



The Echo

Volume 90

Number 1

Spring/Summer 2018

Every Map Tells a Story

Maps are as old as civilization. Archaeologists have recovered maps in Turkey, in the Italian Alps, and Babylonian ruins that date back several millennia. They are pictures of history, snapshots of the physical arrangement of things, they often tell stories of what was important to the mapmakers. Now, the Altadena Historical Society doesn't have anything quite that old, but the maps we have tell stories of their own.

The land we live on now changed from Tongva wildlands, to pasture land, to orchards and vineyards, and to part of a megalopolis in about 200 years, barely a blink

in the timeline of history. The maps on file at the Altadena Historical Society trace some of that change over time. Maps of all types and sizes have been donated to AHS over many years, and we now have about 150 maps in 10 drawers on hand for visitors to come in and look at.



1893 Pasadena Lithograph, published by Wood & Church

In the late 1800s, Altadena was open land with orchards, vineyards, and large estates. A railroad called the LA Terminal Railway ran from downtown Pasadena up the west side of Altadena then across to the east to Altadena Junction at the corner of Lake and Calaveras. Harriet Avenue in west Altadena follows the path of this old rail line. This beautifully drawn lithograph of the area shows a lot of the interesting detail of that time and is surrounded by illustrations of significant buildings. In the section of the map shown here, Marengo Avenue bisects the center,

***If you
haven't
renewed
your
membership,
please do it
now!***

continued on page 6

President's Letter *by Kathy Hoskins*

Recently the Altadena Historical Board had a chance to look back at the 2017 "to-do" list and checked off the things that we accomplished during the last year.

During 2017 we added three new board members, welcomed four new volunteers, presented four wonderful quarterly lectures, increased volunteer time by 200 hours, added two oral histories to our oral history files and installed a new exhibit in our museum. This shows what a vibrant organization your Historical Society is.

In addition, we had a very successful financial appeal

to update and replace some of our computers. Thanks to your robust response, we now have three new desktop computers and one laptop computer. Thank you to all who contributed – your gifts are sincerely appreciated.

This year, in order to have a more visible presence in our community, Altadena Historical Society is entering into three community partnerships with Webster's Community Pharmacy, MonteCedro and Mount Lowe enthusiast Paul Ayers. We are also increasing our footprint on social media.

I hope that many of you will have a chance to drop



by our Archives during this coming year. We have added the first Saturday of the month from 2 to 4 pm to our regular hours of Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 9 am to 1 pm in hopes that those of you who work during the week will be able to drop by.

Thank you for your continued support and we hope to see you during 2018.

Board of Directors

Kathy Hoskins – President

Jane Brackman –VP/Membership

Marlane Forsberg – Secretary

Jim Benson – Treasurer

Rob Hallwachs – Publicity

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Mary Smeritschnig

Dr. Sandra Thomas

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Larry Mudica

Eric Mulfinger

Jean Phillips

Gretta Treuscorff

Pam Wright

Dina Zanolso



**Bruce Spears at the head of the Sam Merrill Trail
at the Cobb Estate – 2006**

Longtime friend of AHS, Bruce Spears, passed away on March 20th. Bruce was a member of our Board of Directors for more years than any of us can remember. His greatest interest was Altadena history, particularly the Mount Lowe Railway.

Always friendly, encouraging and willing to lend a hand, Bruce never missed a chance to spread the word about our Society. He will be missed.

Follow Us on Social Media

The Historical Society is now on Facebook and Instagram. If you haven't seen our Facebook page yet, we post a range of interesting anecdotes from our Archives. We share pictures and stories from the broad range of our collections, maintain a calendar of upcoming events, and highlight the people who make our community a unique and interesting place to live.

Some of our most popular posts are the old newspaper ads we've shared from the *Altadena Press* and the *Altadenan*, which date from the 1930s through the 1980s. These include ads for local grocery stores, Webster's pharmacy, televisions, and the power of using classified ads to reunite lost pets with their families.

We commemorate the people who've made Altadena an interesting and unique place to live. So far, we've featured writers, actors, chefs, horse aficionados, and other

community leaders.

We also post other interesting bits of ephemera from our collections such as a beautiful poppy with a sort of map on its petals, from a booklet written by George Wharton James, one of the men we feature in our current exhibit, "Five Men and the Mountains."

