

Adobe Dust



APRIL 2017

General

Membership Notice

2nd Thursday of the month

At the

Senior Citizen's Center

APRIL MEETING CANCELLED

Adobe closed on
April 15th and 22nd

Upcoming Events

Sat. May 13

Mexican War was
declared 1846

Sat. June 10

D-Day exhibit

Sat. June 24

Wine & Cheese
Fundraiser event.

Sat. July 22

Day of the Cowboy

Tues. Aug. 1

National Night Out

Sat. Aug. 19

National Aviation Day

Sat. Sept. 9

National Teddy Bear
Day / Theodore
Roosevelt

Message From the President—Chris Vargas

We are about a quarter of the way into 2017 - and have been very active at the adobe with historical events and new exhibits. The beginning of the year we commemorated the Battle of Rio San Gabriel that took place in January 1847. The battle took place about a mile from the adobe. We had a great turnout with reenactors, vendors and a BBQ for the community. In February, we had a great exhibit to recognize Black History Month. We had several visitors come to this exhibit and they were very pleased with the exhibit and the MHS' effort to be inclusive when reflecting on our nation's history. In March we unveiled our *Mujeres of the Adobe* exhibit with life-size cutout of the women representing the adobe in the 19th century. This exhibit was a collaborative effort between several of our MHS members, but I would like to extend a special THANK YOU to Carolina Ibarra-Mendoza for her great artwork. Barbara Garcia was the historian who did all the research and put together some very informative overviews in report form and a special thank you to Kathleen Rabago who assisted and served as the docent for the *Mujeres of the Adobe* exhibit the entire day.

On a sad note, I want to express my deepest sympathies and condolences to the family and friends of Sandy Goytia who passed away recently from brain cancer. Sandy was a reenactor, artist and a good friend of the adobe. She will be missed, but always remembered.

Lastly, the MHS' newsletter has been published on a monthly basis for a number of years; however, we have decided to publish our newsletter on a quarterly basis, which is consistent with other historical societies. There are a handful of us that prepare articles monthly and, in my view, these articles have been much more substantive than what I have read in the past. A monthly newsletter requires a lot of time and effort and many of us hold down jobs 8-10 hours a day. We also believe the articles will more substantive, interesting and it is an opportunity to expand the newsletter. Therefore, this will be the last monthly newsletter. Our first quarterly newsletter will be published at the beginning of the summer.

Thank you and persevere.

—Chris Vargas

Curator Column

What's new with the museum. We installed our Mujeres of the Adobe exhibit last month.

The cutouts women look great. Thanks to Carolina Ibarra-Mendoza for her art work and Chris Vargas for transporting them to the adobe. We will be working on the signage to make them look better. We had some very nice items donated by Bob Templin, who went to Montebello High School back in the 1960s. His letter-mans sweater and a pair of liquid oxygen boots he wore during the Vietnam War while serving in the United States Marine Corps. Arlene Sandoval donated some items too. One was a model kit of the 20 mule Borax team. I started building the kit one Saturday, working on the two wagons, then Bob Templin showed up and he had other item to donated. It turn out to be the 20 mule Borax team model kit, build by his brother in 1959. It was already painted and mounted on a wooden plaque. So much for my kit.

For Meet Marge-Baseball day, we will have women's Baseball Hall of Famer Marge Villa with us again. She'll will be at the adobe to sign autographs, talk and take photographs. We move a display case from the Sanchez room to the 20th Century room and I filled it last Saturday with baseball memorability. We have the girls from Montebello High School Interact club, also last Saturday, and they did a wonderful job of sweeping the porch, cleaning the glass and mopping the inside floor. Some new exhibits that we are working on will be the story of Greek George who in died in Montebello. He was part of the 1850s US Army Camel experiment, as a camel driver. He is buried at Whittier's Founders Park.

The Story of the Battle of San Gabriel cannons, which I believe came off the captured American ship "The Mercury" in 1813. The poor ship's captain, George Washington Eayrs, spent the next forty years of his life trying to get restitution from the Spanish Government then the Mexican Government.

After the Mexican War the cannons where taken to the Pueblo Los Angeles and used barriers to block wagons and buggy's from running into the local business stores. Adobe did fine during the last rain storms. There are the usual ruts left around the adobe from the rain runoff. We been blessed ever since we had the adobe painted there has been no tagging, but the men's restroom in the park has been getting all the burnt of it. The iron fence on the east side needs some repairs and hopefully the city can fix it. Park Ranger Rubin Hernandez is still with us and keeping an eye out for the adobe.

- Jon Reed



Early Jews of LA— Who Was Harris Newmark?

During the Spanish time period, practicing Jews were subject to the inquisition of the Catholic Church. Nueva Espana was a Catholic state and anyone suspected of practicing Judaism, especially converts or *conversos* were burned to death. Yet many of the new world colonists were Jews, that is, crypto Jews or *conversos*. Many found “freedom” in the new world so far away from Europe. It is estimated that 40% of the early colonists of New Mexico were of Sephardic origins. In fact, the late cousin Frank Sanchez maintained that Juan Matias Sanchez’s family was originally from three Jewish brothers that came to the New Mexico territory in the 1500’s. (This was recently confirmed by a visit of Yvonne Garcia, third great niece of Juan Matias who came to the adobe on Saturday April 1st---not an April fool’s joke!).

