Front, Valerie Peterson, Nikki Smaglik, and Andrea Howard.

Last Spring the Clarksville Region Historical Society applied for a grant of \$1,000.00 from the El Dorado Hills Endowment towards the purchase and installation of three ornamental concrete seating benches in the Clarksville Cemetery. The EDH Endowment is affiliated with the El Dorado Foundation in Placerville.

The CRHS Board recognized that visitors to the cemetery had no place to sit other than on monuments if they wished to rest and contemplate a grave or simply meditate.

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Type of bench contemplated

President's Letter *(continued)*

I majored in history and anthropology with the goal of becoming an archaeologist. However, it soon became evident that a career in archeology promised limited opportunities and low pay. So after finding the economics courses easy to pass, I changed my major to business and placed my dreams of exploring the past on hold.

My interest in history stayed a dream until our real estate company moved into the old city hall building on historical Main Street in Placerville, what the locals call the "ketchup and mustard" buildings. We started donating a portion of every sale to restoring the building.

Since we also had an El Dorado Hills office, I wanted to do something along the same line for that area, and that is when I discovered the Old Clarksville Cemetery, along with Betty January and the wonderful members of the historical society. After joining the group, doing a fundraiser, and getting to know everyone, one thing led to another and I found myself on the board of directors.

I was honored to be asked by Betty to run for President, and I was quick to accept. One thing I have learned is that no one can say "No" to Betty January.

I am very excited about this year's agenda. We have a goal to grow our membership, using our brand-new edhhistory.org website and Facebook pages, exciting speakers, and many special events, including our first Lincoln Highway 5-mile run/walk from EDH Farms to Clarksville and back. And in 2017, after the completion of the Silva Valley interchange, we will start planning our most exciting event for years, the Spring 2017 return of Clarksville Days!

I am also pleased to see our Society's support of the Oak Ridge High School history project, which involves the history class students with local history. Erlinda and I have always been strong believers in education, and strived to instill that belief in our children. They are proud graduates of Harvard, Penn, UC Santa Barbara and Expressions College; and we have five grandchildren whom we are encouraging.

Meanwhile, in our spare time Erlinda and I are currently completing the restoration of our 1881 Victorian in the Historical District of Placerville.

I hope to see each of you at a future meeting or other event.

Sincerely,

Jim Vindler

President

GRANT *(continued)*

In order to give visitors resting spots, it was decided that three free-standing ornamental concrete benches, placed in an area away from possible grave sites or remains, would be appropriate to fill the need.

The \$1,000.00 grant was awarded to CRHS, along with other grants awarded to other community groups, at a December awards ceremony which took place in the ballroom of the Holiday Inn in El Dorado Hills Holiday Inn.

The board is currently in the process of selecting a supplier for the benches, and installation is anticipated for this fall. An appropriate dedication event is contemplated.

Further information may be obtained from Betty January, 916-933-3173. 



Oak Ridge students with tour leader Mike Roberts (center) examining an old house in Old Clarksville

OAK RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL HISTORY CLASSES TOUR OLD CLARKSVILLE

Three Oak Ridge Advance Placement History classes and parents toured the ghost town of Clarksville on February 27. The tour was organized by the Clarksville Region Historical Society's Mike Roberts. Roberts, along with local historian Melinda Peak, has sponsored local history projects at the school for the last two years. Students have tackled 40-plus Gold Rush-era topics spanning Sacramento and El Dorado Counties, developing research skills in real-world settings near and far, from Ancestry.com to dusty archives, museums and history centers. They are also learning how to ask, and how to answer big questions. The assignment demands they link their topic to various facets of the Gold Rush, including its culture, economics and institutions. Some of last year's projects can be seen on the video kiosk at the El Dorado Hills Library

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CLARKSVILLE TOUR *(continued)*

Students got a glimpse of Clarksville, a standing ghost town, dating back to the 1850s, with Gold Rush roots. It was a significant center of commerce for most of its roughly 150 year history, but the town went into decline when the railroad bypassed it in the 1860s. It became a ghost town when Highway 50 bypassed it in the 1940s. It now sits on private land, behind a locked gate.

In each of the last two years the property manager has graciously allowed the Clarksville history group to bring students onto the site. The old buildings, some dating back to the 1880s, are too dangerous to enter, but students were able to stare in the windows.

The former Clarksville Union School, which is now the center section of the big red barn one can see from Highway 50 west of Bass Lake Road, still stands proud after 150 years.

Former Clarksville resident Madeleine Mosely explained how her school was moved to its current location and converted to a barn. Historian Peak explained Clarksville's role as a stopover on the wagon road to "the diggings," and later how it was bypassed by the railroad, then the freeway.

