



The Branding Iron

DUARTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

JAN-FEB-MARCH 2021

THE DUARTE MUSEUM IS TEMPORARILY CLOSED...ALMOST

During the past several months our door has been closed leaving the museum empty but for our scanners. Janice Buck and Penny Jung work a few days a week scanning old newspapers, some as far back as the 1940s. There are no other copies of these papers and our Museum staff felt it was important to scan them before destroying them. They have been protected at the Museum for many years and take up valuable space. The project required an upgrade in our technical equipment and we purchased a large-scale scanner.

After the scanned papers are checked by Kayko Jorgenson for accuracy in the scanning process, they will be available for access by the public on a computer in the museum library. Type in your subject, and gain access to all the newspaper articles on that subject. It is a giant project for our museum volunteers, but important for the sake of history.

The papers are mainly the Duarte Dispatch—the paper that for years bragged to be the “only newspaper that gives a damn about Duarte.” And it certainly did. Front page articles often included milestone anniversaries and birthdays, school plays, and introduction to new families. Club activities were given prominent coverage and photos. Even family vacations were covered. It was Duarte friendly and treated residents like they were celebrities. Fast forward to today’s papers where there is basically no reporter covering our town.

When the scanned papers are ready to be recycled, anyone interested may go through them and pull any editions they wish to keep. The rest will go into the recycling bin. Watch the Museum website for updates. www.RanchoDeDuarte.org.

Heartfelt thanks to Jan and Penny for their many hours of scanning. It is a tedious and demanding job!

-Claudia Heller



L-R: Sharman Warner, Sara Wong, Ruby Shiroma
(Photo by: Jim McKelvie)

DUARTEOPOLY FEATURES OUR TOWN

There is a custom Monopoly game available featuring Duarte. —Hey, wanna buy lunch at Janet’s Mediterranean Cuisine together with a key to the city for \$750? Or If you eat too many fish tacos from Taco Ensenada, you lose a turn to recover. In DuarteOpoly, a game based on our town, is available at Duarte Walmart in the toy section for \$20, and all of the above scenarios are possibilities. The board game Monopoly has its origin in the early 20th century and now custom games are available.

“You are crowned MISS DUARTE! collect \$100” or “Walk your dog – Advance to Royal Oaks Park.” The company that created the DuarteOpoly game takes a collection of ideas and images and develops them into a custom game. Says Harry Heflin: “My Father was a career Army man, officially making me a Brat! Every two years we moved to a new post, somewhere in the world. I remember the games were long, but we all must have enjoyed it because we were always playing. When Dad was deployed to the Korean war in the 50s it was just Mom and me, but still we played. Just sitting here dredging up the memories of those times is moving, emotionally.”

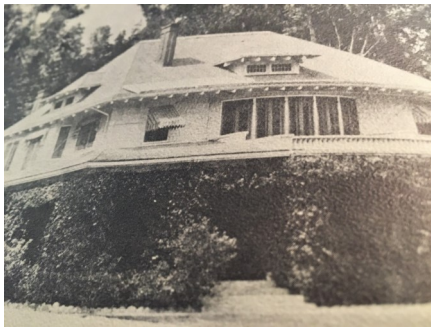
WHERE HAVE DUARTE'S HISTORIC HOMES GONE? THE CULPRIT : FIRE



June 2, 1949

THE MAXWELL ADOBE

Fire consumed the second story of the historic old Maxwell house in Duarte last night before three County fire engines were able to douse the blaze. The house is owned by Miss Rose Maxwell who has lived in it for 64 years. The lower half of the house is adobe and is believed to have been built sometime in the 1880s. The upper half, which was built later, is known to have been constructed in the early 1870s. It was razed in 1968.



August 28, 1952

THE BAIRD RANCH

A fire originating on Olivet Ranch Road Monday afternoon, completely razed the historic landmark spreading to the foothills and mountains destroying 150 acres of valuable watershed. The 20-room mansion was unoccupied and contrary to first reports there were no antiques destroyed but it was adorned with old rare woods, according to Mrs. Archibald Scott who built the house in 1909.



December, 1980

THE GLENN MILLER HOUSE

Bandleader Glenn Miller built a home on fifty-four acres of land in the shadow of the foothills in Duarte's Fish Canyon just west of where Valley View stands today. The year was 1941 and Miller was working on the movie *Sun Valley Serenade*. In 1942 finishing touches were made on the newly erected abode and by that time Miller was immersed in the filming of *Orchestra Wives*. Miller joined the U.S. Army at the age of 38, anxious to join the war effort. While his family lived in the home, Miller played the trombone for service clubs and in recreation halls in Alabama, modernizing military music. Sadly, one fateful day, after he was deployed over seas, his plane disappeared as he traveled from England to France.



His family remained in the Duarte house, joined by the maternal grandparents and together they ran the Miller ranch which included citrus and avocado orchards, strawberry fields and bee hives. In 1980 a fire burned out of control in Azusa. Near midnight it followed a wind shift which sent the blaze west. The fire destroyed the Miller home and continued its destruction west through the Duarte Mesa.



