
South Bay Historical Society Bulletin

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The Pattie Memorial in Presidio Park includes a wall and five-sided structure with a plaque mounted in the stucco. The WPA built the wall and bastion in 1931 in the approximate location of the original east wall of the Presidio, and the San Diego Historical Society dedicated the plaque on April 24, 1931, the anniversary of Sylvester Pattie's death.

The Mountain Men

by Susan Walter

A long time ago, there were no Americans here. Native Americans – yes; Spaniards – yes; Mexicans – yes. But no Americans. The first Americans to walk through South Bay were Sylvester Pattie, his 19-year old son James Ohio Pattie, Jesse Ferguson, William Pope, Nathaniel Pryor, and Isaac Slover. Their goal was to trap animals for their valuable pelts, and sell them at a gathering of Mountain Men – called a rendezvous – to fur dealers from the east. The

exploring party of mounted Mountain Men had planned to travel from St. Louis to New Mexico and beyond. At this time New Mexico, Texas, Arizona and all of what is now USA's and Baja's Californias belonged to Mexico. While the Pattie party was trapping along the Colorado River, Indians stole their horses. On December 9, 1827 they were camped approximately 6 miles south of the current California and Mexico border. Building canoes, they trapped beaver along the rivers. To store the valuable but bulky furs, they buried them. Now on foot, they looked for Mexican settlers, hoping for a chance to recuperate from their ordeal. But they got lost.

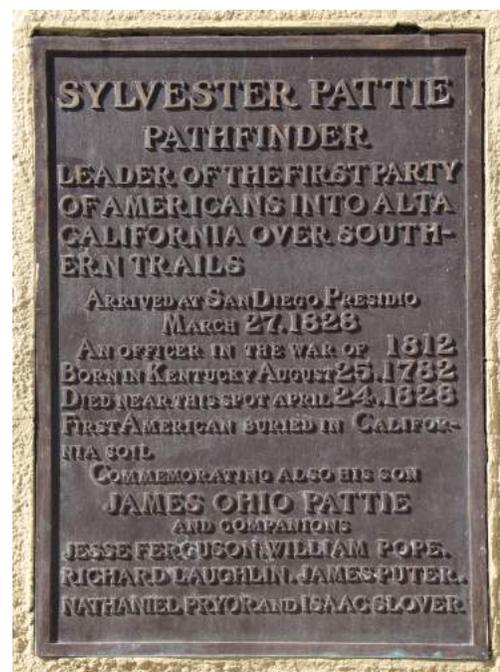
Wandering through the desolate deserts and mountains of northern Baja, exhausted and without water, they were arrested by Mexican soldiers protecting Mission Santa Catarina near Ensenada. Imprisoned several days with only corn gruel to eat, their bodies weakened further. Escorted by 16 soldiers the miserable group marched along the coastline route called El Camino Real, passing near Tijuana (Tijuana), Milejo (near San Ysidro) and Chiap (La Punta) Indian villages, as well as the Arguello Adobe, which was located at La Punta, near where the Salt Works is. They were allowed to ride only when they collapsed from exhaustion, journeying the 140-mile distance to San Diego's Presidio mostly on foot. J.O. Pattie, who had a foul temper at the best of times, did not endear himself to anyone. His very sick father nearly died on this trip. They reached San Diego on March 27, 1828. Jeff Smith's *Reader* article (July 14, 2010) put it like this: "Their arrival became the parade of the year. Most San Diegans had never seen the like: stencil-thin from malnutrition, in soiled leather leggings, frayed red flannel shirts, and hair as long as Jesus', the trappers looked like famished wolves and smelled like a slop bucket." At the Presidio they asked for food and supplies so they could return home, but California's Governor Echeandia, who believed they were spies trying to help the Spaniards regain control of California, put them in jail. Echeandia had been instructed to keep close tabs on all foreigners. He'd been repeatedly lied to by American trapper Jedediah Smith, who'd trespassed into California, was told to leave, and said he'd not return but did, to Echeandia's extreme irritation. The Echeandia and Smith interchanges had set a poor scene for other American presence. The Pattie party was not welcome. Mexican jails did not provide for their prisoners' comfort. Prisoners were expected to provide for themselves. Initially with no one to draw upon for support, the Pattie group found themselves in dire circumstances. They were held captive for about 3 years. Finally, Echeandia agreed to release what remained of the Pattie party. Sylvester had already died, giving him the dubious honor of being the first American to be buried in California soil. Meanwhile, according to J.O. Pattie, there was a terrible scourge of smallpox decimating the Native American population. Eventually, his story goes, he was released from incarceration on the

