



# The INNsider



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March/April

## Are you ready for ‘Ramona’?

It’s time to brush up on the “Ramona” myth, in case your tour accounts are a bit rusty. Docents and friends will carpool down to Hemet on Sunday, April 19, to see a performance of “Ramona” – California’s official outdoor play.

The group will enjoy a barbecue lunch at the Ramona Bowl before the play, get seats in the lower section and even seat cushions for \$45 apiece (play only, \$28). Sign-up sheets are at the

“The most important woman in the history of Southern California”

Poster from a 1936 telling of Helen Hunt Jackson’s novel.

Mission Inn Museum, or call 788-9556 for reservations and a ride, if needed.

The long-running pageant got a boost in the travel pages of the Los Angeles Times on Jan. 11, with some classic posters and photographs of “Ramona” sites and a narrative by travel writer Christopher Reynolds.

Ramona, he wrote, was “The most important woman in the history of Southern California,” according to one historian, “She boosted D.W. Griffith’s film career, offered gainful employment to Loretta

Young and Dolores del Rio, gave Raquel Welch a big break, inspired countless architects and helped write the map for this region’s tourism industry,” Reynolds said. “Her name endures on shops, streets, fruit labels, an expressway, an Indian reservation, a city in San Diego County, a shelf full of silly and scholarly books and enough vintage postcards to give your mail carrier angina.

“And she won all this attention without ever drawing a breath.

“The woman in question, as many a grandmother

could tell you, is California’s first leading lady, the beautiful, embattled heroine of “Ramona,” a bestselling and myth-making novel by Helen Hunt Jackson published in  
*(Continued on Page 6)*



## Spring events: FAM's 152<sup>nd</sup> Birthday

### *Through My Family's Eyes*

**Tuesday, April 14, 1 p.m., VIP and student reception; 3 p.m., public reception**  
**Stokoe Elementary School, 4501 Ambs Dr., Riverside (La Sierra); use Raley Dr. entrance.**

In honor of Riverside's Smithsonian Week, the Mission Inn Foundation has teamed up with Stokoe Elementary for an exhibit exploring the role of family in Riverside's diverse and ever-changing communities. Students brought favorite family photos and teachers worked with them to write about what these photos mean to them.

### **Ramona's historic story** **Carpool trip to Hemet,** **Sunday, April 19**

See "America's longest-running outdoor drama" in the scenic Ramona Bowl in Hemet. Travel by carpool for the 1-3:30 p.m. lunch before the 4-6:30 p.m. show. A \$45 "Whole Enchilada" package includes lower-level seats and waitress service for the barbecue lunch (play alone, \$28). For reservations, call the museum, 788-9556 – indicate if you need a ride.

### **Docent Graduation** **Tuesday, April 21, 6 p.m.** **Spanish Art Gallery**

After eight months of intensive training, the Mission Inn Foundation will welcome a new class of exceptional docents. Reservations for the Mexican-themed event are available by calling the museum at 788-9556.

### **Film Screening: *Beautiful Simplicity*** **Sunday, April 26, 2-5 p.m.** **San Diego Room**

The new film, *Beautiful Simplicity: Arts & Crafts Architecture in Southern California*, examines the rich body of Arts & Crafts architecture in Southern California, from Santa Barbara to San Diego. The 86-minute, wide-screen documentary offers commentary by noted historians. Historically significant structures featured in the production include the Mission Inn. The film's producer, Paul Bockhorst, will be available for a Q&A session following the screening, and a DVD is available for purchase in the museum.

### **Frank Miller Civic Achievement Award Dinner, Thursday, May 14, 6 p.m.** **Music Room**

Join in honoring the life of Gary Rawlings, business leader and quiet philanthropist. The Frank Miller Civic Achievement Award is presented annually to an individual who has provided outstanding civic leadership, service and support to the community in the tradition of Frank Miller. Tickets are \$125 per person; sponsorship opportunities are available. Call 781-8241

### **Happy Birthday, Frank!** **Sunday, May 17, 2 p.m.** **Boathouse, Fairmount Park**

Fourth quarterly Docent Forum, marking Frank Miller's 152<sup>nd</sup> birthday, with Maurice Hodgen, docent and author, talking about the life of the Master of the Inn. Plus a special guest!