If you have a story you'd like to learn more about, or want to recommend we feature someone from Altadena, message us through social media or send us an email.

Want to see what we post as part of your news feed? Become a fan by going to our page and clicking "Like".

<https://www.facebook.com/AltadenaHistoricalSociety/>

There's something new to see almost every day!

To view our posts on Instagram, follow us at <https://www.instagram.com/altadenahistoricalsocietyca/>

— by Daria Topousis



The February 1955 *Altadenan* promoted classified ads with this photo of a boy and his dog



Beautiful Altadena 91001 Proceeds to Benefit the Historical Society

From now through the end of June, you can show your love for both our community and the Historical Society by buying any of the Beautiful Altadena 91001 wares at Webster's Community Pharmacy. The line includes glassware, apparel, kitchenware, and more.

Webster's has named us their partner for the first half of 2018 as part of their community give-back program. Thanks to their generosity, the Historical Society will receive a percentage of the proceeds from their Beautiful Altadena 91001 line.

So please visit Webster's, make a purchase from this special collection, and support your local historical society.

What's Up at AHS

Altadena Historical Society launched our 2018 museum exhibit, "Inspired by the San Gabriels: Five Men and the Mountains," in November to a group of enthusiastic visitors. We were really pleased that Don McLain's family (George and Nancy Warner and others), and Alan Reid, L.T. Gotchy's nephew were able to attend. We've had many visitors since the exhibit opened and we encourage you to come discover the stories behind these adventurous



Relatives of Don McLain and L.T. Gotchy at AHS exhibit opening

all denominations located in our community. She's currently working with Pastor John Bledsoe, Zion Star Missionary Baptist Church and Pastor Tyrone Skinner of the Metropolitan Missionary Baptist Church. If you can contribute to our knowledge of Altadena's churches, please let us know.

We continue to offer presentations on local history to community organizations. Most recently Pam Wright spoke to the Temple City

Historical Society about the Cobb Estate and Jane Brackman discussed local floods at the Altadena Country Club. We have several lectures on tap and are currently developing more. Please let us know if you would like us to give a talk to your group.

I can't say enough about our great group of AHS volunteers. They are talented, knowledgeable, dedicated, and always willing to help our organization grow. Our newest volunteers, Eric Mulfinger and Gretta Treuscorff, are hard at work indexing our maps (Eric) and cataloging our extensive collection of Theatre Americana material (Gretta). You can find a

complete list of volunteers and Board members on page 2.



Exhibit continues through October 2018

men for yourself. The exhibit will run through October 2018 and our new Saturday hours (the first Saturday of each month from 2 to 4) will make it easier for you to visit.

Altadena's churches are a significant part of Altadena's history, and Board member Dr. Sandra Thomas is heading up our effort to enrich our collection with church histories of

New to the Archives

Sincere thanks to all who donated books, photos and memorabilia about Altadena's history this quarter – so many that we're devoting the next page to descriptions of our newest acquisitions.

George and Nancy Warner gave us an L.T. Gotchy-designed T-shirt featuring his jitney and photos of Gotchy's neighbor's cabin near Mount Lowe. **Richard Bales** sent us photographs of his Altadena Elementary School class in the 1940s. **Ben McGinty** provided an American Legion cap and a photo of JR's restaurant that shows the American Legion building.

We are fortunate to have a collection of memorabilia from **Lorraine and Ken Berteneau's** years as the owners of Fox's Restaurant; a collection of Larry Harmon b/w photos of Altadena in the snow, sent to us by **Roland Fraser**; a snow photo of New York and Allen, provided by **Mike McMillan**, former owner of Patty Cakes; Echo Mountain photos from **Charles Blakeslee**; and an original E. Waldo Ward orange crate label donated by **Mike Kinney**.



Janes Village snow photo - January 1949

Michel Chabon; and "The Happy Bottom Riding Club" from **Beth Cassioli** (read a review of this book on page 10).

We have a CD of the Richard Sears' jazz

composition, Altadena, named in honor of former Altadenan jazz musician Tootie Heath and given to us by **Ruth and Bill Dawson**; blueprints from the Bob Lucas Library and a wooden Steve Judd real estate sign donated by **James and Joanne Morse**; and an AAA sign with directions to local hiking destinations probably posted near Millard Canyon

Welcome!

