



The Branding Iron

DUARTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JULY–SEPT. 2015

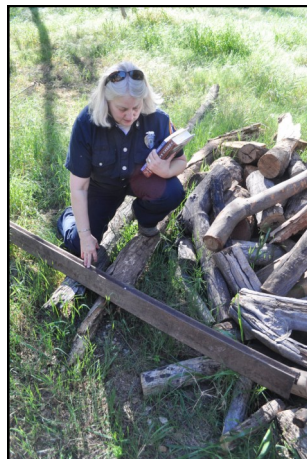
President's Message

Claudia Heller

Up on the Duarte Mesa there is a patch of land which appears to be as close to paradise as we might find around here. This story has its roots in a tree which arrived in California with inflated promises.

It was touted to be the “miracle tree,” a sure opportunity to get rich quick. At the turn of the century with redwood forests quickly disappearing at a time when re-planting was not the norm, future building was threatened. Enter the Eucalyptus tree, imported from Australia, with promises of solving the problem. It was said to produce medicinal and industrial oils, excellent timber and fuel. It would grow quickly in a variety of conditions and when felled, its roots would quickly sprout another tree. A frenzy of orders for this magical tree began and countless acres of Eucalyptus groves were planted with promises of tidy profits.

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Museum Secretary Zoe Osburn investigates a ruin from the old farm while Forester Hanna Tamara looks over a narrow gauge rail among the artifacts in the area.

BOOKS DESCRIBE ROCKTOWN, BLACK AND MEXICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY



New additions to the museum give an honest and poignant picture of the Black and Mexican American History of Duarte from the arrival of Black pioneers to the San Gabriel Valley to the racial unrest of the 1950s through 70s, to the present way of life. The *History of African Americans of Monrovia* and *The History of Mexican Americans of Monrovia* by **Susie Ling**, Associate Professor History and Asian American Studies, Pasadena City College, contain current interviews with many of Monrovia's pioneer families, some of whom are active Duarteans. Much of Monrovia's Black and Mexican history, and that of Duarte, is tied to the arrival of Lucky Baldwin and the Santa Anita Racetrack. Ling also describes later history with the Black churches, schools, restrictions and employment.



Douglas Ross grew up in Rocktown and has chronicled his experiences in a book/album entitled *This is My Story of My Life Growing Up in Rocktown*. Faced with his mother's medical setbacks, from time to time he was raised by extended family and

(Cont. P.2)



PANCHO BARNES STORY DELIGHTS AUDIENCE

Gasps and laughs filled the museum as Historian Terry Terrell presented a visual program of the Wild Life and Times of Pancho Barnes. Before a standing room only audience, Terrell unfolded the life of a woman before her time. Often eclipsed by fellow aviatrix Amelia Earhardt, Barnes proved herself to be the superior pilot, and yet flying was only a part of her life. The story was unbelievable, yet true!

ROCKTOWN/BLACK HISTORY

(Cont. from page 1)

even neighbors. His recollections describe a neighborhood where residents took neighbors who stepped in when needed. Much of his childhood included pre-digital pastimes such as swimming or fishing in the San Gabriel River or swimming at the Monrovia Plunge. He describes his school days at Northview, Andres Duarte and the teachers "who taught us to get along with other kids and grown-ups."

DOUGLAS WILL TALK ABOUT HIS BOOK IN AN INFORMAL "REMEMBER ROCKTOWN" MEETING ON JUNE 27. 1-4 P.M. THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND AND TALK ABOUT THEIR ROCKTOWN MEMORIES.

RACE HISTORY OF DUARTE MONROVIA BY SUSIE LING AUGUST 7, 7:00 P.M.

PCC Associate Professor Susie Ling has compiled an in-depth history of African Americans in Monrovia (overlapping with Duarte) from the 1870s-1960s era complete with photos and dozens of oral histories. She will share her research in a visual program at the Museum on Friday, August 7 at 7:00 p.m. based on her book entitled *The African Americans of Monrovia*.

The program is free and space is limited!



ROYAL OAKS STUDENTS TOUR MUSEUM

On April 30 about thirty students from Royal Oaks School toured the museum, scavenging for answers to questions on Duarte history prepared by their teachers. Zoe Osburn, Pauline and Mark Montgomery organized the tour. "The students were interested and enthusiastic. They sent a letter of thanks to the museum for the hospitality they received.

TRI MUSEUM MEETING

To share ideas and discuss common issues the Executive Boards of three Museums: Duarte, Glendora and Azusa, met in April. Also in attendance was Ralph Thomas, Regional Vice President of the California Conference of Historical Societies. After touring each museum, the Boards held round table discussions on memberships, sharing speakers and exhibitors and fundraising.

Eucalyptus (Cont. from P.1)

In the end, Eucalyptus was certainly not a solution. had carefully balanced itself over the millennia.

It created problems that we are still dealing with today and has managed to tilt a biological scale that had carefully balanced itself over the millennia. Here in Duarte, this highly flammable water-guzzling alien has proliferated on Duarte Mesa city-owned acreage designated as wilderness and watershed land as mandated by local, state and federal laws. It seems it was once a “eucalyptus farm” long ago abandoned. The dead and dying Eucs on the land have created a hazard which is the subject of restoration work which is being done by the L.A. County Fire Department.

RAY BRADBURY EXHIBIT TO RUN THROUGH JULY

Deemed an honorary Duartean, Author Ray Bradbury will be the subject of an exhibit compiled by Jack Collins and Peter Rosenwald. Books, documents, photos, newspaper articles and other memorabilia will be featured in the Museum's revolving exhibit cases through July.



Summer of Victory - Summer for Veterans
Pastor Neil Earle with Susan Earle

This exhibit by Pastor Neil Earle, history instructor at Grace Communion Seminary, remained on display at the Duarte Historical Museum for the month of June. The exhibit features books and photos covering the Victory in Europe (May 8, 1945) and Victory over Japan (August 15, 1945), the early Cold War years, the Marshall Plan and the Berlin Airlift.

HELEN KELLER BAKER

Helen Keller Baker died at the age of 101 on May 29. She was an active Monrovia from 1945-1968 and had many Duarte friends. Condolences to her son, Duarte-Monrovia Historian Steve Baker who thanks DHS&M for its support.

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE AT
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**PLEASE SUPPORT THE MUSEUM BY
PAYING YOUR 2015 DUES. Student/
teacher: \$10; Individual: \$15; Family:
\$25; Life Time Supporter: \$500 (reserved
for individuals and families);
Business/Organization: (see
www.RanchoDeDuarte.org for details).**

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

JUNE 27, 1-4 p.m. - Informal discussion on
Memories of Rocktown.

JULY 8, 4:30 p.m. DHS&M E. Board—at
Museum.

JULY 9, 1 p.m. . FDL: Duarte Library
Fiction Book Club Meeting at Library.

JULY 13-18: FDL Villa Italia Fundraiser.

AUGUST 7, 7:00 p.m. African-American
History of Monrovia and Duarte, at museum

OCT. 24, Noon: Monrovia Old Home
Preservation Group tour at Duarte Museum.

Duarte Historical Society & Museum

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Open: Saturdays: 1-4 p.m.

1st & 3rd Wednesdays: 1-3 p.m.

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Mark Montgomery

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