

# ARTI-FACTS

The Newsletter of the Award-Winning Idyllwild Area Historical Society

Preserving the History of Idyllwild and the surrounding communities in the San Jacinto Mountains

Fall 2010

## A GREAT CELEBRATION AND A NEW BEGINNING

By Ben Killingsworth

Perhaps the best reminder of an enjoyable day celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Idyllwild Area Historical Society, and the beginning of a new and important phase as represented by our beautiful new Archive and Research Center, is the photo at right of five enthusiastic attendees, shown wearing their vintage costumes, and enjoying every minute of it.



One can only imagine what these ladies' closets might contain, but here they are showing off some of it—things they just couldn't bear the thought of throwing away. Left to right: Charlotte Groty, Joan McCullough, Carolyn Hall, Nancy Fletcher and Nancy Borchers

They weren't the only ones, however, who were decked out in clothes reminiscent of the past. Master of Ceremonies Doug Austin and Pat Murphy, pictured at left below, came fit for the occasion.



As for Doug's closet, however, the clothes he's shown wearing might well be the only ones in it, aside from some jeans and T-shirts.

About 100 people showed up for the October 23rd event, which included the unveiling of a very impressive plaque with the names of all of the contributors to the Archive Center's construction costs, which totaled just over \$158,000, including \$32,000 in grants from Riverside County.

Ceremonies included remarks by Sheila Meyer, the society's first president, who traveled from out-of-state to attend the celebration, Lynnda Hart, who played a key role in making the society a reality, then served as the museum curator for many years, and Shirl Reid who was recognized for the hundreds of hours she has spent over the last ten years working as the assistant curator and compiling computerized records of artifacts.

And, of course, last but not least, was Bob Smith, perhaps the hardest working member of the society, who well may spend more *Continued on page 2*



And here they are — On the far left we have Sheila Meyer, the first IAHS board president, and on the far right, our very valuable long time curator and board member, Lynnda Hart. Standing next to her is Shirl Reid, our hard working assistant curator, and next to her is Adele Smith, one of our most valuable behind-the-scenes contributors.

## Continued from page 1

time at the museum than he does at home. Most of his efforts are directed toward conducting research and the financial end of the operation, primarily in his role as treasurer. In the past, he has served as vice president, and, of course is a member of the board of directors

Back in 2000, when the decision was made to re-establish the society, the founders realized, thanks to Sheila, who had previous experience as a member of another historical society, that having a museum was an important element of their hoped-for success. That meant finding a building, not only one they could afford, but one situated in a spot where the public was likely to see it and drop in for a visit.

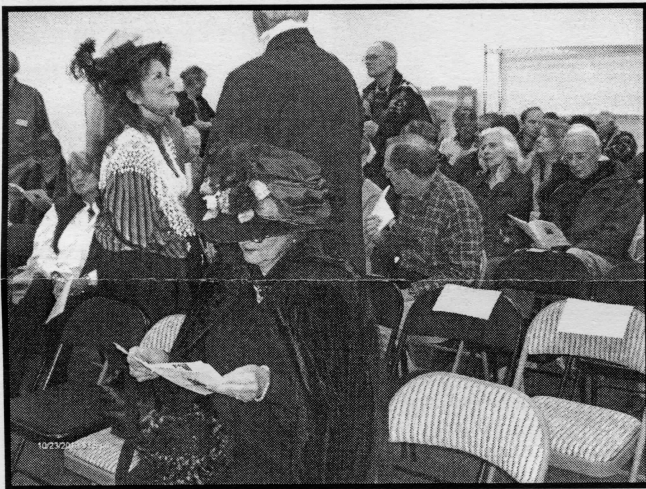
Their problems were solved when they found the building that was to house the museum, and

then, miracle of miracles, received a \$168,000 grant from the Economic Development Agency.

And the need for the Archive Center, or something like it, was also recognized early on when it became apparent that the volume of artifacts being donated to the society made it obvious that additional space was needed. Well, it took ten years, but most would agree that it was worth the wait.