When the territory became Mexico in 1821, the restrictions on foreigners and Jews was lifted, immigration opened up to traders and merchants. Of course, the Gold Rush changed everything---opening up immigration to everyone in the world. Jewish immigrants came too---many young men from Germany. Many became merchants selling goods to the 49’ers (e.g. Levi Strauss). Many came directly to California, not thru Ellis Island. Many often learned Spanish or Chinese before learning English.

One such immigrant was Jacob Frankfurt from Germany (Rochlin & Rochlin, 1985, p. 21). He is listed in the First American census of 1850 as living in the Pueblo of Los Angeles [hereafter Pueblo]. Frankfurt, a bachelor, had come with the Workman-Rowland party along the Santa Fe Trail from Taos New Mexico in 1841. Did he know Juan Matias? He probably came thru New Orleans to Taos. His trade was listed as a tailor. Frankfurt illustrates that many Jews were already here in Mexican California before the Gold Rush. Many young men were escaping Germany or Poland at that time.

To be sure, merchants, tailors, jewelers and bankers (e.g. Isaiah Hellman, the founder of the Framers and Merchant Bank, and also a partner in the Temple-Workman bank that failed) arrived directly from Europe. Many had occupations that allowed persecuted Jews to “pack up” if need be to move to the next town. In many countries, Jews were not allowed to own land, however they were allowed to be the bankers because the Catholic Church saw lending as a form of usury (a sin).

Who was Harris Newmark? Another immigrant who is now featured in the Sanchez adobe’s Timeline room. Harris Newmark was born in Loebau West Prussia, which is now Germany. He came to the Pueblo thru New York in 1853 (Newmark Levi Jr., 2010, p. 8). He learned to speak Spanish and Chinese before he learned English. He became a very successful merchant (see our Newmark Supply Store façade in the Timeline room) and land developer. He was also a personal friend of Juan Matias. He loved tortillas, tamales and penole (Rochlin & Rochlin, 1985, p. 26). Harris married his cousin Sarah Newmark and they had eleven children. His wife also became famous after publishing her account of her European travels. Their children married into the prominent families of the Pueblo. Our friend Marcia Harris, reenactor and docent at the Cerritos Rancho, often portrays Sarah to school children. Marcia says that Newmark sold the first Christmas tree in his store to the Bixby’s (owners of the Cerritos Rancho).

Hellman and Newmark acquired the Repetto Rancho in 1886 and tried to develop what will become the cities of Monterey Park and Montebello. It was William Mulholland who gave Montebello its name: He remarked to Harris that no one would buy lots in a city if they thought it was Jewish, so call your city “Montebello” was his advice.

Newmark also advised Juan Matias Sanchez NOT to put his rancho lands up as collateral to shore up the Temple Bank (Newmark, 1970). Juan Matias did not heed his advice and with this oldest son away at school, Juan Matias was loyal to his comrades P.F.P. Temple and William Workman. When the bank crashed in 1876, Juan Matias lost his Protero Grande and Protero Chico lands (but not the adobe or his properties in Santa Fe Springs).

Early Jews of LA—Who Was Harris Newmark? continued

Newmark is buried in his own memorial crypt in East Los Angeles (the Jewish cemetery)
(Find a Grave, 2017).

Look for Newmark street in Monterey Park or the “Newmark Mall” sign behind the B of A on Whittier and Montebello Blvd. Remember the early Jewish immigrants who created our cities and towns in the Southland.

- Kathleen Rabago



In Memory of Sandy

I met Sandy around or before 2011 at the Montebello Senior Center art class. She really helped me alot. For my first Children's History Day at the Sanchez adobe in 2011, she helped get my chairs and stuff back home in her small van. She also served the food I had made and was my "watch dog" when it came to the food for the reenactors. She helped me tote my chairs and tea sets to Old Fort Mac Days. She was always there when I needed help for Fort Mac, for the San Gabriel Mission and other adobes.

She loved Old Fort Mac Days, so much so, that she even came one year in a wheel chair and costume so she would not miss the event. She helped me out this last October on Sunday at the Battle of the Old Woman's Gun at DRAM. She will be remembered a playing Dona Maria Victoria Ortega and her beautiful black dress, mantilla and home made panetta she made. Not everyone knows that she was a great actor. We went with Arlene Sandoval, Sandy, Myself to the boy's Scout Camp Traix in Monrovia when Lou Lopez invited us. Lou was doing his "timeline" of California history, and she spoke to the kids in the camp. She also came with me and Bob Smith to Villa Linda School District in El Monte's 100 anniversary, where she talked about the Portola party crossing thru El Monte. She could talk.

I have a picture of her "holding the fort" about 5 or 6 years ago at Old Fort Mac days when everyone had deserted the DRAM camp and she was all alone to explain to the public Dominguez and Bob Smith's genology chart. She was good sport to do that. She was a great artist too. She painted beautifully.

