Alvarado Street running across the center of our town is named in honor of the Alvarado family, the first non-native family to reside on the land that later became Fallbrook. Since 1846 the Alvarado family owned 13,322 acres of the Rancho Monserate. Thousands of cattle and sheep herded by Mexican and Indian vaqueros once grazed across the unfenced Rancho Monserate.
Modern day spelling differs slightly from the old records. The Rancho was named for an ancient monastery in Monserrate, Spain near Barcelona. The Alvarado’s Monserate cattle brand, shown above, is one of the classic Californio “picture” brands whose meanings have since been lost.

Bordered on the south by the San Luis Rey River and on the north by approximately where Stagecoach Lane and Reche Road are today, the Rancho Monserate stretched east/west between the old ‘Road from Temecula’ (now I-15) to roughly where Mission Road is today. See 1872 Plat of Rancho Monserate below.

Luiseno Indian families were living here when California governor Pio Pico granted the land to California born Ysidro Maria Alvarado in 1846 as a reward for his father’s long military service. Ysidro Alvarado's father arrived in San Diego as a Spanish soldier in 1769 with the earliest expedition. Retiring after 35 years of service, his family lived in Los Angeles. Ysidro Alvarado and Micaela Avila were married in the church at San Gabriel Mission, initially raising their children in Los Angeles where Micaela’s father was an important official.

To the marriage of Ysidro and Micaela Alvarado three children are born: Tomas (1839), Dolores (1840) and Lugardo (1842). In 1845, Micaela Avila de Alvarado died of unknown causes. Soon after her death, Ysidro married Micaela's younger sister Manuela. The family moved to the Monserate where Ysidro Alvarado built a large adobe home on the rancho near the NE intersection of today’s I-15 and SR76.

In 1862, an outbreak of smallpox swept northern San Diego County killing hundreds. The epidemic ravaged Rancho Monserate. Don Ysidro and his wife nursed many of their dying servants, vaqueros, and farm hands. Ysidro and Manuela eventually contract the disease themselves and also die. It has been said that many of the victims of the smallpox epidemic were buried in a common grave near the Alvarado Hacienda. Ysidro had expressed his wish that he wanted to be buried at the San Luis Rey Mission. Although the mission was now in private ownership with Alvarado's neighbor, Colonel Cave Couts of Rancho Guajome, it was still La Mission to the faithful. Col. Couts did not want smallpox victims buried there. Couts’ men confronted and shot dead one of Ysidro’s mourners during the burial.

Ysidro Alvarado’s 3 adult children could not immediately inherit the Rancho. The boundaries and title were still being determined by the U.S. Land Commission, according to the terms of the Treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo that ended the Mexican American War and conceded the state of California to the United States. This 9-year delay also affected a Canadian settler from New York named Vital Reche, who could not gain title to his nearby Live Oak Canyon homestead until after the Rancho boundaries are confirmed.
The final survey is finally approved in 1872 and Rancho Monserate is equally divided, with approximately 4,400 acres to each of the heirs.

Tomas Alvarado, the son, received the eastern portion which includes today’s Pala Mesa. Under Tomas’ management, cattle and sheep become more numerous and the Rancho is profitable. Tomas’ sister Dolores Alvarado de Serrano and her husband inherit the middle portion where Gird Road now runs. Their younger sister Lugarda Alvarado Palomares and her husband receive ownership of the western portion, where Fallbrook High School is now.

Eventually the presence of so many homesteaders on or around the unfenced rancho made large-scale stock raising impractical. Over the years Rancho Monserate is subdivided and sold off into many smaller parcels of ranches or farms.

~Tom Frew

Acknowledgements:


2) Elizabeth Yamaguchi, Fallbrook Historical Society, 1998

3) James S. Copley, Historic Ranchos of San Diego, 1969

FALLBROOK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Gain in-depth knowledge about the rich history of the greater Fallbrook area by becoming a docent with the Fallbrook Historical Society. Meet others who share your interest in the history of San Diego North County, while learning from peers, experts, and guests. With available training, flexible scheduling and variety of roles, even a limited availability can be mutually beneficial. One day a month or every two months — whatever you can do. Docent activities include greeting and engaging guests to the museum facilities, representing the Historical Society at special events, providing tours of the Fallbrook Heritage Center and Reche Schoolhouse, and broadly serving the Historical Society’s essential mission of educating the community about the history of Fallbrook and surrounding areas. If you enjoy interacting with people, consider joining the ranks of our docents. Experience the satisfaction and personal accomplishment that comes from joining such a stimulating and worthwhile organization, right in the heart of Fallbrook.