Those attending the standing room only celebration, some of whom are shown in the three pictures below, heard all of this and much more, as they sat elbow-to-elbow inside the new building.

In the coming months and years our volunteer staff members will be hard at work meticulously cataloging, recording and storing the thousands of boxed artifacts that have heretofore been stored in a corner of the office building, a constant reminder of what lies ahead. *Continued on page 3*



Bob Smith and Shirl Reid make their presentation to the packed audience, Bob telling everyone about the bronze plaque inscribed with the names of the contributors, and Shirl making sure he doesn't make a mistake.



And, as you can see from the above picture the program was so exciting that the two boys in the front row just couldn't resist texting their friends to tell them all about it. The adults would have been doing it too if only they knew how.



Don Hart, best known by IAHS members as Lynnda's husband, appears to be having a ball as he sits ready to listen to Doug and Carolyn and Sheila and Lynnda and Shirl and Bob entertain him and his many friends.

**Continued from page 2**

One of the highlights of the program was the dedication of the new building to Bob Smith's grandparents, Frank and Mabel Moot. The Mootes first became involved in the San Jacinto Mountains in 1920 when Frank acted as an agent for a group of businessmen looking for a place to establish a mountain resort. After buying an 85 acre homestead in 1924 the group all but disbanded due to a depressed California economy, which left Frank Moot with the mortgage. But, in the end, they divided the property into lots and were later able to sell them to people who became neighbors in what is now called Pinewood. Along with other members of his family, Bob spent many summers there as he was growing up, and today owns the cabin that once belonged to his aunt.

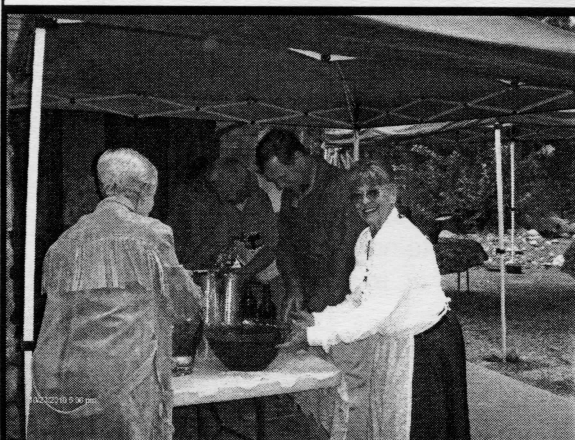
In any event, everyone who has played a part, either as a member, a volunteer, a board member, or an officer, should be proud of what has been accomplished in ten short years. Our membership is steadily rising, even in these tough economic times, and our list of willing volunteers also continues to grow. We even have a new banner on the front of this publication, "The Newsletter of the Award-Winning Idyllwild Area Historical Society."



Three important ladies, left to right, Sheila Meyer, the first IAHS president, Carolyn Levitski, our current president, and Lynnda Hart, who was instrumental in making IAHS a reality



Laura Caster, in the foreground, appears to be enjoying herself immensely, while in the background, on the right, Ruthe Donlon seems to be asking Joan McCullough if she'd mind taking her picture, while, on the left, Richard Levitski is probably trying to convince Bob Edwards that he (Richard) is also wearing a costume.



Leann Gudmundson spots the photographer while Carolyn Levitski and George Groty are too busy filling their plates.



Dottie Goldfarb entertains with her violin, while on the right, Linda and Larry Turner get ready for the crowd about to show up for refreshments and food. Don't they always!

# THE COMPANY WE KEEP

New and renewing members—July through October 2010

## NEW MEMBERS

### Business/Organization

Krone Museum (Sydney Cosselman) Idyllwild  
 Wooley's (Pam Allen) Idyllwild

### Sponsor

Margaret McTague Riverside

### Contributor

Sandy Craig Rancho Mirage  
 Sheri McClain Diamond Bar

### Family

Phil & Carol Baily Temecula  
 B. J. & Edith Brix Idyllwild  
 Rob & Laura Caster Idyllwild  
 James Crawford Idyllwild  
 Ruthe Donlon & Robert McCullough Idyllwild  
 Marte & Jack Ganoung Costa Mesa  
 Lana Ickes Idyllwild  
 Hans & Birgit Iliw Valley Center  
 Charles & Mildred Krueger Desert Hot Springs

