



Canyon News

Black Mountain Park · Del Mar Mesa Preserve
Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve
Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

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The Pierre Bovet Adobe Will Bowen, Ph.D.



Back view of **Bovet Adobe** from a distance.

"When I was a child, I used to pass through Old San Diego and see its ruined adobe houses. I often wondered who had lived in them, what kind of life the people had, and what had become of them. Some of the houses were still standing, some were minus great patches of plaster and the adobe was showing through, and many had melted back into the earth of which they were made. Their inhabitants were gone . . . What had happened to them? . . . Of what avail had been their lives?"

Grace B. Diffendorf 1959

Introduction

The ruins of the Pierre Bovet adobe can be found in Carroll Canyon, not far from the intersection of Carroll Road and Youngstown Way. There isn't much left of the Bovet adobe; just a mound of weather-beaten adobe bricks and flooring; partly enclosed by a chain-link fence. Nor is the space around the Bovet the same as it was in years past. The easement to Carroll Road has been pushed directly up against the back wall of the adobe, destroying two cisterns and crowding out what was once a fine vineyard. Easement sprinklers and seasonal rains continue to pelt the adobe, causing it to further melt away into oblivion; while weeds choke the decaying

See **Bovet** p. 7 for more

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MURPHY & ME

Avid Canyon Hikers!
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Murphy (my Labradoodle) and I recently started doing Volunteer Ranger patrols at Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Both avid hikers, we can regularly be seen at Lake Poway, Blue Sky Reserve, and Mount Woodson, to name a few places. For the past two and one-half years, we have also been actively involved in Scripps Memorial Hospital's Pet Therapy/Trauma program, in which we visit staff, patients, and family members twice a week.

When the October wildfires swept across California, we became temporarily displaced from our home, Lake Poway and Blue Sky. One day, during a Pet Therapy visit, one of the Emergency Room nurses suggested we try hiking at Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. When we arrived for the first time, back in November, I was thrilled to have found another wonderful place to hike and get away from it all. Murphy was similarly excited at all the new places to discover, scents on the trail, and wildlife all around us.

We soon started making friends on the trail. People recognized us

See **Murphy** p. 6 for more

Upcoming Hikes/Events

All hikes are free to the public. If you're bringing an organized group, please call (858) 484-3219 to make arrangements. Rain cancels hikes. Be sure to wear hiking boots and bring water, insect repellent, and sun protection. See you on the trail!

Every Saturday & Sunday

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Ranch Santa Maria de Los Peñasquitos at 11 a.m. on Saturdays and 1 p.m. on Sundays, lasting 45 minutes. See an historic Mexican era rancho with three foot thick adobe walls, settler and Indian artifacts and tour the grounds.

April

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tuesday, Apr. 1, 7 p.m.

Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Tracking Walk

Saturday, Apr. 12, 8 a.m.

Everyone is invited to join us for a free, easy tracking walk to learn about the art of tracking and the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Beginner and Intermediate levels. Meet at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Dr., Rancho Penasquitos. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Canyon Favorites Hike

Saturday, Apr 19, 5:00 p.m.

Join Pat for a moderately paced loop hike to Carson's Crossing, the waterfall, and back. Meet at

the utility gate at the end of Park Village Road. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (A7-B7).

Wildlife Survey Training

Saturday, Apr 19, 9:45 a.m.

This free training includes basic track, sign, and habitat recognition, as well as details on the implementation of survey protocol, and is required for survey volunteers. Meet at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Dr., Rancho Penasquitos. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Miner's Loop Trail Walk, Black Mountain /Rancho Peñasquitos

Saturday, Apr 17. 16, 9 – 11a.m.

Join a naturalist for a hike along the Miner's Loop Trail on the north face of Black Mountain Park. Expect to see flowers, great vistas, and learn about the old arsenic mine. Meet at the Parking Staging area off the new extension of Carmel Valley Rd. about 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. Thomas Guide p. 1189 E7 or call 858-342-8856.

Waterfall Hike

Sunday, Apr. ?, 3:00 p.m.

