



# Poway Echoes

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A NEWSLETTER OF THE POWAY HISTORICAL AND MEMORIAL SOCIETY

*Celebrating 50 Years of Preserving Poway's Past for the Future*

Jeff Frye, President

Spring, 2015

Joye Davisson, Editor

[powayhistoricalsociety.org](http://powayhistoricalsociety.org)

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The coastal breeze that reminds us of springtime is starting to blow again. The hills are green and the days are getting longer. The Poway Historical and Memorial Society is glad of that, we have a busy spring schedule here at Old Poway Park.

On Saturday April 11, the Poway Valley Garden Club will hold their annual Flower Show. The museum and r Nelson House will showcase some of these clever compositions. If you enjoy creative art come by and have a look.

The following weekend will be a new feature here at the Park called "History Day". The idea of this event is to follow a historical theme throughout the park. The initial History Day will be called "Workin' on the Railroad". On Sunday, April 19 there will be train songs and folk music, our museum has an exhibit of Hallmark Christmas Trains, the Poway Station model train club will have their exhibits set up, and of course the old steam engine will be operating.

Springtime will also feature the Community Band Festival on Saturday, May 16 and Sunday, May 17. It is always a treat to hear these bands perform, so please come out and enjoy the music.

On Saturday, May 23 and Sunday, May 24 the park will host an "Old Fashioned Family Day" and camp-out. Families can B.B.Q. and camp in the green picnic areas. There will be photo opportunities around the train cars, the locomotive, and other park areas.

Families can enjoy camp fire storytelling, organized games, as well as other activities.

Coinciding with "Old Fashioned Family Day", on Saturday May 23 will be the second "History Day" of the spring. The historical theme for this event will be "Wild, Wild West". The day will involve the Apache Canyon Gang and Shadow Ridge Regulators re-enactment groups. Train rides and family campsites will be thrilled with the wild west shoot outs as well as photo opportunities with the actors.

There is a new attraction here in the Old Poway Park area and we would like to welcome the San Diego Toy and Doll Museum. Exhibits feature a vast collection of Lego toys dating as early as pre 1950's. The museum has a gift shop and is located at 14031 Midland Road exactly behind Café Lilly.

What a great weekend in and around Old Poway Park. Entertainment includes the Boardwalk Crafts, the Farmer's Market, the Nelson House, the Museum, Poway Midland Railroad, and now the Toy and Doll Museum.

In closing, a quote from Pearl Buck; "If you want to understand today, you have to search yesterday". We want to thank everyone for their contributions in helping to maintain and preserve Poway's history. Through all of our efforts we are helping to strengthen our community, and build square foundations for future generations.

~ Jeff Frye.

## GROWING UP IN POWAY

Growing up in Poway was probably similar in many ways to growing up in rural Eastern Montana.

My Dad Ernie Briscoe brought his girls, Cyndy, Patty, and Barbara to Poway in 1956 to a home he bought in Pacific Beach and moved out to the property off Midland Road.

Barbara was a baby, I was four years old and Cyndy was six. For my Mom, Addie Briscoe this wasn't a similar landscape or lifestyle. She grew up in Missoula, a college town in Western Montana. She was familiar with sidewalks, movie theaters, rivers and trees, lots of trees. She also grew up with a large Lebanese family of five sisters, grand parents, aunts, uncles and cousins. Poway didn't have trees or rivers, sidewalks, and none of her family was here. She made the most of it, but never really accepted the fact her girls were riding motorcycles, horses and hitting back roads in pick-up trucks. We didn't have much else to do. Not like she did living in the city.

When we were very young we spent most of our time outside, making up our own fun by building roads, forts and raising chickens, not a far cry from how Dad grew up.

Mom kept herself busy with raising three girls, and keeping a nice home for her husband. She stayed home for the most part until we were older she got a job working at the school cafeteria and then up the hill at NCR. Finally in the late 60's one of her sisters moved here and I remember the fun they had, including shopping at the Big Bear market, it can still put me into stitches remembering how much they laughed together.

Dad on the other hand fell in love with Poway. He must have felt at home here because he had to drive to Convair in San Diego and make the return trip everyday. I remember he got up at 4:00 AM to get ready, and arrived home at 5:30 PM.