All of our dinners include: choice of soup, salad or juices; vegetable; choice of potatoes, hot homemade muffins, homemade dessert and tea.

From the Grill

Fox's Special steak (with sautéed onions) \$6.95 small cut \$5.95
 Special T-bone steak (16 oz.) \$7.95
 Three (3) Loin Lamb chops (with mint jelly) \$6.95
 Two (2) Loin Lamb chops (with mint jelly) \$5.50
 Two (2) breaded Pork chops (with sautéed onions + applesauce) \$5.25
 One (1) breaded Pork chop (with sautéed onions + applesauce) \$4.50
 Ground sirloin steak \$3.75
 Grilled liver (with bacon or onions) \$3.95

Fish (our speciality)

Fox's "Catch of the Day" (always fresh) ask your waitress
 Filet of Sole \$3.95
 Filet of Halibut \$5.25
 Fried Shrimp \$5.25
 Fish platter \$4.95

Sweets

Try our homemade pies and cobblers
 We also serve sherbet, icecreams + sundaes.

For adults over 65 and kids (under 12)

Filet of sole (with tartar sauce + lemon) \$3.50
 Top sirloin steak (with sautéed onions) \$4.95
 Ground sirloin steak \$2.95
 Grilled liver (with bacon or onions) \$3.25
 Breaded Pork chop (with sautéed onions + applesauce) \$3.95
 (milk included on children's plates.)

Delux hamburger sandwich \$1.95
Delux corned beef sandwich \$2.75
Chef's salad \$2.75
 (Delux sandwiches served with a choice of soup, salad or french fries)

Fox's once served dinner – and wine

Linda Manies's gift of a panoramic view of Lake and Mariposa is being framed for display, as is the large color photo of JR's we mentioned in our last newsletter. Two books have been added to our library – M.F.K. Fisher's "The Gastronomical Me," written while she lived in Altadena and donated by

Campground, brought to us by **Kirby Real**. Finally, **Bruce Linsenmayer** brought us a wonderful collection of Altadena memorabilia including photos of La Vina Sanitarium.

We hope you'll stop by to see these interesting pieces of Altadena's past.

— by Jean Phillips

continued from
page 1

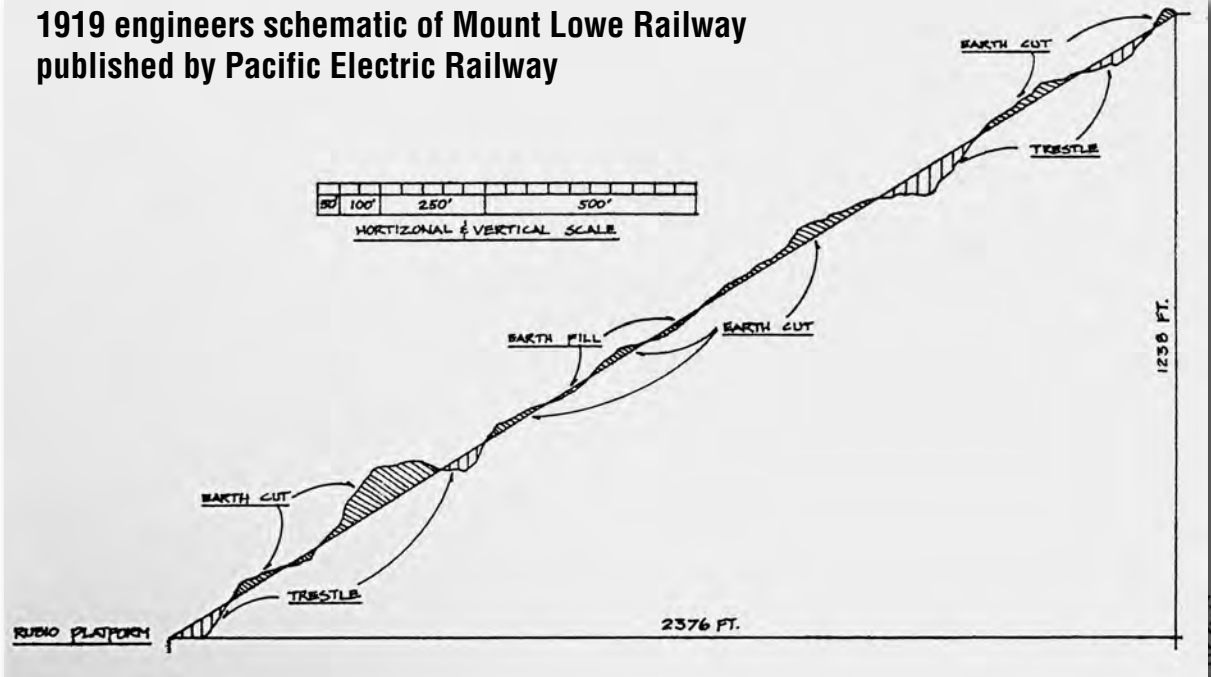
running roughly north to south. Lake Avenue is on the right. On the map shown on page 1, the lithographer drew in the LA Terminal Railway with a small train traveling westbound on the way back to Pasadena. The large building near the center is the original Washington School at the northeast corner of Raymond and Howard. Details on the map are difficult to see. Visit AHS to see the map itself.