Join Linda for a moderately paced loop hike to Carson's Crossing, the waterfall, and back. Meet at the kiosk at Park Village Rd. and Camino del Sur in Rancho Peñasquitos. Bring water and wear hiking boots. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (A7-B7).

Lopez Homestead History Hike w/ Will Bowen

Sunday, Apr ?, 3-4:30 P.M.

Hike out into Lopez Canyon to learn about the Old Lopez Homestead—a small turn-of-the-century dairy farm. Visit the orchard, the Old Road, and see the remains of the barn, house, and milking station. Find out about the importance of the Lopez family in early San Diego history.

Start: West End Parking Staging

Area, Thomas Guide p.1208 (D5).

Carmel Mountain Flower Walk w/ Diana Gordon

Sunday, Apr ?, 9 – 11a.m. Tour one of San Diego's newest nature preserves. Good chance to see wildflowers. Take SR-56 east from I-5 to Carmel Country Road. Go right (south) across the bridge and immediately look for and park in a small dirt parking lot on the right. Wear hiking boots, bring water and sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See Thomas Guide p. 1188, C7 or call 858.484.3219.

May

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tuesday, May 6, 7 p.m.

Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Tracking Walk

Saturday, May 10, 8 a.m.

Everyone is invited to join us for a free, easy tracking walk to learn about the art of tracking and the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Beginner and Intermediate levels. Meet at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Dr., Rancho Penasquitos. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Beginner Tracker Naturalist Class

Wednesday, May 14, 7 a.m.

This class is devoted to developing tracking and awareness skills, with an emphasis on wildlife physiology and habits, how to move in nature, and techniques for recognizing habitats and associated flora and fauna. Email lptt@cox.net to register or go to LPTT Website, <http://www.penasquitos.org/classes.html> for more information. Meet at the historic

Ranch House on Canyonside Dr., Rancho Peñasquitos. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Beginner Tracker Naturalist Class

Saturday, May 17, 8 a.m.

This class is devoted to developing tracking and awareness skills, with an emphasis on wildlife physiology and habits, how to move in nature, and techniques for recognizing habitats and associated flora and fauna. Email lpitt@cox.net to register or go to LPTT Website, <http://www.penasquitos.org/classes.html> for more information. Meet at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Dr., Rancho Peñasquitos. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Flower Walk w/ Diana Gordon

Saturday, May ?, 9 – 11a.m.

Visit vernal pools, one of San Diego's rarest habitats. Good chance to see wildflowers. From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At its intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on what has become Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill several blocks to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots, bring water and sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See Thomas Guide p. 1208, C2 or call 858.484.3219.

Pierre Bovet Adobe History Hike w/ Will Bowen

Sunday, May ?, 3-4:30 P.M.

Hike out into Carroll Canyon (aka. Soledad Canyon) to visit the ruins of the Pierre Bovet Adobe. Find out why so many such adobes of San Diego County were left to deteriorate. Learn about Pierre Bovet and his family and their place in San Diego history. Understand why this area should someday be part of the larger Preserve. Start: Meet at Fire Station near the corner of Scranton and Carroll Canyon Road.

Miner's Loop Trail Walk, Black Mountain /Rancho Peñasquitos

Saturday, May 17, 16, 9 – 11a.m.

Join a naturalist for a hike along the Miner's Loop Trail on the north face of Black Mountain Park. Expect to see flowers, great vistas, and learn about the old arsenic mine. Meet at the Parking Staging area off the new extension of Carmel Valley Rd. about 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. Thomas Guide p. 1189 E7 or call 858-342-8856.

"El Cuervo" Adobe History Hike w/ Will Bowen

Sunday, May ?, 3-4:30 P.M.

Hike out into the West End of Peñasquitos Canyon for a intimate look at the ruins of the "El Cuervo" Adobe. Become familiar with the controversy about who built it when. Find out about Francisco and son, Diego Alvarado--the probable builders. Includes a short side hike to examine Norwood Brown's old roundup corral and to discuss the impact of cattle grazing in the Preserve. Start: Parking Lot: 4206 Sorrento Valley Boulevard, Thomas Guide p.1208 (D5).

