

# The Historian

A Quarterly Publication of the Fallbrook Historical Society

Fall 2024

## Lemonade Day in Fallbrook



**About 1920** Looking north up the dirt road that is the Inland Highway/ Main Ave in Fallbrook at the railroad crossing. Today, in 2024, Wells Fargo Bank is at the right in the corner lot where the train tracks run and these trees once stood. The intersection of Fig St. and Main is visible at the 1<sup>st</sup> electric pole on the left. Electricity came to Fallbrook in March 1917. Train tracks were laid a few months later in July 1917. *Fallbrook Historical Society Photo*

**By 1920, The inland highway** from San Diego to Los Angeles had been paved, except for a gap of 23 miles in San Diego County. The 23 mile stretch from Rainbow to Escondido, passing through the center of Fallbrook, was still a dirt road. (1) Riverside County was pressing San Diego County to fulfill their promise to finally pave this section. (2)

The population of West Fallbrook in 1920 was 1,139 people in 427 households. 80% of these households were farms. (3)

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The Ryan Construction Company of San Diego arrived in 1921 with the contract to pave this last section of highway. A work crew set up camp near Fallbrook to grade the road plus mix and pour concrete. Detours were set up and Main Avenue was closed for weeks. Fallbrook celebrated the road completion on Saturday February 4, 1922, with a barbecue, distinguished speakers, and an evening dance. (4)

The finished pavement through town was just two strips of concrete with a line painted down the middle. On each side of the street, there remained a broad shoulder of dirt where large shade trees grew alongside the road. Sidewalks, where they existed, were typically wooden.

The inland highway brought hundreds or more vehicles along Fallbrook's Main Avenue on weekends and holidays. The Chamber of Commerce began to think about how they might communicate to these travelers about the availability of rich Fallbrook farmland. Robert Wayman, grandson of William Pittenger, and a Chamber booster, was the manager of the Fallbrook Development Company. Wayman was selling Fallbrook ranches and farmland. Wayman was also an organizer of the Fallbrook Realty Board. Wayman is credited with originating the idea of Lemonade Day. (5) Wayman and the other real estate brokers offered to pay the costs of Lemonade Day to the Chamber's publicity fund.

**July 4, 1922, First Annual Lemonade Day:** The Fallbrook Chamber of Commerce, under President Rollin H. Blacklidge agreed to sponsor a Fourth of July event serving free, ice cold lemonade all day to travelers on the inland highway celebrating Fallbrook's 39th year of freedom from frost injury to its citrus crop.

A temporary large stand was built under the canopy of a big shade tree on Main Ave. A sign placed in the middle of the street invited passersby to stop and "have one" on Fallbrook. For this inaugural year, the lemonade stand was only on one side of the street.

Eight cases of lemons and 200 pounds of sugar were on hand to make 27,000 gallons. A corps of female volunteers mixed and served lemonade all day while Chamber President Blacklidge plus Realty Board officers, Wayman and L.J. Sprouse, answered travelers' questions about Fallbrook. They also handed out eight-page folders with information for people in search of a "desirable" location to live. The Chamber estimated they served 14,000 glasses of lemonade throughout the day. (6)

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**You're invited to:**  
**The Fallbrook Historical Society**  
**Annual Awards Ceremony and**  
**Open House!**  
**at the Historic Reche School House**

**September 21, 2024**  
**1:00 pm - 4:00 pm**

**(Awards ceremony at 1:30)**

**1319 South Live Oak Park Road**  
**Fallbrook, Ca 92028**



## **Refreshments!**

Awards presented to

**Pioneers of the Year:** Don and Peggy Durling,

**Business of the Year:** Manor Cleaners

**Member of the year:** Rod Stuart

Tour Fallbrook's first School and grounds.  
Come join us and see a part of Fallbrook's History!

**Fallbrook Historical Society**

**760-723-4125**





**About 1922** Looking north on the Inland highway in Fallbrook at the Main Ave railroad crossing. Two cement lanes are complete. Notice the shade trees along the unpaved dirt parking and pedestrian area along the road shoulder. *Fallbrook Historical Society Photo*

On July 4, 1923, the new Chamber of Commerce president, Dr. Addison Morgan had a large banner stretched across the road with signs placed further up the road in both directions asking everyone to stop and partake of Fallbrook's hospitality to celebrate 40 years of frost-free agriculture. Main Avenue was decorated in gala red, white and blue attire. flowers from local gardens hung on Lemonade stands that displayed immense specimens of vegetables and fruits.

