



Sierra Madre: What John Muir Saw in 1877

By Ed Andersen

In 1877, the San Gabriel Valley was a patchwork of small villages, ranches and Indian settlements. Arcadia’s Elias J. “Lucky” Baldwin had just purchased the sprawling Rancho Santa Anita, and Sierra Madre’s founder Nathaniel Carter was still living with his family on their bountiful 17-acre Willowdale estate in San Gabriel. It would be ten years before Monrovia became the first nearby town to be incorporated as a City of Los Angeles County.

However, despite being wild and unsettled, the San Gabriel Valley attracted national attention in newspapers and magazines throughout the country. Early writers extolled the area’s rustic beauty and encouraged

readers to visit the area to see the extensive orange groves and vineyards and experience the valley’s warm local hospitality. The Sierra Madre Villa hotel, established by William F. Cogswell and William Rhoades in 1873, had earned a reputation as one of the finest hotels in the West and was a prime destination for many of these people.

So, it was not a surprise when two famous travelers arrived on the scene in the summer of 1877. While the two men were friends, they could not have been more different from one another. The first was naturalist John Muir, who came to visit friends in Pasadena, and explore the San Gabriel Mountains. The second was Carleton E. Watkins, who was the principal photographer for Collis Huntington’s Central Pacific Railroad. That summer they each made a significant contribution to local history that can never be forgotten.

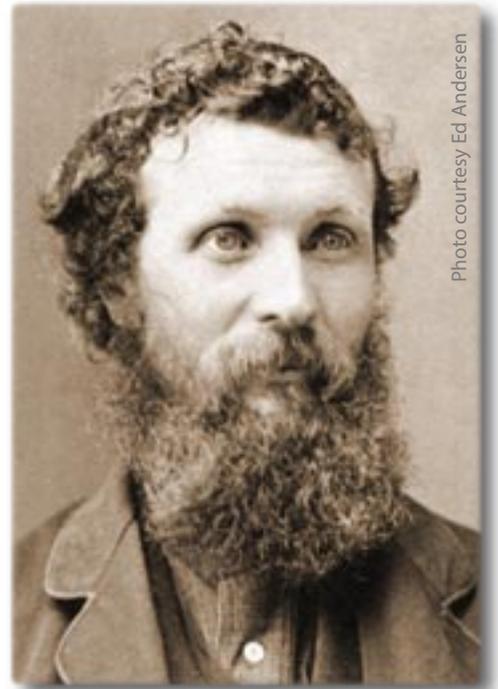


Photo courtesy Ed Andersen

Hear about what naturalist John Muir and photographer Carleton E. Watkins encountered here in 1877 and why they are important to local history.

Ed Andersen, President of Arcadia Historical Society and Muir historian, will tell us all about it at the Hart Park House on June 15 at 7:00

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John Muir was educated in the school on nature, a self-taught botanist who discovered dozens of species of plants, hitherto unknown to science. He was an inventor and a fine geologist, who probably knew more about glaciers than any scientist of the times. Shortly after arriving on foot from Los Angeles in early August, Muir headed straight for the San Gabriel Mountains. He walked

eastward along Orange Grove Avenue and made his way into Eaton Canyon, becoming the first person to document the difficult hike from the valley floor to the top of Mt. Wilson. Muir got a grand look at what we now call Sierra Madre and later recorded his impressions in his first book, “The Mountains of California,” published in 1895.

Talkin' Rocks

The Rockitecture talk in February was a big success!

Architect Barry Schweiger told us about the building and endurance of Southern California's river rock homes, churches, castles, waiting stations, and even water troughs built in the period of 1885-1935. *Note our own rockitecture in the background – the fireplace in the Hart Park House!*



Photos by Jean Coleman

President's Message

Summer is soon upon us, and it is time to update you on all we have been involved in this past Spring! Many of you were able to visit us at our booth during the Wistaria Festival and more recently at the Friends of the Library's Art Fair. We have added many new members to our SMHPS family because of the hard work of our docents at these booths. Your memberships are so important to us because that money helps to keep the museums running, bring in speakers for our programs throughout the year, and support our archives at the library. So, thank you!