RUTH LOUISE CRIST SHRODE
November 7, 1920—October 17, 2020

A chapter in Duarte history came to a close recently with the death of Ruth Louise Jenkins Crist at the ripe old age of 99 years. That chapter began with the arrival in Duarte of her great, great grandfather, David Shaw Shrode, in 1874. With David Shrode were five children from his first marriage: William, Jacob, Sarah, Francis, and Charles, as well as four children from his second marriage: Helen, Viola, Jennie, and Lee. They all played their roles in early Duarte history.

David Shrode's second son, Jacob, married Mary Samantha Patterson of Sierra Madre in 1884, and they were the parents of three daughters: Frances Bertha, Ida May, and Mary Ellen. The girls grew up on their father's orange grove located on South California Avenue in Duarte. The home Jacob Shrode built for his family in 1901 still exists, moved in 1949 from the middle of the orange grove when it was subdivided for new housing and Shrode Avenue was named to honor the family. Bertha Shrode married Karl Parks. Ida May Shrode never married but was an educator who wrote her doctoral dissertation on the agricultural history of the Rancho Azusa de Duarte, a seminal document in local history. Ellen Shrode married Leroy Jenkins of Pasadena on November 17, 1917 in the family home on South California and they became the parents of two daughters: Marjorie Jean and Ruth Louise. Both remembered their grandfather Jacob from their earliest years and visited their grandmother Mary in Duarte until her death in 1943.

Ruth Louise Jenkins married Robert Eugene Crist of Gardena after her graduation from high school. They became the parents of four children: Robert, Carole, Jack, and Kathleen. Carole married Samuel Serrano and it is their son, Steve Serrano,

CERRO GORDO AMERICAN HOTEL DESTROYED BY FIRE

The historic American Hotel, built in 1871, the Crapo House and the Ice House at Cerro Gordo burned down in what is thought to have been an electrical fire in an early morning blaze on Monday, June 15, 2020. No injuries were reported, and the remainder of the town is intact. The semi ghost town is located above Lone Pine and is a popular attraction to those traveling on Highway 395.

According to The Friends of Cerro Gordo Facebook website, the propane tanks of the hotel caught fire and exploded after the hotel itself started burning. The cause is under investigation but is suspected due to the old electrical wiring.



The owner is offering historical tours to raise funds to rebuild the hotel. The road to town winds above Keeler and is quite an adventure in itself. Discovered in 1865 this silver town boomed to a population of 3,000. After a series of booms and busts, Cerro Gordo found new life, second to Bodie, as California's best-preserved ghost town. For tour information: www.cerrogordomines.com,

who has been in contact with the Duarte Historical Museum during the recent past and who cherished a special bond with his grandmother, Ruth, who spent the last years of her life in Murrieta, California. Steve has shared with us that his grandmother was alert and vital until the very end, recounting even on his last visit stories of her Duarte ancestors. May you rest in peace, Ruth Louise Jenkins Crist.

By: Stephen Baker, Historian

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
www.RanchoDeDuarte.org

Phone: (626) 357-9419

Email: info@RanchoDeDuarte.org

Instagram: [@RanchoDeDuarte](https://www.instagram.com/RanchoDeDuarte)

Twitter: [@RanchoDeDuarte](https://twitter.com/RanchoDeDuarte)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

DUE TO THE PANDEMIC AND ORDERS FROM THE COUNTY, ALL MUSEUM ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN CANCELLED INDEFINATELY. PLEASE WATCH FOR ANNOUNCEMENTS ON OUR WEBSITE AT www.RanchoDeDuarte.Org. WE HOPE TO BE BACK TO NORMAL ACTIVITIES SOON.

If you would like to volunteer to serve as a docent once every few months, please call Sharman Warner at (626) 358-2001.

DUARTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

P.O. Box 263, Duarte, CA 91009-0263

777 Encanto Parkway, Duarte

(626) 357-9419

www.RanchoDeDuarte.org

Twitter & Instagram@RanchoDeDuarte

Open: Saturdays: 1-4 p.m.

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

Closed holidays

President: Claudia Heller

Vice President: Sharman Warner

Treasurer: Steve Baker

Secretary: Cathy Long

Asst. Curator: Dilip Tiwari

Board Member: Judy Blake

Board Member: Liz Reilly

Docent Coordinator: Sharman Warner

Exhibit coordinator: Mark Montgomery

Photographer: Alan Heller

Student Tour Coordinator: Liz Reilly

Branding Iron: Claudia Heller, Jim Kirchner

Webmaster: Jim Kirchner

Newspaper scanning project:

Dilip Tiwari, Kayko Jorgenson

Janice Buck, Penny Jung

Duarte Historical Society & Museum
 c/o Claudia N. Heller
 277 Opal Canyon Road
 Duarte, CA 91010