condition that he vaccinate the Indians. Supposedly he went from mission to mission vaccinating everyone he could. However there is no historical evidence known for this epidemic or that those vaccinations occurred.

Wouldn't you like to see how these early Mountain Men lived? Think of it: men who lived off the land, able to construct canoes and rafts to ford rivers, penetrate the highest mountain passes, and battled everything from skunks to grizzlies and mountain lions. They slept in tents or in the open, cooked food they hunted over fires they kindled, and dealt with extremes of weather as a matter of course. They interacted with both hostile and friendly Indians. Dressed in durable buckskins or bright calico, they were armed to the teeth with knives and flintlock rifles.

Well, you can.

In May every year there is a re-enactment of a Mountain Man rendezvous in East County. You can watch or participate in shooting the rifles of the time, and learn to throw a tomahawk from the Western Regional Champion tomahawk thrower. Google Manzinita High Mountain Rendezvous website for the best days for public visitation, and for directions, hours, costs and to see a marvelous "almost moving-picture show". Or you can call (760) 745-2927 or (619) 434-9890 for information. And NO, you do not need to register just to be a visitor.



The Crosthwaites

He was not a mountain man, but was the founder of a family that has spread its influence over San Diego and Baja California for over 150 years. Philip Crosthwaite was born in Ireland in 1825 and came to California in 1845. He fought for the American army at the Battle of San Pasqual in 1846, settled in San Diego, and became active in public life. He was the first county treasurer, a deputy sheriff several times, the second Chief of Police of San Diego, school superintendent, merchant, rancher, the first Master of San Diego Masonic Lodge No. 35, Sergeant of the Volunteer Militia, county clerk, auditor and Justice of the Peace.



In 1848 he married Josefa Lopez, daughter of Bonifacio Lopez, granddaughter of Becino Ignacio Maria de Jesus Lopez, great-granddaughter of Juan Francisco Lopez who was a leather-jacket soldier in the 1769 expedition. Several generations of the Lopez family served as soldiers at the Presidio and built the first homes outside the Presidio and in Mission Valley by 1821, and built the Casa de Lopez "Long House" adobe in Old Town in 1830. Juan Jose

Lopez managed the Presidio stock range below the San Ysidro mountains, and was granted the San Ysidro rancho of 27,000 acres in Baja California east of Tijuana. He built the Lopez adobe on this rancho that was destroyed by the Indian attack in 1837. Philip and Josefa Crosthwaite lived for a number of years in the Lopez home in Mission Valley. Their large family included seven sons and three daughters. One daughter married into the Osuna family that owned Rancho San Dieguito, today's Rancho Santa Fe and Solana Beach.



In 1861 Philip Crosthwaite bought the San Miguel Rancho at La Misión near Ensenada and moved to Lower California. Philip raised cattle on his ranch, but would often return to San Diego. In 1869 he bought out the merchant stock of Ephraim Morse in Old Town and opened a store with Thomas Whaley in the Whaley House. In 1870 the store moved to Horton's Addition but the business failed by 1872. He was also City Marshall 1869-72 at a salary of \$60 per month in gold. Philip died in San Diego in 1903 and was buried in the Masonic area of Mount Hope Cemetery. Five of his seven sons remained at La Misión, raised families that came to populate much of the area between Rosarito and Ensenada.

