

Historic Highway 395

Volume 2, Issue 1

January 2012

Founded

December 4, 2010

Mission Statement

The preservation and the promotion of Historic Route 395 from San Diego to the Cajon Pass.



Inside this issue:

<i>Lake Elsinore Part 3</i>	1
<i>Spotlight: Vista Historical Society and Museum</i>	3
<i>Driver's Seat</i>	4
<i>Silver Springs Part 2</i>	5
<i>News Archive</i>	6



Telling the story, one mile at a time

Lake Elsinore Part 3

by Jeffery G. Harmon

Our journey continues through Historic Downtown Lake Elsinore at the corner of N. Main Street and Franklin Street. We drive north towards Interstate 15 and come to a small detour from the Historic Route.

W. Minthorn Street at one time connected to North Main Street. When Interstate 15 was built, Minthorn was severed from Main. We need to turn left on W. Flint Street and travel one block to N. Spring Street. We then turn right and travel one block to W. Minthorn Street. We have now completed a slight detour and have rejoined Historic Route 395.

Traveling a few feet on W. Minthorn Street, the road then curves north onto Collier Avenue. W. Minthorn Street leaves the highway route and continues through the Lake Elsinore commercial industrial sector. (As of this writing, no signs have been installed to direct traffic through this small detour. Please

send an email request for a map of the Lake Elsinore route)

There are a few historic notes about this portion of the highway. The railroad left Elsinore junction and travelled north through the downtown district. The railroad tracks then ran parallel to Spring Street. The railroad then veered north, running parallel to the west side of Collier Avenue. A small remnant of the rail bed can be seen to the west of the highway. Also there is a culvert crossing, date stamped 1919, hidden behind Acacia tree saplings.

Also running parallel to the highway route is the Downtown Historic Riverwalk and Nature Trail opened in May 2011. The 2 ½ mile trail runs along Alberhill Creek from Limited Street to Riverside Drive. With benches, interpretive panels, and a concrete path, outdoor enthusiasts can enjoy running, walking or riding bikes along the concrete channel. On

occasion, herons and other migratory birds can be seen, strolling through the shallow waters looking for prey.

The highway travelled northwest on Collier Avenue to the intersection on Central Avenue. Then the highway turned northeast and headed toward the City of Perris. On the eastern corner of the intersection there are some oversized Eucalyptus trees. Next to the small grove of trees is an abandoned cement highway curve. Ninety degree highway turns were "shaved" to provide a smooth transition for motorist. With a slight curve, motorist could slow down and make the turn without stopping.

At this intersection there are several sites that can be seen "off trail". The Home Depot Center is located at the north corner. Before the center was built, there was another shopping village at this location, Peddler's

Continued on Page 2

Lake Elsinore Part 3 Continued

Village. Owned by Jerry Har-
matz, the village operated from
1974 through July 1988. The vil-
lage was a big draw in the area.
The parking lot became so
crowded on weekends that Jerry
had to get out in the street and
direct traffic.

Continuing on Collier Avenue will
take you to the Elsinore Valley
Cemetery. It was originally
known as the Greenwood Ceme-
tery and the first recorded burial
occurred on January 4, 1891. In
May 1926, the cemetery was sold
and renamed Elsinore Valley
Cemetery.

Next to the Elsinore Valley Ceme-
tery is the Home of Peace Ceme-
tery, a Jewish cemetery and was
the only one of its kind in valley.
The cemetery was dedicated June
13, 1954 by the Elsinore Jewish
community. Lake Elsinore once
had a thriving Jewish community,
but as their numbers dwindled,
the cemetery fell into neglect. In
1997, the cemetery was rededi-
cated as a part of the Elsinore Val-
ley Cemetery District.



Lake Elsinore cement highway curve at the intersection of Collier Ave-
nue and Central Avenue

Traveling further on Collier Ave-
nue will bring you to the Lake Elsi-
nore Outlet Mall. Opened in 1991,
there are over sixty factory stores
to shop in. The mall provides a
great place to stretch the legs and
take a stroll while enjoying the
many stores and sunshine.