Terry & Diana Kurr Idyllwild  
 Michael & Penny Mihály Columbia  
 Karen Morton San Marcos  
 R. B. & Janice Sutton Riverside  
 Loretta & Charles Van Orden La Quinta  
 William & Mary Whittaker Idyllwild

### Individual

Corrinna Aragon Los Angeles  
 Sydney Cosselman Idyllwild  
 J. H. Deal Riverside  
 Barbara H. Desforges San Clemente  
 Rita Edwards La Quinta  
 Bill Jackson Corona  
 Laura Long Valley Village  
 Jacquelyn Nyquist Idyllwild  
 Carol Scanny Palm Desert  
 Bob Simpson Fresno

## RENEWING MEMBERS

### Founders Circle

Jan & Nigel Priestley Idyllwild

### Sponsor

Bill & Pat Altman West Covina  
 Barbara Burgess Idyllwild  
 Stacy Ann Emmons Long Beach  
 Dotty & Mel Goldfarb Idyllwild  
 Dorothy Koepcke Palos

Verdes Estates  
 Bill Merkelson Van Nuys  
 Joseph & Raphael Plunkett Diamond Bar  
 Quiet Creek Inn  
 (Jim Newcomb & Michael Ahern) Idyllwild  
 Linda & Manny Rider Palm Desert

### Business/Organization

Wilder Cabins  
 (Bob Robbins & Pat Litfin) Idyllwild

### Contributor

Ann & Bill Bashford Idyllwild  
 Suzanne Bowman Idyllwild  
 Richard Davis Moscow, ID  
 Bobbie & Gary Glasheen Idyllwild  
 Marcia & Mac McQuern Riverside  
 Susan Miller Hemet  
 Betty & Walter Parks Riverside  
 Clark & Lana Hapeman Riverside  
 Susi Questad Idyllwild  
 Geraldine Sperling Idyllwild  
 Carson & Donna Struthers San Diego  
 Larry & Linda Turner Idyllwild

### Family

Bob Blankman Idyllwild  
 Hodge Crabtree & Katie Boskoff San Diego  
 David & Mary Carroll Idyllwild  
 Bob & Peggy Ferguson Claremont  
 John Drake & Rebecca Frazier Idyllwild

*Continued on page 5*

## CAPTURING STORIES FROM OUR PAST

By Corrinne Brown

We're renewing our efforts to capture the oral history of Idyllwild and the surrounding communities by interviewing residents who have lived through the many changes our mountain communities has experienced. A generous grant from the Idyllwild Community Fund has allowed us to purchase some of the equipment for this project, and we're now ready to move forward.

This summer we held two classes to train volunteers in the art of interviewing. Lynnda Hart has graciously taught the classes without compensation and made the experience meaningful but fun. Trainees, thus far, are Adele Voell, Corrinne Brown, Charlotte Grotty, Dick Dorisse, Morry Copland, and Adele Smith.

Videographer Avianna Jones has volunteered to help us with both filming and post-production. We're honored to have her professional experience as we record our history for posterity.

Interested in taking part in this project? Or know someone who should be interviewed? Call Corrinne Brown at 659-5301.

**RENEWING MEMBERS/Family Continued**

Bruce & Carolyn Ganoe	Fallbrook
Ellis & Shirley Greenwall	Rancho Mirage
Eugene Hubbard	San Diego
Noreen & Stephen Hudson	Palm Desert
Kathleen & Dennis Kieferdorf	El Cajon
David Kobosa & Frank Maurer	Los Angeles
Don & Mary Beth Lazzaro	San Diego
Joan McCullough	Idyllwild
Joyce Miller	Santa Ana
Robin & Sarah Oates	Idyllwild
Bob & Dot Pentz	Menifee
Carol & Gene Rice	Idyllwild
Donald Sherman	Idyllwild
Monica Smith & Curt Fukuda	Mountain View
Scott Solomon & Melinda Gardner	Calabasas
John Thomford	San Diego
Deidre Vail	Walnut
Jean Waggoner & Cal Gogerty	Idyllwild
Mike Wimbrow	Trabuco Canyon