### **The Catacombs are coming!** **Saturday, June 13, noon-6 p.m.** **Cloister Walk**

A chance for the public to see what most docents have seen – the "secret" underground tunnels that once housed precious art, Catholic relics and Native American artifacts, all moldering in the damp. A one-day-only fund-raising event, the Mission Inn Foundation will offer special catacomb tours and entertainment. Space will be extremely limited, so make reservations early. Tickets are \$50 per person or \$75 per couple.

### **The Inn Crowd: On Top of the World** **Cocktail Reception, Thursday, June 18,** **5:30-7:30 p.m.**

#### **Alhambra Suite & Courtyard**

Celebrate summer in the Mission Inn's beautiful Alhambra Suite & Courtyard. This unique event will feature summer-inspired hors d'oeuvres, wine and classical music. Make sure to pack an overnight bag because you'll have a chance to win an a stay that evening in the Alhambra Suite. Tickets are \$100 per person. For more information call 781-8241

# Walter Parks: Inn roots run deep

**By Dauris Slaughter**

*Class of 1999*

Our docents become authors in a variety of ways. Walter Parks, a long time resident of Riverside, was drawn into writing because of his curiosity about the Famous Fliers' Wall.

He was involved during the so called "bad old days" when community members through the Mission Inn Foundation and Friends of the Mission Inn were trying to save the Inn. In the process of rescuing various materials and artifacts, he found a water-soaked cardboard box filled with file folders. This turned out to be hotel's Fliers' Wall file with all sorts of material including letters and carbon copies of DeWitt Hutchings correspondence with various fliers.

Intrigued with this find, Walter spent a weekend organizing the documents into fresh folders.

He decided to write a short article, but once into it, he realized the subject was too big and deserved a book. However, much more information was needed, and he really did not know where to start. In the Riverside Public Library he discovered the Press-Enterprise files. It turned out that during the 1930s and '40s, the Fliers' Wall ceremonies were notable enough to be covered in the newspaper. He was usually able to find articles about the fliers and details of the ceremonies.

Library research, correspondence and personal interviews filled in other gaps. He found that the Friends of the Mission Inn

had scrapbooks that provided needed missing information. He corresponded with and later met Gen. Frederick R. Payne Jr., a Marine pilot honoree on the wall, who fought and became an ace in the Battle of Guadalcanal. His mother was a good friend of Allis Hutchings, and she was the one who

suggested in 1931 that the new St. Francis Chapel be dedicated as the International Shrine to Aviators. From this idea grew the Fliers' Wall. Walter participated in the ceremony for Astronaut John Glenn in 1986, the year the book was finished and published. He updated it in 2005. "The Famous Fliers' Wall" was his first major writing project. Later he joined four others to co-author the Friends' "Historic Mission Inn" publication. He has written articles for the INNsider, and in 2007 he joined the Mission Inn Foundation Board.

In 1977, the year after the Mission Inn Foundation was formed, Walter was invited to be

on the board. He served as president following Arthur Littleworth and Dr. Peter Lewis and on various management and restoration committees until the Inn was sold and closed in 1985.

After graduating from the first docent class in 1987, he helped with the perimeter tours that were offered at the time while the community waited for the Inn to reopen. Occasionally he and the late Philippa Jones would be called by the hotel management or the Riverside Redevelopment agency to tour a potential buyer or some other special group. He gave the first regular tour when  
*(Continued on Page 4)*




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*Photo by Doug Hargis*

## Walter Parks

*(Continued from Page 3)*

the Inn reopened in December 1992.

Guests on Walter's tour over the years have included actresses June Lockhart and Jane Withers ("Josephine the Plumber"). When Lockhart attended the Frank Miller dinner a dozen or so years ago. Walter thought this would be the obligatory tour for the visiting celebrity, but she proved to be interested in every detail (and Walter knows a lot of detail); they had a wonderful time, he says. Her only request was "no press," at least not until she could prepare herself for the evening.

