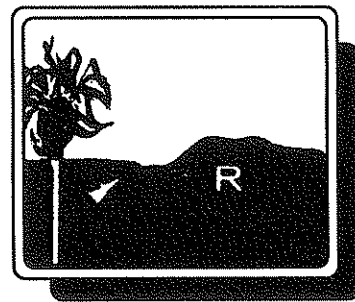


# REDLANDS CHRONICLES



March, 2007

## "The History of the Harris Company 1905-1999."

Aimnee Rodriguez, A.K. Smiley Public Library

Monday, March 26th, 7:00pm

Assembly Room, A.K. Smiley Public Library

The Redlands Area Historical Society will take a trip down memory lane at the March 26th meeting at A.K. Smiley Library. Aimnee Rodriguez, Library Specialist assigned to the Young Readers' Room of Smiley Library, will present her power point program on "The History of the Harris Company 1905-1999." The Harris Company Department Store was a fixture on East State Street for decades before moving to the Redlands Mall and becoming the anchor of the mall.

Aimnee Rodriguez is an alumna from the University of Redlands and graduated in 1993 with a B.A. in history and a California teaching credential. She taught English in Costa Rica, English as a second language for Bloomington High, and social science at Arrowview Middle School in San Bernardino. Ms. Rodriguez then received her M.A. in Public History. Her graduate studies allowed her to work for institutions such as the Timken Museum of Art, the San Diego Historical Society, and for preservation architect Milford Wayne Donaldson. While working in San Diego, Ms. Rodriguez began her research on the Harris *Continued, page 3*

## Old House Group Meeting

Wednesday, March 21, 7:00pm

522 Alvarado Street

The March OLD HOUSE GROUP meeting will be held at the 1909 Arts-and-Crafts style home of Sandy and Stephen Miller. As many as four or five families are believed to have occupied the home during its almost one hundred year history. The present family room is thought to have been an office for a doctor or lawyer as it has its own dedicated side entrance.

The Craftsman Bungalow features a slate roof and ten-foot ceilings as well as a rock fireplace. Upstairs an original sun porch with two entrances can be found where perhaps many a July or August night found family members cooling off after a hot Redlands summer day.

The Millers have lived in the home for about three-and-one-half years. One of their many projects was the construction of a new deck under a beautiful old oak tree in the backyard. In September 2003, Redlands Horticultural and Improvement Society revived the 1896 Smiley Brothers program to recognize outstanding front yard landscapes in the Redlands area. In July 2006, the Horticultural Society presented the RHIS Front Yard of the Month Award\* to the Millers for their beautifully designed front yard.

*Continued, page 3*

## A Letter from your President...

Have you ever wanted to be a fly on the wall? Joining the Old House Group (OHG) at one of the old houses they visit each month can almost give you that opportunity. One of my friends (you know whom you are!) lovingly calls the group "Snoop and Snack" because we roam freely through these homes before the meeting actually begins then enjoy treats courtesy of the homeowners. Not only do these gracious hosts allow us into their private sanctum but then they give us food! It takes a special person or, in the case of most homes, persons to welcome a group of strangers into their home. These persons are literally the "heart and sole" of the Old House Group; without such generous people in our town OHG would not exist.

Not only does this group have fun but we also learn something at these meetings. Members are encouraged to discuss their upcoming, ongoing or completed renovation projects. We always have time for questions regarding how to accomplish some type of repair or renovation. Each member contributes what they know so that the whole group can benefit. In conjunction with the "Riverside Renovators" we have compiled a list of recommended contractors and craftsmen in many different disciplines of the building trades. This list is free to any member of the Redlands Area Historical Society (just go to our website [www.rahs.org](http://www.rahs.org) and click on "resource list" then send an email requesting a copy). In our own small way the members of the Old House Group are true preservationist; renovating one house at a time. Please join us, on the third Wednesday of the month, to see what other preservation minded members are up to.

This is a good time to urge every member to get involved! Getting involved can be simply attending one of our own genealogy workshops (which are free), participating in the Inland Orange Conservancy's "Keep to Eat" program or volunteering at Family Service. Even contributing a single can *continued, back page*

## Special "Patron Saints' Day" Tour March 17th!

The Redlands Area Historical Society will be celebrating the birth of the Smiley brothers 179 years ago with a tour of the Smiley Park neighborhood March 17th beginning at 10am near the entrance of A.K. Smiley Library. The tour leader is Tom Atchley, Redlands High School social studies teacher and writer of the 1989 tour. A \$10.00 fee will be collected for the tour to benefit the historical society's Heritage Home book.

This neighborhood tour boasts two National Historic buildings, philanthropy of our patron saints, our first park and hospital, The Bowl, The Lincoln Shrine, City Hall, split-stone curbs and walls, and Victorian architecture including the Classic Box, Mission Revival and the California Bungalow. Redlanders identify this neighborhood as retaining those qualities of the past that are well-worth preserving. Smiley Park and its environs bespeak traditional values intermingling with the present forming an ambiance that is unique in 2007.

The Redlands Historic and Scenic Preservation Commission originally commissioned this tour to help foster appreciation of the past while promoting stewardship and tourism today.