My sisters and I would walk to Midland School from our house when we were very young. We took our lunch sacks with paper wrapped sandwiches and

walked past the tall green grass that grew over the septic tank through Grandma's yard.

We'd follow the light brown trail through the empty field to Putney Road and if the winter were cold, we'd jump on the thin ice covered puddles on the black-top street.

Midland Road had two rows of very large Eucalyptus trees. Walking between them darkened the sky and created a fantasy world for my sisters and I. We fashioned curled bark platters and used seedpods to serve up our make-believe hors d' oeuvres.

I grew up in Poway in the 50's. There wasn't a lot of canned fun in those days. Our imaginations created our fun. We played outside most of the time, building and digging. We built dirt roads, which were graded with flat board tractors, using small rocks to line the roads that lead to our statute horse ranches. We would winnie and kick up our heels pretending to be wild stallions. We watched ants drag seeds and build a fortress of casings around their underground empires. We took shovel fulls of black and red ants just to watch them fight. We searched for horned (horney) toads and teased trap door spiders into thinking we were the next meal.

Our neighbor Sidney Anderson owned the local Stationary Store and what was more impressionable for us was a pet skunk, and the cool old green car she drove.

One hot summer our family pulled up lawn chairs to watch a tarantula and a tarantula hawk perform an epic battle.

Like I said we didn't have much else to entertain us. Poway had no public transportation and even if it did there was no place to go. No theater, no bowling alley, we even drove to Escondido on Saturdays, when mom got to use the car to do our grocery shopping at Rube Nelsons.

Our Cousin Beth lived in Claremont. She learned ballet and tap dance she even knew how to roller-skate. We didn't, Poway didn't have sidewalks

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and we lived on a dirt road. Besides we were busy riding bikes and horses.

Our town grew up with us. Even our own rural neighborhood changed. More houses, more people, and more cars. Trees I once climbed and carved my name into were no longer standing. Paths we walked on and the trails we rode on were replaced with housing tracts.

I left Poway in 1978 to live in Oregon and raised my family of two boys. When the kids were young we would pack up our station wagon and make the long drive back to Poway as often as we could.

Poway has changed a lot, but something that never changes is the sense of a place. Like how the air

smells after a rain, and the spooky feeling of an October Santa Anna wind. Feeling the texture of sand under my bare feet and the smell of the wild sage growing wild on the hillsides were instantly familiar.

I was lucky to have grown up in the same home that my family never left. Even to this present day the feeling of being home is a feeling of comfort.

~Patricia Bean

Patricia Bean is the daughter of Ernie Briscoe a long time member of Poway Historical Society. She is a professional photographer living in Poway, helping to care for her elderly Mom, Addie Briscoe. Ernie passed in 2006.

## ERNIE BRISCOE AND HIS PHOTOGRAPHY

Dad wanted to have a career in photography; it was one of the things he loved the most. In 1942, before moving to San Diego, Ernie, in his 20's, went to Art Center School in Los Angeles and studied the Ansel Adams technique of black and white photography.

He opened a studio in Missoula, Montana called the Campus Camera and that is how he met Mom. She was working at a film-developing lab in the basement of the Wilma Theatre where Dad took his film in to be developed.

Some of his shots were published but the demands and undependable income wasn't good enough to support his new family so he moved to Pacific Beach, California where his sister and her family had just moved.

The photographs of the ranch life he went home to the summer

of 1942 are on display at the Poway Historical Museum during the March.

All the years growing up, dad took great pictures of family, and of Poway most of which he would print in his own darkroom.

He used his photographic and building abilities to help out at the Historical Society, his involvement has provided better record keeping and preservation of the museum's photographic collection.



~Patricia Bean

Poway Historical and Memorial Society  
P. O. Box 19  
Poway, CA 92074-0019

**OLD TIME DARKROOM AND  
PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT**

There will be an exhibit reception and  
darkroom discussion on March 7<sup>th</sup> at  
11:00 AM presented by Patty Bean,

**POWAY HISTORICAL AND MEMORIAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

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Optional: I would like to help with:    Artifacts             Docent in Nelson House   
Library     Special Events     Tours     Docent in Museum     Research