He has given tours for other noted personalities, including many high-ranking Air Force officers passing through the former March Air Force Base. However, by far his most important guest, he says, was former Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. In 2001, she came to Riverside to dedicate the new Federal Court House and gave a speech at the Convention Center. It had been a long day when she reached the Inn, and Walter could see she was tired.

Sensing this was another obligatory tour, he tested the situation by stating after introductions that O'Connor and her group would have a good time over the next half hour. She looked him in the eye and said, "Fifteen minutes." A docent must be flexible, and Walter started to give one of the shortest tours in history. But she became quite interested, particularly with anything related to the law. She enjoyed the story of President William Howard Taft and his special chair, because Taft later became Chief Justice of the United States. Justice O'Connor sat in the Taft chair for a picture by Michael Elderman.

Walter was born in Orange and grew up in Fullerton, which he considers his home town. After college, service in the Navy, graduate school and a job in Palo Alto, he and his wife Betty moved to Riverside in 1962. He joined the Riverside Unified School District and became assistant superintendent for business, staying with the

district until 1983. Afterward he became part of a school consulting team and started a portable-classroom leasing business. A consulting job at Idyllwild Arts Academy in the San Jacinto Mountains led to a long-time interest in that campus. He served for 20 years on the school's board, and he and his wife own a second home in Idyllwild. They have two children and four grandsons.

One of Walter's other great interests over the past 25 years has been a small village in northern Chihuahua, Mexico. Artists there produce a thin-walled, finely painted pottery. He wrote a book about the art form called "The Miracle of Mata Ortiz" and has given talks on the subject.

After more than 30 years, the Mission Inn remains a high priority, he says. Walter considers it a great honor to be asked back year after year to lecture to the new-docent classes. When a special or particularly oddball tour comes along, Walter is likely to be leading it.

## Big turnout for old art

Antique Appraisal Day on March 26 at the American Legion Post 79 in Fairmount Park was a great success, reports Emily McEwen, Foundation history curator who organized the event. Professional appraisers from Bonhams & Butterfields in Los Angeles spent the day looking at art and objects brought in by more than 350 people wanting an estimate of the worth of their possessions.

"After expenses we made about \$6,200 for the Foundation, which is above and beyond what we could have ever hoped for," Emily said. "At this point we haven't made plans for another appraisal day, but we certainly won't rule out the possibility once we catch our breath from everything else we have planned."

She expressed gratitude for the docents and other volunteers at the event, including Marge Barr, Linda Essig, Joan Hayes, Dorothy Hernandez, Carol Krieger, Michelle Logan, Bill and Joni Rose, Peg Scott, Floyd Smith, Ofelia Valdez-Yeager and Deane Wylie.

# 'Land in lieu of wages'? Not the case

By **Steve Lech**

*Class of 1989*

*Author and Docent Steve Lech addressed the Quarterly Docent Forum on March 22 on the question of how C.C. Miller acquired the property on which the Inn stands. This is adapted from his remarks at the forum.*

We've heard and told the story for years – Christopher C. Miller received the lot upon which the Glenwood Hotel and later the Mission Inn was built in lieu of back wages owed to him by the Riverside Land and Irrigating Co.

Research has shown, though, that this is not true.

The chain of title for Block 6, Range 6 of the Town of Riverside (the parcel upon which the Mission Inn lies) goes as follows:

- On Jan. 23, 1877, the Southern California Colony Association under S.C. Evans sold to both C.C. Miller and G.O. Newsom "Block 6, Range 6 of the Town of Riverside" for the fair-market price for entire blocks in downtown Riverside at that time (San Bernardino Deed Book R, pg. 485). While other lots were being sold, a few other entire blocks were also sold, and they all sold for \$250.

- On Aug. 29, 1879, C. C. Miller bought from G. O. Newman and Mary Emma Newman "Block 6, Range 6, of the Town or Riverside." Miller paid his daughter and son-in-law \$3,280 (San Bernardino Deed Book 21, pg. 416).

- On Feb. 4, 1880, C.C. and Mary Miller transferred to Frank Miller the same property for \$5,000 (San Bernardino Deed Book 21, pg. 416).