June

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tuesday, June 3, 7 p.m.

Members are welcome to attend this business meeting to plan Friends' activities. Meeting is at the historic Adobe Ranch House at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Driveway. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

2008 National Trails Day

Saturday, June 7.

Join Us on the Trails! Visit the SDTT booth during the celebration of our America's trail system. Meet at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Dr., Rancho Peñasquitos. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Tracking Walk

Saturday, June 14, 8 a.m.

Everyone is invited to join us for a free, easy tracking walk to learn about the art of tracking and the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve. Beginner and Intermediate levels. Meet at the historic Ranch House on Canyonside Dr., Rancho Peñasquitos. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Miner's Loop Trail Walk, Black Mountain /Rancho Peñasquitos

Saturday, June 14, 9 – 11a.m.

Join a naturalist for a hike along the Miner's Loop Trail on the north face of Black Mountain Park. Expect to see flowers, great vistas, and learn about the old arsenic mine. Meet at the Parking Staging area off the new extension of Carmel Valley Rd. about 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Black Mtn. Rd. in Rancho Peñasquitos. Wear hiking boots and bring water and sun protection. Thomas Guide p. 1189 E7 or call 858-342-8856.

Waterfall Hike

Sunday, June ?, 4:00 p.m.

Join Linda for a moderately paced loop hike to Carson's Crossing, the waterfall, and back. Meet at the kiosk at Park Village Rd. and Camino del Sur in Rancho Peñasquitos. Bring water and wear hiking boots. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (A7-B7).

Canyon Favorites Hike

Saturday, June 7, 6:00 p.m.

Join Pat for a moderately paced loop hike to Carson's Crossing, the waterfall, and back. Meet at the utility gate at the end of Park Village Road. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (A7-B7).

Flower Walk w/ Diana Gordon

Sunday, June ?. 3 – 5 p.m.

Visit vernal pools, one of San Diego's rarest habitats. Good chance to see wildflowers. From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At its intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed

straight on what has become Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill several blocks to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots, bring water and sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. See Thomas Guide p. 1208, C2 or call 858.484.3219.

Directions

Black Mountain Open Space Park

From I-15 take SR 56 (Ted Williams Parkway) west to Black Mountain Rd. Go right (north) on Black Mtn. Rd. all the way to Carmel Valley Rd. Take a right on the new extension of Carmel Valley Rd. and proceed past the Community Park on the left and down the hill. Look for a sign for the park on the right and take the next right into the park entrance. Careful, this is a tight turn off Carmel Valley Rd. Proceed up the road to the staging area. Or, take Bernardo Center Dr. from the I-15 west to where it ends at the new extension of Carmel Valley Rd. Take the latter west, past the park entrance until you can take the first available U-turn back to the park. See Thomas Guide p. 1169 (E7).

Carmel Mountain Trail Head

From Carmel Valley take El Camino Real south. At intersection with Carmel Mountain Road, proceed straight on Carmel Mountain Road. Go up the hill to East Ocean Air Dr. Go left and park at Fairport and Shorepointe. Wear hiking boots. Bring water/sun protection. Moderate hill to climb. **Thomas Guide p.1208 (C2).**

Mercy Road Parking-Staging Area

In Mira Mesa. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Rd. and straight across intersection into parking lot. Meet on upper level. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (D7).

Northern Parking-Staging Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive, about 1 mile to Camino del Sur. Left on Camino del Sur and park by the kiosk. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (A7-B7).

Park Village Drive Meeting Area

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. From I-15 take the Mercy Road exit west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain Road and up hill, left on Park Village Drive and take it all the way to the end at the white barricades and park entrance. Thomas Guide p. 1189 – 1188 (J7).

Ranch House Walks/Tours

Located in Rancho Peñasquitos. Take Mercy Exit off I-15 west to Black Mountain Road. Right on Black Mountain. Left at first light, Canyonside Park Dr. Go past ball fields to the white-fenced parking lot. Left into the lot. Walk up path to the ranch. house. Thomas Guide p. 1189 (C7).

