

Historic Highway 395

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Mission Statement

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



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Telling the story, one mile at a time

Vista Part I

by Jeffery G. Harmon

Our journey begins in Bonsall, at the intersection of State Highway 76 and East Vista Way. We travel south on Vista Way, climbing a long gentle grade out of the San Luis Rey River Valley. On either side of the road there are nurseries, fruit stands, and orchards. A few homes and ranches can be found between varieties of mature trees planted in the front yards. The landscape has changed little since the days Highway 395 was routed through the area.

When this road was part of the Inland Highway, it was named Mission Road. However, by the time U.S. Highway 395 came through, the road was simply known as San Diego Boulevard. In 1948, when Highway 395 was rerouted through Moosa Canyon, a campaign was started to rename San Diego Boulevard, East Vista Way. Vista residents agreed and in January 1949, East Vista Way was

named.

As the road crosses the grade's summit, it begins to descend into the City of Vista. Incorporated on January 28, 1963, the city first began as three Mexican land grants: Rancho Buena Vista, Rancho Guajome and Agua Hedionda Y los Monos. By the end of the 19th century, American dry farmers had settled in the area. After the completion of Lake Henshaw in the 1920s, water began to flow into the Vista area and with it more people began settling in the area.

The intersection of East Vista Way and Foothill Drive was known as Delpy Corners. Jules Delpy arrived in Vista in 1888 from Southern France to help his uncles, Julian and Bernard Delpy at their winery. Jules married Maria, who was also from France, and they settled there on 80 acres of land. They operated the Buena Vista Winery until Prohibition shut the operation down.

The Delpy family was civic leaders and contributed greatly to the development of Vista. In 1894, the Delpys started the first Vista school. Eight students were needed for the county to send a teacher. However, there were only seven students at the time, so Maria Delpy enrolled as a student as well. The Delpy one-room school house once stood where the East Vista Way post office is now located.

To learn more about the Delpy family, travel on Foothill Drive to the Vista Historical Society Museum at Rancho Minerva. (See Vol. 2 Issue 1) A word of caution: Foothill Drive makes two ninety-degree turns. Watch the streets signs carefully while traveling towards the museum.

As we continue driving along East Vista Way, we come to the intersection of Williamston Street. Before there was a shopping center at the

Continued on Page 2

Vista Part I Continued

current location, the Vista Golf and Country Club was on the site. The 9-hole, par 34 golf course, was built on 45 acres and utilized the home of the Beck Ranch as its clubhouse. The club operated from March 22, 1958 to until it closed on July 16, 1959.

Vale Terrace Drive is at the next intersection. Traveling a few miles southeast on Vale Terrace Drive brings us to Brengle Terrace Park. The 81.7 acre park is one the largest parks in the City of Vista and is worth exploring. The park has many sports amenities, a recreation center, a senior center, the Alta Vista Gardens, and the Moonlight Amphitheatre.

We return to East Vista Way and continue driving towards the downtown area. At the intersection of East Vista Way and Civic Center Drive we find Wildwood Park. This five acre park was donated to the community in the 1920s by the owners of the Rancho Buena Vista Adobe. The



East Vista Way and Williamston Street.

Sign donated by Janice Klafehn.

Adobe is located to the south of the park. (See: Vol. 1 Issue 2)

Civic Center Drive is home to the recently completed Vista Civic Center. The street originally was called Escondido Avenue. The road was constructed as a cutoff for Highway 395. Motorist could bypass the downtown business district by taking the Escondido cutoff. The idea was great for traffic, but it was bad for business. The

street was recently renamed to assist people in locating Vista's Civic Center.

Our journey comes to an end at the intersection of East Vista Way and Civic Center Drive. Join us next time as we take a walking tour of Vista's Historic Downtown. So remember, get off the interstate, slow down and "Take a Drive on Route 395."

Driver's Seat

The journey began on a hot summer day in early August. Janice Klafehn, President of the Vista Historical Society, donated a booth to the 395 Association for the Annual Vista Rod Run. Route Member Tom Casey manned the booth during the event and received several donations and many encouraging words about the old highway.