Mt. Lowe Incline Drawing

The Pacific Electric Railway Company ran one of its trains from Fair Oaks near Colorado Boulevard through Altadena all the way up to the Alpine Tavern high in the San Gabriel Mountains. The route came up Fair Oaks to Mendocino, turned right at Mendocino, crossed eastward to Lake Avenue, then went north. Just above Dolores Street, the rail line swung off Lake Avenue to the east again and headed into Rubio Canyon. From Rubio Canyon, an incline tram took passengers up to Echo Mountain, where they switched to the Alpine Division for a three-mile trip to the Alpine Tavern. The Pacific Electric Railway produced an engineers' schematic diagram of the entire rail line in 1919.

This single page excerpt from the 12-page map shows the rail incline from Rubio Canyon platform up to Echo Mountain. At the time of its construction in 1893, the incline was the largest funicular railway in the world.

1919 engineers schematic of Mount Lowe Railway published by Pacific Electric Railway

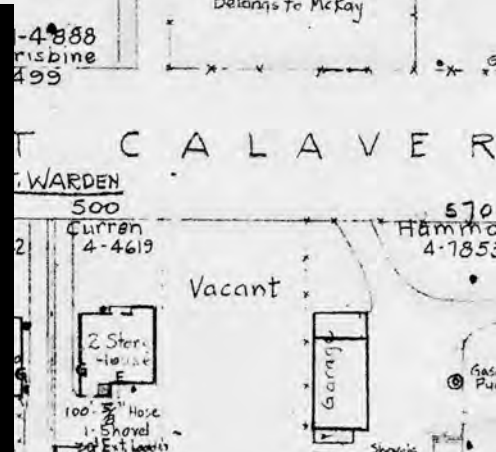
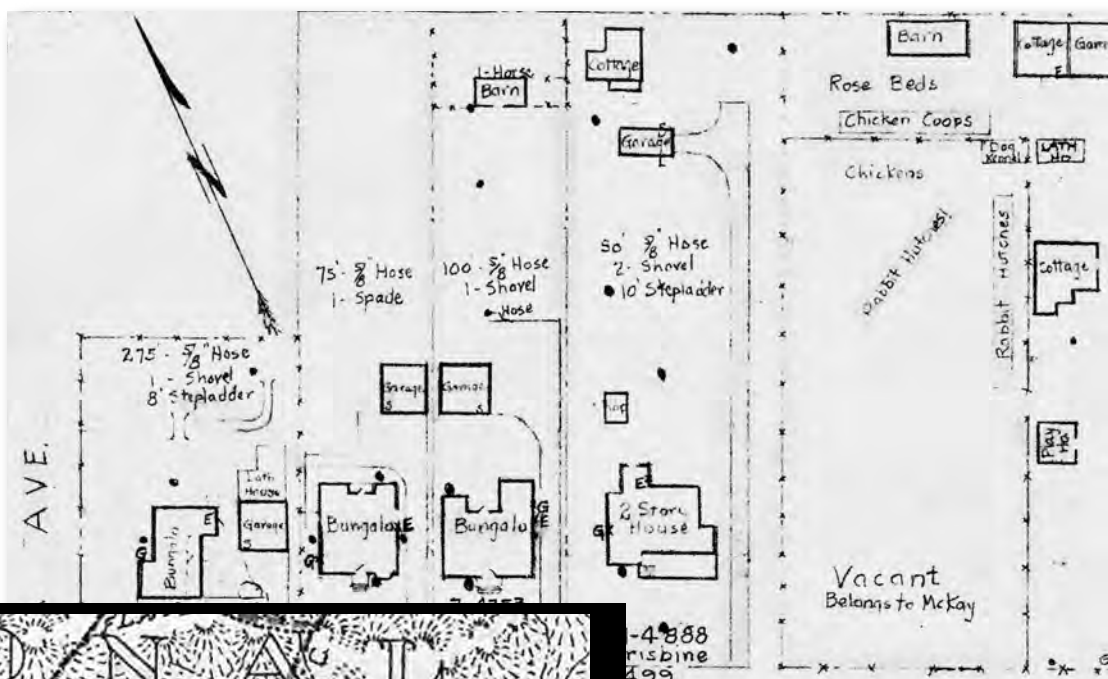


