



EAGLE ROCK VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Winter, 2022

Early Chapters in Southern California History

California history, especially that of its southern regions, is much older, and features a more diverse cast of protagonists, than just about any other part of the United States. Unfortunately, only a tiny fraction of California's present population of more than 40 million has any connection with or knowledge of the earliest chapters of our state's history. Most Californians are familiar only with the events of the past century, or even less. And, since the majority of these newcomers are monolingual English speakers, the first 300+ years of California history, all of it recorded in the Spanish language, remains largely

unknown to them. Sadly, much of what passes for this early history has been garbled, misinterpreted, or perverted by Anglo-American mythology. On February 22nd, 2022, Brian Dervin Dillon will take us on a tour of Southern California beginning in 1542 and ending in 1900. Along the way we will meet California Indians, Spanish explorers, missionaries and soldiers, and Californios of Mestizo, Mulato, and Zambo origin. Dr. Dillon will illuminate our shadowy past and demolish old, entrenched, myths about Southern California's earliest history.

Dr. Dillon is a 5th-generation Californian. An archaeologist, he is both the son and the father of historians. He has spent 50 years doing archaeological, anthropological, and culture-historical research in every part of California (46 of its 58 counties) and in four other Latin American countries. His fluency in Spanish and longstanding relationships with Native Americans allows him to offer a fresh view of Southern California History.

This Zoom presentation is based upon his most recent book, *Early Chapters in Southern California History*, published in 2021 as Keepsake No. 54 by the Los Angeles Corral of Westerners International. If you are not on our email list, to be notified of the Zoom link, email: webmaster@eaglerockhistory.org

EARLY CHAPTERS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA HISTORY A FRESH VIEW-1542-1900



GENERAL ANDRÉS BELLO

ZOOM MEETING WITH
BRIAN DERVIN DILLON
TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 22, 7:00
EAGLE ROCK
VALLEY
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

VISIT OUR WEBSITE EAGLEROCKHISTORY.ORG

Hello, Eagle Rock!

Thank you, ERVHS Members, for your continued support. The last couple of years of online only meetings has mostly eliminated our traditional means of augmenting membership funds, so your membership plays an even more vital role now. We have very limited access to our archives, but continue to make strides in our efforts to place more historical images online – a special thanks to Eric Warren in this regard, but also thanks to John de la Fontaine for his continued editing of the website. A few years ago we moved to the Wordpress web editing platform, which has enabled multiple people to contribute.

During this time, we have continued receiving requests for information regarding local properties and businesses. Some have donated items from their childhood. We also welcome photos and historical comments about those photos. If you have some photos that you think are representative of life in earlier times, or depict underrepresented areas of time or place, please feel free to send a digital copy (scans are best, but a cell phone camera can get the gist of an old photo). We would need whatever information that you have regarding the photograph, such as date, place, and people in the photo. That information about the photos is called meta data, and is really just as important, as the actual photo. If you have a story about the photo, even if it seems obvious to you, please include that too. Recognizable places or events are especially of interest. We are trying to increase our archives in the area of minorities, so photos of or about minorities are also quite precious for us. You can send the photos to me, at president@eaglerockhistory.org. Physical photographs can also be donated, but please contact me/us about them. We are a bit hindered by the lack of

access to our normal archives, but will attempt to continue to accommodate physical donations, in a safe manner.

As we move into 2022, and hope that it isn't "Twenty-twenty too", we are hoping that we can start up some sort of physical or hybrid meetings sometime soon. In the meantime, we are continuing to work to maintain the history of Eagle Rock.

David Dellinger, President
Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society

QR CODE
Scan to access our website
with your phone.



The objectives of the Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society

- to preserve, clarify through research and to perpetuate the history of Eagle Rock Valley
- to make this history available to students, researchers, libraries and all interested persons
- to preserve and protect our local landmarks, especially the Eagle Rock

Membership is open to all who would further these objectives

Public Archive Hours 10 to 12 every Saturday
at the Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock
2225 Colorado Blvd. Eagle Rock CA 90041
for information call 323-257-1357

This journal is published quarterly by
The Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society
Editor, Eric Warren
Layout, David Mc Nutt
Contributors, Katie Taylor, David Dellinger

Visit our website at:
eaglerockhistory.org

If your mailing label dates before 2022, it's time to renew your membership. Please take a moment and mail your check now. A dues form and envelope are included with this newsletter.

Thanks, We depend on you

ERVHS History Part Two: A New Home, Historic Preservation Collaboration and Distribution

The Eagle Rock Community Cultural Center (now known as the Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock) was chartered in 1996, as the City elected to conform the management of the refurbished old Eagle Rock Library to a citywide push to form community arts organizations. Generously, then as now, this organization hosts the Historical Society. In our new home, the most pressing initial priority was to properly house and inventory our materials. As long-time president John Miller was nearly the last of the older generation still active, a new generation of leadership was needed. As we looked at our holdings it became clear that the Northeast Newspaper and Eagle Rock Advertiser archives were key holdings that needed to be shared with the public. An ongoing conversation began with our neighbors in Highland Park Heritage and Occidental Collage to accomplish this. At the same time, increasing concern led us to examine our role in historic preservation efforts. Our public presence continued to evolve, with the addition of the Ice Cream Social event, hosting the community, in addition to our quarterly meetings (continuing on Zoom) and our newsletter. We seek new collaborators in the community to enhance our effectiveness and continue our archival and educational work.

