

The Branding Iron

DUARTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JAN.-MARCH, 2014

President's Message

Claudia Heller

Our Museum library is full of historical books, including many agricultural volumes once relied upon by local citrus ranchers. But today, museum visitors want to study books on local history and subjects more relative to their interests. Therefore, we are re-organizing the library to place the more popular books on key, easy-to-find shelves.

These books include the latest books on Duarte History published in the past few years, and now an area will be dedicated to Duarte High School Yearbooks. Hopefully we will be able to collect yearbooks back to the High Schools first graduating class in 1961.

Additionally, in easy reach, will be dozens of notebooks compiled by Lucile Morrison, wife of Dr. Morrison, owners of the Morrison Ranch which is now Westminster Gardens. Mrs. Morrison judiciously cut out newspaper articles for several decades, placing them in well-marked albums labeled titles such as "school district," "tragedies," "history," and such.

Books by John Robinson on the San Bernardino and San Gabriel Mountains, are also available.

Although books may not be "checked out," the Duarte Historical Society welcomes visitors to peruse library books, especially students studying local history.

In addition, dozens of DVDs are available for viewing. Personal interviews previously aired on DCTV by hosts Rev. Neal Earle, and Mary Barrow Somerlott, bring alive Duarte's personalities, many of whom are no longer with us. Some of these include interviews with Victoria Duarte Cordova, Rustie Ham and Betsy Bacon. Several DVDs show the annual Route 66 parades, and the city-sponsored hikes to Fish Canyon.

Come visit our Library and immerse yourself in Duarte's colorful past.

MISS DUARTE REUNION SCHEDULED FOR JANUARY 11



Chanda-Lyn Hildebrand, 1991 Miss Duarte,
Christine Shedley, Jr. Miss

It was a highlight in Duarte during the 1970s into the 90s, precipitating numerous events and culminating in a grand pageant. Before an excited audience and dozens of hopeful young Duarte girls, the winners of the annual Miss and Jr. Miss Duarte contest were revealed and lives were changed forever.

Relegated to history, the contests ended and are now just a memory.

On January 11 from 2 to 4 p.m. past pageant participants will gather at the Museum to relive those historical days. It will present a great photo opportunity as the ladies model their sashes and tiaras. The public is invited and admission is free.

A Miss Duarte exhibit will remain at the museum through February.

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Cooper's Hawk

Photo by Alan Heller

FALL BIRDWALK NETS THIRTY-NINE SPECIES

Led by ornithologist Kimball Garrett, more than thirty birders walked through Encanto Park along the bioswale and into the adjacent river trails on a birding expedition in mid-November. Despite the threat of rain and little water in the river, blue skies greeted the group and a small pond above the first weir north of Puente Largo bridge reaped several species including six Northern Shovelers, three Green-winged Teal and a Spotted Sandpiper.

Birdwalks are sponsored by the Duarte Historical Society twice a year, led by Garrett who is the collections manager at the L.A. County Museum of Natural History. A complete list is on www.duartehistory.org.



Photo by Candace Dougherty

More photos on P. 3

(The following article appeared in the local papers on April 21, 1966)

WALTER KNOTT WILL ADDRESS HISTORICAL GROUP

Walter Knott, owner and developer of Knott's Berry Farm and Ghost Town, will be the featured speaker for the Duarte Historical Society's installation dinner on May 6 at the Old Kentucky Home Restaurant, 802 E. Huntington Drive, Monrovia.

The special event is also planned to honor the Duarte Historical Society's presentation of their first "Pioneer Service Award" which will be presented to the individual contributing an outstanding effort in the development of Duarte's history.

(Note: The Pioneer Service Award was presented to Dr. Ida Mae Shrode in recognition of her book about the land use of the area known as the Rancho Azusa de Duarte. Her family came to the US from Texas after the civil war in the 1870s, and her grandfather founded the Southern Methodist church on Buena Vista Avenue. Her father was a citrus rancher.

Miss Duarte, continued.

Miriam De la Flor Fox was crowned Miss Duarte in 1974. After arriving in the US as a Cuban refugee, she landed in Duarte and worked her way through the School District teaching at 5 Duarte Schools. Miriam today serves Duarte as Assistant Superintendent.

Another Miss Duarte was Dori (Valleroy) Russell, crowned in 1981. She still recalls the passion and excitement generated by the contests. "After I was crowned," says Dori, "I loved representing the City in many activities such as A Day at the Races, riding in the Monrovia Day Parade with my father driving the car, and attending ribbon cutting ceremonies."

While some San Gabriel Valley cities retain this tradition, it was abandoned locally in the mid 1990s.

LOCALS PHOTOGRAPH BIRDS AT PARK & RIVER



Red-masked Parakeets (above)
Northern Flicker (below)
Photos by Candace Dougherty



JUSTICE BROTHERS TOUR SET FOR JANUARY 8, 2 P.M.



A Duarte gem hidden in plain sight! Join us for a private tour of the Justice Brothers Racing Museum located only blocks from Encanto Park at 2734 Huntington Drive.

This isn't just a museum for auto enthusiasts, it's a living, breathing time capsule of Americana and has everything from a Pitts Bi-Plane to a camera collection.

We will learn the story of the Justice Brothers which is intertwined with Duarte's history and the lore of Route 66. Their success story reads like a movie, and here they are, right in our town.

The group size is limited, so please reserve your spot by calling Claudia Heller at (626) 358-0329, by January 4. The tour is free.



**PLEASE SUPPORT THE MUSEUM BY
PAYING YOUR 2014 DUES. Student/teacher:
\$10; Individual: \$15; Family: \$25; Business/
Organization: \$100; Lifetime: \$500. Dues help
pay for this newsletter and our monthly
operating costs. THANK YOU**

JEFF BIBB SHELF ESTABLISHED

After fifty years living in Duarte, Sandy Bibb has packed up her belongings and will relocate to Arizona. A shelf at the Duarte Historical Museum Library will be dedicated to her son, Jeff.

The "Bibb Bunch" moved to Duarte in the spring of 1963. At that time, the family consisted of Allen and Sandi Bibb and Jeffrey who was 7 months old. The family grew to include Kevin born in 1965 and Brian born in 1966."

The Bibb boys attended Duarte schools. Jeff died in August 1989. and his Duarte High yearbooks have been donated to the Museum Library.

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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