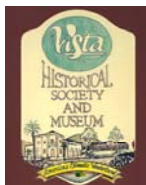


# Vista Historical Society

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 E-Mail: [vhm67@1882.sdcoxmail.com](mailto:vhm67@1882.sdcoxmail.com)  
 Web <http://www.vhsm.org>



P.O. Box 1032  
 Vista, Ca 92084  
 (760) 630-0444  
 1315 Hot Spring Way  
 Vista, Ca 92081

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Vista Historical Society was founded in 1967. The society is governed by a fifteen-member Board of Directors and has a membership of about 400.

Opening day for our first museum was June 14, 1994 (Flag Day). This building was near Wildwood Community Park near historic Rancho Buena Vista Adobe. The guest of honor that day was photographer Joe Rosenthal, who presented us with an autographed copy of his famous photograph of the "Flag Raising Over Iwo Jima."

We are now moving into a new facility, an old home called Rancho Minerva. This had been the home of the Greek pioneer family of Nick and Bessie Huntalas.

Our museum at Rancho Minerva will contain displays and memorabilia covering Vista's history from the days before the missions and ranchos to the present day. It will also include our collection of photographs dating from the 1890's and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, books on the history of Vista and the surrounding area, and other interesting things.

On display in its own area will be the "Vista Hall of Fame." Created in the late 1980's as part of the Vista Heritage Celebration and now administered by the Society, the Hall of Fame highlights individuals who are chosen for their contributions to life in Vista.

The Vista Historical Society signed the Lease with the City of Vista for Rancho Minerva at a ceremony at the rancho on Monday January 26, 2009. Rancho Minerva should be open to the public in a few months.

The new museum will offer tours, speakers for meetings, videos and research opportunities as well.

The Museum and the Vista Historical Society are supported by donations and grants as well as memberships. We have several free meetings each year with interesting speakers. Our next meeting will be March 21. Our Annual Meeting and Luncheon is in June.

Diane

## IT'S OFFICIAL: RANCHO MINERVA LEASE IS SIGNED

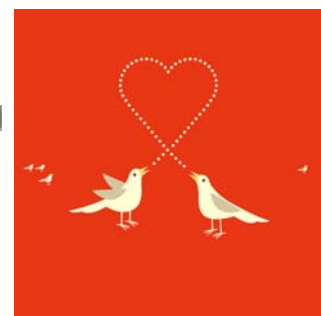
Rancho Minerva officially became a new permanent museum for the Vista Historical Society during a lease-signing ceremony at the historic home on Monday, January 26, 2009.

The historic property, located at Foothill Drive and San Clemente Avenue in Vista, will be leased by the Historical Society from the City of Vista, which owns the property after a land trade with the Vista Unified School District.

Presiding over the 1:00 p.m. signing ceremony was Vista Historical Society president Diane Eckert, accompanied by the board of directors. Several members of the Huntalas family were also present. Representing the City were Robin Putnam, Director of Community Projects, and Andrea McCullough, Communications Officer.

In signing the lease, President Eckert noted the significance of the occasion, saying,

*(Continued on page 4 Minerva)*



**MEMORIALS**

As of January 23, 2009

**IN MEMORY OF LUZ DURAN**Margarita Duran  
Hank Hodgdon**IN MEMORY OF ALICIA DURAN**

Margarita Duran

**IN MEMORY OF RICHARD DURAN**

Margarita Duran

**IN MEMORY OF PAUL L.V.CAMPO**

Margarita Duran

**IN MEMORY OF LUIS "MARTY" MARTINEZ**

Margarita Duran

**IN MEMORY OF LINDEN BURZELL**

Margarita Duran

**IN MEMORY OF JOHN GERZ**

Margarita Duran

**IN MEMORY OF GLEN HAYDEN**Robert Melbourne  
Jean Bice  
Paul and Diane Eckert**IN MEMORY OF WILLIAM (BILL) CROSSON**

Paul and Diane Eckert

**DONATION TO BUILDING FUND**

Ted and Irene Huntalas

**NEW OFFICE HOURS**

The Vista Historical Society is changing its office hours.

