



April 2011

## The Formation of Riverside County from San Bernardino County in 1893

Monday, April 25, 2011, 7:00 p.m.  
Assembly Room, A.K. Smiley Public Library

Steve Lech, prolific Riverside County historian, will present the history of the creation of Riverside County to the Redlands Area Historical Society at their April meeting.

Lech is the current president of the Riverside Historical Society. He has written several books on Riverside. In the Images of America series published by Arcadia Publishing Company he has authored *Riverside in Vintage Postcards* (2005), *Resorts of Riverside County* (2005), *Riverside 1870-1940* (2007) and *Riverside's Mission Inn* (2005).

Lech's most ambitious project is *Along the Old Roads---A History of the Portion of Southern California That Became Riverside County, 1772-1893*. This huge project was published by Steve Lech embracing all of Riverside County. Several chapters focus on the early attempts by Riverside to form a separate county and the final "divorce" from San Bernardino County in 1893.

Both Riverside and San Bernardino had grown apart since the 1870's. San Bernardino was known for saloons, downtown brawls, frontier miners and cattlemen, railroad connections, and county politics that seemed to ignore the interests of Riverside.

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Bill & Sandie Green Residence on Walnut Avenue

### Old House Group Meeting

Wednesday, April 27, 2011, 6:30 p.m.  
516 Walnut Avenue

This month's meeting will be held at the home of Sandie and Bill Green. This lovely "Folk Victorian" 1898 home with a large yard was the recipient of a 2004 Heritage Award.

Sandie explains that she and Bill purchased the house in March, 1999. Their son "rented" it for the next 2 years until Bill retired (she worked from home so anywhere would be fine). They sold their 1877 Italianate outside of Cleveland, Ohio in August, 2001 and headed west. Although the house was "move in" ready, they piled all the furniture into one

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## A Letter from your President...

Let me begin by thanking all those who lied to Larry Burgess for the March 8, 40<sup>th</sup> Year Class celebration. I believe we actually pulled it off without a hitch. I called Larry feigning sickness and he graciously swallowed the bait. Char warned he might slip the responsibility to Nathan Gonzales, so I clued him in and asked him to remove any sign canceling the class. Larry had a very important Library Board meeting from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 or 7:30. I called Bill Hatfield, president of the library board, and suggested keeping Larry until 7ish. Sue McClure, hospitality chair for the society, ordered the cakes and edited my suggestions for the evening. I arrived early and coached the night class and those arriving for the big "Surprise!" cheer. Blue Eagle Video was manned and ready taking photos of the cakes. Hiding out by the Lincoln fountain I awaited the "surprise" announcement. I was able to cure myself and later teach the amended class.

We ate most of the two large cakes and congratulated Larry on his accomplishment. He really was happy avoiding a two hour lecture on March 8 after a very busy day. He received his overdue newsletter and all was well. If you need a good lie to support a worthy effort I recommend Char Burgess, Nathan Gonzales and Bill Hatfield. I'm not on the list since my lie participation sent trepidation through my soul.

Bill Blankenship chairs our board committee to replace Kathy Beall and yours truly. Our terms end in June according to the Historical Society Constitution. Years ago the society deemed that fresh ideas and rotating board members insured a more vibrant society. So if you are interested or would like to suggest three members for possible board membership, please contact Bill by email at [bblankenship@riversidebia.org](mailto:bblankenship@riversidebia.org). The Board meets on the first Monday in the months of September through June. Our meetings are usually a little less than two hours. Board members plan the Old House Group meetings, walking tours, refreshments, heritage awards, monthly meetings, newsletter items, and historical society projects.

The Board wants to remind all members that yearly dues are now payable. We mailed an envelope and dues flyer with the January newsletter. If you lost that info sheet and envelope just mail a \$25.00 check to Redlands Area Historical Society, Inc., P. O. Box 1024, Redlands, CA. 92373. If you are still confused just call (909) 307-6060 and we will answer your questions. We plan to "cull" the membership list of those that have not paid very soon. Our newsletter is expensive in its enlarged format and we must keep our budget balanced - unlike the Federal Government.

Your President, Tom Atchley

# Redlands Railroad

## Love Affair, Part II

- by Tom Atchley

Motor Roads built narrow gauge track that measured 30 inches to four feet wide. They were less expensive to build because they could use county roads and city streets. Avoiding costly right-of-way land purchases required permission from the county supervisors and city governments. Redlands was all county land with incorporation coming after the railroad was built.

Motor Roads could snake through a community with tight turns following the narrow gauge track. Their locomotives were disguised to look like any other railroad coach. Steam was a fearful new technology that required an attitude adjustment. Both engine #1 and #2 for the San Bernardino Rail Road were covered with wooden boxes to appear less like belching, puffing, twelve-ton locomotives. Locomotive #1 was called "Redlands" and #2 was called "San Bernardino." Often the locomotives were called "dummies" because of their supposed disguise. The new locomotives had the reputation for sending farmyard animals - especially horses - into frenzied flight with their fearful appearance and novel hissing noises.

Motor Roads could make many quick stops along their route but usually not on the curves, since getting traction again on the slick steel tracks was difficult. The Central Avenue to Tippecanoe curve was especially difficult to negotiate above 6 miles per hour or after a stop there. Many passengers recalled "helping" the train around the curve to regain momentum after a stop.

The SBRR route began in San Bernardino on First Street (now Rialto Avenue) and "E" Street. The route followed First Street to Waterman and then turned south to Central Avenue. From Central to Tippecanoe the train traveled through cottonwood forests along the north side of the Santa Ana River. This rich bottomland was called the Timber Settlement in the 1850's. Until a spark arrester was installed in 1889, the train sparks began numerous fires along the railroad route.

