



Canyon News

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

April, May, June, 2012
Volume 26 No. 2

New Images of the Bovet Adobe

Will Bowen, PhD

I recently came across two new images of the Pierre Bovet Adobe, which is located in Carroll Canyon—a part of the larger Sorrento Valley. These images improve our understanding of the Bovet, which is important to us because it contributes to our comprehension of the history of the region.

Both images are paintings, done in the Plein Aire style. The first image is a water color painting dating to 1913. It is the work of Eva Scott Fenyés, a wealthy resident of Pasadena, who took on the task of drawing and painting the old adobes and Missions of Southern California. She traveled around by horse, wagon, and on foot to capture her subject matter.

The second image is an oil painting done by Helen Hill, a student of the renowned San Diego Plein Aire painter Alfred Mitchell. It is dated to the 1950s.

We have to be careful in looking at paintings such as these because sometimes the painter will take “artistic license” - that is, they may alter the

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image from reality. For instance, in the Fenyés water color, there appears to be an out building near the adobe—but this may have been a cistern. In the Hill painting, a large pepper tree appears to the left of the adobe, which probably never existed, but was painted in to balance the darker cypress trees to the back right of the adobe.

Be that as it may, what we do seem to see from these paintings, when they are compared to the photographs from 1936, taken by Fenyés' daughter Lenora Curtin, after her mother's death, is that sometime between 1913 and 1936, two backrooms and a gabled roof were added to the (see page 7)



Eva Scott Fenyés watercolor painting, 1913



Helen Hill oil painting, circa 1950

Upcoming Hikes and Volunteer Opportunities

All of our hikes are free. There is a fee for the Tracking survey classes. See below for details.

Wear good trail sneakers or boots and sun protection (hat, sunscreen or both), and bring water. Call 858-484-3219 for more information.

Repeating Events

Every Saturday and Sunday:

Historic Adobe Ranch Tour

San Diego County Park docents lead a free guided tour of San Diego's second oldest standing residence, Rancho Santa María 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. The Ranch House is located on Canyonside Park Driveway off Black Mountain Road between Mira Mesa and Rancho Peñasquitos.

Every month:

Wildlife Tracking

Sat. 8 a.m. - 10 a.m. Apr. 14, May 12, June 9, July 14, Aug. 11, Sept. 8, Oct. 13, Nov. 10, Dec. 8

Join a knowledgeable San Diego Tracking team instructor for FREE informal dirt time lessons in the art of wildlife tracking. Learn how to identify the tracks and scat of coyotes, bobcats, raccoons, deer, and other wildlife in our area! No reservations necessary, just show up. Rain cancels. For more information see www.sdtt.org. Meet at the Historic Adobe Ranch House on Canyonside Park Drive and Black Mountain Road, Rancho Peñasquitos.

Volunteer Weed Warriors

Sun., 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. Apr. 22, May 27, June 24, July 22, Aug. 26, Sept. 23, Oct. 28, Nov. 25

Volunteers needed to help control invasive weeds throughout the preserve! Community service credits are available. Meet at the Rangers station office 12115 Black Mountain Road (same driveway as Canyonside Stables). Call Ranger John Garwood at 858-538-8066 for more info.

Every two months:

Black Mountain Open Space Park Citizens Advisory Committee

Thurs., 6:30 p.m. May 10, July 12, Sept. 6, Nov 8

Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. Meet in the Canyonside Recreation Center at Black Mountain Road and Canyonside Park Driveway, Rancho Peñasquitos.

Peñasquitos Canyon Citizens Advisory Committee

Thurs. 6:30 p.m. May 17, July 19, Sept. 13, Nov. 15

Public is welcome to attend this meeting to plan park activities. Meeting is at the Historic Adobe Ranch House on Canyonside Park Driveway and Black Mountain Road, Rancho Peñasquitos.

Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon Board of Directors

Tues., 7 p.m. May 1, July 3, Sept. 4, Nov. 6

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 Park Driveway, Rancho Peñasquitos

Quarterly:

Beginning Tracking Wildlife Surveys

Sat. 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Apr. 21, July 21, Oct. 20

This class prepares you to participate in surveys that monitor the wildlife in major open space preserves and other critical areas. Topics include basic recognition and identification of animal tracks and other signs, introduction to track patterns and gaits, wildlife journaling, an overview of the survey protocol, and more! Classroom time is supplemented with plenty of time in the field ("dirt time").

This training is required for survey volunteers and also serves as a prerequisite for the Intermediate Tracker/Naturalist class. After this training, students are expected to participate in at least one SDTT wildlife survey. Preregistration is not required for individuals, but requested for groups. The \$25 fee includes a number of valuable refer-

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

ence materials. Dress prepared to spend time outdoors and bring a sack lunch and water.

Also, please bring your calendar to sign up for transects. For more information: 760.715.4102 or www.sdtt.org. Meet at the Historic Adobe Ranch House on Canyonside Park Driveway and Black Mountain Road, Rancho Peñasquitos.

Intermediate Tracking for Wildlife Surveys

Class: Wed. 7- 9 p.m. Sept. 19

Field: Sat. 8 a.m.-4 p.m. Sept. 22

This class expands on the beginning training and includes recognition and interpretation of tracks and sign on a variety of surfaces. There are exercises in speculative tracking, aging, soil dynamics, debris interaction, trailing, mammal skull and dental identification, and tracking on various substrates. Additional gait interpretation is covered. Cost: \$50 (\$10 discount for SDTT or Friends members). Pre-registration required. Go to www.peñasquitos.org/classes.htm for more information or e-mail lpitt@cox.net to register.

Advanced Tracking Wildlife Surveys

Class: Wed. 7- 9 p.m. May 16, Nov. 14

Field Sat. 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. May 19, Nov. 17

The Advanced Class continues to develop your tracking proficiency. Subtle details of track identification are presented. Techniques and exercises for trailing animals through various surfaces will enable you to stay on the right track. Drills and exercises will help expand your knowledge base, point out areas to work on, and give you a preview of the tracker evaluation process. Cost: \$50 (\$10 discount for SDTT members). Pre-registration required. Go to www.peñasquitos.org/classes.htm for more information or e-mail lpitt@cox.net to register.

Hikes & Volunteer Opportunities

April

Cactus Wren Restoration Volunteer Planting Project **Sat., Apr. 7, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

Volunteer opportunity to plant natives on a new restoration site. Community service hours are available. Bring gloves, water and sun protection. RSVPs ARE REQUIRED. We can only take a small number of volunteers as we have to 4-wheel into the site. Please RSVP to Mike Kelly at mkelly1@san.rr.com.

Miner's Loop Trail Walk, Black Mountain Open Space Park **Sat., Apr. 21, 9 - 11 a.m.**

Join hike leader Arne Johanson to hike the Miner's Loop trail on the north face of Black Mountain Park. Meet at the parking staging area at 14850 Carmel Valley Road, about 1/4 mile east of the intersection with Black Mountain Road in Rancho Peñasquitos.

Herb Walk with Will Bowen **Sun. Apr. 22, 4 - 5:30 p.m.**

Learn to identify the different trees, plants and shrubs of Carmel Mountain Nature Preserve. Find out how they were used for food and medicine by

Native Americans, Spanish, and Anglo American settlers. End up with a good grasp of the native flora. Meet at the Carmel Mountain Staging Area.

Wildflower Hike

Sat. Apr. 28, 8 - 11 a.m.

Join naturalist Mary Lueking for a moderately paced, 4-5 mile loop hike from the north rim, concentrating on wildflowers. Meet at the south end of Del Vino Court .

May

Carson's Crossing - Sycamore Crossing Loop

Sat. May 5, 8 a.m.

Join naturalist Linda King on this moderately paced loop walk to the waterfall, Sycamore Crossing and Carson's Crossing. Meet at the kiosk at the end of Park Village Road at Celome Way, Rancho Peñasquitos.

Herb Walk with Will Bowen

Sun. May 27, 5 - 6:30 p.m.