Starting Monday, February 9, 2009, the office will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

The office is currently located at 1315 Hot Spring Way. These hours will be in effect as long as the office is in this location

**CALL FOR HALL OF FAME  
NOMINATIONS**

2009 is the second year that the Historical Society has implemented the Early Vista Residents Procedure to elect new members to the Vista Hall of Fame. The intent of this new procedure is to elect distinguished Vistans who passed away at least 30 years before their election to the Hall of Fame.

A maximum of two new members may be elected. The criteria for election in this category of the Hall of Fame is:

1. Each nominee must have lived in Vista.
2. Each nominee must have died a minimum of 30 years prior to the year of nomination, in this case 1979. If the date of death is not known, a best estimate will be used.
3. Each nominee must have made significant contributions to the betterment of the community. The accomplishments must be verified to the committee's satisfaction.
4. Married couples who both meet the criteria may be nominated together as one nominee.

The Society Board of Directors will appoint a committee to review nominations received from the public for the board's consideration.

If you believe that you know any candidates that meet the above criteria, please contact the Museum by phone 760-630-0444; fax 760-630-0444; e-mail vhm67@1882.sdcoxmail.com; or by mail to P.O. Box 1032, Vista, Ca 92084. **Nominations must be received no later than February 25, 2009**. Please include supporting evidence with your request

The Vista Hall of Fame was created in 1989 as part of Vista Heritage Week to honor significant people and their achievements that have enriched Vista's vibrant history. Inductions were made in each of the next three years, ceasing in 1992 and beginning again in 1995.

The Vista Historical Society then received custody of the photographs. In early 1994, upon completion of the Vista Historical Museum, the Historical Society began to display the Hall of Fame members' photographic portraits.

From 1995-2006, new members of the Hall of Fame were chosen by the Historical Society in even-numbered years. The new members were inducted into the Hall of Fame at the Society's annual meeting each June.

In 2007, the Early Residents Division was

*(Continued on page 3)*

(Continued from page 2)

added on odd-numbered years to include persons who had died at least 30 years previously.

Mayor Morris Vance and former Vista Irrigation District board president Linden Burzell were elected to the Vista Hall of Fame for 2008.

## EXISTING HALL OF FAME MEMBERS Standard Division

Current members of the Hall of Fame and the year of induction are:

1989 **Ida Dawson** (deceased), owner of the Rancho Agua Hedionda y Los Monos.

1989 **John M. Cosh** (deceased), banker and Founding President/Organizer of the Boys' and Girls' Club of Vista.

1989 **Harrison and Ruth Doyle** (both deceased), authors of *The History of Vista* and founding members of the Vista Historical Society; he is a former mayor of Vista.

1990 **Luz Duran** (deceased), building contractor, charter member of the Vista Hispano Club.

1990 **Bee Meyer** (deceased), school teacher, The Vista Press columnist, member of many civic organizations. She was the wife of the late Frank Meyer, former Vista Mayor.

1990 **Meta Royer** (deceased), owner of several real estate offices, secretary to the Vista Chamber of Commerce.

1991 **Lloyd D. Tracy** (deceased), business owner, member of many civic organizations and service clubs, former City of Vista Mayor and Councilman.

1991 **Beulah Post** (deceased), civic activist.

1992 **Milo E. Shadle** (deceased), lawyer, real estate developer, civic activist.

1992 **Emily Sexsmith** (deceased), Vista resident since her marriage in 1932 to owner of Sexsmith's Market, civic activist.

1995 **Jules and Maria Delpy** (both deceased), 19<sup>th</sup> Century pioneers, owners of the Buena Vista Winery and the Delpy Ranch, active in founding schools and the Vista Irrigation District.

1995 **Orbee Mihalek** (deceased), former Mayor and Councilwoman of the City of Vista, businesswoman, member of many civic organizations.

1995 **Anastasia Weil** (deceased), former owner of the Rancho Buena Vista, founding member of the Vista Historical Society.

1998 **Elva Dawson** (deceased), volunteer in many

organizations specializing in park issues.

1998 **Russell and Margie Thibodo** (Russell deceased), owners of the Thibodo Ranch, now Shad-owridge. Volunteers in many organizations, and noted philanthropists.

2000 **Alan Shada**, business owner, member of many civic organizations and service clubs.

2000 **Bob and Miriam Pope** (both deceased), business owners, members of many civic organizations and service clubs.

2002 **Barney and Donna Fields**, business owners, members of many civic organizations and service clubs.