Santa Luz Meeting Area

Meet at the kiosk in the parking lot off San Dieguito Road, opposite Montien Rd.. Thomas Guide p. 1168 (J5).

Sorrento Valley Meeting Area

Meet in parking lot at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd. on the north side of Sorrento Valley Boulevard in Sorrento Valley, 1/4 mile east of its intersection with Sorrento Valley Road. Thomas Guide p. 1208 (D5).

West-End Parking-Staging Area

South side of Sorrento Valley Blvd. in Sorrento Valley, 1/2 mile east of intersection with Vista Sorrento Pky. From east take Mira Mesa Blvd. west to Camino Santa Fe. Right on Camino Santa Fe, then left on Sorrento Valley Blvd. to bottom of the hill. Entrance is on the left. From the west, take I-5

or 805 to Sorrento Valley. Take Sorrento Valley Blvd. east, pass last building on the right. Preserve entrance is on right. Thomas Guide p. 1208, (D5).

People to Know

Brian Swanson: *Friends' President*

Mike Kelly



Brian with bobcat friend (bobcat was confiscated by Fish & Game, and could not be released into the wild because it had imprinted on humans).

Brian Swanson, Friends' president, has been a member of the Friends' Board of Directors for about twenty years. He grew up hiking the canyons and mesas of San Diego, and first hiked in Penasquitos Canyon and Del Mar Mesa in the late '60's. At that time the area was private property and cows outnumbered people. During those hikes he met mesa resident/pioneer Walter Meklensek, who used a 1930's era water truck to bring water to his homestead. Brian is a land manager for SDG&E, where he has worked for many years. He also is a licensed attorney with a small practice assisting clients with wills and trusts. Brian joined the Friends' Board at the invitation of our founder, Dr. Alberta Fleming (enticed by the ice cream and cookies served at our annual meetings). Brian enjoys

hiking and camping, and leads natural history walks for the Friends and the San Diego Natural History Museum. Our nearby open space jewels --- Penasquitos Canyon Preserve, Del Mar Mesa, Carmel Mtn., and Black Mtn. --- offer something for everyone who seeks to renew the peaceful spirit of their soul. If you have a little time, talent, and enthusiasm, the Friends could really use your help. On behalf of the Friend's Board, Brian invites friends and neighbors to join us in educating the public about this precious resource, and helping the city and county park staff in helping to keep these p l a c e s s p e c i a l .

Maps of Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve and Black Mountain Open Space Parks are available at www.penasquitos.org.

Spring at Black Mountain Park

Ranger Ed Christianson

It's always a nice time of year when the grass gets green and tall, flowers are blooming, and the weather just can't get any better. Spend some time in the field and you come away with the sense that all is as it should be, exotic weeds included.

I was surveying the land this first week of March and was surprised how tall the wild Artichoke had grown in the old farmland. Another project to add to the list, clear the trail! While out there, I observed two amorous ravens, one of the most interesting animals to watch in my opinion. I then noticed a Coyote was passing his time watching me. Not a care in the world it seemed.

Along Lusardi Gorge I saw a family of trail makers doing their thing browsing on shrubs, five mule deer making their way to somewhere else. Looking up at the clear blue sky you could always spot a Redtail somewhere not too far off. And in spite of the honey-bee die-off, I've been hearing about, I drove past two swarms searching for a new home.

After a recent division meeting we were asked to complete a questionnaire and one of the inquiries was 'What is good about working here?' I think the answer for me is that at the end of the day our collective work, our small contributions, adds to the common good of the world. And there is great value in that.

(Murphy cont'd from pg 1)



Labradoodle "Murphy" and companion, ??

from a distance since, everyday for the past two and one-half years; I carry Murphy on my back when he starts to get tired. He generally walks and runs for the first 5-7 miles of the day then, usually at the onset of a big uphill climb; he sits down and waits for me to pick him up. From there, I usually carry him between 3 to 5 miles a day. So far, Murphy has logged more than 3,800 miles on my back, much to his delight.

