



THE POPPY PAPER



Official Monthly Publication of the
Boosters of Old Town San Diego State Historic Park
A Non-Profit Organization

August 2018

The Adobe Guild

By Tim Downing, Volunteer Coordinator

The Adobe Guild Has Moved! Wait, you did not know Old Town San Diego had an Adobe Guild?

Okay, hold on...before I get there, I should let everyone know what adobe is. Adobe is the Spanish word for mud brick, made from earth and other organic materials. Historically, the "other" organic material in Old Town was cow dung. Today we use straw. Old Town San Diego State Historic Park has five original adobe buildings still standing.

The Adobe Guild has been very active over the last six months. The core Adobe Guild members are Jason Langley (below), Osiel Munguia and Steve Van Wormer (right). You will find these three very active on the third Saturday of each month for Californio Living History Day. You will know who they are, even if you have never met them. They are the ones walking around in the Park barefooted with muddy feet!



Up until June, the guild had been meeting and making adobe block in Seeley Yard, where they have been building on information gathered from one of Dr. Elkind's interns from San Diego State University. The guild has been making about twenty blocks a month! Most of these are one at a time! These blocks are made just like they were 193 years ago, when the first adobe walls were being laid down here in Old Town. The guild is using dirt from around Old Town and is using the same methods used then. The blocks are turned every few days to insure the water evenly dries from the blocks. It takes about thirty days for the blocks to completely dry.

At the end of May the Adobe Guild started their move from Seeley Yard to the fenced in area on the corner between the Johnson House and the Cosmopolitan Hotel. The new location has a few great benefits. The first is that it gives access to a larger number of Park visitors, which allows the guild to really show off a great living history program.

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The Adobe Guild *(continued from page 1)*...



Another benefit of this location is that it is a nice big lot. When you walk by, you will not only see the blocks and the adobe making pit, but you will be able to see the beginnings of a foundation and an adobe wall. Here our Park visitors will get to see how an adobe house was constructed.

In June when the guild was working on the foundation, Steve Van Wormer told a Park visitor, with a big smile, “After forty years of digging these foundations up as an archaeologist, I finally get to see how they were built!”



Make sure you come by and visit the Adobe Guild on the third Saturday of each month, and watch the progression of the adobe wall construction. And, if you want to play in the mud, contact Steve or Tim, and they will make sure you have fun!

Celebrating the West on the Move 2018 Schedule of Stagecoach Days Events

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Times</u>	<u>Location</u>
August 4 th	Trades that Shaped the West	12:00pm – 4:00pm	Plaza
August 11 th	Days of the Vaqueros	12:00pm – 4:00pm	Plaza
August 18 th	Twainfest	11:00am – 5:00pm	Plaza

From the Editor's Desk...

Many thanks to all of *The Poppy Paper* contributors for updates on the fabulous summer activities over the past couple of months. This month's issue is unusually lengthy, as some submissions for the July issue were received after the paper had been printed. Thankfully, since Deanna Turton was on vacation and did not submit her usual Treasurer's Report, I was able to squeeze everything in this month!

Please keep in mind that Park staff should submit their articles to Superintendent Richard Dennison for approval; volunteers and guild members should submit to their lead person and/or Tim Downing. Also, make sure to allow for extra time so that Richard isn't overwhelmed with emails at the last minute.

There are only three more weekends of Stagecoach Days events, and then it is back to school for many of us. So, if you haven't checked out the great living history activities in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park yet this summer, it's time to come on down!!!

Happy Reading!

Ruth French, Editor, poppypapereditor@gmail.com

(Deadline for submissions is the 20th of each month for inclusion in the following month's issue.)

EDUCATIONAL REPORT FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2017-2018

By Graham Kirkham, Park Interpretive Specialist

I am pleased to report another very successful and challenging year of educational tours. Children from five to eighteen years old, from local schools to students from South America and Europe, all benefited from the knowledge and experience of our Park aides and volunteers. The dedication and great teamwork of all who staffed the stations and guided the students was evident, as they made certain that all who attended not only enjoyed themselves, but learned a great deal about Old Town and the people who lived and worked here.