2002 **Hans Doe** (deceased), nationally recognized water expert and board member of the Vista Irrigation District, the Southern California Metropolitan Water Authority and several other organizations.

2004 **Gloria E. McClellan** (deceased), Vista Mayor and Councilwoman.

2004 **James Porter**, retired director of City of Vista Parks and Community Services.

2006 **O.K. "Bub" Williamson** (deceased), first coach at Vista High School.

2006 **Richard E. Vought**, longtime community activist and volunteer.

2008 **Morris Vance**, Vista Mayor and former Vista City Manager.

2008 **Linden Burzell** (deceased), former Vista Irrigation District Board President and V.I.D General Manager.

## Early Residents Division

All were elected in 2007.

### Cave J. Coutts

Owner of the Rancho Guajome, builder of the Guajome Adobe, and major Vista figure in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century.

### Joseph H. Fotheringham

First Vista Mayor, member of the Tri-City Hospital Board of Directors and civic activist.

### John Frazier

Founder of the first Vista Post Office (1882), first Postmaster, and responsible for the name Vista.

### Wells Miller

Macadamia Nut farmer, one of the organizers of the Boys' Club, and civic activist.

### Charles Mull Sr.

Early Vista Irrigation District Engineer-Manager and real estate developer.

(Continued on page 4 HALL)

*(Continued from page 1 Minerva)*

“The lease that we are signing today marks a new chapter in the life of the Vista Historical Society. The mission of our Society has been and remains the preservation of our history and the education of our citizens in that history.

“This lease gives us the responsibility of preserving Rancho Minerva, one of the most significant remaining buildings representing Vista’s agricultural past. In this rancho, we will be able to create the beginnings of 20th century development in our area. We plan to use the site as a living teaching tool to create interest in our past.

“No doubt the Society will establish other venues, museums with other focus, but the Rancho Minerva will remain our core.

“We wish to thank the City of Vista for giving us this opportunity to be here. We are asking all our members and Vistans to assist us in this endeavor. And with that we will sign the lease and begin our journey.”

Light refreshments were served following the signing as dignitaries and visitors toured the impressive home.

Built by Nick Huntalas in 1933, the house was a center of social life for the Vista community for several decades. Huntalas, a Greek immigrant, came to Vista in 1909 and began dry-farming 420 acres of oats and hay along what is now busy Foothill Drive. He married Bessie Papsino, also a Greek immigrant, in 1916, and the couple celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary at Rancho Minerva.

The two-story home, located directly across from the new Rancho Minerva Middle School, is comprised of adobe bricks, with a sparkling white exterior and red tile roof. It features an 18-foot-high living room ceiling. The bricks for the 14-inch-thick walls were shaped from chicken wire, straw, and dirt excavated during the construction of the cellar.

Much of the original landscaping design remains as meticulous as it was when Rancho Minerva was built.

Several photographs, including a wedding photo of his parents and some original items from the home were donated to the Historical Society at the annual Christmas Tea by Ted Huntalas, son of Nick and Bessie and a lifelong Vista resident who grew up at Rancho Minerva. Huntalas recently authored a book about the history of Rancho Minerva, titled “The His-

tory of Rancho Minerva 1911 to 2007.”



Diane Eckert, Mary Lou Hayward, and Irene Huntalas stand by while Rosemary Conway signs the Lease.



Irene Huntalas, Ann Huntalas Drakos, Marita Allen and Lois Cavalier.

*(Continued from page 3 HALL)*

**William Pechstein**

First treasurer of the Vista Irrigation District and real estate developer.

**Melvin Z. (M.Z.) Remsburg**

The founder and publisher of The Vista Press in 1926.

**Everett Remsburg**

The son of M.Z. He served as publisher of The Vista Press after his father’s death in 1950.

**Harry and Cora Walker**

Ranchers, builders and civic activists.

**Dr. Walter Weil**

Owner of Rancho Buena Vista, founding member of the Vista Historical Society, husband of Hall of Fame member Anastasia Weil.



The attendees are grouped around the historic Rancho Minerva Sign in the home's living room. On the left side, from left to right are, standing, Melinda Andersen, Mary Lou Hayward, Michele Moxley, Alan Harvey, Paul Eckert, and Ann Huntalas Drakos; seated, Lois Cavalier, Sandi Graham, President Diane Eckert, and Jack Larimer. On the right side, from right to left, standing, Ted Huntalas, Irene Huntalas, Bette Huntalas, Jon Paul Ferguson, and Rosemary Conway; seated, Jean Bice, Janice Klafehn, and Alvora Beck. Original photos by Andrea McCullough



Ted Huntalas, right, and his son-in-law Jon Paul Ferguson with the historic Rancho Minerva sign.