Oakridge teacher Matt Hodgins and several parents accompanied the group, which also took in the historic Clarksville Cemetery after the ghost town tour. ☞



SOCIETY ELECTS BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR 2016

The results of the annual election were announced at the CRHS Annual Membership Meeting on January 27, 2016, held at the El Dorado Hills Library.

The members elected Jim Vindler President and Director, Doug Hus Vice President and Director, Fran Thomson Secretary and Director, John Thomson Treasurer and Director. Paul Booth, Hal Erpenbeck, Betty January, Mike Roberts, and Janette Rogers-Booth were elected Directors.

According to Treasurer John Thomson, the balance in the CRHS Treasury stood at \$6,441.85 on January 1, 2015.

Outgoing President Betty January addressed the meeting, and said that she wanted to thank all of the members of the Society for their continued support, and said further that she was looking forward to the year 2016 as a great year full of exciting meetings and events. ☞



A roadside inn and stagecoach of the 'fifties
(from a contemporary photograph)

COME TO THE LOCAL HISTORY FORUM AT THE SENIOR CENTER

The Local History Forum is a monthly group discussion of people, places and things in early El Dorado Hills. Former Village Life Reporter Mike Roberts leads the discussion and will provide maps and introductory comments, but Mike asks those who lived it to turn out and participate. The group is small and friendly. Bring stories, pictures and friends. Mike hopes to capture the reflections of early residents in a related oral history project.

The Forum meets on the first Friday of the month at 10:00 A.M. at the Ramona "Moni" Gilmore Senior Center, 990 Lassen Lane El Dorado Hills, (at the corner of El Dorado Hills Blvd., in the former Fire Station). For inquiries, call the Senior Center at 916-358-3575.

April 1, 2016, Ridgeview

Ridgeview Village went up in the 1970s, and in many ways was a harbinger of the upscale housing to follow. Prospective buyers took an E-ticket 4-wheel drive ride up a steep gravel road to get to the lots, which were often little more than rock outcroppings. Most sold for about \$7,000, which was also the cost of heating one for the winter. The hard won arrival of natural gas changed all that. We'll share stories and review how Tony Mansour brought natural gas to El Dorado Hills and how Bill Kriz and Paul Richins got PG&E to run it up to Ridgeview.

May 6, 2016, Park Village Elementary School, Pool & Gym

Park Village Elementary School, gym, athletic field and adjacent pool were vital early institutions in the new

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HISTORY FORUM *(continued)*

and relatively isolated community of El Dorado Hills. In the pre-air conditioned 1960's, local families spent most of their summers at the Park Village Pool, which was later renamed in memory of El Dorado Hills firefighter Peter Bertelsen, EDH Fire's first line-of-duty fatality. The pool is gone but the memories remain, along with a lovely spray park. The school gymnasium also holds a special place in the hearts of early residents, serving as El Dorado Hills' first gym, second CSD office and first senior center. The school was renamed for former principal William N. Brooks, 35, who was struck by a drunk driver on Highway 50 in 1969.

June 3, 2016, Golf, archery... polo anyone?

The Executive Golf Course was an early and important element of the original 1960 Master Plan for El Dorado Hills. We'll discuss how the planned recreation amenities "played out on the ground," pun entirely intended, in Alan Lindsey's El Dorado Hills, and later in Tony Mansour's "EDH 2.0," which omitted the Stonegate Golf Course but added the archery range.

Lindsey's plan was authored by the top urban planner in the world, Victor Gruen. The July forum is dedicated to the eccentric Gruen, who placed recreation on a pedestal, right behind "preserving ... in every way possible" the "natural assets of the landscape" and minimizing vehicular traffic. We'll giggle at early El Dorado Hills marketing material featuring a "sportsman's lodge" in modern-day Highland Hills, along with tennis players, equestrians, golfers, fishermen, skeet shooters, hunters and sailors. Could polo have been far behind?

July 1, 2016, The Voice of the Village –

The El Dorado Hills CSD was formed in May 1962. Twelve months later the staff published the first issue of a monthly newsletter titled The Voice of the Village. With only a couple hundred families in El Dorado Hills at the time, early mimeographed issues were pretty light. Golf Pro Dave Mancour (no relation to Tony Mansour) got a lot of early column inches. As the community grew, the little publication found its voice. Stories were well-constructed and to the point. Every significant event, from new businesses to new babies to the popular Luau parties at Park Village Pool were celebrated in its pages. We'll flip thru selected pages from this curb-level chronicle of El Dorado Hills' formative early years and try to trigger a few memories.