We also benefited from our partners in the local Old Town community. I would like to thank all the excellent staff who have worked at the **Wells Fargo** museum over the year, an important and very popular stop on the tour. I would also like to thank **The Old Town Foundation**, who helped fund the Fourth Grade Program, especially for San Diego Unified School District.

However, there is one staff member who deserves a special thanks, my Jack-Of-All-Trades, Senior Park Aide Sierra Holcomb. Sierra took over from the previous administrative assistant in July of last year. I will just mention a few of the duties Sierra has carried out in the past year: school tour guide, Mason Street school teacher, print shop operator, and an 1846 sailor (she looked better in my sailor suit than I ever did). The bulk of Sierra's time was spent dealing with schools and teachers booking the tours. Believe me, this was a serious challenge trying to please everyone. Sierra worked with the Foundation and San Diego Unified to not only book the tours, but also to collect the money and grant checks. She then had to track the transactions and documentations. Sierra was also responsible for numerous other administration duties. All of this Sierra did with a smile on her face and never a complaint. (Well, almost never.) Sierra also managed to fit in a two-week mission to Nepal during the year. So, a big "THANKS" to Sierra for all her hard work!

This year we had 8,156 students and chaperones attend our tours, slightly down from last year, as we had planned. We provided 149 tours, one down from last year. The average size of tours this year was 55, last year it was 62. Our busiest month for tours was April with 1,344 attendees, followed by May with 1,132 attendees.

Those were the figures, but more important was the feedback we received. Students, teachers and parents said what great tours we provided, so much so that we already have plenty of bookings for next year. Who knows what next year will bring with all the planned changes to California State Parks in general, and to San Diego Coast specifically. Whatever the changes may be, I am sure the Education Department will still be an important part of the district plan. So, come and join us, sign up to operate a station, be a guide, or cover a museum. Come have some fun and make an important contribution to the education of all the youngsters who visit Old Town with such excitement and anticipation.

Big thanks again to all the Park aides and volunteers who contributed to a successful year.



Treasurer's Notes

By Deanna Turton

Since I just got home last week, I will not have my usual treasurer's report this month. However, I would like to thank BOOT Board Member Becky Halliburton for filling in for me while I was gone - about four weeks!

Also, while I was away, a letter arrived from the County of San Diego indicating that we received another Community Enhancement Grant for \$8,000.00, to be used from July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019. More on that next month...



Old Town Volunteers at the 2013 Fashion Show

New Period Attire Committee

By Tim Downing, Volunteer Coordinator

There is a new Period Attire Committee in town. This seven-person committee is comprised of staff and volunteers. The goal of the committee is to help streamline the process for getting new period attire approved and to make sure Park staff, volunteers and concessionaires have the best period appropriate clothing out there.

The committee members are: Sector Superintendent Richard Dennison, Senior Park Aide Vanessa Jones, Museum Curator Amy Lew, Park Interpreter Gregg Giacomuzzi, Volunteer Coordinator Tim Downing, BOOT Board Member Susan Hector and Volunteer Patt Seitas.

The committee has already met several times this year, and plans on meeting quarterly throughout the year. The primary focus of the meetings this year is to update the web links to vendors, adding new vendors, and talking about ways to streamline the paperwork. Some of the changes that have been made by the committee so far are: New volunteers have one year from their start date to earn their 72 hours for the stipend. All seasoned volunteers have from January 1 to December 31 to earn their 72 hours. This change makes keeping track of dates much easier on Vanessa and Tim. We will also be adding more sketches and pictures to our manual and online. This will give everyone some good clear images of the excellence to which we strive.

Remember, the committee is here for you. However we need your help, as well. How can you help us? You can help in a few ways. The first one is by bringing new items of attire you would like to see in the Park. Bring the documentation, photos, paintings, sketches and all the information you can. Once we have it, we can review it and, once approved, it can be added to our collection for everyone. For those of you who complete your 72 hours, you can help us by NOT waiting until December to process your stipend. You can also help by sending us information about vendors who have period attire and period items. And most of all, you can help us by making sure you are always doing your best to be “in period” when you are participating in our living history events.

Each and every one of you makes the living history events what they are. Here in Old Town, we are so far ahead of many of our sister parks with our living history programs and period attire, and we want to continue this great trend. For this, we need your help. Thank you for all you do!

