

MUSEUM MUSCLE

The Museum of the San Ramon Valley is a small museum with big ambitions. Unlike other small museums in the area, it not only has a permanent exhibit, but it puts on 4 or 5 special exhibits per year. This requires an imaginative exhibit committee and a lot of moving of artifacts, exhibit furniture, and props. This moving is done by the Strippers and the Strippers Auxiliary. The Strippers build and repair things the Museum needs. They get their name from their founders who did paint stripping on the depot restoration. The Auxiliary, which includes the Strippers, are the movers and shakers of exhibits.

A good example of what they do is the recent *Christmas Memories* exhibit. The first step was to move the *Indian Life* exhibit back to the Museum's major storage site in Bollinger Canyon at the old Nike site, provided to us at reduced rent by Sid Corrie. The big truck to move the exhibit materials is provided by realtor Terry McDaniel.

The next step was to bring the Christmas materials to the depot. This included the exhibit components and the festive outside decorations for the depot. The Strippers set up the tree in front, wreaths and other decorations.

After that it was time to return the empty exhibit boxes back to Nike. At the close of the exhibit the boxes were brought back and loaded, and then the loaded boxes taken back to Nike to wait for next year. The Museum is grateful for all of this hard work!



The Museum Muscle in the above picture are l. to r: John Wild, Vic Georgiou, Chuck Brydon, Jim Lane, Mark Stoff, and Stan Wharton. Doug Aitken is a mover who took the picture.

Others who help move are Carlo Borlandelli, Jim Casey, Mike Giorsetto, Dale Haukland, Bud Lentz, Craig Miller, Bob Myhre, Keith Oleson, Ron Olivieri, Earl Schremp, Ross Smith, and Jerry Warren.

ELLIOTT'S IS 100 YEARS OLD IN 2007



This year is an anniversary year for one of the Valley's oldest businesses, Elliott's. Hiram Elliott was once a jockey, then decided to learn the saloon business. He worked at the Crockett Hotel and in Walnut Creek. His brother-in-law Charles Gust owned the Lawless Bar (some sources say "Eagle Bar") at the corner of Diablo and Front Streets and Hiram came to run the bar.

Hiram married Tillie Hartz in August, 1907, and purchased the bar from Gust that same year. One story goes that he sent two unruly drunks out to settle things, saying "you tigers work it out in the alley," thus giving the nickname Tiger Alley to the little street called Prospect.

As the creek ate away at Front Street and businesses moved to Hartz Avenue, Hiram built a store which he rented out on Hartz in 1911. Then he built a new saloon next door and moved Elliott's Bar to Hartz in 1912.

Sources: Duane Elliott, Virgie V. Jones' *Historical Places...in SRV*, Gary Sato, *Daily Gazette* (1907).

School Days, School Days, Good Old-Fashioned Rule Days...

School is back in session at the historic Tassajara Grammar School on Finley Road. On February 20, 2007, the first third grade class will come for a living history program, taught by Museum docent-teachers and supported by the volunteer superintendents. Each day 30 students, accompanied by parents and teachers, live in 1888 and learn to cipher, read aloud, play traditional games and write with a quill pen.

All third grades in the San Ramon Valley attend the program and come to the school which is owned and operated by the San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District. The Tassajara School Program is a partnership between the Museum and the fire district. Thanks to Shapell Homes, the site has been improved and features a restored stable, a new handicapped restroom and spiffed up historic outhouses. A ribbon cutting is scheduled for March 21 at noon to celebrate these improvements.

Mistress Joan Kurtz and Master Don Kurtz lead this program. Many thanks for their sustained vision and energy.

The Branch Line

The Museum of the San Ramon Valley in the Depot

Spring 2007

