

# The Elk Grove

# Hotel Register

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Elk Grove Historical Society, President: Bud Long, 685-3511

Newsletter Editor: Elizabeth Pinkerton, 685-3206

## NEXT MEETING ON JANUARY 12 AT NEW HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICE BUILDING

Program Chairperson Sterling Kloss has a great surprise in store for the first 1981 meeting of the Historical Society when members meet in the new office building on Elk Grove Boulevard in the I.O.O.F. Building. The meeting, scheduled for 7:30 on Monday, January 12 will feature John Queirolo as the guest speaker. Mr. Queirolo is an historian-collector to match Society members Amundsen and Long, and perhaps even to do them one better! You may have seen this renowned "cowboy", who proclaims that he is "in love with the Old West, in a number of movies leading a wagon train or firing a 19th century rifle. He is a collector of artifacts on a grand scale - having two warehouses filled with Old West memorabilia. Mr. Queirolo lives in neighboring Fiddletown, a likely domicile for one who enjoys the days gone by. One of his recent accomplishments was the organization of the Highway 50 Wagon Train, an annual trek over the Sierras that commemorates the Gold Rush.

Although many members dropped by at the Historical Society Open House to note the opening of the new office, others may wish to use this occasion to visit the new office and see all the local history displays on loan from various members. The new office is a cozy place, thanks to the generosity of Chuck Argentine who has offered the space to the Society.

## COMING UP ----- THE FIFTH ANNUAL WINE TASTING AND HISTORICAL DISPLAY

February 6 is the date set for the 1981 EVENT OF THE YEAR for the Historical Society - the annual Wine Tasting and display of artifacts and collections that belong to members and guests. This year the displays will be arranged into five rooms set up in the Parish Hall of St. Joseph's Catholic Church (across from Elk Grove Park). The rooms will be a kitchen, bedroom, dining room, parlor and music room. In addition to wine, punch and coffee will also be served, and cheese and crackers will be available. It is planned to have a photographer available to take pictures of folks seated in an old time buggy parked outside. The event is slated from 7:00 until 9:30 on Friday evening, February 6. Wear period dress if you would like to do so. This is a great opportunity to view some of the great collections of historical items in the community. The theme naturally is "HOME SWEET HOME".

Tickets for the Wine Tasting are being mailed to all members. They are to be sold or returned to Amy and Al Bartholomew if they are not sold. Price is \$2.00 per ticket. Please return unsold tickets by February 1, if possible, or at the door the night of the February 6.

Edie McDonald reports that all tickets for the drawing for the hand-painted lamp (done by member Lois Toquero) are out. She would like to have the stubs and money returned by January 12. If more tickets are desired, they can be obtained from Edie at 685-3286.

All money or unsold tickets either for the Wine Tasting or the lamp raffle can be sent to the Historical Society at P.O. Box 562 - Wine Tasting Tickets to the Bartholomews and Lamp tickets to Edie McDonald.

Chairperson Margit Kloss has asked for volunteers for setting up the displays on the evening of Thursday, February 5, before the Wine Tasting on Friday night, and Clean-up on Friday after the event and Saturday morning. Please call her at 685-4730 if you can help. Hostesses are also needed for the wine pouring and people are needed to assist with the displays while people are viewing them. Contact Margit if you can help in any way.

## WINE TASTING COMMITTEE MEETING ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13 AT THE OFFICE

### WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS -----REMINDER TO OLD MEMBERS THAT DUES ARE DUE!

The Elk Grove Historical Society welcomes the following new members:

Walt Davis (Sponsor: Carl Amundsen)

LIFE MEMBERS: Mr. & Mrs. Jon Colton

Glenn Terry (Sponsor: Carl Amundsen)

LTA

Jim and Nula Fales (Sponsor: Carl Amundsen)

Leroy and Zula Blum

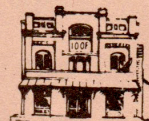
Ruby and Larry Callander (Sponsor: Milt Webb)

Catherine Knapp (Sponsor: Helen Mahan)

Mr. and Mrs. Dick Lichtenberger (Sponsor: Carl Amundsen)

Richard and Melba Warriner (Sponsor: Bud Long)

Citizen's Utilities



FAMILY MEMBERSHIP: \$12.00 - Individual: \$8.50 - Business - \$7.50 - Students: \$4.00  
Senior Citizens: \$4.00 - Library: \$7.50 - Life Membership: \$100.00



TO: OUT-GOING AND IN-COMING PRESIDENT BUD LONG:

Thanks, Bud, for the great job you did as President of the Elk Grove Historical Society this past year. It wasn't easy coming in as you did from Vice-president to President almost overnight, but you showed us that you could step in when we needed you. We are really thrilled that you are willing to continue in your duties for another year. Anybody who likes old cars, antiques and rusty parts was born to be President of the Historical Society! And we are lucky to have you Bud, and your sweet wife, Lee too. Thanks, Bud, for starting our meetings on time and keeping us on task. Thanks for handling the Board meetings with a minimum of fuss. Thanks for listening to all our gripes and concerns. And, most of all, Bud, thank you for always being willing to lend a helping hand. ALL THE GRATEFUL MEMBERS OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.S. We promise to support you and all the new officers during 1981, so feel free to call on us!

#### ODDS AND ENDS

This is the first newsletter that is being double-printed which means that it is being read, I guess. It's the first time that we have had enough news to fill more than one side so that must mean something. We are also moving up to regular printing instead of xeroxing due to the many comments about the December newsletter.

I still need a few people to help on the History Project. Let me know if you are interested. At this point, you could plan on one evening or afternoon per month in terms of time. We will be reporting to the membership at the February meeting on plans thus far.

#### ELK GROVE'S BARBED WIRE PHONE COMPANY (contributed by Louise Waterman from "Openline")

In the early 1900's, when most telephone exchanges were limited to fair-sized cities, sixteen rural families in Elk Grove, California (between Sacramento and Lodi), had their very own phone system. Led by farmer and veterinarian Jim Mitchell, they bought wall phones with crank handles from a mail-order house, and connected them to the top wire of well-mended fences that criss-crossed the area. They had no phone contact with the outside world, of course, but their system kept them in touch with each other. Each family had its own combination of long and short rings as its own "private number."

Though all bells rang on all phones, your private ring told everyone the call was for you - and listening in on private conversation - called "rubbernecking" - was strictly forbidden.

There were times, though, when the barbed wire exchange became a turn-of-the-century equivalent of today's radio, movies and TV-with a once-a-week "special" nobody wanted to miss. Each Sunday after supper, the family in each house gathered around the phone to listen to-and contribute-all kinds of entertainment: music, songs, poetry readings, recitations and tall tales.

Often, dates were made for dances, picnics and hay rides, and always, the evening closed with one and all singing, "Good Night, Ladies...Good Night, Gentlemen."

Within a few years, tall poles, real telephone wire and a company-run system, complete with central office and operator arrived in Elk Grove, and the whole world opened up to the families on the barbed wire exchange. (contributed to Pacific Telephone, "Openline", published in San Francisco, date unknown, by Mrs. Birdie Mitchell Esser - aunt of Gertrude Hogaboom, Historical Society member). Editor's Note: We parents of teenage daughters might like to go back to this.

TO:

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