Volunteers in the Park

By Tim Downing, Volunteer Coordinator

July 4th 2018 is behind us and it was a great one! The weather was perfect for the event. We had 81 volunteers who participated in this year's event. This worked out to 80% participation rate of the volunteers who said they would be there.



(L-R): Frances McMeeken, Donna Wright, Patt Seitas, Susan Monroe

Just in case anyone is keeping count, this is the third year in a row we have had such a high participation rate from our volunteers for the 4th of July! If it were not for all of you helping, there is no way this event would be so successful. It is always fun to watch the families and people from all over the world enjoying our Independence Day celebrations!

Our band did not march in the parade this year, but that did not matter to all the Park visitors who joined us in our two laps around the Plaza! I think this year we had the largest number of visitors participate in the parade, and it was amazing to see! I love walking through the crowd and encouraging our visitors to join us. The smiles on their faces when they realize they can join in is priceless!

I would like to say "Thank You" to a few of our volunteers. For all of you who really liked the food selection this year, you have Becky Halliburton and Kim Baldwin to thank. Both of these ladies worked hard with many trips to various stores to make sure we had a wonderful spread for lunch! I would like to thank BOOT President Jeanne Ferrell for coming out and helping to sell tickets. Having Jeanne there to help really made things go easier for our Park guests! And, thanks to the 23 Elders from the San Diego Mission of Latter Day Saints, who set up the entire Plaza, and took everything down after the event.

And, finally, I would like to say "Thank You" to Senior Park Aide Mary Stout. Mary was asked to fill in for Gregg Giacomuzzi a few weeks before the event. Mary did a great job in bringing the event together. I heard from more than a few long-time staff members and volunteers, who commented on how smoothly this 4th of July celebration went!

We are now in full swing of summertime fun! Keep up the great work you are all doing for our Park! And, **THANK YOU** for all you do!

Twainfest Writing Project

Selects Submissions for Performance

By Victor C. Contreras

The Year 2018 marks the fourth time the *Descendants of Early San Diego* has partnered up with *Twainfest*, *Write Out Loud Theater*, and the *Playwrights Project* to create monologues, written in the voice of a person who lived in San Diego during the 1800s. The project was designed to create pieces that honor our history here in San Diego, but also educate those who are watching the performances of these researched works. The selected pieces will be performed by hired actors at the annual Twainfest celebration, which is scheduled for August 18, 2018 in Old Town San Diego.

The criteria was that the piece runs between 3 and 10 minutes in performance length. The submitted piece must be historically accurate. It should explore, not only something about the person depicted, but also something about the time period. It could be historical events, culture of the times, clothing, foods, pastimes, weapons, transportation, or anything of interest that is typical of San Diego region during the 1800s.

This year the selected pieces numbered three, where in the past there were two per year. The awarded submissions were announced at the annual Descendants Reunion Luncheon, held this year at Café Coyote on June 23. Although, this year we had fewer submissions than last year's record setting number, it was the opinion of members of the judging committee that the quality of submissions improved overall. We hope to do a better job of publicity for the project next year. We went to great lengths this year to clarify that there are no set number of selected pieces for the project; and to emphasize that we are in search of pieces that meet the standards for historical accuracy and theatrical presentation.

Previously, all depicted historical people were presented as adults. This year we had two of the three pieces selected in the voices or experience of younger people. Within our growing library of pieces we already represent people who were teachers, ranchers, people for and against the law of the times, and now children.

This year's three project recipients of a \$100 award are:

- "An Old Town Shooting Match" by Roy Blackman, is a piece portraying the famous Judge Roy Bean who was known as the hanging judge of Texas. Prior to becoming one of the most famous judges of the West, he escaped from the San Diego Jail. This piece in his voice tells the story.
- "Getting Here" by Susan D. Walter is about a young girl's experience moving to San Diego during the 1800s. It is an interesting look at migration to San Diego from back East from the perspective of a young person, without adult issues or goals setting the motivation.
- "Juan Ramon Cota" by V. C. Contreras is a story that brings many events together. From the perspective of a teenager, who would have been old enough to get around on his own, but too young to take the role of a man during that time. Juan Ramon Cota comments on the last Native American uprising in Southern California, the call to arms that followed, the arrival of an Australian group that came under the guise of fighting Natives but became troublemakers in the town, and the gun fight in the plaza of Old Town that followed.