Somewhere down the line, the story was told that C.C. Miller received the lot in lieu of back wages. This thought was "set in stone" in 1938 when Zona Gale wrote:

"From the first recorded deed showing the transfer of the block on which the Mission Inn stands, from the Southern California Colony Association, for \$250, there is a later deed to Mr. C.C. Miller for the same property for \$328 – which was in lieu of salary owed him by the Association; then to Frank A. Miller for \$5,000 in 1880" (Gale, 1938, pg. 38).

The first deed she talks about is one from Jan. 23, 1877. The last is the one to Frank Miller dated Feb. 4, 1880. The "later deed" story as written by Gale is what I believe set in motion the account we've told for years. However there are three very strong points that, to me, condemn her story.

- The story does not logically work. Why would the association transfer title to C.C. Miller (who, according to the deed, paid them), and then turn around and record another deed to him in lieu of back wages? If they wanted or needed to give him money, they could have simply done that without recording a deed. In other words, if C.C. Miller owned the property, the association could not have given it to him later as payment of back wages.

- More damning, in all of my research through San Bernardino County deed books, there is no deed as described by Gale. Although C.C. Miller did dabble in real estate, no more deeds are recorded for the Mission Inn block besides those mentioned above.

- Curiously, \$328 is exactly one-tenth the amount that the elder Miller paid Gus and Emma Newman in 1879. Gale (or someone else) apparently misinterpreted the deed.

**How should we change our story?** It may be best simply to say that C.C. Miller purchased the land upon which the hotel sits, and then sold the hotel to his son either for business reasons or simply to get out of the hotel business.



The INNspecter

## Ready for 'Ramona'?

*(Continued from Page 1)*

1884," he wrote.

Reynolds gave an account of the play's origins:

"Hemet sits in the foothills of Riverside County, the heart of the country where much of the cruelty and violence of 'Ramona' took place. Several reservations lie nearby. But those weren't exactly tourist attractions in the early 20th century, so in 1922, somebody at the local chamber of commerce proposed that the town capitalize by other means. So, local boosters hired a playwright.

"His name was Garnet Holme, and he not only adapted the novel into a script but also strode into the brush and chose a site for an open-air stage production. In 1923, the first 'Ramona' production made its debut, with audiences of thousands clambering up the hillside to watch the scenes enacted on the facing slope.

"The spectacle grew into a three-act annual event, the actors dodging real cactus thorns and scrambling up real boulders. Behind the false facade of the set's ranch house, a bathtub holds water for horses.

"Though they missed one year during the Depression and four during World War II, Hemet's boosters have kept that romance alive . . .

"In 1959, the producers chose a new 'Ramona' named Raquel Tejada, soon to become better known as Raquel Welch. In 1969, the role went to Anne Archer, who has gone on to dozens of television and film roles, including an Oscar-nominated supporting role in the 1987 film 'Fatal Attraction.'

"Though audience members now take their places in a 5,000-seat amphitheater instead of climbing into the hills, the rustic scene will never be mistaken for Disneyland or Universal Studios. The show . . . features about 300 cast members, all but two of them volunteers – musicians, cowboys on horseback and Native American dancers.

"But here too, Ramona's name has lost some magic. Total attendance, which surpassed 40,000 as recently as the late

1980s, has dipped to about 7,000. To make ends meet and maintain the 160-acre site, says Ramona Bowl's executive director, Janine Reitenbach, the organization now stages other plays, concerts and special events throughout the year. It also relies much more heavily on donations.

"Here's the part Jackson would love: With casino revenue growing steadily, four tribal governments near Hemet have come aboard as 'Ramona' donors in the last eight years.

"Though Riverside County and the James Irvine Foundation still top the list of contributors, gifts from once-destitute native communities now amount to more than 20% of the Ramona Bowl's donation income and that figure is likely to grow.

" 'We want to preserve the story,' says Rose Salgado, a Soboba tribal council member and treasurer on the Ramona Bowl's board. 'It depicts all of the injustices, and it makes people realize what has happened.'

"In other words, there's a new chapter in this story approaching that no novelist could pull off without blushing: After 125 years, with her fame faded and fortunes dwindling, could it be the resurgent Indians who will rescue Ramona?"