One day, we met seasonal park attendant Sam Lanning at the Preserve. We both knew Sam for a few years, frequently crossing paths at Lake Poway. Sam suggested that we contact rangers Paul Kucharczyk and Autumn Acker to see if they need some help in the form of volunteer ranger patrols. We both like giving back to the community so, without hesitation, I contacted Paul and before long, Murphy and I were accepted into the program. I want to give special thanks to Cheryl Wegner, County of San Diego, Dept. of Parks & Recreation Volunteer Coordinator, for her great support and energy in quickly moving us through the initial application process.

Before we started with our first patrol, we dropped in to speak with ranger Paul. He spoke about the local groups and organizations that play a big part in how this habitat is preserved and cared for. He also imparted to me his philosophy of providing visitors with an enjoyable experience, whether hiking, riding horseback, mountain biking, etc. In my very limited time at the Preserve, I estimate that 98% of the visitors pay heed to the signs and regulations of the area. And more so, it doesn't seem to take anything away from their experience - they truly enjoy their time here.

In conversations with Autumn, her warm approach to caring for this Preserve is very reassuring. Sam is similarly filled with kind words and information for all the people he comes in contact with. All in all, it is an honor to be able to work alongside such a wonderful team of people. As I had recently mentioned to Paul and Autumn, Murphy's and my patrols have developed into a form of Pet Therapy on the trails. As all pet owners can attest, we are all too quick to engage in a short friendly conversation about our dogs, cats, horses and so forth. What might otherwise be a quick friendly hello on the trail becomes something more than that. Murphy and I appreciate being given the opportunity to play a small role here at Los Penasquitos Canyon Preserve and look forward to meeting you on the trail one day.

(Bovet cont'd from pg 1)

bricks into silent submission.

Nonetheless, the Bovet adobe is still an important archaeological and historical site which renowned San Diego archaeologist James Robert Moriarity classified as having “moderate to major significance,” meaning that it has excellent potential to contribute to the scientific understanding of an era of our history or prehistory. In addition to its archaeological value (and it has never been excavated), the Bovet is worth studying from an architectural standpoint, as it exemplifies the transition from the Mexican to American periods in San Diego building history.

The Bovet adobe is also important because of the people who lived there. Pierre Bovet was the first Swiss immigrant to early San Diego and the first professional chef and baker in Old Town. After Bovet moved to Carroll Canyon, many San Diegans came to the Bovet adobe home by horse for a fine dinner, to buy wine, or to use as a rest stop on a stage line that ran up “La Canon De La Soledad” (Sorrento Valley). After the railroad was built people even rode the rails up from San Diego for an excellent repast.

The Bovet adobe is of special interest to those of us involved with Penasquitos Canyon Preserve because it is directly linked to our Ramon López’s Lopez Canyon dairy farm, to Ramon’s father Bonafacio López’s now gone Sorrento adobe, and to Diego Alvarado’s El Cuervo adobe through family ties and marriage. The Bovet adobe was an important node in a network of historic habitation sites in this area. The old dirt roads that connected these domiciles can be seen in a structural sense as the real-world manifestations of the social relations that connected them interpersonally.

The Bovet adobe is situated adjacent to a fine, but needing restoration, riparian habitat and

not far from an excellent and rare stand of thick-trunked Coast live oak, a historic cattle tunnel, and the railroad line, which dates to 1880. The land for the railroad, known as Sorrento Grade, was sold by Bovet and worked by Chinese immigrants in white shorts, sandals, and straw hats (one of their many unrecognized and little appreciated contributions to the building of the West). Only ½ a mile down the valley toward the lagoon is a Native American habitation site of such importance that is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places.

The ruins of the Bovet adobe, the surrounding historic and prehistoric resources, and riparian habitat deserves to be protected and cared for — I suggest under the umbrella of Penasquitos Canyon Preserve.

Who Was Pierre Bovet?

