



# The Heritage Junction Dispatch

A Publication of the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society

Volume 38, Issue 1

January-February 2012

## Calendar

### Monday, January 23

General Meeting for Election of Board Members;  
Board of Directors Meeting  
6:30 PM Saugus Station

### Wednesday, February 1

Deadline for the January- February  
*Dispatch*

### January, February

Hart Hall events, see page 4

### Monday, February 27

Board of Directors Meeting  
6:30 PM Saugus Station

Check [www.scvhistory.org](http://www.scvhistory.org) for other upcoming events.

## President's Message

by Alan Pollack



What's in a street name? Running from Copperhill Drive in Valencia past the Walmart and towards the Mann Biomedical Center is a street called the Kelly Johnson Parkway. So who exactly was Kelly Johnson? Born

on February 27, 1910, Clarence Leonard "Kelly" Johnson was destined for greatness in Southern California's aerospace industry. Johnson is best known as the first leader of Lockheed's legendary Skunk Works aircraft design and construction operation in Burbank. The Skunk Works, alias for Lockheed's Advanced Development Projects, was responsible for designing such aircraft as the U-2, SR-71 Blackbird, F-117 Nighthawk, and

the F-22 Raptor. The SR-71 Blackbird would become the fastest and highest flying craft in aviation history.

### KELLY FROM THE EMERALD ISLE

Born in Ishpeming, Michigan, Johnson was nicknamed "Kelly" after prevailing over a bully in an elementary schoolyard fight. The name, based on the Irish song "Kelly from the Emerald Isle", exemplified Johnson's lifetime tenacity in overcoming controversy to efficiently design and build cutting-edge aircraft. Johnson developed a keen interest in airplanes from an early age. He designed his first aircraft as a teenager and won a prize in a local contest. He became a student at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor at the onset of the Great Depression in 1929. At the University, Johnson worked for the head of the aeronautical engineering department. Through this connection, he was

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## Winter in Newhall

Articles and inquiries regarding *The Dispatch* may be made to 254-1275

## President's Message

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able to work with the University's wind tunnel, where he was involved in testing aircraft, trains, and automobiles.

Graduating in 1932 with a bachelor's degree in aeronautical engineering, Johnson had no luck in finding employment on the East coast, as many aircraft firms were struggling to survive during the depths of the Depression. After returning to the University of Michigan to obtain a master's degree, he eventually ended up in Southern California, where he was given a job as a tool designer at Lockheed. At that time, Lockheed was a small struggling company newly emerged and reorganizing from bankruptcy. Their future was hinging on a twin-engine passenger plane called the Lockheed Electra, which had been one of Johnson's wind tunnel test projects at the University of Michigan. While university professors and Lockheed executives were happy with the design, Johnson felt he could do better. The newly hired engineer brazenly told executives at Lockheed that the plane was unstable in his opinion. Lockheed sent the young engineer back to the wind tunnel at the University to come up with a better design for the airplane. After 72 trial runs in the wind tunnel, he solved the stability problem.

After his successful efforts on the Electra, Johnson returned to Lockheed as its sixth member of the engineering department. He also served as a test pilot on a multitude of Lockheed aircraft. In 1937, at age 27, Johnson was presented with the prestigious Lawrence Sperry Award by the Institute of Aeronautical Sciences for his contributions to aeronautical design of high-speed commercial aircraft. He would go on to receive over fifty awards during his lifetime for aeronautical achievements. With World War II on the horizon, demand for Johnson's skills and Lockheed's aircraft greatly increased as Lockheed turned its attention from commercial to military aircraft. Johnson was largely responsible for the successful design of the P-38 Lightning, an aircraft known as being the fastest of the World War II era.