Learn to identify the different trees, plants and shrubs of Carmel Mountain Nature Preserve. Find out how they were used for food and medicine by Native Americans, Spanish, and Anglo American settlers. End up with a good grasp of the native flora. Meet at the West End Parking Staging Area.

June

Carson's Crossing - Sycamore Crossing Loop

Sat. June 2, 8 a.m.

Join naturalist Linda King on this moderately paced loop walk to the waterfall, Sycamore Crossing and Carson's Crossing. Meet at the kiosk at the end of Park Village Road at Celome Way, Rancho Peñasquitos.

Night Hike with Mike Kelly

Fri. June 8, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Naturalist Mike Kelly leads this moderately paced, flat hike to enjoy the Preserve at night and see wildlife including deer, bats, and tarantulas. Meet at the kiosk at the corner of Park Village Road and Camino del Sur in Rancho Peñasquitos.

Herb Walk with Will Bowen

Sun. June 17, 5 - 6:30 p.m.

Learn to identify the different trees, plants and shrubs of Carmel Mountain Nature Preserve. Find out how they were used for food and medicine by Native Americans, Spanish, and Anglo American settlers. End up with a good grasp of the native flora. Meet at 4206 Sorrento Valley Blvd.

A Note from Our New President

Les Braund

Taking on the task of President of the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon will be challenging. Although our boundaries have been established, there are still many threats to the wellbeing of the canyon and surrounding open space. From the beginning, the Friends have monitored threats of encroachments into the preserve and responded appropriately. Threats from sewage spills, dumping of toxins, and introduction of exotic species require continued vigilance.

Dramatic change is not likely. The tradition of the Friends has been established by my predecessors. Our regular hike schedule will be unchanged. Our volunteer work parties removing exotic species and restoring habitat will continue.

A preponderance of our visitors, be they hikers, bikers, or equestrians, know little of the his-

tory of the canyon or what makes the preserve worth saving. I would like to see more efforts to educate the public on what is here, why its important, and the history of the canyon. A possibility to accomplish this would be to suggest Eagle Scout projects that contribute to increasing the knowledge of our visitors.

In the past, attendance at our hikes was sometimes disappointing. But now Pat Watkins' outreach program has increased the number of attendees by providing signage announcing dates and times of hikes. I would like to see an expanded variety of hikes. Finding hike leaders for medicinal plants, insects, spiders, or reptiles for example may be difficult. Many of these kinds of hikes are limited by collecting and gathering restrictions placed by governing bodies.

Eagle Scout Project Completed

Submitted by Tyler Quackenbush

(Ed. Note: The article originally appeared in the San Diego Seagull. The photographs were supplied by Tyler.)

Three trail heads at the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve recently received a face lift thanks to Tyler Quackenbush of BSA Troop 642.

Tyler's Eagle Scout Project consisted of constructing and installing four wooden "trash can enclosures" at each location. The wooden boxes

were created to cover the 55 gallon trash and recycling cans which have been vandalized and "trashed" to the point of being an eyesore.

Covered in dog-eared cedar planks, each box resembles a small fenced enclosure, standing roughly three-and-a-half feet tall, as well as five-and-a-half feet wide, a perfect fit for the trails themselves. To differentiate between the two cans in each box, hand routed signs reading "Trash" and "Bottles and Cans" adorn the front of each unit.

The project was funded through donations from the Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, the Peñasquitos Town Council, Lowe's, Home Depot, and money raised through a fundraiser held at Golden Spoon in Peñasquitos. With over 100 man-hours from members of the community poured into planning and completing the project, these new units have spruced up our local hiking trails in the Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, creating a more pleasant environment for canyon visitors.



Land Dedication Moves Forward

Mike Kelly, conservation chair

In our January 2012 *Canyon News* we asked for your letters of support to move Dedication of almost 2,000 acres of open space land in Peñasquitos, Carmel Valley, Gonzalez Canyon, and the Santa Luz Grasslands of Black Mtn. Open Space Park. I'm pleased to report steady progress on this measure. Your letters were among more than 800 sent on behalf of dedication.