Grandson Albert William Crosthwaite did not stay in Baja. His father was Charlie Crosthwaite, the youngest of the seven sons, and he was born in San Diego in 1906. But he was raised by his father's brother, William Crosthwaite, who had ranches in both Mexico and the U.S. After the Mexican Revolution in 1911, his aunt Bolvey brought him to

live in San Diego. He attended San Diego High School and played fullback on the football team. After graduation in 1927, he played professional football on various local teams, for the American Legion, several athletic clubs, and finally for the San Diego Bombers in 1940-41. At the same time he joined the San Diego Fire Department, trained under Fire Chief Louis Almgren in 1928, and served for 20 years rising to the rank of Lieutenant.

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Although retired in 1948, he was not finished as a fireman. He became a fire captain with the Naval Air Station and trained firemen at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot. In 1956 another opportunity opened up in the South Bay. The unincorporated area south

of Chula Vista had been served by the California State Division of Forestry fire station on J Street, but in 1956 the station was closed. The communities of Castle Park, Otay, and Harborside decided to form the Montgomery Fire Protection District and a county bond issue in 1957 paid for the construction of a station at 391 Oxford Street. The county recruited Al Crosthwaite to sign on as the Fire Chief. This was the same time that his cousin Rupert was opening a sports supply store in Chula Vista, so Al decided to move to Corte Maria Street in Chula Vista and began recruiting volunteers for the Montgomery station. Not surprisingly, he turned to college athletes to fill out his crew of firefighters. Wayne Whitby and Octavio Cano were linemen at San Diego State, and Gene Phillips was on the Aztec basketball team. "You don't have to be an athlete to work here," said Crosthwaite, "but we've found athletes make good firemen. It helps me out to have the college boys here, and it helps them because they can study when there are no fires." Two other volunteer firemen, Cliff Davis and Jim Galve, were ex-athletes from their high school days, and six others had some athletic background. In December 1959 Crosthwaite resigned from the fire department. He feared that Castle Park would be annexed by Chula Vista and the Montgomery District would not survive. He said he had the same traits as his grandfather Philip Crosthwaite. "I guess I took after him--he could never seem to stick with anything very long. He was a merchant, a politician and law enforcement and he kind of divided up his time between the three."