1920s Automobile Road Map of Los Angeles Country, published by the Auto Club

The Automobile Club of Southern California was an early promoter and supporter of car travel in the region. This is part of its Automobile Road Map of Los Angeles County, dating from the 1920s. You can see many of the main roads we still use as well as some interesting details. "M"s on the map indicate places where hikers and horse riders could get meals and lodging at trail camps in the local mountains. A road up the Arroyo Seco could take you past Teddy's Outpost all the way to Oakwilde for a picnic or an overnight stay. There was apparently a "Balloon School" at what is now Arcadia County Park. El Prieto Canyon is called on this map "Negro Canyon," apparently referencing the early Altadena resident and lumber man, Robert Owen, who lived in El Prieto Canyon in the mid-1800s.



During and after World War II, it appears that some neighborhoods in Altadena had detailed plans in the event of an air raid. This close-up from the Air Warden Map shows east Calaveras Street



between Santa Rosa and Santa Anita. It dates from the 1940s, though its author is unknown. You can see the property owners' names, the equipment they have on hand, and structures on each property. On the upper right, there are rabbit hutches and "chickens" on vacant land owned by someone named McKay.

There is much more available to look at in our collection, but these are a few of my favorites. If you have time to come by to explore in the map drawers, they're open!

— *by Eric Mulfinger*

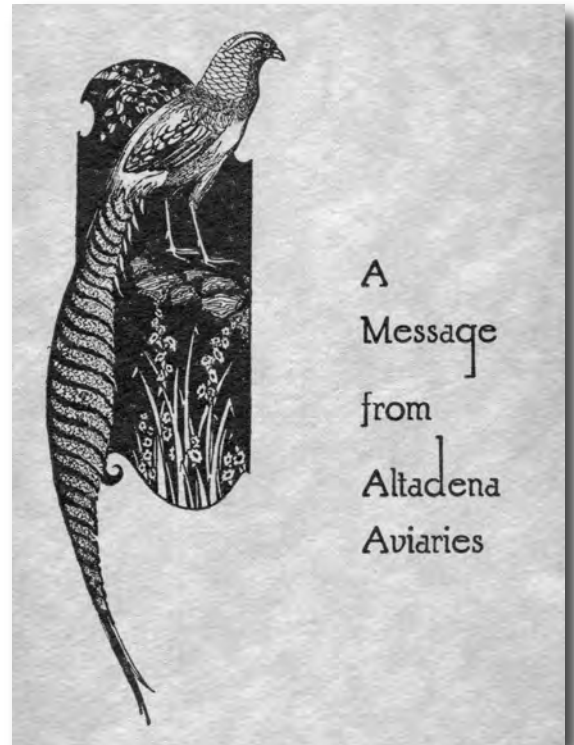
Fowl Fanciers in Early Altadena



In the early 1900s, breeding of poultry and exotic birds was quite a popular pastime. Aviaries housing imported birds of many varieties could often be found on the grounds of Altadena and Pasadena estates. The Andrew McNally House on

called “The Four-Track News” had an article in its June 1906 issue by George Wharton James, historian, writer, and publicist for the Mount Lowe Railway, about the popularity of birds in Altadena and Pasadena – both wild birds and more exotic breeds kept in aviaries.