**Individual**

Francis Blake	Fullerton
Diann Coate	Idyllwild
Ann Copeland	Palm Desert
Charlotte Cowan	Idyllwild
Connie Cowan	Indio
Donald & Louise Giger	Idyllwild
Fred Guenther	Vista
Ken Harrison	Cardiff-by-the-Sea
Barbara Jones	Idyllwild
Bronwyn Jones	Idyllwild
Ron Kelley	Rancho Mirage
Sherry Martinez	Idyllwild
Sharen Metz	Idyllwild
David Pekrol	Idyllwild
Alma McGaugh Peters	Mountain Center
Harry Quinn	Mountain Center
Percy Schultz	Palm Springs
Frank Tysen	Sherman Oaks
Carlisle Volk	Phoenix, AZ
E. J. Weiler	Idyllwild

***Idyllwild and the High San Jacintos***

**By Bob Smith**

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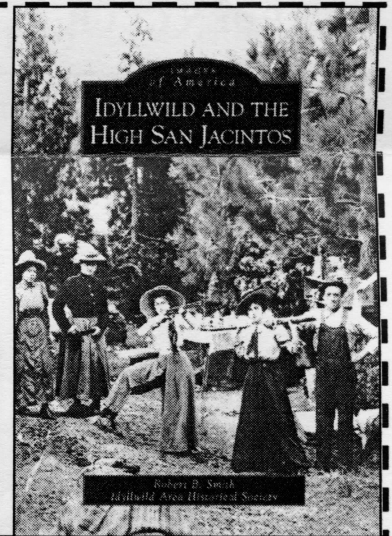
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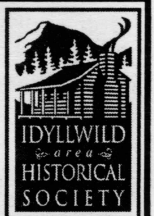
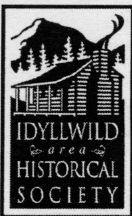
Please mail your check, payable to IAHS, along with this form to IAHS P. O. Box 3320, Idyllwild CA 92549.

To see our ONLINE INDEX for this book, go to the publications page on our website, [Idyllwildhistory.org](http://Idyllwildhistory.org), and click on the blue link.

If you have questions, please call (951) 659-8725



**IDYLLWILD AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY**



**President:** Carolyn Levitski **Secretary:** Adele Voell

**Directors**

**Treasurer:** Bob Smith

**Special Advisors**

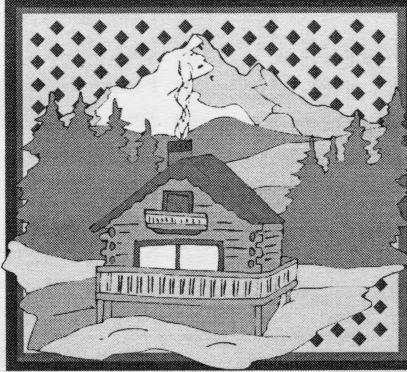
Joan McCullough	Nanci Killingsworth	Harry Bubb	Kent Steele
Nancy Borchers	Shirl Reid	Kay Cenicerros	Lynn Voorheis
Linda Turner	Charlotte Groty	Walter Parks	Janice Lyle
George Groty	Carolyn Hall		
Laura Caster	Jeanette Schultejann		

**Assistant Curator:** Shirl Reid **Media Consultants:** John Drake & Rebecca Frazier

**Office Volunteers:** Susi Questad, Will Johnson, Carolyn Hall, Maureen Dunn, Gail Wilson, Rebecca Frazier, John Drake, and Leann Gudmundson.