As you'll recall, even though land may have been set aside in the City as open space land to be conserved in perpetuity, the City Council has the option to convert this land to other purposes, even to sell it off to developers — unless, and this is a big 'unless' — it has received a formal "Dedication" under provisions of both City and State Law. Formal "Dedication" gives the land a higher level of protection. Once "Dedicated" this land can't be converted to other uses without a 2/3rds vote of the public, a powerful level of protection. The only exceptions to this are for public utilities such as the reclaimed water line recently constructed in dedicated parkland in Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve.

First indication of progress toward dedication was when the City Council took up the "Dedication" issue for about 10,000 acres, including our parcels, instead of leaving it to the Rules Committee, a sub-committee of the City Council. At its full meeting the City Council voted to recommend the City support "Dedication" legislation to be put forward by State Senator Christine Kehoe in Sacramento. While "Dedication" can be achieved at either the City or State level, it saves the City hundreds of thousands of dollars in process fees and staff time to have it done at the State Level.

The vote to support Kehoe's bill was almost unanimous. City Councilman Carl DeMaio, one of the Republican Party candidates for mayor of San Diego, was the lone dissenting vote. He voted against the legislation since he didn't receive any

support for adding a list of his own legislative priorities to the City's package.

The second bit of good news was the actual introduction of Senate Bill SB 1169 on Feb. 25 in Sacramento with bi-partisan support. Assemblyman Nathan Fletcher, one of the Republican Party candidates for mayor of San Diego, issued a press release supporting the Dedication legislation.

Our third piece of good news was the 11-1 vote by the Rancho Peñasquitos Community Planning Group to support dedication of all but two parcels. Eric Bowlby of San Diego Canyonlands (www.sdcanyonlands.org) made the presentation of the issue at the group and did a great job of answering questions, concerns, and negotiating workable compromises to win their support. I was there representing the Friends, but didn't have to intervene since Eric did such a great job.

One of these parcels turns out to be privately owned and not City open space. The other is the Darkwood Canyon (parcel #H5134U) from Park Village Rd up to Sundance St. The group indicated it supports eventual dedication, but just not at this time due to construction of the middle portion of Camino del Sur up one of the finger canyons of this parcel. This road segment is strongly supported by the community since the neighborhoods in Park Village are locked in a one-outlet cul-de-sac now, dangerous during emergencies such as the recent fires. Once built, this road segment will connect to SR56. Once built, the group said it would support dedication.

The last step in the process lies with Sen. Kehoe at the State level, and that is garnering enough support to bring it to a successful vote in the legislature. We'll let you know if your further support is needed.

Life and Death on Del Mar Mesa

Brian Swanson

Today, Friday March 16, I visited Del Mar Mesa. The skies were overcast, but the temperature felt like it was about 70 degrees. I noticed about a dozen bikers, usually in clusters of four or five, enjoying rides on the single and double tracked trails. Songbirds were calling and lines of ants busied themselves going here and there with evident purpose. Nightshade, Blue Dicks, Chamise, Morning Glory, Monkey Flower and Lemonadeberry were found along the trails.

Many of us have hiked on other mesas with names like Otay, Kearny, Mira or Claremont. Today most of those mesas are covered in houses. But not here, not yet. Once, years ago, our mesas all had vernal pools. Now only relics remain.

That's why Del Mar Mesa is so special. Del Mar Mesa still has vernal pools. And many of them are "alive" this time of year.

What makes a vernal pool? Water, at the right time, is critical for vernal pool life on the mesa.

Without winter and spring



rains, there is no life. I noticed a number of depressions of varying depth on my hike today. Some were deep, but bone dry. Others were shallow, and slightly damp. Some were like miniature lakes, brimming with water, the surface of the pools broken by protruding water plants. Some of the pools had completely dried up. I eagerly peered into each pool I happened upon. Most appeared devoid of life. A number had various plants. Nearby some pools I saw button celery and wooly marbles, distinctive vernal pool-adapted plants. I saw rabbit, deer and dog tracks. And lots of

bicycle tracks right through some of the pools (how thoughtless).