“For the prospective travelers to California, on their arrival in the land of birds, buds and blossoms they may enjoy for themselves the charm of the birds in person. While these



Sales Brochure Cover

Altadena Aviaries, one of the most exclusive bird importers and breeding farms in America. According to their brochure, “each week Oriental importations arrive.” Their



Photo of an Aviary on the grounds of the Andrew McNally House on Mariposa Street.

Photo courtesy of Carothers Photography

Mariposa Street includes an aviary built on what was then the home’s back yard. It is still there today.

A vintage travel magazine

aviaries are all on private grounds, every courteous

visitor is welcome and made to feel at home in his environment,” he wrote.

Altadena was the home of nationally recognized



Parakeets

priced as low as \$10 per pair

Imported from Australia and Africa—and are more commonly known in America as the ideal love birds. Every fancier, large or small, should have two or three pairs of them.

An outstanding collection of Parrots and rare Parakeets.

Every bird is raised or bred in our own aviaries

stock included Green Peafowl, Argus Pheasants, and Mandarin Ducks. Flamingos came from Africa, Parakeets from Australia, and Imperial Fruit Pigeons from India.

People came from all over to see these exotic fowl, including movie stars from



An inside look at the Altadena Aviaries Brochure

for their own home aviaries.

From about 1900-1920 chickens were raised on family farms. Chicken breeders also patronized Altadena Aviaries, as its inventory included rare breeds of chickens such as Cochins, Orpingtons, Golden and Silver Seabrights, and White Crested Polish.

Some raised the birds primarily to sell their eggs; other poultry fanciers would enter

their birds in local poultry exhibitions such as county fairs. In those days, chicken meat was a delicacy usually reserved for special occasions and holidays.

Favorite breeds for the home flocks are still popular today. The Barred Rock, one of the all-time popular favorites in the country, was a prolific layer of brown eggs loved for its beautiful black and white markings.

Araucanas, first discovered in Chile, were referred to as the "Easter egg chickens" because their eggs are blue-green shades, from turquoise to deep olive. The top egg-

layer, popular then and today was the White Leghorn.

Local historian Sarah Noble Ives, in her 1938 book, "Altadena", describes the popularity of poultry raising. "From 1906 to, say, 1910, the principal ambition of every tenderfoot was to own a chicken ranch..... People whose sole contact with the genus Gallinaceai from any angle had been confined to the stuffing in their pillows,



the albuminous "accompaniment to a breakfast of 'ham and', and the Sunday dinner fricasseed cold-storage rooster."

When the spread between the cost of feed and the selling price of eggs reached the vanishing point, many gave up their backyard "farms." But chickens have always been found in local back yards, for Altadena has always held on to its rural beginnings. (See the air warden's map on page 7 for the location of a lot where chickens and rabbits were raised in the 1940s.)

— by Paula Wegner

Hollywood who would pose for a photo shoot with the birds. Others came to purchase these beautiful birds



Book Notes

Altadena Historical Society has a reference library available for browsing, research and entertainment. You're welcome to stop in to read, question and browse.

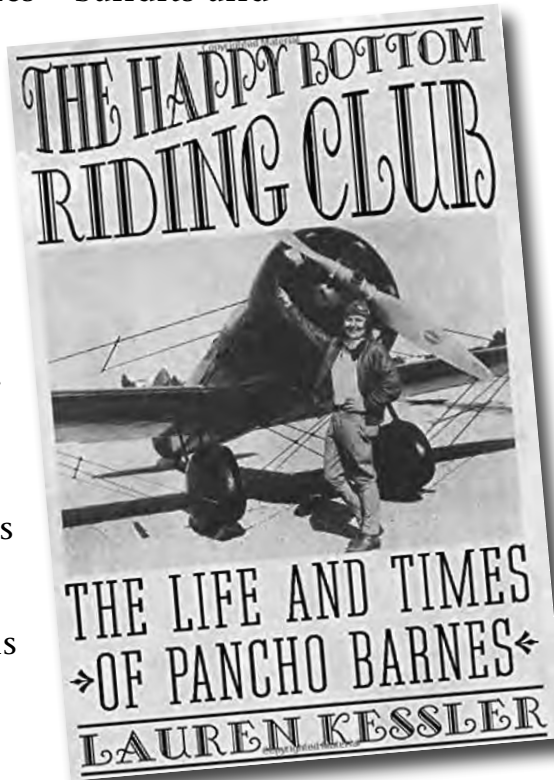
"The Happy Bottom Riding Club – The Life and Times of Pancho Barnes" by Lauren Kessler, Pub. 2000