After money was collected and the signs ordered, Tom drove to Ontario to pick up the completed order. The donated signs were then hand delivered to the City of Vista with instructions on where the signs were to be located. The signs, however, were not im-

mediately installed. Phone calls and personal inquiries were made, but no answers were given for the installation delay.

In January, I drove the historic highway into Vista and my heart skipped a beat as I saw that the Vista signs had been installed! I happily took a photo of one of the signs which stood in front of the Avo Playhouse. It was hard to imagine that a year prior, I had taken the same street photograph, but without an installed sign. Now, here I was, a year later, and the picture was now complete!

Janice Klafehn donated two of the ten signs installed in Vista. One was donated in memory of her great-grandparents,

Jules and Maria Delpy and the other for her great-granduncle, J.B. Barthe. Her signs can be found on E. Vista Way.

The Association would like to thank Janice and all those who donated signs to help preserve this historic highway. We would also like to thank Tom Casey for his time and services. Working together we can all tell the History of Highway 395, one sign at a time.

Jeffery G. Harmon, Editor

Spotlight: The J.A. Cooley Museum

By Jeffery G. Harmon



Located at the intersection of Park and El Cajon boulevards, the J.A. Cooley Museum is a San Diego attraction not to be missed. Housed in a two story building, the museum's plain storefront façade downplays the great treasures waiting for visitors inside. Upon entering the museum, a handwritten note on the door kindly reminds patrons to feed the parking meter coins.

The J.A. Cooley Museum is the lifetime collection of Jim and Carmen Cooley. There are over two dozen classical cars parked in chronological order. Multiple antique collections are in every nook and cranny of the spacious museum. As visitors explore the exhibits, there is always something new waiting to be discovered.

As I prepared to tour the museum, Jim Cooley greeted me with a smile and said, "If you have any questions, please ask. I'll either confuse you or I'll give you the straight scoop."

The museum's antique automobile collection is one of the finest I have seen. The earliest car is the 1885 Benz Motorwagen.

When asked how he acquired the car, Mr. Cooley replied, "I began collecting over sixty years ago. People didn't understand why I wanted such unpractical cars."

From the 1885 Benz to the 2000 Buick XP concept car, the museum tells the story of automobile development through the years. "We have a lot of firsts here," Mr. Cooley explained, "The first car and the first mass produced car to name a few." When asked which car is his favorite, Mr. Cooley talked about a Peugeot that was not in the displayed collection.

Automobiles are not the only items found in the museum. There are over twenty-five categories of antiques represented as well. The sound of chimes and cuckoo clocks can be heard in the back half of the museum. As the hour is struck, visitors may feel they are no longer in a museum, but maybe visiting old friend in their living room.

There is an extensive model train collection along one wall. Many sizes and types of trains are displayed. There are a few model town pieces found be-

tween the trains. My favorite piece was a long arched yellow iron bridge.

Nestled between a few automobiles are antique strollers and baby carriages. A gravity fed gas pump or a pre-1920 hand gas pump can be found tucked in a corner or two. There are collections of spittoons, typewriters, coffee grinders, lamps, and cameras. I discovered a framed passenger certificate for the last ferry boat across San Diego Harbor on August 2, 1969.

One of Mr. Cooley's prized collections is his phonographs. He exclaimed, "I have one of the largest phonograph collections. Edison's museum is only larger!" When asked if all his phonographs were in the museum, he said, "Oh no. I have over a hundred items that are not in the museum. If I get a bigger place, I may be able to show more of them."

The final piece I saw was a 1900s Wurlitzer Band Organ, Model 153. When asked if it works, Mr. Cooley grinned and said, "Everything in here works, but me." He plugged the organ in and turned it on. The machine thundered to life, harkening us back to small town country fair. When the music stopped, I could still hear the cuckoo clocks chiming in the back room.

I thanked Mr. Cooley for the tour as I exited the museum. As I strolled along Park Boulevard's sidewalk, I spotted a 1915 date stamp below my feet. Park Boulevard was once part of U.S. Highway 395. I smiled and wondered if any of Mr. Cooley's antique cars ever travelled portions of the historic highway.