One last historic location to see is
Aimee's Castle at 17375 Sunnys-
lope Avenue. Aimee Semple
McPherson, evangelist and founder
of the Foursquare Gospel Church,
built a summer home in the hills
overlooking Lake Elsinore. In
1929, she commissioned architect
Edwin Bickman to build the home
at a cost of \$286,000. McPherson
sold the property in 1939. The
"castle" has had several owners
since. In 2005, the Foursquare
Gospel Church bought and restored
the "castle" to its former glory.
However, in 2010, the church
placed the property up for sale.

We will end our tour of Lake Elsi-
nore at the intersection of Collier
Avenue and Central Avenue. This
will conclude our tour of the South-
west Riverside County regional

highway segment. Next, we will
return to the North San Diego
County region and begin our driv-
ing tour through the City of Vista.

So remember, get off the interstate,
slow down, and "Take a Drive on
Route 395!"

The Rancho Buena Vista Adobe

Announces the opening of their
January special exhibit

"The History of Historic Route 395"

Produced by
The Red, White and Blue Society

Historical research and materials
provided by
The Historic Route 395 Association

The Rancho Buena Vista Adobe is

located at:

640 Alta Vista Dr.,

Vista, CA

For operating hours, and tour cost call

(760) 639-6164

Spotlight: The Vista Historical Society and Museum at Rancho Minerva

By Jeffery G. Harmon



Leaving Historic Route 395 at the intersection of E. Vista and Foothill Drive, my children and I traveled southeast into the winding foothills of Vista's back country. We arrived at Rancho Minerva, a modest two-story house, located in the center of a once thriving agricultural ranch. Rancho Minerva is the home of the Vista Historical Society and Museum.

Jack Larimer, a museum employee, greeted us in the museum's gift shop. He offered to give us a tour. He first shared with us the history of the Huntalas family and their beautiful home.

Nick Huntalas, a Greek immigrant, settled in the area in 1909. He dry-farmed the acreage along Foothill Drive for many years until water began to flow into Vista in 1926. With ample water, groves of trees and field crops were planted on the ranch.

Rancho Minerva was completed in 1934. It was constructed with thick adobe bricks. The two-story home's white exterior was capped with a red tile roof. The home served the Huntalas family for many years, until the ranch was

sold.

After learning about Rancho Minerva, we were ushered into the Bride's room. Inside the room there were several vintage bridal gowns on display.

Jack shared with us, "The Huntalas family had many friends and relatives in Los Angeles who got married. Many married couples would spend their honeymoon here at Rancho Minerva. They would stay in this room, which was the most secluded room in the house."

Our next stop on the tour was the living room, which has an 18-foot tall ceiling, a grand piano, and a fireplace. With limited space, the living room has been carefully divided into a variety of themed exhibits. The exhibits include Vista schools, a military exhibit, notable families, the area agricultural and the business industries.

A new exhibit at the museum is the cast-iron stove display. Diane Eckert has loaned to the museum several stove models from her collection. There are two types of stoves, toys and salesman samples. The models are from the

19th and early 20th century. The stoves' details make this exhibit a must see.

In the center of the living room there are several photograph panels depicting Vista's historical past. Avocados once were king in Vista. The Calavado Packing House in Vista was the largest of its kind in the world. However as times changed, the industry moved out of the area.

The history of the Vista Irrigation District is also told in photos. Without water, there might not have been a city called Vista. Transported water from Lake Henshaw to the Vista area provided the life source that allowed the Vista agricultural industry to thrive.

When the water came to the area, so did the newspaper. The Vista Press chronicled the history of Vista as the city grew and prospered. Today the newspaper editions from 1926 through 1973 are available online for researchers to enjoy. A free souvenir copy of the first issue of the Vista Press dated September 24, 1926 is available for museum visitors.

The final living room exhibit was the military exhibit. Mementos collected by Vista residents who served in the military through the years, have been gather into a single exhibit. A signature piece is an original signed photo of the raising of the flag at Iwo Jima by Joe Rosenthal. Rosenthal had ties to Vista and donated the photo to the museum.

Jack then escorted us into the gift shop and quickly brought our attention to some local Indian artifacts in a glass case. The display tells the story of the Luiseno people, the first residents in the Vista

Vista Continued

area. Through the years, local farmers, while plowing in the fields, unearthed many Indian artifacts and donated them to the museum.

Our tour continued into a small cramped room. Jack explained that this room was the original kitchen.

“Imagine a stove, a refrigerator, and cupboards in this small space.” Jack smiled, “They even had a dinner table.”