Florence "Pancho" Barnes lived a life of stunning contrasts! Her grandfather (Thaddeus Lowe, creator of the Mount Lowe Railway) adored her and they spent every Sunday on outings. They went everywhere—horse rides, mountain hikes, circuses, alligator/ostrich farms, and air shows. She was his kindred spirit, and undoubtedly absorbed his spirit of adventure on these outings.

On the other hand, (this was 1910, after all,) her mother insisted that she become the epitome of a "good wife," soft-spoken, modest, etc. A marriage was arranged with an Episcopal rector, which resulted in the birth of a son. She and her husband never lived together afterward. Instead, she set out to overturn every prohibition her mother

had tried to instill, and she did it with conviction. She chose to live a life of excitement, adventure and exuberance.

This book lists scores of her exploits...solo flights across the U.S. and into Mexico, air races, stunt riding/flying. She literally walked through jungle from San Blas to the Yucatan while pursued by bandits and



revolutionaries. During that trip, while riding a mule, her male companion dubbed her "Pancho." She liked the name and used it the rest of her life.

She knew many famous people (had relationships with more than a few



Pancho Barnes (left) with Amelia Earhart (third from left)

men) and threw legendary parties, many of which lasted for days. But, the Depression was devastating, and Pancho finally had to sell almost everything to buy property in the Mojave Desert. She created an airfield and guest ranch, known as The Happy Bottom Riding Club where she entertained lavishly and often, with parties fueled by liquor flown in from Mexico.

Marrying three more times, her life was a whirl of new projects, parties, flying, riding and general good times. Pancho Barnes was an extraordinary person who set her own path and ignored convention. She was the

personification of "The Roaring Twenties," not to mention "A Liberated Woman."

This quote from her tells it all. "Ah, hell! We had more fun in a week than those weenies had in a lifetime!"

— by Pam Wright

FREE

“Lost Trails of the Altadena Foothills” Unveiled by Historian Paul Ayers April 23 at the Altadena Historical Society

Program in the Community Center is Free and Open to the Public

Once-popular trails in the front range of the San Gabriel Mountains that have fallen into disrepair or disappeared will be rediscovered by historian Paul Ayers in a 7:30 p.m. Monday April 23 program at the Altadena Historical Society.



Paul Ayers at Woodwardia cabin ruins in Dark Canyon

Altadena Historical Society has endorsed Ayers's ongoing project of locating once-popular campsites that flourished across the front range of the San Gabriels, but have mostly reverted to a natural state.

The program, which is free and open to the public, will be in the Community Center, 730 E. Altadena Drive. The Community Center is immediately west of the Sheriff's Station and south of Rite-Aid.

Ayers, an attorney and San Gabriels historian, will illustrate his talk with some of the scores of vintage photographs and postcards he has collected over 25 years of researching and restoring Altadena trails.

He will share his research methods, which include using historic aerial photographs, old maps, trail artifacts, and personal exploration.

The Society, founded in 1935 and Altadena's oldest non-profit community group, is currently featuring an exhibit of “Five Men Inspired by the San Gabriels” in its museum at the Community Center.

The Society museum and archives are open 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays, and also from 2 to 4 p.m. on the first Saturday of each month.

The AHS website is at altadenahistoricalsociety.org, and can also be found on Facebook and Instagram.

— *by Rob Hallwachs*



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VISIT OUR BLOG!
altadenahistoricalsociety.blogspot.com

Altadena Historical Society (AHS), a non-profit organization, was founded to gather, preserve, and make available information about the people, places and events that have shaped the community in the past. The Altadena Historical Society is proud of its history. Founded in 1935, we are one of the oldest volunteer organizations in the community.

Please join or renew today!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

_____ \$25 Membership

_____ \$50 Premium Membership (includes booklet with 51 pictures
of interesting Altadenans)

You can now join online <http://www.altadenahistoricalsociety.org/membership.htm>