### THE SKUNK WORKS

Johnson was promoted to chief research engineer at Lockheed in 1938. As World War II progressed, the U.S. Army Air Corps became concerned about reports of a new high speed jet fighter developed by the Germans. In 1943, they asked Lockheed to come up with a comparable plane within ninety days. To accomplish this monumental project, Johnson was asked by Lockheed to assemble a team of engineers and shop mechanics and given free rein to develop a prototype. Named after the "skunk works" in Al Capp's "Li'l Abner" comic strips, the Skunk Works at Lockheed was born from this project. The result of the project was the XP-80,

forerunner to the F-80 Shooting Star, the first jet fighter for the U.S., and first U.S. plane to exceed 500 miles per hour. The Skunk Works continued to develop additional military aircraft, including the first plane to fly at twice the speed of sound in a level flight.

Johnson became Lockheed's Chief Engineer in 1952. Three years later, Johnson's Skunk Works facility was asked by the CIA to create an aircraft that could fly over the Soviet Union on military reconnaissance missions. Out of this request was born the famous U-2 spy plane. Johnson built a facility at Groom Lake, Nevada, to be used as a secret testing site for the U-2. This facility later became known as Area 51, a top-secret site where some believe the U.S. government clandestinely studied an alien spacecraft and its occupants that were purportedly recovered near Roswell, New Mexico, in 1947. The U-2 spy plane remarkably could fly at altitudes over 70000 feet, with a range of 4000 miles.

### PRESIDENTIAL HONORS

Kelly Johnson remained in charge of Lockheed's Skunk Works division until his retirement from Lockheed in 1975. He loved his work so much that he turned down offers to become Lockheed's President three times so he could remain with the Skunk Works. Johnson was known as a superb designer of aircraft and a skilled manager of the people who worked for him at Lockheed. His credo was "be quick, be quiet, and be on time". Of his philosophy for running the Skunk Works Johnson said, "Our aim is to get results cheaper, sooner, and better through application of common sense to tough problems. If it works, don't fix it." Johnson received many honors during his career, including the 1966 National Medal of Science, presented by President Lyndon B. Johnson at the White House, and in 1983 The National Security Medal presented by President Ronald Reagan for "Exceptional meritorious service performed in a position of high responsibility, and have made an outstanding contribution to the national security of the nation". At the White House ceremony in 1966, President Johnson stated "Kelly Johnson and the products of his famous Skunk Works epitomize the highest and finest goal of our society, the goal of excellence. His record of design achievement in aviation is both incomparable and virtually incredible. Any one of his many airplane designs would have honored any individual's career".

Now why is a street in Santa Clarita named for this man who brought great honor to the city of Burbank? Turns out that Lockheed had a facility in what is now the Valencia Industrial Center. Initially called the Lockheed Rye Canyon Research

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## President's Message

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and Development Center, this facility was renamed the Kelly Johnson Research and Development Center in June, 1983, to honor Johnson for his 50 years of service to Lockheed. Kelly Johnson died on December 21, 1990, leaving behind a legacy in the aviation industry never to be forgotten.

### HAPPENINGS AT THE JUNCTION

Executive Director Pat Saletore recently held a long-awaited docent training program at the Train Station and at historic sites throughout the Santa Clarita Valley. From this program have emerged our ten newest docents. We would like to welcome to the Historical Society family Wendy Beynon, Linda Casebolt, Andrea Donner, Catherine Hartnek, Sarah Johnston, Anna Kroll, David Price, and Anthony Tellez. Board member Ed Marg and his wife Teresa also took the training program and will be helping out with our docent program. Thanks so much to all of you for your commitment to passing on the history of our valley to the community! Special thanks to Anthony, who has also agreed to coordinate scheduling of the docents at the Saugus Train Station Museum.

Our major goal for 2012 is to get our Capital Campaign underway to fund and complete the new Local History Center in the Pardee House. We invite all Society members to participate and contribute to this important endeavor. Best wishes to all of you for a healthy, happy and productive 2012! See you all at the Train Station...