For more information and to join the FHS docent pool, please contact our Docent Coordinator, jeffduhachek@gmail.com
The Historic Mission Theater

Presents

“Mr. Smith Goes to Washington”
A tribute to Fallbrook’s own, Frank Capra!
An Historical Society Fundraising Event

March 28 at
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Frank Capra lived in Fallbrook from the early 1950’s until the early 1970’s. He was involved with the Chamber of Commerce and the FPUD water board and was an Oscar winning director.

Storyline:
“A idealistic man is appointed to fill a vacancy in the United States Senate. He soon finds out about political corruption.”

Come learn about Fallbrook History and support the Fallbrook Historical Society.

Social Hour at 1 pm and 5 pm!
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Movie tickets $10.00 in advance or $12.00 at the door.
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Tickets can be purchased at FallbrookMissionTheater.Com or at Sun Realty 431 South Main, Fallbrook

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IN APPRECIATION

Our sincere appreciation to M. Joseph Bowe and the David and Dorris E. Staples Foundation for their generous gift to the Fallbrook Historical Society. This gift will fund our initial scholarship prize for the upcoming Essay Contest for high school seniors.

A big THANK YOU to Derick and Linda Lovett and the Slacker Hill Band for their generous gift to the Fallbrook Historical Society. The band donated all of their tips from their performance at Brother’s Bistro on January 17th.

To Eric & Valerie Thruelsen who noticed the slow response times on the computer in the main museum and went to Costco, purchased and presented to us a brand new, high speed, computer for the museum research area, the community of Fallbrook is very grateful.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Sat., June 6th 1 pm – 4 pm
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING & OPEN HOUSE
with Pioneer of the Year Award, Vintage Business of the Year Award, and Announcement of Essay Contest Winner

Sat., July 18th 4pm – 6pm
MEMBERS ONLY WINE TASTING AND NEW MUSEUM EXHIBITS PREVIEW

Plan a Visit

Reche Schoolhouse Open:
Includes the Schoolhouse, the Hindorff Adobe, the Indian Rocks
1319 S. Live Oak Park Rd.
Open the second Saturday of each month
1 p.m. – 4 p.m.
or by appointment

The Heritage Center Open:
Includes the Main Museum, the Pittenger House, the Gem & Mineral Room, the Ford Room, the Don J. Rivers Interpretive Center (the Barn), the outside displays
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The Caboose at The Railroad Heritage Park (Caboose Open)
Main Ave. at Elder St.
Avocado Festival April 19th
During Summer Nights Events

Fallbrook Historical Society facilities are available for private tours by appointment. Call 760-723-4125.
HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW FALLBROOK HISTORY?

Test yourself and your family with these:

1. What was Camp Pendleton called before it became a Marine Corps Base during World War Two in 1942?
   HINT:  https://www.fallbrookhistoricalsociety.org/about/fallbrook-history/featured-articles/

2. Where was the Reche homestead, in 1869?
   HINT:  See display at Live Oak Park.

3. Where was the Santa Fe train station in Fallbrook from 1917 until 1971?

4. Who was the first European family to settle around Fallbrook?
   a) The Reches
   b) The Alvarados
   c) The Girds
   d) The Windsors
   HINT:  See Page 1 in this Historian.

5. True or False. Fallbrook Girl Scouts are the oldest troop West of the Mississippi.
   HINT:  See display at museum.

6. True or False. The Fallbrook Historical Society is located on Rocky Crest Road.
   HINT:  Open Mondays and Thursdays 1-4

Answers on right of page.

Need a place to hold meetings, host a wedding, have a reunion or a party?

The Reche Schoolhouse
The Ford Room
The Barn
Are Available for Rental
Call 760-723-4125
The Fallbrook Historical Society’s mission is to bring history to life by educating the community and others about Fallbrook’s rich heritage

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