This time there were lemonade stands staffed by volunteers on both sides of the street. The Chamber reported 15,000 glasses of lemonade were served as visitors were told about "Frostless Fallbrook." (7)

On July 4, 1924, it was reported that Dr. and Mrs. Morgan of Fallbrook and their volunteer crew served 40,000 free drinks of lemonade or orange juice. (8)

Fallbrook's annual Fourth of July Lemonade Day was famous.

Significant road improvements occurred in 1928. The Fallbrook Chamber directed the construction of concrete sidewalks and curbs, plus installing ornamental street light posts. This project coincided with the County widening the highway pavement to go full width from curb to curb. To allow for the wider paving and the new sidewalks, many of the old umbrella trees along Main Avenue were cut down in January of 1928. Regrets were expressed at seeing the old trees go, but the road improvements and improved street lighting were seen as the beginning of a new Fallbrook. (9)



**About 1931** The new Fallbrook. Looking north on the inland highway at Main Ave & Fig Street. Pavement goes curb to curb. Trees are gone. The El Real Hotel on the left opened in September 1930. New sidewalks and ornamental street lights can be seen. Evidence of the old 2 lane paved highway is still visible. *Fallbrook Historical Society Photo*

On July 4, 1928, the Chamber was disappointed that not all travelers stopped to enjoy the lemonade hospitality. Travelers seemed eager to reach their Fourth of July destination.

In 1929, the Fallbrook Chamber hired constables to direct traffic to pull over. With lemonade stands on both sides of the intersection at Alvarado and Main, traffic was lined up a couple of blocks in each direction. Over 10,000 people were served lemonade. (10)

However, not all travelers appreciated being pulled over by a constable and having their trip delayed, free lemonade or not. Because of the complaints, it was the last time constables were used to stop traffic.

**July 4, 1930, Last Annual Lemonade Day:** Without the constables, only 1,000 people were served lemonade and just 500 information packets handed out. (11)

In 1931, the California Highway Commission announced plans to take over the inland highway from the Counties. Concerns were expressed that a traffic hazard was created by stopping a great number of cars on the high-speed highway. The Fallbrook Chamber of Commerce was seeking assurances from the State Highway Commission that the highway route would continue to come through Fallbrook.

In June 1931, the Chamber of Commerce voted to discontinue the annual July 4<sup>th</sup> Lemonade Day. Reasons given included the State Highway Commission concerns, plus that the work of the free lemonade event in recent years had been left to a mere handful of people, and that the advertising value was no longer worth the expense. (12)

Lemonade Day had become a thing of the past.

~Tom Frew

**Footnotes:**

- 1) The Journal of San Diego History, The Rising Tide 1920-1941. Chapter 2 Charting a Way, by the Union Tribune.
- 2) *Fallbrook Enterprise* June 27, 1919.
- 3) 1920 U.S. Census.
- 4) *Fallbrook Enterprise* Jan 27, 1922.
- 5) *Fallbrook Enterprise* July 28, 1928.
- 6) *Fallbrook Enterprise* July 7, 1922.
- 7) *Union Tribune* July 5, 1923.
- 8) *Union Tribune* July 20, 1924.
- 9) *Fallbrook Enterprise* January 13, 1928.
- 10) *Fallbrook Enterprise* July 5, 1929.
- 11) *Fallbrook Enterprise* July 11, 1930.
- 12) *Fallbrook Enterprise* June 19, 1931

## Exploring FALLBROOK'S HISTORY

We love to talk about our history, even going back as far as the Ice Age.

Do you have a question about Fallbrook's pioneer families, the historic buildings around town, our first schools, and where the railroad once ran?

Submit your question to our Historian [here](#).

Docents at the Historical Society Museum on the corner of Rocky Crest & Hill Ave. can show our historical displays collected by our museum curators.

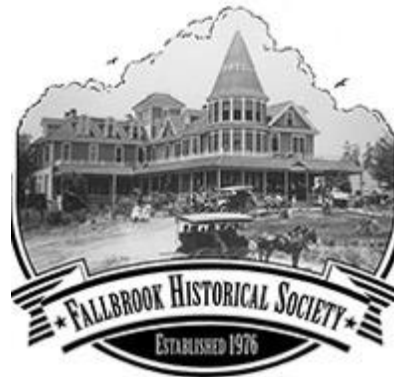
Private tours for groups can be arranged by [contacting us](#).

Historical Presentations to your Club or group can be arranged by



Miniature Train Display at Fallbrook Historical Society Museum

*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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