Society President Diane Eckert makes it official while board members Janice Klafehn and Alan Harvey observe.



Melinda Andersen, Alvora Beck, Andrea McCullough from the City of Vista, Diane Eckert.



Paul Eckert

This sign stood in front of Rancho Minerva for many years.



**MONTHLY VOLUNTEER LUNCHEON**

The volunteers of the Vista Historical Society meet for luncheon at varying local restaurants on the first Wednesday of each month.

The February event will be held at Hennessey’s Restaurant on Main Street at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, February 4.

Sixteen volunteers enjoyed the December luncheon, held Wednesday, December 5, at Coco’s, at the corner of Melrose Drive and West Vista Way.

Attendees included Mary Lou Hayward, Jean Bice, Rosemary Conway, Diane Eckert, Edith Johnson, Melinda Andersen, Marita Allen, Mary Dolnik, Al Beck, Lois Cavalier, Carolyn Chiriboga, Michele Moxley, Janice Klafehn, Pat Richardson, Jack Larimer, and Marge Cosh.

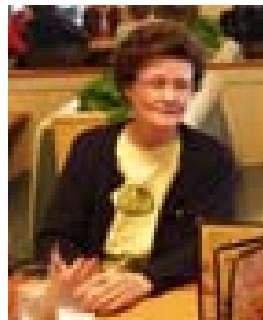
The March location has not yet been set.

These luncheons are open to all Society members and those interested in meeting the volunteers and learning about participation in activities of the Vista Historical Society.

Please make reservations by calling Mary Lou Hayward at (760) 724-4586. Information is also available by phoning the Society office at (760) 630-0444.



VOLUNTEER LUNCHEON



JEAN BICE



MARY LOU HAYWARD

**SAVE THE DATE**

The following is the meeting schedule for 2009; more information will be available as the dates approach. Save these dates.

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Time</u>
March General Meeting	March 21, 2009	Rancho Minerva	2-4 PM
Annual Meeting	June 20, 2009	TBA	11:30 AM – 2PM
July General Meeting	July 18, 2009	Park Terrace Café Senior Center	2-4PM
Dinner Downtown	Sept. 19, 2009	TBA	3-7 PM
Christmas Tea	Dec. 13, 2009	Park Terrace Café Senior Center	2-4 PM

The Historical Society also participates in other events. The first is the Chocolate Festival on May 24. If you wish to help at any event, call the Society office, 760-630-0444.



MELINDA ANDERSEN, PAT RICHARDSON, MARGE COSH



MICHELE MOXLEY, CAROLYN CHIRIBOGA, JANICE KLAFEHN

## MEMBERSHIP

The Vista Historical Society depends on its membership for income and support. The benefits of membership include the monthly newsletter, several social and educational events each year, and access to the museum data base as well as other publications.

Membership supports our efforts to discover and preserve local history. Please consider joining by filling out the form below and sending it with your dues to:

Vista Historical Society  
P. O. Box 1032  
Vista, CA 92084-1032

Mr./Mrs./Miss  
Mr. and Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

### MEMBERSHIP-ANNUAL DUES

\$5 Student     \$25 Individual  
 \$45 Family     \$100 Business, Firm or Organization



### RANCHO MINERVA 1940

This picture, which shows the ranch house along Foothill is from the book “The History of Rancho Minerva 1911 to 2007” by Ted Huntalas. The new home of the Vista Historical Society is currently being made accessible for the disabled. The Society will occupy the site later this year. For more information about this book see this web site:

[http://www.blurb.com/  
bookstore/  
invited/383534/66d4f0e5e84558cedc7d9897031c4167](http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/invited/383534/66d4f0e5e84558cedc7d9897031c4167)

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### **PROGRAMS AVAILABLE**

Programs are available for presentation on request for schools, clubs and other organizations. In addition, other presentations can be customized to fit your needs. For more information, call 760-630-0444.

*The next newsletter will be published in MARCH 2009. Please submit articles by FEBRUARY 15th.*