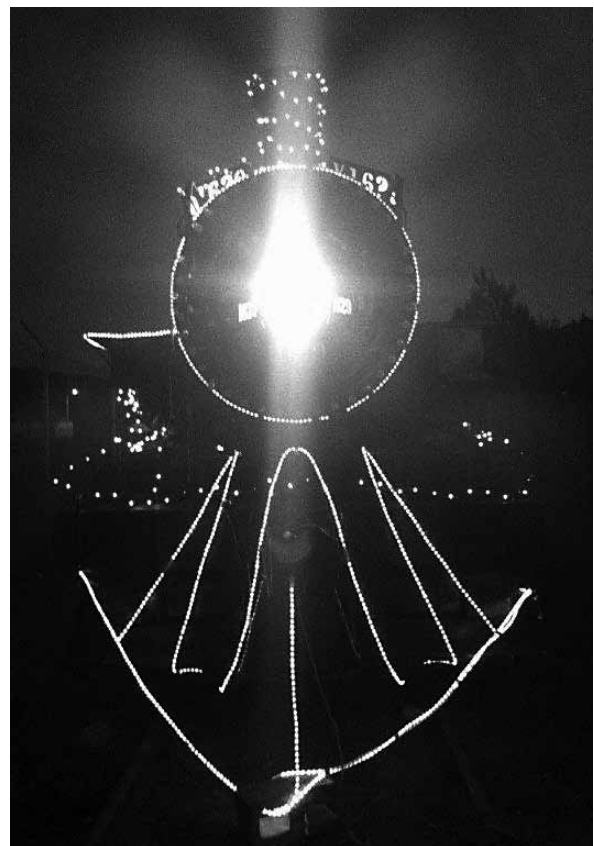
Alan Pollack

## Sale at the Museum Gift Store by Cathy Martin, Store Manager

The Santa Clarita Valley Historical Museum Gift Store is going to have a first-ever after-Christmas sale. As members of the Historical Society, you will receive **an extra 10% off your bill of SALE items only**. All you have to do is bring in your newsletter with your printed name and address to receive the discount.

I would also like to take this time to thank all of our loyal members for supporting the Museum Store. We really couldn't do it without you! Remember **all of the proceeds from the sales go directly to the park restoration**. I'm look forward to seeing you soon, and happy shopping!

## Decorating SP 1629



## William S. Hart in the Movies by Rachel Barnes



Of course, we all know that William S. Hart was in the movies, but a 2011 family film about a young orphan living in a train station in 1930's Paris? That's right, 87 years after the iconic cowboy star released his final film, *Tumbleweeds* (1925), he returned to the big screen in this year's holiday favorite and possible Oscar contender, *Hugo*.

In the movie, young Hugo Cabret (played by Asa Butterfield) encounters Georges Méliès (played by Ben Kingsley), who manages a toy shop in the same train station where Hugo has taken up residence after the death of his father. The primary story in *Hugo* follows the young eponymous hero as he seeks to finish his late father's project and repair a broken automaton. The back story, however, follows the life of Méliès, a real life illusionist and filmmaker who achieved international fame at the turn of the last century because of his use of innovative special effects in his short silent films. Now, since silent films are a central theme in *Hugo*, clips from the era's most famous movies have cameo appearances, including *The Great Train Robbery* (1903) with Bronco Billy Anderson, *The Kid* (1921) with Charlie Chaplin and Jackie Coogan, *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (1921) with Rudolph Valentino, and of course, *Hell's Hinges* (1916) and *Tumbleweeds* (1925) with our own Bill Hart.

And speaking of silent films, all museums that have some connection with the silent era (including us here at the Hart Museum) must be excited by the acclaim and reception of the 2011 French romance, *The Artist*, starring Jean Dujardin and Bérénice Bejo as a declining silent film star (Dujardin) and a "talkie" actress on the rise (Bejo) in the late 1920's. *The Artist*, a silent film shot in black and white, won a series of awards at the 2011 Cannes Film Festival, and this innovative masterpiece is already generating Oscar buzz.

Both *Hugo* and *The Artist*, along with their acclaim with critics and audiences, are spectacular news for the Hart Museum, because these movies pay tribute to the era of silent films. And we encourage you to see both films, enjoy the world of silent film actors, and then come visit the Hart Mansion where you can see the home and collections of one such star.