## THE 10th ANNUAL IDYLLWILD HOME TOUR WAS A GREAT SUCCESS

In spite of a lagging economy, this year's home tour was the most successful, moneywise, since 2004, netting \$8,544. Not only that, we received rave reviews from many of the 387 ticket holders, many of whom said it was the best Home Tour ever. One example is this letter from Chris Singer: *"I wanted to say how spectacular the Home Tour was this year. It is my favorite event in Idyllwild. The homes this year were all so beautiful, and the volunteers, from the parking attendants to the docents, were kind, helpful, and informative. My only regret is that I didn't invite more people up. My dream would be to someday have a home worthy of the tour, but that's not going to happen until my kids leave home! Thank you for all your hard work."* Chris Singer, Silver Pines Lodge and Creekstone Inn



Special thanks to Nanci Killingsworth, who pours her heart into this event every year, John Drake and Rebecca Frazier, who contribute so much time and effort, Carolyn Levitski, who did a super job of promoting the event, Linda and Larry Turner for providing refreshments at the museum, the artists and musicians who added a touch of class, the more than seventy volunteers who generously gave their time in order to make sure the visitors were all well taken care of, and, last but not least, the five homeowners who were brave and generous enough to open their homes to over 400 people who inspected every nook and corner, and came away saying they can't wait until next year. Neither can we.

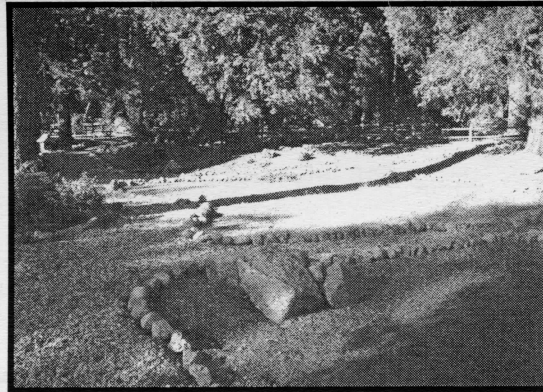
## GARDEN CLUB PLANTING A "VILLAGE GARDEN" ON MUSEUM GROUNDS

By Carolyn Levitski

The Garden Club, in partnership with the Historical Society, is planting a "Village Garden" on the front grounds of the Historical Society Museum.

They will plant multiple areas with plants that are drought tolerant and adaptable to our mountain ecosystem. On the east side of the grounds they will plant indigenous native plants.

Their goal is to beautify the community and to educate the public about native plants and non-natives that grow well here. Eventually all the plants will be labeled for easy identification. Gary Parton has developed the master landscape plan and Harold Voor-



heis, president of the Garden Club, and Mike Feyder, vice president, have spearheaded the work.

To date, they have completed the layout of the gardens, rock borders, installation of a watering system and planting on the west side.

The Garden Club uses our grounds as a stop on their annual Garden Tour, and recently held a plant sale with proceeds used to fund the gardens. They are a 401c non-profit and have a special fund set up for the museum gardens.

Historical Society members who wish to contribute can specify that their tax deductible donations to the Garden Club be used specifically for the museum garden project.

### Special thanks to -

Barbara Jones and Linda Turner for mailing help, Linda and Larry Turner for the fine food they provide at our events Doug Austin for emceeing, our docents who dressed up in period costumes, Dottie Goldfarb for her lilting violin music at our 10th anniversary celebration, Bill Bashford for his recent donation of old Ernie Maxwell memorabilia Chris Singer for the loan of our chairs for the anniversary event, Charlotte Groty for agreeing to assist Joan McCullough as vice-chair of our docents group, and Bob Smith for his willingness to speak about our historical society and Idyllwild history to groups when requested. This fall he spoke to the Hemet Heritage Foundation and the Old Riverside Foundation. Another Hemet book signing is coming soon.

# TREE MONUMENT OR TOTEM POLE?

By Ben Killingsworth

It usually went something like this –

Visitor – “We’re going over to have our pictures taken in front of the totem pole.”

Resident (or ‘Townie’ as the Idyllwild Arts students call us) – “It’s not a totem pole, it’s a tree monument!”

Visitor – “Looks like a totem pole to me.”

Townie – “Well, it’s not – it’s a tree monument!”

Visitor – “What exactly is a tree monument, anyway?”

