

THE HISTORIAN

FALLBROOK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

260 ROCKY CREST ROAD - P.O. Box 1375. FALLBROOK, CA 92088

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(760) 723-4125

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IN MEMORIAM DONALD JACK RIVERS 1928 - 2005

With the untimely passing of Don Rivers on December 3, 2005, not only the Fallbrook Historical Society but the entire Community of Fallbrook lost an endearing presence. To commemorate his leadership and contributions over the years, in January the Board of Directors voted to honor Don by bestowing his name on the barn soon to be built on the museum grounds. Upon completion it will be dedicated to his memory and known as the **Donald Jack Rivers Interpretive Center.**

Remembering Don...

Don Rivers had not been in the Historical Society very long when I came in as a director. He was not familiar with the rules and operations of the organization. He spent many hours searching through the files for clues to the way the society had grown, and how various procedures were set up to be done.

There was a period of time when we all got discouraged from all the problems that came up, but Don held fast to seeking out the answers and the solutions to each problem. With his encouragement and leadership it worked out.

He was there at the museum many hours every week. He took after-hours phone calls at his home. And when he was at home he was frequently working at his computer on business of the museum or displays of Fallbrook history. He transcribed old news articles, a never-ending project. He devoted many evening hours, year after year, entering old Fallbrook Enterprise articles into the computer for scrapbooks of information for researchers to use.



March, 1998 – Ceremonial Burning of the Museum's Mortgage
(l to r) Jack Story, Don Rivers, Bev McDougal, Marge Yackey

He scanned and saved on CD several hundreds of photographs, and printed them for the files, for displays, and for scrapbooks. He gave many presentations with these pictures he had assembled. He was always available for presentations whenever someone requested a program about Fallbrook. He did fantastic research to put together a history of the buildings in our town.

He was a dedicated citizen of Fallbrook who left a marvelous legacy for us all.

**Margaret Ray, Museum Director
December 15, 2005**

**DON RIVERS WAS BOARD PRESIDENT FROM
1997 TO 2003**

Remembering Don...

Marge Yackey was the one who introduced Don to the Board, urging him into the presidency. After introducing him to me, and out of Don's hearing, she said, "You'll like him, Cecelia, he is a good man."

Did you know that he and Mary did a complete inventory of both the Masonic Cemetery, where he served on the board, and of the Odd Fellows Cemetery? They walked the rows to get every visible name correctly recorded.

They seemed surprised when I wanted to send both records and their 8-volume anecdotal history of Fallbrook to the DAR Library and Library of Congress as original works for the History/Genealogical collections. All were accepted. I think even they did not realize what contributions these are to the community and how much they are used at the museum for research.

He is truly irreplaceable.

Cecelia Njust, Museum Director



BARN UPDATE

I have very exciting news concerning the barn. We are just a very short time off from getting our permits from the county. Then we will be able to start grading. The building has been ordered from Wedgcor and hopefully, this year, we will make a lot of progress in finishing this project. We are still short of the total amount of funds needed to finish the project, but plans are in place to tackle this problem.

In addition, I am happy to announce the names of three new members who have agreed to serve on the Barn Committee. Joining **Bev McDougal**, **Thea Moore**, **Cecelia Njust** and myself are **Bruce Dennett**, **Bob Gillespie** and **Dode Martin**. Each of these gentlemen has unique talents which will be of great use to us as we proceed with construction.

Joel Darwin East, Barn Chairman

New Library Shelves

A new shelving unit has been installed in the Library/Research area specifically designed to hold larger binders and scrapbooks and allow the consolidation of these materials. Over the next few weeks there will be significant changes in that area of the museum and we ask that you bear with us while we complete the reconfiguration. The long-term goal is the enhancement of the storage and retrieval of research materials.

Monies for the new shelving unit came from Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) funds from the County of San Diego.

Books for Sale

We have acquired a number of "vintage" books and magazines that, while historically interesting, are not specifically related to Fallbrook or the surrounding area. These items are now available for purchase at prices ranging from \$0.25 to \$2.00. If you are interested in early issues of **Arizona Highways** (both individual magazines and annual "best of" compilations), books and periodicals on the Civil War or states and localities other than California, check the display behind the main reception counter.

Books for Sale (cont'd)

And don't forget **Fallbrook in Review**, our historical society publications - \$7.50 per volume or a complete set of 8 volumes for \$50.00. These make wonderful gifts.

Membership

We welcome new members **Denver Allan Davis** of Escondido and **Allyn Fili** of Fallbrook. Member **Virginia Duerst Howard** joined the society in August of 1999 and recently became a Life member. She lives in Murphys, CA.

A pleasant surprise during the recent very busy months has been the receipt of 18 renewals in advance of the end of our fiscal/membership year, which is 30 April. Many renewals have included an additional amount for the Barn Museum Building Fund.

Thank you so much for your vital support of our society.

Cecelia Njust, Membership Chairman

Help Wanted

Volunteers are needed to assist with the physical inventory of our museum. This is an ongoing project and to date the team has completed 95% of the upper floor of the main museum. The next phase will include paper research materials, the Ford Room downstairs, and the Pittenger House.

We need help for a minimum of one 2-hour session (morning or afternoon) per month (or more if you are available). We have found it effective to work in two-person teams.

The project is to identify and match artifacts with existing records and to update those records as necessary. Computer experience is not required but would be most welcome. Training will be provided. For information, please contact **Jane McKee, 728-6373**.

Model A's Look Right at Home!

One of the recent activities of our society was hosting a visit and tour stop for the **Palomar A's**, a North County chapter of the Model A Ford Club of America that meets in San Marcos. The tour was open to members from the entire county. Their tour chairman, **John Frazee** and his wife **Diane**, who live in Oceanside, had come to the museum several weeks before to arrange their visit.

Regularly scheduled docents for that day were **Bev McDougal** and **Betty Johnston**, and they were joined by **Lee Shaeffer**, **Bob** and **Shirley Fender**, **Carroll** and **Cecelia Njust**, **Judy Gillespie**, and her guest, new docent **Allyn Fili**.

The tour of 16 cars included a variety of "A's" from coupes to a Woodie wagon and a vintage Highway Patrol Car, all in great condition. The group started in Bonsall, stopped for a morning tour of the Reche Club schoolhouse, then drove by more historic buildings throughout Fallbrook and arrived at the museum after lunch. The visitors seemed most impressed with our buildings and exhibits, especially our Model A and Model T. They enjoyed coffee and cookies we served in the Ford Room downstairs.

All the guests said they hoped to come back as they needed more time to look at our many displays. Museum members who hosted the event enjoyed meeting our guests, showing them the exhibits, and seeing the cars. Like everyone who has seen it, our visitors were intrigued by the **Somacal Exhibit** with its model train running through scale models of Fallbrook historic buildings – a treasure it is, with the engine painted to replicate the big one hauled out of the Santa Margarita Canyon after the destructive flood of 1916.

If you have not helped with a society event, or acted as a docent for a few hours a month, become a volunteer. You will enjoy working with other members as you learn more about the collections and the history of Fallbrook. Do call **723-4125** and leave a message to volunteer. You'll be glad you did!

Cecelia Njust