

The Branding Iron

DUARTE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

APRIL-JUNE, 2013

President's Message

Claudia Heller

He was the man who made it all possible. Without Monty Montgomery, we would not have our lovely museum in Encanto Park. Indeed, there might not be a museum at all!

Which was bigger, his booming voice or his kind heart? When I first met former Mayor Monty Montgomery, it was in 1980, the year we moved to Duarte. He frightened me because he was such a bigger-than-life person. He served as Mayor during that decade and was deeply involved in the city in a multitude of aspects. It was through the Duarte Historical Society that we later became friends and my admiration for him grew.

Always with a hearty laugh, he was a joy to be around and his sense of humor was such that years later I planned a fundraising banquet for the museum where we roasted him relentlessly. He took it all in stride, even the part where former Mayor Ginny (Joyce) Belba, took the mic and revealed to the crowd that this strapping man's real first name is actually "Joyce."

He served as president of the Duarte Historical Society for seven years (1983-1990), and it was largely because of his contacts and expertise as a contractor that the Society was able to purchase the historic house in which the museum is presently located. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints sold the house to the Society for the total price of \$1, rather than demolish it to clear the land for their Church. The deal was



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IT'S A WHAT DAY CALLS FOR IMAGINATION!

From pie perforators to a kazoo, museum visitors gawked at the table full of curious items, some of which were never identified. Loyd Gibbons of Loyds Bike Shop contributed a box camera, bike tank, antique kick stand, and a rubber-band powered zip gun. Pat De Rose modeled a Japanese hand massager, and Pauline Montgomery explained the workings of her clove-covered orange used to ward off moths.

The manual typewriter had suffered corroded ribbons, and was a reminder of how far we have come with the invention of electric typewriters and then word processing machines and now today's laptops!

DOCENT TRAINING DAY

To our dedicated docents

Curator Irwin Margiloff will lead a

Docent training session

At the Museum

Saturday April 6, 11 a.m.

Museum tour, explanation of exhibits

Questions and Answers

Sharing of docent stories

Followed by sandwiches



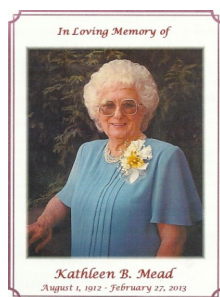
CHRONICLES OF DUARTE

Soon a new book on Duarte will be released entitled *Chronicles of Duarte*. Published by History Press, the book is a compilation of a number of columns written by DHS President Claudia Heller since 1991, together with photos by Alan Heller. It features interviews with pioneer and contemporary residents, historical events, wildlife, organizations and schools.

Details regarding the launching of the book will soon be announced.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Sadly, our thoughts go to the family of our member Donald Wood, recently deceased.



Sadly, we honor the memory of Kathleen Mead, long time Duarte volunteer and resident of Bradbury (August 1, 1912- February 27, 2013)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

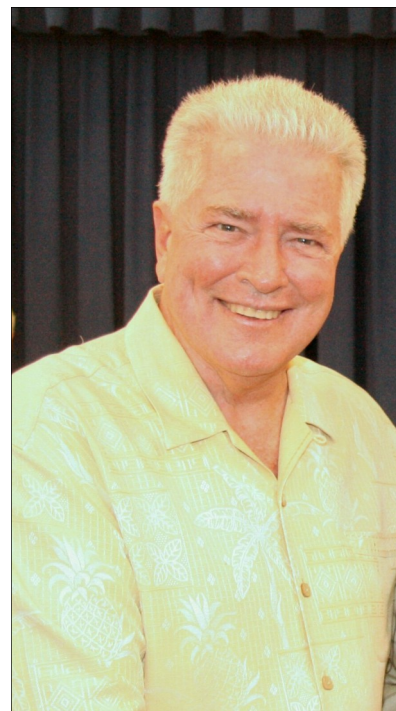
Docent Training: April 6, 11 a.m. at Museum

Birdwalk: April 21 Meet Kimball Garrett at the Museum at 7:30 a.m. Arrive early for donuts!