## *Riverside's iconic peak: 100 Years on Mt. Rubidoux*

The Mission Inn Museum opened its newest exhibit March 12: "Stories from My Mountain" explores the last century of history on Riverside's iconic Mt. Rubidoux, commemorating this year's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary April 12 of the Easter Sunrise Service.

Friends of Mt. Rubidoux supplied their organization's rich archival material to bring this project to life. This exhibit is heavily image-based and explores the historical themes of spirituality, the changing landscape of Riverside as seen from the mountain, personal memories of Mt. Rubidoux and the continuing volunteer stewardship that keeps the mountain safe, clean and beautiful.

*"Stories from My Mountain: 100 Years of History on Mt. Rubidoux" will be up through September.*

# Honors for Nanci

**By Dauris Slaughter**

*Class of 1999*

Nanci Larsen, the Foundation's director of audience development and administration, was named the Roy Hord Volunteer of the Year at a Feb. 19 dinner of the Riverside Downtown Association.



The award was established in memory of Roy Hord Jr., "known for his generous heart, warm spirit, and tireless efforts on behalf of the community," according to the citation. Each year it

is presented by the association to an individual who exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism, with the Hord family itself choosing the recipient from those nominated.

Hord, who died of cancer in 2002 at age 67, was an All-American football guard at Duke in 1957 who went on to play for the Los Angeles Rams and other teams from 1960 to 1965. He was general manager of the Riverside International Raceway, 1965-83. He became a legislative aide to Riverside County Supervisor Norton Younglove and later to Supervisor Tom Mullen.

"Nanci has found a way to expand the 24-hour day beyond the imaginable, and Riverside has been the beneficiary," said retired Riverside Judge Vic Miceli. Adding to the tribute, Riverside Women's Club President Robbie Kennedy said "Nanci goes beyond what is expected and then brings her friends along."

Nanci's peers at the Mission Inn Foundation added their praise, saying they are highly appreciative of the support she gives her fellow staff members and docents.

Here are a few of Nanci's volunteer interests: the Mission Inn, the California Citrus State Historic Park, Women's Club,

Evergreen Cemetery, Ronald McDonald House, , Salvation Army Bell Ringers, Friends of Fairmont Park and the Old Riverside Foundation She is a member of the Riverside Cultural Heritage Board.

At the same dinner, the Business Activity Award was presented to Robyn Rogers, chair of the Docent Council, and to Chuck Krieger, a Foundation board member, on behalf of the docents.

## 20 new docents due at Art Gallery fiesta

**By Barbara Burns**

*Class of 1998*

After 28 weeks of training, spread out over eight months, more than 20 docents in training will be graduating in ceremonies on April 21 at 6 p.m. in the Spanish Art Gallery.

With the Mission Inn Foundation's focus on high quality service to our guests, this class has embraced a commitment to historic accuracy and good story telling.

This class has benefited from the work of the Research and History committees. Many of the members of those committees – Doug Hargis, Steve Lech, Walt Parks, Jo Turner and Jerry Gordon – have shared a lot of new and old information with this training class.

The mentor committee has given lots of advice and shared lots of good stories and taken the trainees on lots of tours. The docents in training are grateful to the veteran docents who have generously allowed them to lead parts of their tours in these last few weeks. Those experiences are such an important part of docent training.

The Inn itself has been very generous in giving the class access to "places we don't go" – like the 6th Street Bridge, the Carmel Dome and the Bell Tower (thanks to Manager on Duty Chris Johnson).

Please join us in the Spanish Art Gallery on April 21 as we celebrate the Docent Graduation and Volunteer Recognition Fiesta.