## Hart Park News- January & February, 2012 by Cheryl Hazama

**January 1, 2012:**

Hart Park wishes everyone a Happy New Year!

**Jan. 21-22, 2012:**

Hart Hall - "DreamWorkz I" - 3 Dimensional & Visual Arts Exhibition - Free to the public

**February 3, 4, 5:**

Hart Hall – In Honor of Black History Month: "History, Art & Diverse Cultures"; Diverse Culture exhibits, Music & Art . Free to the public

**February 21, 22, 23, 28, 29, Mar. 1; 6:00-10:00 PM**

Hart Hall - **Community** Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training - Open to the public, no charge, registration required. Six-day training session. Gear purchase optional but encouraged. Contact: Manny Moreno 213 351-8986 for more information.

### Join the SCV Historical Society Today!

|                         |          |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Life Member             | \$350.00 |
| Life Member with spouse | \$500.00 |
| Corporate               | \$200.00 |
| Non-profit              | \$50.00  |
| Family Member           | \$50.00  |
| Regular member          | \$25.00  |
| Senior Member (60+)     | \$15.00  |
| Junior (18 & under)     | \$9.00   |

Memberships make great gifts for your historically-minded friends and family! To join or renew online, visit <http://www.scvhs.org> .

## Election Time

**N**ominations were taken at the last meeting for the Board of Directors of the Society, for the next election to the board. Because 5 candidates were nominated for the 5 available positions, they will be approved by acclamation under the following sections of the bylaws at the annual meeting on January 23 at 6:30 PM in the Saugus Station:

### Article II, Section 4-Nomination and Election of Directors

**A.** The Nominating Committee shall prepare a slate of names equal to the number of vacancies on the Board, and will present the slate at the November membership meeting. At the November meeting only other nominations may be made from the floor, or received in writing. If the nominee is present at the meeting, has given written permission for the name to be submitted into nomination, and has at least one sponsor, his name may be added to the list of nominees to be presented to the general membership at the election the following January. If the proposed nominee is not present at the November meeting, his name may also be added to the list of nominees only if the nomination is in writing, signed by five sponsors, and contains his written permission for his name to be submitted into nomination. The nomination must include a biographical sketch and the written permission of the nominee.

**B.** The members will be notified of the names in nomination not later than 30 days prior to the annual membership meeting.

**C.** If, at the annual meeting, the number of candidates equals the number of vacancies to be filled, they shall be elected by resolution of the members present. If there are more candidates than vacancies, election will be by secret ballot.

**D.** There will be no cumulative or proxy voting; those candidates receiving the largest number of votes will be declared elected.

### The Incumbents

**Alan Pollack** is currently President of the Historical Society. "As program chairman, I am also responsible for booking and hosting our Historical Lecture Series. I write local historical articles which have been published in the Society's "Heritage Junction Dispatch" and the "Old Town Newhall Gazette" supplement to the Santa Clarita Signal newspaper. I also serve as a docent for the Saugus Train Station Museum.

My day job for the last 25 years is as an internal medicine physician at Kaiser Permanente in Panorama City.

My vision for the Historical Society is to continue to expand the educational opportunities that we make available to the public, and to improve our fundraising capabilities so that we may best preserve the historic buildings of Heritage Junction and the rich history of the Santa Clarita Valley."

**E.J. Stephens**, 1st Vice President of the SCVHS, is a film buff and Hollywood historian. He has merged his two passions while on the board by hosting the *Flickers at the Junction* film series and teaching the *Newhallywood on Location: History of Film/TV in the SCV* class. This past February, he helped create a silent film festival at Heritage Junction called *ChaplinFest*. E.J. regularly leads groups to SCV film sites and hosts the "Behind the Scenes" tours of Melody Ranch for Cowboy Festival. He is also the co-host of *SCV in the Movies* on Santa Clarita's channel 20.