Classic vernal pools are natural depressions on the mesas that fill with water from the rains. A few, rare plants and animals have evolved to survive through wet and dry conditions. Plants survive the summers by depositing seeds, which wait for the rains to sprout and quickly reproduce.

The fairy shrimp and western spadefoot toads have their own survival techniques. The translucent shrimp lay eggs in tiny cysts, which won't hatch until they've been submerged in water for about 48 hours. Then they quickly mature to their $\frac{3}{4}$ inch mature size, mate and lay eggs before the pool evaporates. The toads burrow deep into the soil, often in rodent burrows, and aestivate (similar to hibernation) to survive the hot dry summers. The pounding of raindrops on the mesa softens the soil and awakens them from their sleep.

Today I found pools that had dried up early, with their plump tadpoles shriveled into specks of

gray. I also found one pool about two feet long by about one foot, with the merest bit of water. In that small space there were approximately two hundred tiny, tadpoles. Their fate hung in the balance, and didn't look very promising. However, the sky was overcast, so evaporation was low. And heavy rain is forecast. I hope to return after the weekend, and once the roads and trails are passable, to learn the fate of these tiny pollywogs.

The next time you see a pool on the mesa, think of the story that it holds, and if it's holding water, you might take a closer look.

(Bovet adobe cont.)

adobe. This was probably done to renew and refurbish the structure, which is periodically necessary for adobe structures which are relatively unstable due to the nature of adobe. The materials for the renewal were probably brought in by railroad, as the track was nearby.

Then, sometime between 1936 and 1950, the two back rooms were removed, no doubt for the wood.

Outside of their historical value, the paintings are beautiful in their own right, especially the Hill painting, which shows an incredible use of color in representing the Bovet adobe.

Membership Application

Membership category: (circle 1 below)

Senior (62) or Student \$10	Individual \$15
Family \$20	Sponsor \$30
Corporate \$250	Life \$1000
Patron \$100	
Contribution \$ _____	

I/We are interested in the following:

____ Volunteer to help a committee (call to discuss)

____ Hikes

____ Indian Culture

____ Educational Workshops

____ School, Family, Youth Programs

____ Environment (Plants, birds, mammals, geology)

Other: _____

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Email _____

Please make checks payable to:

Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
P.O. Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196

Thank you for your support! Your donation is tax deductible.
Call **858.484.3219** or **858.342.8856** for more information.

Don't be left out!

Want to keep up with all the events sponsored by the Friends of Peñasquitos Canyon? Get all the latest information and details by giving us your email address. Email your contact information to Mike Kelly at mkelly1@san.rr.com or to Pat Watkins at pwatkins2008@gmail.com.

Friends' Directory

Officers

President: Les Braund	858-566-3958
Vice-President: Don Albright	619.443.5937
Treasurer: Pat Watkins	858.538.2527
Secretary: Edward DiBella	619.563.0717

Other Members of the Board of Directors

Jeanie Anderson, Anne Harvey, Mike Kelly, Mary Lueking, Janet Nelson, Brian Swanson

Walk Leaders

Don Albright, Will Bowen, Diana Gordon, Arne Johansen, Mike Kelly, Linda King, Mary Lueking, David Robertson, Brian Swanson, Pat Watkins

Committees

Conservation Chair: Mike Kelly, 858.342.8856
Newsletter: Janet Nelson, 619.519.3150
nelson.janet1@gmail.com
Tracking Team Coordinator: Rick Botta,
858.672.0584
Webmaster: Beth Williams



Friends of Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve, Inc.
P O Box 26523, San Diego, CA 92196
858-484-3219 www.Peñasquitos.org

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If your expiration date is close or has come and gone, please take the time to send in a renewal check for your membership dues and save us the postage for reminder mailings!



Views From the Next Cactus Wren Restoration Site

Can you figure out where the new site is located?

A hint: It's not in Los Peñasquitos Canyon...