My Reminiscences of Silver Springs, Part 3

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

The government purchased the Santa Margarita Ranch and developed Camp Pendleton, and the Naval Ammunition Depot (now called the Naval Weapons Station). Soon armed convoys of ammunition trucks began passing by the café on their way to the port at San Diego. As soon as we heard their sirens up the road, we would run out to watch and wave. The men in the convoy waved in return.

I remember when one of our N.A.D. trucks exploded on its way down into Rose Canyon – where the University of California is now located. Eucalyptus trees on both sides of the road were blown down by the blast.

One another occasion, a motorcycle M.P., leading the convoy, had an accident at the foot of the new section of 395 which cut off Hellers Bend. A car of naval officers sped back to Silver Springs to use our telephone and call for help. (Our customers told us about other injuries, especially when James Roosevelt, son of the President, was training men on

the DeLuz roads.)

Walter, my husband, served in the Navy during World War I. Years earlier, with Frank Parkinsons and others, we formed a VFW Post and met in the basement of the Odd Fellows Hall. We all participated in war-related activities.

After Gladys and Joy came to work for me at the café, I rolled bandages with the Fallbrook Chapter of the Red Cross. I also gave 1,400 hours of volunteer time for Fallbrook on the War Price and Ration Board in Oceanside. I remember getting up even earlier than usual to take my girls out to Shearer's ranch to man the airplane spotting station. We identified all the aircraft we spotted overhead and called the report to headquarters.

One evening, Elliott Bandini stopped in the café on his way up to Fallbrook. He was helping Mr. Potter, Superintendent of the school, in the temporary civil defense headquarters, which had been set up at the high school.

Elliott took the girls with him and had them serve as "victims" in a mock air-raid to test the preparedness of Fallbrook's emergency system.

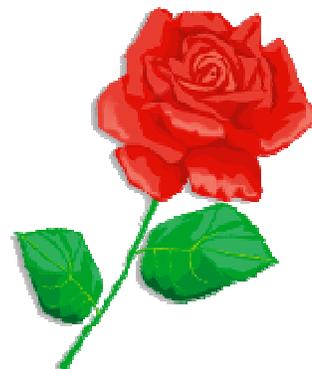
In the war years, an order went out that no lights were permitted to be seen after dark (in case enemy aircraft flew over). We kept Silver Springs open by installing heavy blackout curtains over the windows.

Many of my former high school customers went off to fight in World War II and found time to write us. In January 1944, Sgt. Bob Crane, while stationed in India, sent a letter, closing with these words:

"Well Mrs. Hughes, have you got lots of pie and ice cream? Tonight I'll just start off with half a banana cream pie and four scoops of ice cream and two pineapple malts. You can see what a reserve you'll have to build up before I get there. . ."

Some of my boys never returned. Charles Clemmens, stationed in England during the war, was killed flying over Germany. I did the flower arraignments for his funeral. He was brought home and buried in the Odd Fellows Cemetery, across the road from his family home.

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



**A HISTORIC ROUTE 395
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Announcement:
February Monthly Meeting
Cancelled

OUR THOUGHTLESS MOTORISTS - NO.1



Reprint: The Vista Press February 27, 1930

Highway 395 Link Slated for Early Completion

Reprint: Lake Elsinore Valley Sun, March 6, 1952

Completion of the link of Highway 395, from one mile north of Temecula to Antelope Road is predicted for the weekend of March 15-16, according to S.W. Lowden, chief of this district's office of the State Highway Commission. The new link is approximately seven miles long.

Opening of the road for traffic, however, does not mean that through traffic will be routed over it, the

highway chief said. Pending completion of the next connecting link to the north, signs will be erected at the highway, division near Temecula and at other intersections reading: "Not a Through Road - Construction Not Complete." The new road, however, may be used by those who desire and by local traffic.

The adjacent unit of 395, approxi-

mately 10 miles in length, is slated for completion about September 16. This unit starts at Antelope Road and connects with the existing Perris-Hemet highway one mile north of Romoland.

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