The Smileys will be honored first at the pansy garden near the entrance to the library. Proceeding along West Vine and the Linda Pew statue of the Smiley twins, the West Vine Street homes will be discussed along with the 100th Anniversary of Redlands Community Hospital, which has its roots on Vine.

From West Vine the tour turns south on Fourth Street to West Olive. Here Sacred Heart Church and the school become the focus. Along West Olive some of the foremost Redlands families of the early 1900s built their homes. The neighborhood enjoyed electric trolleys, observed orange groves from lofty towers, or in the case of William F. Holt, the developer of the Imperial Valley, cast a wide net in Redlands for investment dollars.

Returning to Parkwood the tour follows the west end of Smiley Park, Glenwood Drive, and heads north on Grant Street. Some of the small unique homes date to the 1880s. Turning right on Brookside Avenue, the Pure Gold building dates from 1927, when Redlands dominated the citrus industry of Southern California. Turning right again on Eureka Street the unique Spanish architecture of the Post Office is featured. Completing the circle the tour returns on Eureka Street, named for the Eureka Mills Mine of Northern California, where many of the early residents of Brookside Avenue once sought the golden promise.

Good walking shoes are recommended. Wearing green is required. Celebrating the arrival of the Smiley Brothers and their birthday is the theme.

*Harris Company, continued*

family and presented her program to the San Bernardino Historical Society last year.

The Harris Company began in San Bernardino in 1905 and expanded to Redlands in 1908. Harris Brothers, Leslie, Harold and Melville eventually had stores in Colton, Indio and Lake Arrowhead. Harris Brothers purchased the old Randall and Merriam Dry Goods store on Orange Street in 1908. Needing more display space, the store moved to 17-23 East State Street in 1915. The store doubled in size in just two years moving into the Smith Brothers Oriental Gift Store. Disaster hit the company on September 26, 1925 in the worst downtown fire on East State Street, which leveled the store. The Harris Company rebuilt the store and celebrated its 25th Anniversary in Redlands in April, 1933 with a building photo for which Philip and Harold Harris proudly posed.

Harris family members were known in the San Bernardino Valley for their civic mindedness and many contributions to the betterment of communities here. Leslie was co-founder of the 1921 American Legion Post 106, Chairman of the first war bond campaign in 1942, President of the San Bernardino Chamber of Commerce, and member of the National Orange Show Board of Directors.

Harold Harris was director and vice-president of Redlands Kiwanis Club, president of the Merchants Division of the Redlands Chamber, fund raising chairman of the YMCA, publicity chairman of Community Chest, finance chairman of the Community Music Association (Bowl), and Fellow and University Associates member of the University of Redlands.

Ms. Rodriguez has invited members of the Harris family to attend. Her program begins at 7:00 p.m. in the Assembly Room and will capture a business and family with roots in the San Bernardino Valley for over a century.



*Old House Group, continued*

Although Sandy and Stephen have put the house up for sale, they do not plan to move away from the Redlands area. Sandy has her own business and plans to relocate in East Redlands where she will have more room to conduct her business from home. The Millers and the Old House Group hope you will come and learn more about this historic home on one of Redlands great old streets.

New and Renewing Members

<i>Individual/ Family</i>	Wallman, Bonnie & James
Boone, JoAnn & John	Ward, Ralph & Pearl
Bohr, Tom H.	Waters, Virginia
Brown-Jensen, William & Wendy	
Clark, Robin	<i>Contributing</i>
Covington, Mary E.	Bishop, Carol E.
Coy, C. Brock	Campbell, Brian, Theresa & Dianne
Cuny, Lucas	Grant, Hal & Cornelia
Curley, Tim & Toni	McDowell, Michael & Meryl
Curtis, Marcus & Theresa	Noble, Bertha
Doolittle, Phillip L.	Parsons, Ted & Judith
Dusenberry, Ruth Sarah & Natalie	Slemmer, Thomas & Elizabeth
Eden, Howard	Vroman, Laura
Fitzpatrick, Douglas & Janet	
Gomes, John & Vicki	<i>Donor</i>
Hayden, Patty	Andriese, Jack
Herendeen, Frank & Rosemary	Bloom, Brian R.
Holmes, Mary Jo & J.E.	Hatfield, Bill & Lori
Howell, Nicole & Marquis	Hunter, Bill & Donna
Irving, Janet	Irving, Tam & Lucretia
Kirkpatrick, Dave	Knight, Robert M.
Lang, Linda	Nies, Boyd & Helen
Loder, Robert & Jimmie	
Martinez, Dan	<i>Patron</i>
McCue, Donald & Susan	Belote, Jim & Patti
Peterson, Selma	Ziemer, Jim & Mary Hurley
Provence, Adelle	
Sanders, Donna	
Shuler, Tor & Julie	<i>Thank you, each and everyone, for your support! Apologies to those members appearing on this list who renewed in October 2006!</i>
Sloan, Elsie	
Southern, Mark & Mary	
Stark, Betty	
Steben, Mitch & Dave Hazenkamp	
Stockton, Shelli	
Swann, David & Sarah	
VanVoorhis, Bruce & Susan	

*Newsletter Deadline*

All RAHS members are encouraged to submit articles for the *Redlands Chronicles* to Nathan Gonzales at [ngonzales@akspl.org](mailto:ngonzales@akspl.org) by the 1st of each month.