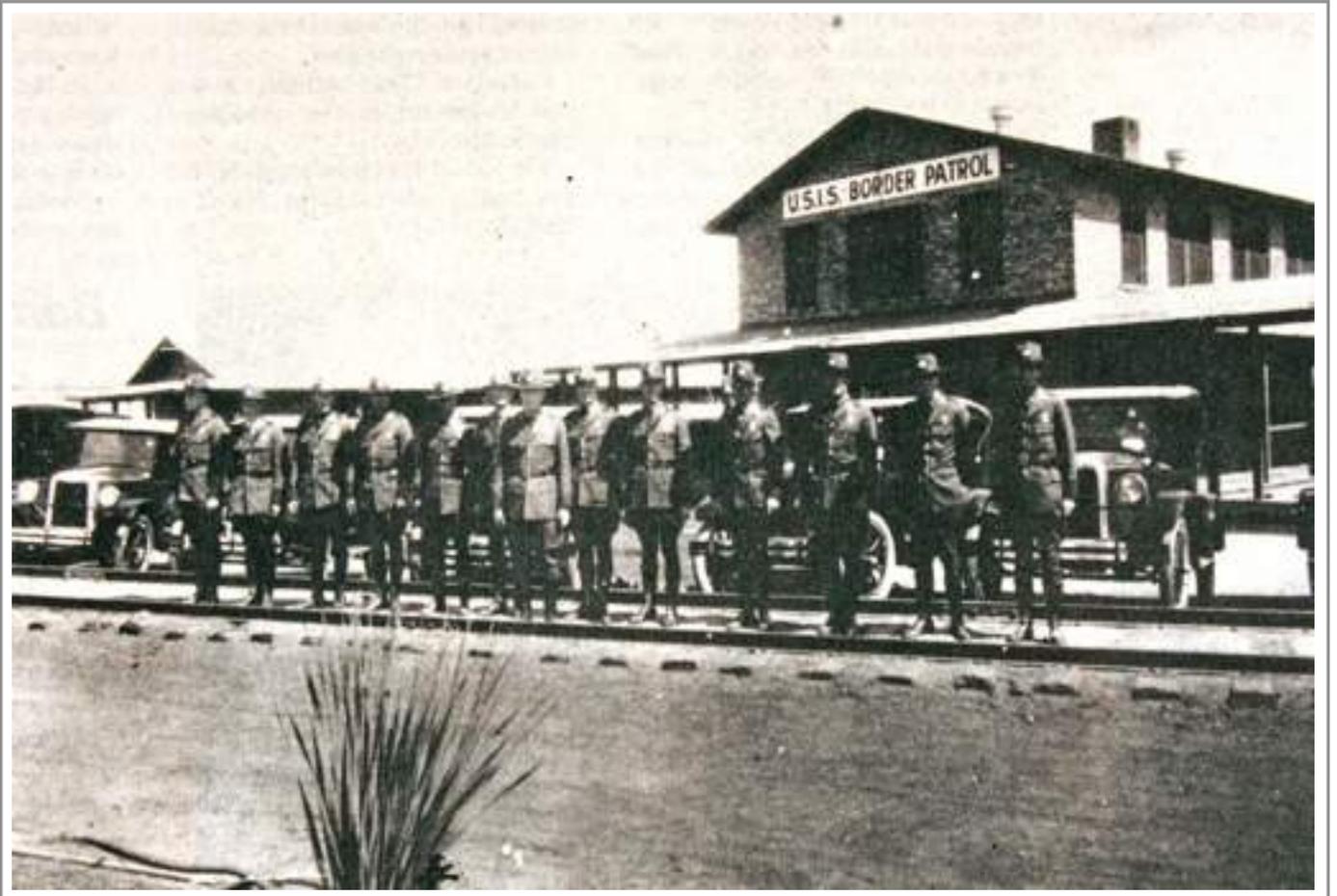


The fire station at 391 Oxford Street in Castle Park, where Al Crosthwaite was chief from 1957 to 1959, became a station in the Chula Vista Fire Department after the 1985 annexation.

Founders in the South Bay Chinese Community, Part II

by Harry Orgovan

The Exclusion Act of 1882 dramatically affected the immigration of Chinese to the United States, until it was repealed in 1943. In March of 1915 Congress authorized a group of inspectors who were first referred to as mounted guards or inspectors. They operated from El Paso, Texas to California along the Mexican border. The focus of these inspectors was to apprehend Chinese immigrants trying to avoid Chinese exclusion laws. This was the beginning of the Border Patrol we know today. Chinese persons paid as much as \$1,000 for a trip across the border from Mexico to San Francisco; some had to work for 10 years to repay the debt. In those days the Border Patrol made 90 to 150 arrests per week. (1)



This photo shows the first recruits of the new Border Patrol of the U. S. Immigration Service in 1924 in El Paso, Texas. Standing in center is Clifford Perkins who had been head of the Mounted Guard Chinese Division of the USIS, then was called on to lead the formation of the Border Patrol. He established the Chula Vista Sector and lived here until his death in 1977.