Part of the ER-VHS archives after delivery to the new ERCCC. When the materials were discovered, in poor condition where the city had deposited them, community members reorganized the space and built shelving to allow access to sort the cataloged and disorganized collection. (Eric Warren-ERVHS)



John de la Fontaine and Mary Andrews sorting the Eagle Rock Advertiser, our second archival project after reestablishing ourselves downstairs in the Cultural Center. The microfilming of this newspaper was the first step in bringing our newspapers to the public. (Melody Peterson-ERVHS)



Pat Samson, Virginia Neeley and Ann Walnum took on the task of sorting through the materials and starting a catalog. A lot of help from our friends, Highland Park historians all! (Melody Peterson-ERVHS)

Our Town, Our History



Mel Harte writes “James B. McNary & Jennie C. McNary built this home after WWI and according to grandpa McNary it cost \$3500 to build, including cobblestone fireplace and porch columns. The McNarys lived in the house until the middle ‘30s, then they moved to the converted garage in the rear to make room for family members”. The house, on Eagle Rock Boulevard, was threatened by condominium development. The Eagle Rock Valley Historical Society and TERA (The Eagle Rock Association), with the aid of Charles J. Fisher, obtained Historic Cultural Monument status in 2007. (1962 Survey-ERVHS)



Opportunity calls. Eric Warren received a phone call from a man who wanted to get some old Eagle Rock newspapers out of his storage. He and Charles Fisher followed up and found the bound volumes of the Northeast Newspapers. Here they are in the back of my Honda. (Eric Warren-ERVHS)



This prizewinning photograph of the fire in the Eagle Rock hills on March 19, 1964 is one of the many thousand negatives of the Friezer collection donated to Occidental College at the suggestion of the Historical Society. This collection along with the microfilmed Northeast Newspapers and Eagle Rock Advertiser formed the core of a collaborative effort between Occidental College, The Highland Park Heritage Trust and ERVHS to store, catalog and make available these immensely important historic resources to the public. A portion of the newspapers is now available on the web at the California Digital Newspaper Collection. Ongoing efforts to make more available form the core of our collective effort. (Photograph by Joe Friezer, published in the Eagle Rock Sentinel.)

Our Town, Our History



Pat Topping and Katie Taylor greet our guests at the annual Ice Cream Social. Pat designed all of our logos including our "Been There, Done That, Forgotten Most of It" t-shirt, worn here by Katie, our treasurer. (Unknown-ERVHS)

Our famous dollar-a-dip ice cream along with assorted baked goods refresh the crowd at the Ice Cream Social, our public event that replaced the yearly potluck. The Fifth Friday Folk Band and the Occidental College Historic and Folk Dance Troupe engage the crowd at the 2019 Ice Cream Social. This event often features the Eagle Rock High School Latin Jazz Band and the organ grinder man. (Eric Warren-ERVHS)



An appreciative crowd at the 50th anniversary banquet in 2011 applauds as our oldest remaining past president Powell Greenland comes forward. We were treated to a delicious vegetarian banquet at Fatty's restaurant, hosted by Kim Dingle and prepared by Aude Charles. (Karen Warren-ERVHS)



The honorees at the 50th anniversary banquet were: past president, Powell Greenland; past-president, John Miller; founding member, Doris Thielen; and then-president, Eric Warren. (Karen Warren-ERVHS)



**at the Center for the Arts, Eagle Rock
2225 Colorado Blvd. Eagle Rock CA, 90041**

**EARLY CHAPTERS IN SOUTHERN
CALIFORNIA HISTORY**

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2022 7:00

**ERVHS ANNIVERSARY BANQUET ?
CELEBRATING 60 HISTORIC YEARS**

TUESDAY, APRIL 19, 2022 6:00 or

**GAS. LUBE. OIL. TIRES. REPAIRS
AUTO SERVICE IN EAGLE ROCK
TUESDAY, APRIL 19, 2022 7:00**

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Phone # _____

E-mail _____

Membership Category:

Individual \$20 Business \$35 New

Family \$25 Life \$300 Renewal

Will you help with the ongoing activities of the ERVHS ?

Yes No

Archives Newsletter Oral history

Meetings Fundraising E-mail me

Publicity Displays to help

Other _____

Clip and mail to : **ERVHS**
c/o Center for the Arts
2225 Colorado Blvd.
Eagle Rock, CA 90041

Date _____

Member's Corner



Elizabeth Bjornen

Known by friends as BJ, this new Historical Society member has many tales to tell. Born in Maine, BJ moved with family to Highland Park on Ruby Place in 1959. She attended Franklin High School and went on to be an Anthropology major and History minor at Cal State LA. This laid the groundwork for her career as a teacher and

Dean of Students for the LAUSD for 25 years. She had moved away, but found herself nostalgic for her childhood neighborhood, so in 1997 she purchased a home adjacent to Sparkletts. During this time BJ attended the LA Police Academy, then served as a Reserve Officer for roughly 25 years, mainly on the weekends.

The more we talked the more she surprised me with her life's adventures: traveling, often alone, to Egypt, Russia, Finland, Hungary, Scotland and more. She took horseback vacations in Europe as well. When asked her favorite place, she didn't hesitate to say, riding in southern Arizona, with its combination of heat and constant breezes.

BJ continues to enjoy shopping at Galco's as she did as a child, preferring the sarsaparilla selection! She was sad to see Ernie Jr.'s go but enjoys patronizing Cindy's now. Lastly she "forgot" to mention that she has also been a docent at the Autry Museum for the last 6 years! BJ is a dynamo! We are so happy she chose to join the Historical Society and to share this glimpse of her life story. Welcome BJ!

—Katie Taylor