## Where is it?

OK, you're forgiven for not recognizing this one, since few could have seen it. It's from a series of panels that were stored in "pockets" off the Music Room stage. As of mid-April the origins of the art were unknown; an artist's signature includes the date "1988." Anyone know more? The panels are now in the museum. (Photo by Chris Johnson)

## MISSION INN FOUNDATION – MISSION STATEMENT

*The Mission Inn Foundation preserves, interprets and promotes the cultural heritage of the Mission Inn, Riverside, and the surrounding Southern California communities through its museum services, educational programs and outreach activities. The Foundation was formed in 1976 to preserve the public trust in the Mission Inn, a privately owned National Historic Landmark.*

**DOCENT COUNCIL, 2008 – 2009:** Robyn Rogers, Chair; Mel Gutierrez, Vice-Chair; Kathy Chennault, Secretary; Jacci Barnes, Margaret Benner, Jim Ferguson, Chuck Gonzalez, Doug Hargis, Joan Hayes, Michele Lufkin, Merwyn Schwartz, William Scott, Dauris Slaughter, David St. Pierre, Past Chair; Jo Turner, Deane Wylie. **COMMITTEES – CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR DOCENTS:** Robyn Rogers, Chair. **DOCENT ROSTER:** Joan Hayes, Chair; Jacci Barnes, Ursula Dube, Mel Gutierrez, Dauris Slaughter, Robyne Williams. **HISTORIAN:** Doug Hargis, Chair; Jacci Barnes, William Scott. **INN-LAWS/POLICIES & PROCEDURES:** Jacci Barnes, Chair. **MENTORS:** Merwyn Schwartz, Chair; Cora Lee Brown, Ursula Dube, Nancy Fiveland, Dan Hantman, Peter Keck, Steve Lech, Joyce Lyons, Jane Morabito, Dauris Slaughter. **INSIDER NEWSLETTER:** Deane Wylie, Chair; Dan Hantman, Doug Hargis, Dauris Slaughter. **PEER REVIEW:** Dauris Slaughter, Chair; Barbara Burns, Jean Digati, Ursula Dube, Anne Greule, Judy Hadcox, Dan Hantman, Sheryl Lee, Joyce Lyons, Merwyn Schwartz, Jo Turner. **RECRUITMENT:** Mel Gutierrez, Chair; Kathy Chennault, Chuck Gonzalez, Anne Greule, Doug Hargis, Nancy Kim, Sharyl Lee. **SPECIAL EVENTS:** David St. Pierre, Chair; Barbara Burns, Gretchen Cheney, Brightie Dunn, Joan Hayes, Joanne Hershey, Michelle Lufkin. Joyce Lyons, Jane Moraabito, JoAnn Schwartz, Deane Wylie. **SUNSHINE:** Michelle Lufkin, Chair. **TRAINING:** Jo Turner, Chair; Cora Lee Brown, Jerry Gordon, Dan Hantman, Steve Lech, Walter Parks, Robyn Rogers, David St. Pierre, Dauris Slaughter; Barbara Burns, coordinator. **MIF STAFF:** John D. Worden, Executive Director; Steve Spiller, Museum & Collections Manager; Emily McEwen, Curator of History; Virginia Fesunoff, Director of Marketing; Nanci Larsen, Director of Audience Development & Administration. **PART-TIME STAFF:** Sharla Wright, Museum Store Manager; Brianna Barrett, Museum Staff; Marge Barr, Museum Staff; Linda Essig, Museum Staff; Carol Nathanson, Museum Staff. **BOARD OF DIRECTORS:** Chuck Krieger, President; Kathy Wright; Executive Vice President; Dell Roberts, Secretary; Bill Carter, Treasurer; John Brown, President-Emeritus; Brad Alewine, Kathy Allavie, Richard Anderson, Judith Auth, Chuck Beaty, Liz Cunnison, Ann DeWolfe, Charles Field, Teresa Hanley, Randall Hord, Frederick Hoyt, Brian Jaramillo, Ray Maghroori, Mike Marlatt, Walter Parks, Kerry Pendergast, Janice Penner, Holly Redfern, Kelly Roberts, Bill Rose, Ruthan Smith, David St. Pierre, Ofelia Valdez-Yeager, Doug Wible, Bill Wilkman, Mike Gardner, Ex-officio; Jeannene Kelly, Carol Krieger, Ex-officio; Robyn Rogers, Ex-officio-Docent Council; S. Sue Johnson, Emeritus status; Jonathan O'Neal, Emeritus status.

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