Pierre Bovet was born in the French part of Switzerland in 1825. He came to this country shortly after the discovery of gold in California in 1848. He was the first Swiss immigrant to old San Diego and became a chef and baker in Old Town. A tax record from 1852 shows that Bovet and his partner, surnamed Lienre, paid \$1,200 in taxes for two horses and “stock in trade” — presumably the necessities of his baking business.

In 1854, when he was 29 years old, Bovet married Maria Lorenza de la Providencia Lopez who was 19. She was the daughter of Bonafacio Lopez, nicknamed “The King” — a colorful rotund horseman and major figure in Old San Diego — and his first wife Maria de los Dolores Rosas.

At that time, Bonafacio López lived part time in an adobe on the hillside of Old Town and part time in a country adobe near what is now the Sorrento railroad station. López had a legal claim to Sorrento Valley, albeit disputed by the City, who said it was Pueblo or

public land. López had bought Sorrento Valley from Cave Coutts for \$500 in 1853. Coutts, in turn, had acquired it from Francisco Alvarado, who originally had been granted it by Carlos Carrillo, Mexican governor of California, in 1838.

I believe that Bonafacio López built the Bovet adobe and gave it and the land, which would have been his, to his son-in-law as a marriage gift in 1854. A tax record from 1870 still exists which shows that Bovet paid \$1 a piece for 125 sheep and \$50 for improvements, presumably on his land in Carroll Canyon. The improvements were undoubtedly the vineyard that he planted.

An 1884 Survey Map, commissioned by Diego Alvarado, exists of an area known as 14 Range No.3 West. The bottom left corner of the map, labeled section 9, contains the Bovet lands. Actually, Bovet owned the top two lots of section 9. Also indicated on the map are Soledad Valley, the Bovet house, Soledad Creek, and a road heading out east. Bovet’s vineyard is also drawn in to the east and north of his house and extends up into section 4. In reality, though, Bovet had grapes growing directly in back of the house as well.

Max Dietrich and his wife came to Carroll Canyon in 1885 and started a farm just a little north of the Bovet property. Dietrich told San Diego historian Winifred Davidson that Bovet was on the land when he got there in 1885 and that Bovet had lost all of his sheep in a sleet storm in 1880. After that loss, Bovet switched to raising horses and cattle.

On an 1892 hand-penciled Plat Map of San Diego, you can also see the two parts of Section 9 owned by Bovet. The lands nearby, owned by Ramon López and Diego Alvarado, are also indicated.

In 1895, Bovet filled paperwork and acquired undisputed title to the land through a Government

Land Grant of 160 acres in the same manner that Ramon López had acquired title to López Canyon. This title can be found in the US Patent Homestead Book #5 that is on file at San Diego Historical Museum.

In an interview conducted by Fabert & Crosthwaite for the San Diego Historical Society with Eva Bovet — who married Bovet's son Johnny and lived on the ranch for one year around 1895 — Eva stated that Bovet was well educated, spoke five languages, had beautiful penmanship, and carried one of his arms in a sling due to some infirmity. Eva went on to say that the majority of Bovet's vineyard was destroyed when a dam above the farm broke one night.

Albert Smith, who was the foreman of the Andrew Cassidy ranch, which was built upon the foundation of the old Bonafacio López adobe, said that he used to come for dinner at the Bovets: "Bovet was a famous cook. The rich people would engage him to cook dinner when they gave a party. When I had charge of the Cassidy ranch in Soledad I would ride my horse up the canyon in the evening and

have dinner with Bovet." Another famous guest at the Bovet house was Helen Hunt Jackson who wrote the historical novel about early San Diego entitled "Ramona."

A 1903 Phone Book shows that by that date Bovet had moved to room at 946 Front Street, probably to be close to his daughter who worked downtown as a seamstress. Other of his children stayed on the ranch until it was sold in the late 1920s.

The Bovet Family

Pierre Bovet had five daughters and three sons with his wife Providencia, whom he affectionately called "Lencha." The daughters were named Dolores, Margarita, Enriqueta, Elvira, and Juanita. The three sons were Jesus, Augustin, and Ramon; the later went by the name "Johnny." Jesus died at the age of one day in 1856; Enriqueta died at four months in 1874 and was buried in the little cemetery in Old Town called El Campo Santo. Dolores also died as a child.