The rains of 1916 brought about the overflow of the Sweetwater Dam. While the dam held, each side gave way, which brought flooding in the Sweetwater Valley. All bridges in the Sweetwater Valley collapsed in the torrent of water. 4,000 feet of water distribution pipes were destroyed. Twenty-one people died, most of them were Chinese truck farmers who lived near their fields in the flood plain. The Sweetwater Fruit Company packinghouse was heavily damaged. (2)

1920 was a time of great famine in China. The Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA) traces its roots to this period. At this point the CCBA became the principal organization representing the San Diego Chinese. At first the association was made up of prominent businessmen mainly focused on merchants'

interests. The CCBA along with the Chinese Congregational Mission assumed all social leadership and social needs of the community from the 1930s to the 1960s. The 1935 Exposition in Balboa Park saw the opening of the Hall of China, later to be called the House of China. This was accomplished with the leaders of the CCBA, second generation of Chinese in San Diego. (3)

From the 1880s until World War II Chinese restaurants could only be found in downtown San Diego. After the war, San Diego's population moved to the suburbs and the Chinese businessmen followed. The first Chinese restaurant in the South Bay was the Chung Kin Cafe at 22 West 8th Street in National City in 1945. The owner, Tom Choy, had found himself in trouble with the law in downtown San Diego the year before because he made his own squirrel whiskey. He decided to move out of Chinatown and start a restaurant close to the destroyer base in the South Bay. (4)



In 1949 Andrew Hom opened the Pic-A-Chic Market at 305 National Ave. in Chula Vista. In 1950 Jim Hom along with partners opened China Land Restaurant at 3135 Midway in the Point Loma area. His son who took on the name Jackson Hom immigrated to San Diego from China in 1955. His father Jim died two months after his arrival and at 19 years old Jackson took over his father's duties with little English speaking experience. In the early 1960s Jackson returned to China to seek a bride, with the oversight of his family. He was introduced



to a school teacher who would take on the name Nancy. The exact moment when she knew Jackson Hom was for her, was the day she was to meet Jackson at a bus stop at 1pm. The teacher Nancy worked until 12 noon, so she decided to go home and take a quick nap. When she awoke it was 5pm. She rushed to the bus stop and Jackson Hom was still there. That was when Nancy realized that Jackson was the man for her. Jackson Hom took joy in making other people happy through his food. Some of his specialties included his signature prime ribs and homemade wontons, and also egg foo young and chop suey, not common in China. Jackson Hom sold his interest in China Land restaurant and opened his own restaurant, the Land of China in Chula Vista in 1974 at 4th and C Streets. As he became a success he actively supported the San Diego Chinese Community. He served as President of the Ying On Labor and Merchant Association. In the 1980s he and his wife Nancy helped establish the Lin Wah Music Center, which produced productions of Cantonese operas with actors traveling from China to perform in San Diego. After his retirement in 1995 for three years he worked as a part-time floor manager at Sycuan Casino. Through 45 years of marriage he realized while in hospice care, his wife Nancy was ill-prepared to eat without him. "All her life, she never had to cook. When I go, who's going to cook for you."

Jackson Hom passed away in 2010. (5)

Andrew Hom opened the largest Chinese restaurant in the South Bay in 1963 called Shangri-La with Harbor House. 1964 saw teenage dances at the Shangri-La which ran into problems with authorities, with 400 juveniles showing up for Friday night dances. In 1965 Andrew Hom filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy just two years and one month after opening. (6)

In 1966 Wendel Hom opened the Tea Pot Inn at 1060 National Ave. in Chula Vista, where it was open for almost 30 years. Wendel Hom came from China in the late 1950s and worked his way through various restaurants honing his culinary skills. He was chef at the Hong Kong Room at the Palomar Inn in Chula Vista before he opened Hom's Tea Pot Inn. (7) In 1964 Jennings and Mary Lou Hom purchased "Woo Chee Chong" Market on 16th Street in San Diego.