August 5, Victor Gruen –

In 1959 Alan Lindsey set out to create a uniquely modern city, planned from the get-go for 75,000 active

residents. He assembled a "dream team," of leading designers, engineers and investors anchored by eccentric urban planner Victor Gruen, the most celebrated architect of his time and a world class colorful character. His ideas influenced generations of urban planners and kept him in the national spotlight throughout the 1950s. The New Yorker Magazine adored his "wild hair and eyebrows like unpruned hedgerows." Fortune noted "eyes as bright as mica and mind as fast as mercury." Sadly, he's best remembered as the father of the enclosed shopping mall. Gruen came to despise shopping malls, but only after designing dozens of them. In El Dorado Hills, Gruen got the rare opportunity to design a modern city from scratch. ☞



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

While the Society uses reasonable efforts to provide accurate information about events, some information is obtained from third parties and has not been independently verified by the Society. Events sponsored by the Society are indicated with **bold** type.

March 16, 6:15 P.M. - Kathryn Marshall: "Seaborne Settlers: The Atlantic to Pacific Passage of the Gold Rush Era." El Dorado Hills Genealogical Society, El Dorado Hills Library, 7455 Silva Valley Parkway, El Dorado Hills. Inquiries edhgs@yahoo.com

March 20, 10:00 A.M. - Brooke Schreier Ganz: "Reclaim the Records: Using Freedom of Information Laws for Genealogy." Jewish Genealogical Society, Einstein Residence Center, 1935 Wright Street, Sacramento. Inquiries mortrumberg1@earthlink.net.

March 23, 6:30 P.M. - John E. Thomson, Ph.D.: "History of Bass Lake, A Gold Rush Relic." Clarksville R.H.S., El Dorado Hills Library, 7455 Silva Valley Parkway, El Dorado Hills, California 95762. Inquiries 916-933-3173.

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EVENTS *(continued)*

April 2, 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. - Murer House Docent-led Tours. 1125 Joe Murer Court, Folsom. Inquiries 916-985-3250.

April 9, 8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. - Plant and Garden Benefit, West Sacramento Historical Society. 840 Harbor Blvd., West Sacramento. Inquiries 916-374-1849.

April 14, 6:30 P.M. - Lecture and Documentary Film: "Replacing the Past: Sacramento's Redevelopment History." Center for Sacramento History. KVIE, 2030 W. El Camino Avenue, Sacramento. Inquiries 916-808-7072.

April 16 through 20 - Forty-first Annual California Preservation Conference: "New Acts, New Assets: The Changing Face of Preservation." Presidio of San Francisco. Contact californiapreservation.org

April 20, 6:15 P.M. - Stephen Morse: Case Study. El Dorado Hills Genealogical Society, El Dorado Hills Library, 7455 Silva Valley Parkway, El Dorado Hills. Inquiries edhgs@yahoo.com.

April 27, 6:30 P.M. - Elena Smith, California State Library, History Section: (Topic TBA). Clarksville R.H.S., El Dorado Hills Library, 7455 Silva Valley Parkway, El Dorado Hills, California 95762. Inquiries 916-933-3173.

May 7, 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. - Monthly Murer House Docent-led Tours. 1125 Joe Murer Court, Folsom. Inquiries 916-985-3250.

May 14 - Rescue Historical Fair, Rescue, California. Inquiries information@rescuehistorical.

May 18, 6:30 P.M. - Clarksville RHS Board Meeting, 2015 Ranch Bluff Way, El Dorado Hills. All members welcome, please call Betty at 916-933-3173 so seating may be arranged.

May 25, 6:30 P.M. - Ellen Osborn, Author: "Evolution of Highway 50 from Indian Trail to Today," Clarksville RHS, El Dorado Hills Library, 7455 Silva Valley Parkway, El Dorado Hills, California 95762. Inquiries 916-933-3173.

June 4, 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. - Monthly Murer House Docent-led Tours. 1125 Joe Murer Court, Folsom. Inquiries 916-985-3250.

June - No Clarksville R.H.S. meetings are scheduled in June or July as a policy.

July 9, 8:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. - Annual Bayley House Spring Barn Sale, 4300 Highway 49, Pilot Hill. Household items, antiques, crafts, and produce. Inquiries 530-889-1629.

October 1, Save The Date - Clarksville R.H.S. Inaugural Lincoln Highway 5K walk/run over the Historic Lincoln Highway. More details to follow.

Membership Application

I (we) wish to join CRHS:

Name _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Annual Dues Level:

Individual @ \$20 _____

Family Members @ \$10 _____

Business Member @ \$100 _____

Single Payment Dues Level:

Life member @ \$1,000 _____

Benefactor Donation:

Bronze Level @ \$250 _____

Silver Level @ 500 _____

Gold Level @ 1,000 _____

Platinum Level @ \$5,000 _____

Total Amount Enclosed _____

Please complete this application, make your check payable to CRHS, and send them to John Thomson, CRHS Treasurer, 501 Kirkwood Court, El Dorado Hills, CA 95762, Telephone 530-677-3039. Or you may use the application at edhhistory.org and pay using PayPal.