For 2012, E.J. hopes to see the *Modern Times* 75th anniversary plaque, that was created for *ChaplinFest*, placed at the spot on Sierra Highway where the iconic final scene of the film was shot in 1935. He also wishes to see the SCVHS board work together as a more cohesive unit, to build solid relationships with other entities in the community.

**Sioux Coughlin** is currently a fifth grade teacher at Highlands Elementary School, but has experience teaching all levels (kindergarten through eighth grade).

"It was my years as a third grade teacher that brought me to the Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society. I wanted to be able to share more about our local history with my students, so I joined a docent training group.

The training included a tour (led by Pat Saletore) of the historical sites in the Santa Clarita Valley. It made such an impression on me that I used it as a model for a yearly bus tour for my class.

My vision for the Society is to be sure we make the community aware of the importance of knowing and preserving our history."

### The Non-Incumbents

**Roberto Torres** is a graphic designer who studied at Guadalajara's University. With 28 years in the field, he is looking for an opportunity to apply his skills in a more noble way. Roberto looked for an "educational organization whose mission is to work with the community; encouraging new generations to educate and prepare for the future, and giving equal opportunity to older generations." He sees the Historical Society manifesting the importance of education in our continuously changing society. He began his affiliation with our organization by working with his son on Heritage Haunt.

**Scott Sivley** was born in Northridge and grew up in the San Fernando Valley. He went to Cal State Northridge and has worked at the USPS for 31 years here in Santa Clarita. He married Cindy in 1988 and they have 2 sons. Scott and Cindy have been involved in Heritage Haunt, but they have been available all year long to help the Historical Society.

## Our Soul Link With Death Valley

by John Boston

The Santa Clarita Valley has been linked with Death Valley for hundreds of years. In the 1400's, a great Indian migration began from the midwestern plains, and the Shoshone who lived there slowly marched West. Some of the Shoshone stopped to make Death Valley home, others went on a few hundred miles to live in our valley. They would eventually become our local Tataviam Indians, who would live in tranquility here for more than a millennium.

In 1849, as the Tataviam were rapidly drifting toward extinction via the settling of California and the SCV, a group of 100 wagons calling themselves "The Jayhawkers" started in Missouri and headed out to the gold fields of Northern California. After a disagreement over directions, the Bennett-Arcan portion of the adventurers thought they had a short cut and split off from the main party. On Christmas Day, they ended up lost and stranded in this hauntingly severe desert that they would later name Death Valley. Exhausted and broken down, the wagoners sent their two fittest men, William Manly and John Rogers, to race for help.

Well. They raced at a tortoise pace. The hikers headed over the Panamint Mountains, thinking Los Angeles couldn't be far beyond. While Manly may have written a book about his exploits ("Death Valley in '49") he wasn't much of a navigator: L.A. was over 200 miles away, most of it some of the most unforgiving desert on Earth. The pair lived off dead animals, a crow and a buzzard. They had become so disoriented, they ended up about 50 miles off course - in our very own San Francisquito Canyon.

Still, they were grateful to reach Santa Clarita. From Manly's own description: "There before us was a beautiful meadow of a thousand acres, green as a thick carpet of grass could make it, and shaded with oaks, wide branching and symmetrical, equal to those of an old English park; while all over the low mountains that bordered it on the south and over the broad acres of luxuriant grass was a herd of cattle numbering many hundreds if not thousands... such a scene of abundance and rich plenty and comfort bursting thus upon our eyes, which for months had seen only the desolation and sadness of the desert, was like getting a glimpse of Paradise, and tears of joy ran down our faces."

Hm. Saugus? Odd thing was, the pair were so lost, they thought they were close to San Francisco. The duo stopped a vaquero and asked if they were close to Baghdad by the Bay and he said San Francisco was only a few miles away.

That would be the Rancho San Francisco, home of Ignacio del Valle, mayor of Los Angeles and owner of just about everything in our valley.