We may be combining past winning pieces into the presentations at Twainfest in August. That decision is still being evaluated. We are also exploring the possibilities of additional presentations of these works.

Updates in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park

By Gregg Giacomuzzi, State Park Interpreter I

- Senior Park Aide Mary Stout and Volunteer Coordinator Tim Downing did an excellent job coordinating the July 4th special event.
- The trees and shrubs have been significantly pruned back in the native plant garden.
- A gate at the Taylor & Congress side of the native garden area is proposed, to better secure the area from transient activity.
- It is anticipated that the new Seeley Stable Museum interpretative panels and building boot scrapers will be installed by the end of the year.
- A contract has been awarded to start demolition of the old CalTrans building. The timeline is still pending. The Park website will have more information in the next few months.
- Stagecoach Days is in full swing and will end August 18th with *Twainfest*, which will be presented by *Write Out Loud*.
- *Fiestas Patrias* will be led by Senior Park Aides Mary Stout and Megan Curtis on September 15th.
- Reconditioned period appropriate light fixtures will replace the existing exterior lights in front of the Schoolhouse.
- The *Fiestas de Reyes* portable stages have been moved and will be stored in the open space behind the BOOT shed.
- BOOT Board Member Bob Jones has fixed the sound system and lighting in the Old Town diorama, located in the Robinson-Rose Visitor Center.
- The Park has hired two new visitor services Park Aides, Elly Barrett and Lindsey Bernas.
- Interpreter Gregg Giacomuzzi and Senior Park Aide Vanessa Jones are continuing to work on the online period attire vendor list for Old Town San Diego State Historic Park.
- Lydia Tenia, a long-time visitor services Park Aide, officially retired from Old Town San Diego State Historic Park on July 31, 2018.
- Shawna Bishop, a recently hired Park Aide, is currently organizing and cataloging historical data and images from Old Town San Diego State Historic Park.
- Ryan Nye, a new State Park Ranger trainee, will be completing his field training program in Old Town San Diego State Historic Park in the next three weeks. Ryan will then be stationed on a permanent basis at Anza Borrego State Park.

Native Plant Landscape Work Party

2nd Saturday of Every Month - 9:30 to noon

WE NEED YOU! It is seen by more visitors than any other native plant landscape in San Diego. A few die-hard members have tended it for ten years. We hope more CNPS members will come help us and bond with it. After we hit the noon hour, some of us will go for a no-host lunch.

Please come help us grub out unwanted non-native pest plants. Bring water, sun protection, your own gloves and hand tools...or share ours.

The landscape is at the corner of Congress and Taylor Streets. Park for free in the lot off Calhoun Street, past the green dumpsters.

Questions?

Kay or Peter OldTownLandscape@cnpsd.org



With Sympathy



We recently learned that Ursula Ellsworth's mother passed away in June at the age of 87. Ursula and her husband Wayne have been Old Town volunteers and dancers with *Los Bailadores* for many years. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to Ursula and her family.

MONTHLY BOOT BOARD MEETINGS

BOOT Board Meetings are held the 3rd Wednesday, 1:00 pm, at Café Coyote. Monthly Board Meetings are always open to the public.



2018 CALPA Conference

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October 23 through October 26, 2018

The California League of Parks Associations and California State Parks invites park partners throughout California to join us for a conference focused on providing professional development, training and more for the many partner organizations that work tirelessly to promote, support, enhance and maintain California's 280 state parks. Sessions will be designed for nonprofit professionals, board members, volunteers, community leaders and California State Park staff.

The conference will be held at the Lake Natoma Inn in [Folsom, CA](#).
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Conference room rates are \$95 when reserving for CALPA Conference.

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BOOSTERS OF OLD TOWN

San Diego State Historic Park
4002 Wallace Street
San Diego, CA 92110

Membership Application or Renewal

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- _____ **\$25.00 Single Supporting Member**
- _____ **\$30.00 Senior Couple (62 yrs. or older)**
- _____ **\$40.00 Family (2 or more individuals)**
- _____ **\$155.00 Life Member (62 yrs. or older)**
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