After we exited the kitchen we passed by the stairs leading to the upstairs. Jack stopped and explained the layout of the house. “There are two bathrooms in the house, one on the first floor and one on the second floor. The upstairs shower was not in the bathroom but was located in the middle of the hall off to one side.” The second floor is currently unavailable for tours.

The next room we were taken into was the society’s research library. Books, photos, and newspaper clippings chronicle Vista’s rich history. With an appointment, a docent can be made available to assist researchers.

The final room on the tour was the early 1950s kitchen addition to the house. The new addition replaced the original cramped smaller kitchen. The new kitchen is light, spacious, and has all the accessories available in the 1950s.

“I spoke with the contractor who did the work,” Jack chuckled, “He told me it took him three days to dig through the thick adobe wall to provide access to the new kitchen.”

As our tour ended back at the gift shop, we thank Jack for sharing with us the wonderful history of

Rancho Minerva and the history of the City of Vista. I then noticed on the register counter some Historic Route 395 souvenir signs for purchase.

“We sold the signs at the Downtown Winter Festival last night.” Jack told me, “We sold a lot of them.”

As we were leaving the museum, Jack handed us a Downtown tour booklet highlighting Vista’s historical landmarks. My children and I thanked Jack for the tour and returned to our car. As we drove back down Foothill Drive to Historic Route 395, we looked forward to finding new historical treasures in the City of Vista.

For more information about the Vista Historical Society & Museum at Rancho Minerva visit their website: <http://vhsm.org/default.htm>

Driver’s Seat

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a safe Christmas season and enjoyed spending time with family and friends.

On December 22, 2011, Founding Member Steve Varner and I took a tour of Historic Route 395 from Murrieta to the Cajon Pass summit. The all day journey took us on many twists and turns throughout Riverside and San Bernardino counties. We found and photographed several 16 foot wide cement highway segments. We explored areas in Lake Elsinore, Colton, Verdemon, Devore, and in the Kenbrook and Cajon Canyon areas.

We were nearly blown off our feet by frigid gale force winds in Colton as we walked a highway segment next to the railroad south of Fogg Street. We further explored the three separate routes that Highway 395 took through the city of Colton.

Highway 395 joined Route 66 at the intersection of Mt. Vernon Avenue and 4th Street in the city of San Bernardino. The two routes were cosigned northward to the city of Hesperia. Several years ago Steve Varner drove the entire length of Route 66. He gave an incredible tour of the old highway routes through the Cajon Pass.

However, before Route 66 and Route 395, there was an older highway that crossed the Cajon Pass, the National Old Trails Road.

We found a remnant of this highway in Devore. Three different material layers could be seen in a crosscut of the old road. There was asphalt, rock gravel, and Portland cement. As we fought the winds and hiked the highway for a short distance, I felt like I was walking back in time. I expected to see an old Tin Lizzie rumbling down the grade towards

us. We ended our day with lunch at the Summit Inn. We hope to one day place a Historic Route 395 sign at this location.

If you would like to see photos from the trip, visit our Facebook page. Steve has placed two links on our page. One link is a photo storybook and the other link is a satellite view of where each photo was taken. (His camera had a GPS marker on it.)

Currently we are planning a March joint meeting in Devore for both Historic Route 395 and Route 66 groups. It will be two historic highways, one historic cruise. Be looking for details to the Rendezvous in our February newsletter.

Our second year is just getting started. We will keep you up-to-date as new events, and new discoveries come our way.

Jeffery G. Harmon, Editor



My Reminiscences of Silver Springs, Part 2

Reminiscences shared by Mrs. Gertrude Hughes with her daughter, Elizabeth Hughes Yamaguchi in May 1983. This is part two of a four part series.

Highway 395 was used extensively by truckers bringing produce, especially potatoes and onions, from Hemet and Murrieta to the coast. Our place became a pick-up point for local produce. I remember Elmer Kane, who had a large chicken ranch on the north side of Rattlesnake Hill. He would leave crates of eggs every morning at the café for the market truck to pickup and deliver to San Diego. After I had a telephone installed in my place, I left the back door open so neighbors could come in and use it. It was the only telephone within a mile.