The del Valles promptly nursed the two to a quick health and sent a large expedition of men and aid to Death Valley to rescue the Bennett-Arcan group. That was some act of Good Samaritanism. That's almost 500 miles round trip, and today the Auto Club will only tow seven miles without charging you.

Let's pause a moment and think about something. Imagine:

Imagine a pair of near-dead men showing up at your front doorstep in 2012. They ask not only for help, but for rescue. They ask if you would mind taking a couple of months off work to go and bring back an entire squadron of essentially homeless, broken down and near-death people.

Would you do it? Something to think about. Anyway...

While Manly & Rogers walked for help, the Bennett-Arcan group stayed at Death Valley. John C. Colton was one of the group that waited. In 1903, he recalled that hellish adventure of starvation and thirst. At first, the group began killing oxen, even boiling the hooves for soup. They watched members of their party die of exposure and disease.

Manly & Rogers eventually returned with riders from Ignacio del Valle's ranch to the rescue. They brought the group back to the Santa Clarita Valley. Colton's recollection: "Several days without water... struck Santa Clara River. Partly emaciated and nearly dead. Men who had weighed 200 pounds less than 60. Reached Rancho San Francisco February 5, 1850." About the del Valle hospitality, he wrote: "How we did eat, sleep and drink. We did nothing else for two weeks."

Colton also noted: "(How we) have been cared for at the old milk house" which "must be preserved forever - it must remain a landmark - earthquakes will hardly capture it - I regret you didn't leave a little pile of adobe to mark the locality of the old Rancho House that looked to our starved party like a palace."

That address was from a letter from Colton to E.H. Bailey, Rancho San Francisquito; Surrey P.O., CA; Feb. 28, 1903.

Many of those original pioneers would stay to make Santa Clarita their home and some of their relatives are still

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## Death Valley

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here today, I'm told. Up until World War II, relatives of the survivors would hold a reunion party in July at an old oak grove in Castaic.

Besides being joined at the hip millions of years ago when mountains were twisting and tearing apart, here's something else that links the Santa Clarita with the lowest spot and hottest spot in America.

One of the women who was rescued from one of the most unforgiving and hottest spots on planet Earth, looked back from her wagon as she was leaving for the more moderate climes of Santa Clarita. Bouncing along the dusty road, on her way out of the central California badlands, she disgustedly said, "Good-bye, Death Valley."

The name stuck. From Colton's recollection, that woman who named the beautiful desolation would stay on to live in the SCV.

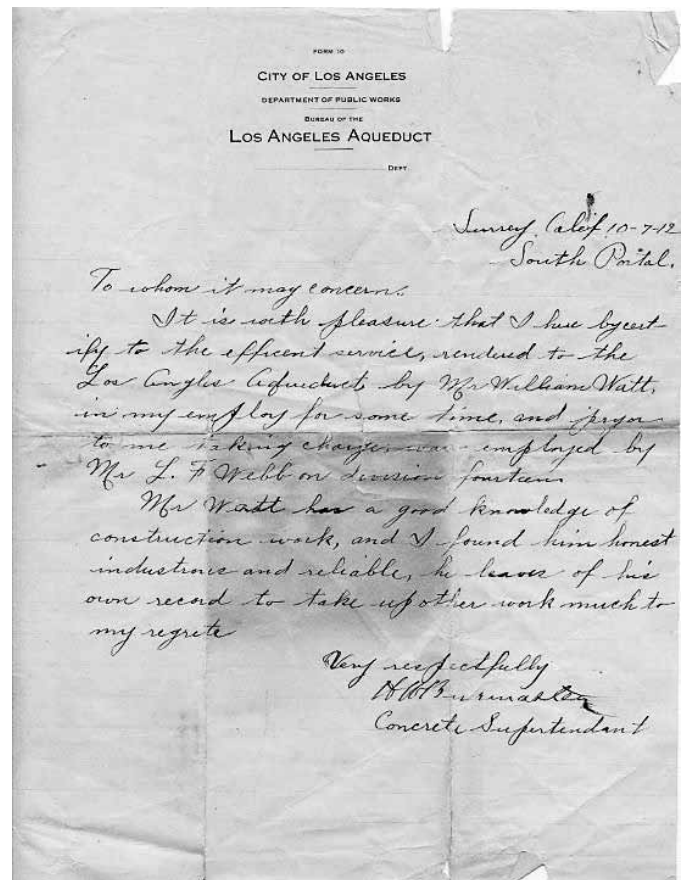
Death Valley's a national park now, the largest in the continental United States at 3,286,241.46 acres. It's one of the few parks where you don't have to worry about forest fires, because everything is pretty much burnt to a crisp already. Yet, it is so beautiful in its desolation. You ought to consider a winter's visit before the mercury hits the 120's.