The market had been established in 1899 and had its first location in Chinatown at 450 Third Ave till the early 1940s. Woo Chee Chong translated stood for "Peace and Harmony". In the mid 1970s they opened a branch in Chula Vista on the south end of Third Ave. It was the place to go for exotic foodstuffs and culinary tools from the Far-East. Woo Chee Chong in Chula Vista closed its doors in 1995. (8) It was said in the 1970s that almost all of the Chinese in San Diego were cousins or relatives of the Hom or Yee families. Most of the 5000 members of the Chinese community can trace their origins to these two families. (9)

NOTES:

1. Border Patrol History, www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/about/history/bp_historcut.xml . "Oldtimer Tells Memories," *The Chula Vista Star-News*, Sept. 4, 1969. Photo of Perkins is from *The Chula Vista Star-News*, May 8, 1975.
2. Webster, Karna, *Chula Vista Heritage 1911-1986*. City of Chula Vista, 1986.
3. Lee, Murray K. *In Search of Gold Mountain; A History Of The Chinese In San Diego, California*. Donning Company Publishers, Virginia Beach, Va. 2011, p 335
4. Chung Kin ad is from the San Ysidro Border Press, Apr. 19, 1945. Tom Choy is from *The San Diego Union*, Dec. 24, 1943.
5. *The Chula Vista Star*, Dec. 30, 1949. *Voice of San Diego*, Mar. 10, 2010. Hom's Land of China ad is from *The San Diego Union*, May 18, 1974.
6. Rojas, John. "Shangri-La," in *Chula Vista, the Early Years*. Vol. 2 San Diego Ca: Tecolote Publications, 1993, pp. 40-43
7. *The Chula Vista Star*, June 4, 1967.
8. *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, June 3, 1995.
9. *The San Diego Union*, June 2, 1975.



MONDAY'S MEETING

The 6:00 Monday evening, September 29, 2014, meeting of the South Bay Historical Society is going to be an "Open Microphone" event, with those in the audience invited to have FIVE MINUTES OF FAME AND GLORY! Opening our meeting will be a tiny performance of the Agnew Daycare Angels, who will sing Ragtime Cowboy Joe / Ragtime Cowgirl Joan, in costume with their hobby horses. Their performance will be assisted by Mrs. Agnew, their parents and grown up Angels. Susan will then give a 5 minute story about the importance of the Angels, and the song they sang, to her, as an example of one person's reminiscences. After that two or three people will mingle with the audience, tape recording the audience's memories for their own FIVE MINUTES OF FAME AND GLORY. The luck of the draw will determine which speaker will be speaking into the microphone. Speakers can bring show-n-tell items as well; however, the exhibition of their show-n-tell should fit within their 5 minutes. Format is simple: Time will be called, tape recorders begin, speaker gives their name (which will be written also on a list), and speaker tells their story. Please attend! Even if you don't want to talk, you will hear some great stories and meet or reacquaint with some of our interesting residents of our own region. For more, see Resources <http://sunnycv.com/southbay/>

NEWS



Casa Familiar is hosting a book signing for Barbara Zaragoza's recently published book, *San Ysidro and the Tijuana River Valley*, at THE FRONT Art Gallery, 117 W. San Ysidro Blvd, on Saturday, October 18th from 12Noon-4pm. Please stop by for fun stories, a book signing, and an exhibit of old San Ysidro pictures. In addition, please consider bringing your old photos to be scanned for the San Ysidro History Archive Project, a digitized collection that will be available to present and future researchers and students. See the website at <http://friendsofsanysidro.org/>



EVENTS

We have planned the following dates for the rest of 2014. This year, our regular meetings are held in the Auditorium of the

Chula Vista Main Library, Monday evenings at 6:00.

September 29. Open discussion, moderated by Susan Walter.

November 17. Speaker: Dr. Floyd Larry Wergeland, a retired ophthalmologist who spent 30 years in the U.S. Army Medical Corp and 19 years in private practice in Chula Vista. He served as the consultant to the Surgeon General U.S. Army and was Chief of Ophthalmology at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. He has been involved with the Nature Center since 1996 as a docent and he helped build the Aviary Support Building and the Wergeland Shark and Ray Exhibit and Discovery Center.



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