Bovet's daughter, Margarita, married William Crosthwaite, the

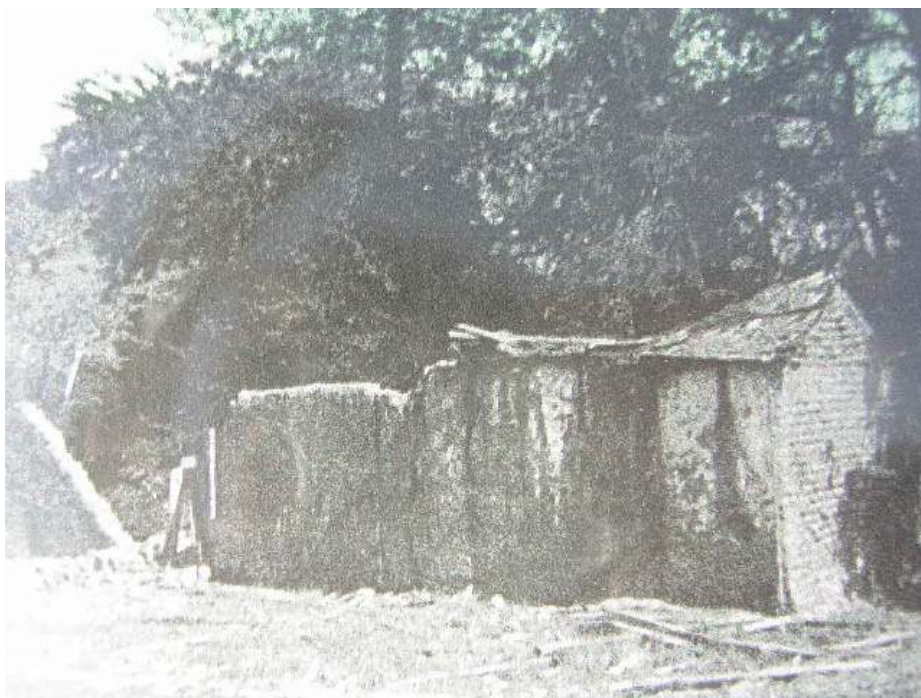
son of Philip C. Crosthwaite, an important San Diego pioneer patriot, educated at Trinity College in Ireland, who took part in the battle of San Pascual. Both the governor of California and Lower California (Baja) were in attendance at their wedding ceremony. Margarita and William spent much of their lives on Rancho Santa Rosa in Baja, but visited the Bovet home whenever they came up to San Diego. When Pancho Villa rose to power in northern Mexico in 1911, they moved back to the Bovet farm.

Just to show how interconnected people were in the early days of San Diego, Philip Crosthwaite had, like Pierre Bovet, married one of Bonafacio López's daughters. The elder Crosthwaite and his wife Maria Josepha had a house in Old Town and owned Rancho Poway.

Bovet's daughter Elvira married Luis Machado of the famous Machado family and lived in Vista. Juanita married a son of Diego Alvarado, named Alonso, who grew up in the El Cuervo adobe. They end up moving downtown because she got a high paying job as a seamstress for the ladies of the night in the Red Light District. Johnny Bovet's older brother Augustine, who bought and sold cattle, married Eva's mother.

The Bovet House

The Bovet adobe is unique in that it is a transitional building exhibiting elements of both the Mexican and American periods. It is somewhere between the Mexican period El Cuervo adobe and the American period López house. It had adobe walls and flooring but wooden planks on the outside walls as siding. It had a gabled roof, which was shingled, and a red brick chimney. Eva Bovet said that it had five rooms that made it smaller than the El Cuervo adobe, which had eight. Although the archaeologists who surveyed the building in the 1970s estimated there were 2-3 rooms, there



Back view of Bovet from close up.

probably were five if you consider the two rooms at the back of the house shown on the 1936 photographs. The rooms were approximately 12 foot by 15 foot and were not interconnected. You had to go out onto the porch or veranda to get from room to room.