And, finally, one last thing to ponder: Many of us will launch the New Year with a fresh exercise program to get lean and fit. William Manly and John Rogers left Death Valley on Nov. 4th, 1849. Without support vans, state-of-the-art tennis shoes, hi-tech camping gear and, oh yes - water, they walked more than 200 miles. It took them two months.

How's that for a severe program to get in shape?

*Local historian John Boston has written more than 20,000 stories, articles and columns about the Santa Clarita Valley and has earned 119 major writing awards, including being named America's top newspaper columnist. Contrary to published newspaper reports, he never moved out of the SCV and still lives in the wilds of Castaic. His new commercial website, [thejohnbostonmagazine.com](http://thejohnbostonmagazine.com), is coming out in early 2012.*

## L.A. Aqueduct Construction Letter - 1912



## Recent Docents

**T**hank you to the following members who served as docents during November and December:

|                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Frank Adella        | Barbara Martinelli |
| Laurie Cartwright   | RuthAnne Murthy    |
| Linda Casebolt      | Alan Pollack       |
| Sioux Coghlan       | The Questers *     |
| Evan Decker         | David Price        |
| Francesca Gastil    | Pat Saletore       |
| Catherine Hartnek   | Konrad Summers     |
| Harold Hicks        | Tony Tellez        |
| Ed and Theresa Marg | Gordon Uppman      |

Also, thank you's to the following, who opened the doors so that the docents could do their jobs:

|             |                    |
|-------------|--------------------|
| Duane Harte | Barbara Martinelli |
| Ed Marg     | Alan Pollack       |

Don't know who the Questers are?

See [www.questers1944.org](http://www.questers1944.org)

### ATTENTION HISTORY LOVERS!

*The Santa Clarita Valley Historical Society has been busier than ever these last couple of years. You see a lot of changes for the better, but this comes at a price: Yes, that means dollars and cents. We are not underwritten by the County, the City, or anyone else. Most of the money we have spent comes from donations. Let's be honest: Your dues barely cover your newsletters. Fundraising is harder than ever, and we need capital to even do that.*

- > *Do you like what we are doing?*
- > *Are you excited about the near completion of our Research Library?*
- > *Do you think that we should get on with the museum move to the Pardee house?*

*This is your opportunity to help make things happen. When your membership letter comes, add some extra \$'s to the check! Add a little something extra beyond your dues this year.*

*This is not just a request for money; it is a really critical request for support.  
Show us you care. . . Soon!*



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24101 San Fernando Road, Newhall  
Open to the public each Saturday and Sunday  
1:00 to 4:00 PM  
Kingsbury House open the first Sunday  
of each month from 1:00 to 4:00 PM

#### Historical Society Board of Directors

- Alan Pollack ----- President
- E.J. Stephens ----- 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President
- Jeff Boultinghouse ----- 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President
- Sioux Coghlan ----- Recording Secretary
- Barbara Martinelli ----- Corresponding Secretary
- Duane Harte ----- Treasurer

Gordon Glattenberg ----- Dispatch Layout

*"Preserving the best of the past for the good of the future"*

**Society Info: [www.scvhs.org](http://www.scvhs.org)  
Photo, Text Archives: [www.scvhistory.com](http://www.scvhistory.com)**