By the time this newsletter goes out we will have had our program at the Search & Rescue. We know how important their work is to our community and like to take the time to share their history with our members. It is always a learning experience to visit the Search & Rescue Team at their home base on Stonehouse. We thank them for all their dedication and hard work!

We will have a booth at the Trail Race on Sat. May 27th which will feature hiking-related books and maps. With the help of Jeff Lapedes, we will be continuing Dr. White's legacy sharing pictures and memorabilia of the first Trail Race. We hope to see you down at Kersting Court to visit our booth and cheer on the runners.

Did someone mention "CEMETERY TOUR"? Yes!! We are hoping to bring back our "Tour of our Famously Departed" this coming October! We have started to gather volunteers (ages 12-100) who would like to portray some of our well-known pioneers. With the help of scripted dialogue and rehearsal, they will tell us stories about who they once were! If you are interested in participating as an actor for this event, please contact Leslie at 626-321-7735.

November brings us to a tour of E. Waldo Ward & Son. This historic "step back in time" ranch has made jellies and jams since 1891. This unique business has been passed down through three generations of the Ward family. Walk around, tour the factory's grounds and visit their amazing gift shop. This will be a great time to pick up those early Holiday gifts!!

We continue our School Tours throughout the year and enjoy all the enthusiasm of the students, teachers, and parents as they learn some of the amazing history of our town. We also provide private tours for small groups to experience the history of Lizzie's Trail Inn and the Richardson House.



One of our ongoing goals is to have the roof fixed at Lizzie's and the backroom demonstration kitchen completed at the Richardson House. Because these museums are owned by the City we are "on their timeline." We have waited for over 10 years for the roof to be fixed and more than 16 to have the back room of the Richardson House converted to a demonstration kitchen (which was Lizzie's extra kitchen for the restaurant and where the Still was kept!). We are happy that our past City Council and the present City Council are finally seeing the importance of keeping the historic buildings of our city updated. We hope that these projects will be completed in the NEAR future!

I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events. Stop by Lizzie's on a Saturday from 10 -12 for a visit on the porch – and bring a friend!

Leslie Ziff
Co-President



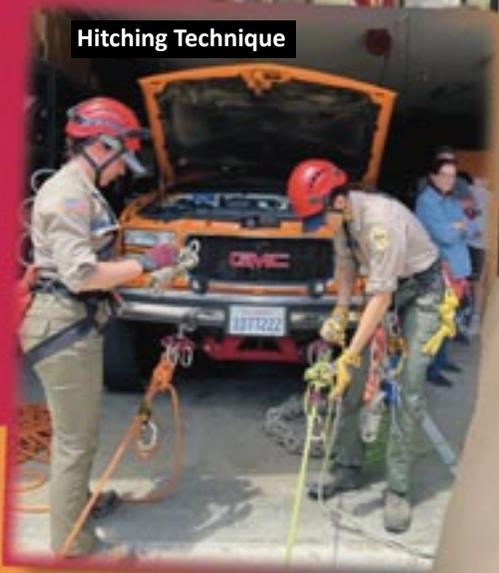
FIRST Responders

In May, Sierra Madre Search & Rescue gave us a tour of their facility and a demonstration of their techniques.



Our Speaker

Hitching Technique



Rappelling Demonstration

Thanks to Our Photographers
Speaker & Uniform: Shannon King
Hitching Technique: Frank Moore
Rappelling & Guests: Christel Chang

Our Booth at the Wistaria Festival



Photos: Shannon King

What John Muir Saw

Continued from page 1

Carleton Watkins was well-connected in elite social circles from New York to San Francisco, and his enviable list of wealthy clients funded his photography business. Watkins came with more fanfare than Muir, arriving in two railroad cars with tons of gear that included his familiar horse-drawn wagon, cumbersome cameras and bulky glass plates and chemicals.