Taste of Duarte: May 8, 5-8 p.m. at Westminster Gardens

Author's Festival: October 5 at Westminster Gardens

A FOND FAREWELL TO AN AMAZING MAN



It was with great sadness that the world learned of the passing of Huell Howser (1945-2013), a hero to many of us in California. He dug deeply into our "gold" and spread his nuggets of knowledge of many well known and little known landmarks in our state. Some grumbled that he had not visited their little historical spot, but he probably would have done so but for his untimely passing.

A few years ago I watched him as he interviewed historical persons at the grand opening of the Kelso Train Depot. It was truly a two man show: Huell and his cameraman. He had no "go-fers" rounding up interviewees. If they weren't at the appointed spot at the scheduled time, he personally would take off running around looking for them. And when the interview began, he was as calm and prepared as one could be.

When his guests spoke, he became more and more engaged and excited, listening carefully to their

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MONTY (continued)

largely arranged by Monty.

Monty had big dreams and a way of making them come true. He was a classic family man. He and his wife, Dorothy, were married for sixty-eight years. They purchased a home on Cinco Robles in Duarte in 1957 and there raised their daughter and five sons, all of whom graduated from Duarte High School. Throughout the years, their Cinco Robles home was constantly opened to local non-profit groups for fundraising events.

For several decades Monty was a big influence in town and fortunately his work and dedication was on the side of improving the quality of life for all Duartean. Because of his vision and actions, we enjoy many of the fruits of his labors today. He and Dorothy moved to Costa Mesa in 1987, but according to their daughter, Claudia, "they always thought of Duarte as their home." He passed away on February 18 of this year, at the age of 92

HUELL (continued)

accounts of the depot in its fledgling years, and asking question after question. It was obvious he had done his homework. He made everyone feel at home as if he were a visiting uncle, and when the interview concluded, we all knew much more about the history of this historical depot

For years I have admired Huell's tenacity, enthusiasm and fairness in bringing to the public a first-hand look at places, people and events we may never have known about. He has been an inspiration to all of us with a sense of curiosity and interest in peoples and places. As for Huell, no one can emulate the man; his personality is so uniquely his. However, we can all learn from his legacy to look below the surface and appreciate people and places which are silent, hiding gems that have not yet been discovered.

I take my hat off to Huell Howser, mourn his death, and to the man and his long line of successes I say: **"That was amazing!"**

-Claudia Heller

HISTORY OF TRASH EXHIBIT DEBUTS AT MUSEUM



The history of waste collecting sounds like an odd subject, but if you think about it, the methods of ridding cities of trash have changed dramatically over the years from dumping waste into neighborhood pits, to burning trash in incinerators, to the modern recycling and weekly curbside pick-up we enjoy today.

Burrtec Municipal Program Manager Olivia Sanchez is passionate about trash and has artistically created an exhibit covering the history of trash collecting which will remain on display at the through May. She has shared some interesting history.

The exhibit traces trash collecting from the days rubbish was buried or discarded into the nearest fields or waterways, to the years when horse drawn carts made pick-ups, and on to more modern advances.

"Over a hundred years ago, the business of solid waste collection was not as streamlined as it is today. It lacked the technology and mobility that the collection trucks currently have," according to Olivia. In the 1920s, the first open top vehicles specifically for trash collecting came on scene. In 1937 George Dempster invented the Dempster Dumpster, and compactor trucks came on scene in the 1960s and '70s.

**PLEASE SUPPORT THE MUSEUM BY
PAYING YOUR 2013 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**

DOCENT TRAINING SESSION

Docents and prospective docents:

Saturday, April 6, 11 a.m.

**Curator Irwin Margiloff will lead a
docent training session.**

**Bring your questions and curiosity
Sandwiches served**

Duarte Historical Society & Museum

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

777 Encanto Parkway, Duarte

(626) 357-9419

Open: Saturdays: 1-4 p.m.

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

Web page: www.duartehistory.org

President: Claudia Heller

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Treasurer: Steve Baker

Secretary: Terri Hanks

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Director: Boyd Leeson

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Ruby Shiroma, Sheri Uhlig

Video Library: Mary Somerlott, Buck Gwynn

Photographer: Alan Heller

Exhibit Coordinators: Pauline Montgomery,

Mark Montgomery

Branding Iron: Claudia Heller, Jim Kirchner

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