Eva Bovet went on to say that there was a large dining table in one room that was usually filled with people. The house also had a piano and a wine press. There was a white rose climber on a trellis at the back of the west end of the house and a mulberry tree at the opposite end. In front of the house were three large Monterey cypress trees that were brought down from Monterey, California by sailing ship. Like Pepper trees, Monterey cypress were often planted by Mexican era homes because they were drought resistant and offered shade from the hot sun and protection from the wind.

The Bovet Adobe as an Object of Art — the Plein Aire School

The Bovet adobe has been the subject of at least two paintings in the style of the Plein Aire



Nell Lester's painting of the Bovet.

School of Art. The Plein Aire School was an important genre of California art during the 1920-30s and is still practiced today. There recently was an exhibition of Plein Aire Art at Torrey Pines State Park. The Plein Aire School focused on Impressionistic watercolor or oil painting of natural land-

scapes and old buildings. It featured a nostalgia for the great old colorful and romantic days of Spanish California. The founder of the school was Alfred Mitchell. One of Mitchell's students named Helen Hill painted the Bovet adobe in the 1930s. Her painting is depicted in a book titled, "Hiking and Biking Trails of San Diego," written by John Carroll Hooper. On the back of the painting, there is some inscription that says that Domasio López built the adobe in 1844. Domasio should be Bonafacio and the date should be 1854

Another Plein Aire style painting was made by Nell Lester, sister-in-law of noted San Diego archaeologist Fred Buchanan, in 1956, and is shown here.

The Bovet Adobe today

If you were to go down to the ruins of the Bovet Adobe today you might not think there was much left to see — just a 2-3 foot high mound of melted adobe bricks, some adobe flooring, and three dried up old dead cypress trees, one of which has fallen. You would also see two metal poles near the edge of the adobe which once held a plaque, now long lost,



Side view of Bovet — you can see wood planking and part of the front porch.



Bovet adobe in a dilapidated condition with only 1/2 the roof — notice the close cropped grass from the presence of cattle and a wall with a passage knocked thru it.

which mislabeled the ruins as “The López Adobe.” But if you knew something about the history of the place and the people who lived there and their relationship to other of the historic peoples of old San Diego, then you might be able to see more. The past might come alive again and your imagination would allow you to understand the true significance of this place.

Like other such adobes, the Bovet has deteriorated over time due to vandalism, equestrian activity, cattle, the elements, and a lack of concern. The city has been remiss in not protecting one of our few historic resources — the adobe. The private owners of the land on which most adobes sat seemed to care more about their present time activities than the past. But that is an error we all seem to make — thinking that the present is always more important than the past. Many cattlemen, such as Norwood Brown, who ran cattle through Carroll Canyon (and Peñasquitos Canyon), did not want archeologists digging holes

that their horses might fall in nor discovering resources that might curtail their economic activities.

The Pierre Bovet adobe is important to the Friends of los

Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve because of its relationship to the ranches and farms of our Preserve and its potential to help us better understand them. It is equally important to the people of San Diego because of its place in our history, especially the early American period following the era of Mexican rule.

It’s our lesson to learn to protect old adobes from cattle, horses, vandals, and the elements. We need to keep them whitewashed and insure the roof is intact. Then they will last for many years for people to enjoy and ponder.

Yes, the Bovet adobe is an important place and it deserves to be stewarded and cared for. If you consider the surrounding fine riparian habitat, with stands of old thick oaks and the other historic and prehistoric resources, such as the cattle tunnel and Chinese-built railroad, and the nearby Native American habitation site, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, you can only conclude that this is a valuable but neglected area which needs its habitat restored, its remaining resources



Man standing by the ruins of the Bovet--just the back corner of one wall about 12 feet high.

carefully protected, and to be officially made part of something larger, such as our canyon preserve. I personally think Carroll Canyon is even more related to Penasquitos than the recent additions of Carmel Mountain and Black Mountain Open Space. Although it is admittedly late in coming, let us now take collective action to care for this important place.



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.

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