Watkins was an innovator who was among the first to use wide-angle lenses and he was the first photographer to make "mammoth plate" images. It is believed that Watkins was a guest at Cogswell's Hotel, both in 1877 and again in 1880. He photographed the hotel and the surrounding area from several different vantage points and the extant images reveal what Sierra Madre looked like more than 150 years ago.



Photo courtesy Ed Andersen

Carleton Watkins



Cogswell's Hotel c.1877

Up at the Museums

by Diane Sands

The weather is getting warmer, the rain seems mostly behind us, and now is a great time to visit Lizzie's Trail Inn and Richardson House!

December 17 we held our holiday open house at the museums, with goodies both savory and sweet and plenty of drinks (of the non-alcoholic kind!). We had a wonderful turnout of members, local residents, friends, and hikers. It was a lovely day and everyone seemed to really enjoy themselves.

Our cataloging and photography of our museum pieces hit a hiatus through the winter and early spring due to the tremendous amounts of rain we received. Since we are photographing using natural light, the lack of sunlight put a damper on that. Having no heating in Richardson House also caused a delay as the rain caused the building to be mighty cold inside! But have no fear! Work is picking up again in June and should progress through the nice summer and fall months.

We lost longtime supporter Dr. Bill White in October last year, but had a lovely memorial for him in November at Trail Inn.



Dr. Bill White Memorial

Photo: Diane Sands

People from all kinds of areas that Dr. White was involved in attended, from museum folks to hikers, Search & Rescue, Methodist Hospital, Trail Race people, and family and friends. It was a lovely turnout and Patti White and family honored us with their presence. He will be missed greatly at our museums, especially at Lizzie's.

It has been our pleasure to entertain a few children's tour groups these past months, with the latest being a school group set to tour in late May. These groups have been from the local schools, as well as from a Brownie/Girl Scout troop. There was even a Scout who attended our tour, then came back on the weekend with her mother and sister, and proceeded to give them part of the tour in Richardson House! Future docent in the making for sure!

As usual, we acquired a few new odds and ends at both museums from our members and friends. Needless to say, we

don't have a lot of space to add much, but have been able to take in a few small pieces, such as a couple of beautiful dinner plates courtesy Dane Lenton for the table in Richardson House's parlor.



We're all dressed up for the Open House!

Photo: Diane Sands

Members of the City Council continue to reassure us that they have not forgotten their promise to repair the roof on Lizzie's and the shed in the back of Richardson House. We are eagerly waiting for the day that they have bids, accept one, and start in on the long awaited fixes we so greatly need.

We continue to sell memberships and books at the museums, and enjoy the camaraderie of our porch brigade which comes to meet and swap stories every Saturday. When not giving tours, these folks keep us entertained and smiling, both on Lizzie's porch and Richardson's porch.

The rocks in our rock garden continue to come and go, and visitors are happy to hear that we may have another rock event in the future. Mothers who stop by with their children happily tell the kids that they should paint a rock at home and bring it to the garden, and then will be able to take a different rock away from the garden. Bring one, take one. And so it goes.

As the rock garden changes, so do we and the museums, trying to improve as time moves on. We look forward to having any of you join us to visit or to docent with us. Being a docent is not hard – you can shadow one of us, we have cheat cards to help, and it is only for a two-hour stint. You meet lovely people, sometimes get donations to SMHPS if you entertain them well, learn history, enjoy lovely weather on the porch, and wave at the people who walk by asking "Do you live here?"

That's your cue to say, no, but it's a free museum and would you like to come in and learn more? Or you can say, yes, and invite them in to see your place. Both work and it's a lot of fun! And sometimes they even take your picture and put you on the internet!

Hope to see you soon Up at the Museums!