Townie – “Well, it’s a monument to the trees. And it’s made out of wood from an Idyllwild tree, so it’s a tree monument.”

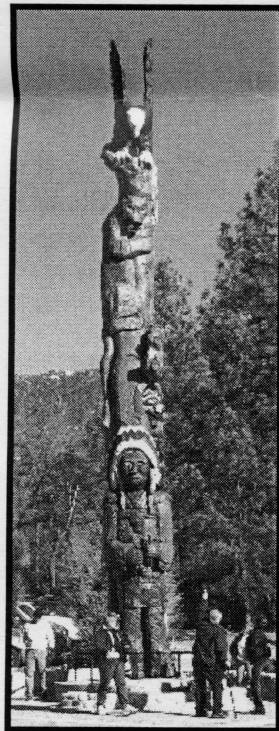
With only slight variations, this same conversation must have taken place on a busy weekend, many times.

So, who was right? Was it a tree monument, or a totem pole? Now that it’s gone, after standing proudly in the center of town for about 18 years, all too often trying to shield its many eyes from the never ending flash bulbs, maybe it’s time to settle that question — what should we, townies and visitors alike, have been calling it?

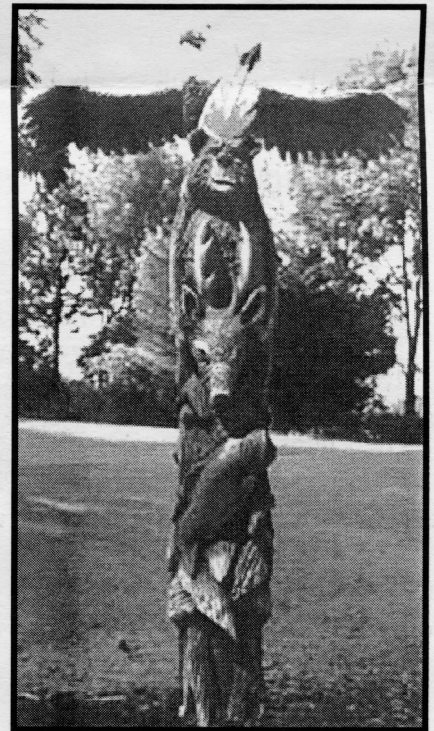
OK, right about now you’re probably asking yourself, “What’s all this got to do with our history, anyway?” Quite a lot, actually – not ancient history, of course, but history, nonetheless, and, at times, important history. Just ask the Chamber of Commerce if you have any doubts. But before we get too far along with this, let’s make one thing perfectly clear. Totem poles are a product of American Indian culture, but the Indians who lived in these parts did not make totem poles. That’s partly because there

were no large trees of any kind growing where they lived, but mostly because the practice of erecting totem poles was confined to tribes living in the Pacific Northwest and southern Alaska, the most notable being the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian peoples of Southern Alaska. Other tribes living along the coast of British Columbia and Washington also carved totem poles.

The tree used almost exclusively was the Western Red Cedar, primarily because of its greater resistance to decay. Other trees were either more likely to deteriorate at a faster rate, or were not suitable for carving. But even those carved from the more durable Western Redcedar did eventually succumb to the elements and the natural inclination of dead trees to decay. Because of this there are only a few totem poles in existence that were carved before about 1900 and literally none that were carved before 1800. In a way, this may seem rather sad, but there is reason to believe that the Indians who created them looked upon them as living things, subject to the same deterioration and death that occurs with all living things. In fact, they believed that anything



We called this is a Tree Monument?



American Indians, and everyone else, call this a Totem Pole

directed toward preventing this natural process was an attempt to contradict the laws of nature. For that reason totem poles were usually not well maintained and wound up falling over during the winter, or being pushed over to prevent them from falling on somebody. Sound familiar?

“All of that’s well and good,” you’re probably thinking, “but it wasn’t a totem pole, it was a tree monument, and a darned good one!”

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**Admission is free**

**Donations are welcome**

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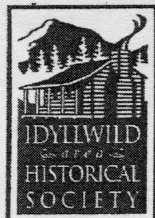
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