There was no florist in Fallbrook, so I took courses in floristry and obtained my license. Walter, my husband, built a flower shop over the ravine to provide a protected place for the cut flowers and a space for me to work on orders for set pieces.

In the 1940s it was customary for friends to give flowers to the young people who were graduating and tables were set up in the cafeteria to display them. Although graduating classes had

fewer than thirty students, many flowers were needed.

In those days there was no wholesale flower market in San Diego. I had to order flowers from the Los Angeles market on Wall Street. They were delivered to the flower shop of Marian Hagar (Pellanda) on U.S. 101 in Oceanside, and I would pick them up from there. I also bought flowers from growers in Carlsbad and Leucadia.

To meet the demand of increasing traffic, we put in two more gasoline pumps and stocked the store with groceries. We enlarged the café several times until there were eleven seats at the counter and four booths for family style meals. I also created my own piecrust recipe. People began returning to the café just for my pie.

My schedule was to get up at 5:30 in the morning, pick flowers from Walter's garden to put in the flower shop, and by 6:30, have Silver Springs Café open and ready to serve our breakfast customers. I took care of flower orders in between preparations for the lunch

and dinner runs. It was usually midnight by the time I closed up shop and walked up to the house to go to bed.

Silver Springs Café became a place for local families, like the Bandinis and the Reinemans to have dinner. At that time, all the eating places in town that were opened late served alcohol. Since we didn't at Silver Springs, parents entrusted their teenagers to us in the evenings. High school students came in after school dances and sports events for pie and coffee. They would listen to the jukebox and play the pinball machine. I remember when Jimmy Banks and his team came from Pala to play Fallbrook. They always stopped at the café on the way home, and I would serve them pie and ice cream.

Sometimes, when Marion Clemens, Stanley VanDyke and Dick Gird came in at closing time, I would let them fix something for themselves so that I could go home. When they were finished, they would close up for me. All the high schoolers enjoyed carving their initials and messages in the paint of the counter. When there was no more room for names, the boys brought tools from their woodworking class and refinished the counter.

I'll never forget how Mrs. Ellis' son used to climb a tall fir tree on their place and decorate it with Christmas lights. It was a beacon along Highway 395, and those of us who passed by it on our way to town called it "our Christmas tree".

Permission to reprint this article was granted by Elizabeth Hughes Yamaguchi in 2001.

A HISTORIC ROUTE 395 ASSOCIATION PUBLICATION

24580 Leafwood Dr.
Murrieta, CA 92562

Phone: (951) 837-5905
email:jethrosire@yahoo.com



Announcement:

January 7th Monthly Meeting

8:00 a.m.

Rainbow Oaks Restaurant

OUR THOUGHTLESS MOTORISTS - NO. 10



Reprint: The Vista Press November 6, 1930

U.S. Crossroads at Eighth, Main

Reprint: Riverside Daily Press, November 3, 1937

Posting of U.S. Highway 395 directional signs at Eight and on Main streets has spotted Riverside squarely on the Three Flags Highway, Secretary Stephen C. Paxton of Riverside Chamber of Commerce said today.

The intersection of the two streets becomes an important one, for there also are U.S. Highway 60 markers connecting Pacific and Atlantic coasts. Bear State Highway 18 signs at the same corner point to beach resorts in one direction and three important mountain lakes in the other.

Transfer of the state and federal highway routing from Main to Market between First and Eight streets has been ordered by E. G. Sullivan,

division highway engineer. The move will be made because Market Street will be less seriously affected by the California law prescribing parallel parking on all state highways than would Main Street.

Going northward, U.S. 395 reaches Grand Forks, British Columbia, approximately 100 miles inland from the great Canadian port of Vancouver. The route passes through San Bernardino, Cajon Pass, Randsburg, Olancho, Bishop and Bridgeport, in this state and misses Victorville by only a few miles. Carson City and Reno, Nev., Alturas, Calif., Valle Falls, Burns, and Pendleton, Ore., Pasco, Spokane and Colville, Wash. are on the route.

In the other direction the Three Flags Highway goes over Box Springs grade, Perris, Elsinore, Temecula, Fallbrook and Escondido to San Diego and thence past Tia Juana to Ensenada, the lovely little crescent city of Baja California, Mexico.

We are now on

Facebook!

Search: Historic Route 395
Association

Please "Like" us!

Send us your photos and your
memories!