SMHPS Business

2022-2023 Calendar

May 6 & 7	Booth at the Art Fair
May 20	Search & Rescue tour
May 27	Trail Race booth
June 15	General meeting & John Muir talk
July 9	Board planning meeting
July 20	Board meeting
August	Dark
September 21	Board meeting
October TBA	Cemetery tour
October 19	Board meeting
November 11	E. Waldo Ward tour
November 16	Board meeting
December TBA	Holiday party

Membership Bonanza!

WE ARE VERY EXCITED TO WELCOME OVER 50 NEW MEMBERS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Jeffery & Diana Shaw | Charles & Priscilla Bidwell |
| Elizabeth Booth | Tom Caulfield |
| Ron Martinetti | Ginny DiBias |
| Linda Graves | Gerri Dole |
| Chris & Cheryl Ciufu | Bictgor Fong |
| Kirk & Xochitl Jackson | Janet & Keith Gillespie |
| Richard Scott | Wendy Hellstrom |
| Veronica Barba & Jay Sewell | Karen Hill |
| Caroline Hawkins-Ocario | Olivia & Aaron Hinojosa |
| Alexander Weitzel | Mark Hoelzel |
| Bria Maez | Kim Kelley |
| Debbie Ferris | Bridget Marshall |
| Marilyn Chew | Susan Miali |
| M.J. Pedroza | Jeremiah Neese |
| Wayne Lam | David Nickoloff |
| Daniela Romero | Ben Rawls |
| Mike Merrigan | Christina Rivera |
| Janine & Eric Gregory | Adam Sanchez |
| R.J. & Jamie Arnett | Samantha Smith |
| Frances de Guzman | Allen Sun |
| K. Youngstrom | James Vitale |
| Leslie Owen | Pat Wickhen |
| Bobbi Perry | Jeff Dapper |
| Peter Lamendola | Min Yang |
| Richard & Mary Ann Wisz | Patrick Kelley |
| Andrienne & Fernando Alegre | Joanna & Fred Lenkchorst |
| Susan Gallagher | Jimmy Lillard |
| Colin & Megan Barr | Brad Clarke |
| Victoria Abdawa | |

**SIERRA MADRE HISTORICAL PRESERVATION SOCIETY
P.O. Box 202, Sierra Madre, CA 91025-0202
Membership / Donation Form**

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Membership Level	Specific Donations
___ \$20 <i>Individual</i>	\$_____ <i>Sierra Madre Historical Archives</i>
___ \$25 <i>Family</i>	\$_____ <i>Oral History Program</i>
___ \$5 <i>Student</i>	\$_____ <i>Museums</i>
___ \$30 <i>Contributing</i>	\$_____ <i>Richardson House</i>
___ \$60 <i>Patron</i>	\$_____ <i>Lizzie's Trail Inn</i>
___ \$100 <i>Supporting</i>	
___ \$500 <i>Lifetime</i>	

Total Enclosed: \$ _____
Please make check payable to SMHPS

The Sierra Madre Historical Preservation Society is a 501(c)(3).
 Your contributions are deductible within the limits of the law.
 Thank You.

Yes, I would like to be a volunteer for the SMHPS _____

Maggie Ellis
Membership Chair



Sierra Madre Historical Preservation Society
P.O. Box 202, Sierra Madre, CA 91025-0202
(626) 836-6709
www.smhps.org

👉 Upcoming Program! 👈

Sierra Madre: What John Muir Saw in 1877

June 15 | 7:00 pm
Hart Park House in Memorial Park

Photo: Arcadia
Chamber of Commerce



Our Speaker:
Ed Andersen
*President of Arcadia
Historical Society and
Muir historian*

SIERRA MADRE HISTORY



Southern California Story:
Seeking a Better Life in Sierra Madre



On Sale at Arnold's Hardware,
Lizzie's Trail Inn, and the Library **\$25**