The name "Tippecanoe" seems to have no connection with the battle of Tippecanoe nor the presidential campaign slogan of "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too." The name appears to apply to the railroad-bridge that crossed the Santa Ana River. The bridge was one of



*The Dinkey at Motor Junction Station located at the intersection of California Street and Cottonwood Road (now Mission Road). Note the Southern Pacific crew and ticket agent with new SP identification after 1893.*

the major engineering accomplishments of the SBRR. The bridge survived the flood of 1910 but was completely obliterated in the 1916 deluge. Tippecanoe Avenue did not exist in 1888, so perhaps the name applies to the bridge only with a hint of humor.

After crossing the bridge the railroad turned east on San Bernardino Avenue to a right turn on Mountain View. The turn created the village of Idlewild on the corner of what is now Redlands Blvd. and Mountain View. Farmers living in Victoria, Mound City, Gladysta, Drew and West Old San Bernardino found a passenger bench without a station.

Traveling south on Mountain View Avenue the train made the left turn onto Cottonwood Road (now Mission Road). Here the Van Leuven, Curtis, Cole, Frink, Tolles, Hinckley and other Old San Bernardino families could see and use the transportation. School children attending the Mission School jumped onto the back step of the slow moving motor to grab a free ride to school.

The Motor Junction Station called "Mission" was located on California Street and Cottonwood Road. The locomotives were stoked with additional coal here to travel north on California Street and right on West Citrus to begin the climb through the Barton Ranch subdivision. Black clouds filled with cinders, unburned coal and soot punctuated with white steam were seen for quite a distance as the chugging, puffing train crossed Nevada Street.

In 1889, the Barton Station stop was added to the train itinerary for new families that bought land in the Barton tract and later, in 1901, the Barton School was built on the corner of Nevada and West Citrus. Railroad right-of-way is still clearly visible from

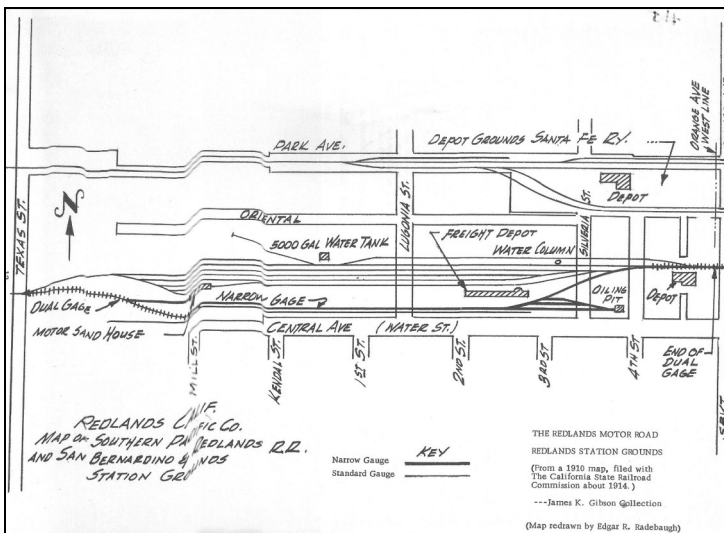
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California Street and along West Citrus.

The railroad route drifted to Park Avenue heading east to the Mission flood control arroyo. No mention of the current bridge across the arroyo is made in 1888. Crossing Central Blvd. (Water Street in 1888, now Redlands Blvd.) at Texas Street the train followed closely to the north side of Water Street to the Orange Street Redlands depot. The brick depot ornamented Orange Street and quickly became the most frequented establishment in town.

Between Oriental and Water Street, east of the depot almost extending to Texas Street, the SBRR grounds consisted of four side tracks, a 5,000-gallon water tank, freight depot platform, another water column, a mechanics repair shop, a Wells Fargo office and an oiling pit. The depot grounds for the Santa Fe railroad on Park Avenue appeared sparse in comparison.



Map of the SB & RRY Station in Redlands with support buildings, water tanks and adjoining streets. 1910.

The Interstate Commerce Act of 1887 passed some inconvenient regulations for the new railroad. Each train was required to carry a full compliment of railroad operators. This meant that in addition to the engineer, now a fireman, brakeman and conductor must be part of the crew. Often the crew members perched on top of the locomotive to give more space to the passengers. Mechanics, welders, switchmen and ticket agents were found in both the San Bernardino yard and Redlands facility. All freight charges were displayed along with the passenger rates and departure times.

The two coaches were each designed differently. One had bench seats with spartan appointments that was primarily for freight. The other had plush upholstery, curtains that could close to the sun or weather and a stove for cold weather. Fares were 30 cents one way for the 10.12 mile trip and 50 cents round

trip. The competition immediately forced the less popular Santa Fe to advertise a 25cent one-way fare.

While the government regulated the railroads the employees had not unionized. The SBRR operated each day from 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. each day. Most employees had 12-hour work schedules. Trains from San Bernardino and Redlands left and arrived every two hours. Five times a day the schedule was followed with precision. The railroad whistle for departure was often used to set timepieces. During the theatre season special evening trains returned drama aficionados to Redlands on a "theatre train."

Santa Fe responded with four round trips a day but with no commitment to arrive or leave on time and no stop was made between San Bernardino and Redlands. In 1892, the Santa Fe Kite Shaped Track excursions making the loop trip did follow a strict schedule.

The first motor train arrived in Redlands May 17, 1888. Railroad directors, the press and distinguished guests who made the first trip noticed some hitches in the ride. Axle grease was generously applied to the Tippecanoe curve to reduce friction and sparks. The ride was laboriously longer than expected, since tree limbs along the route needed trimming. Fires followed the train from Central Avenue and with a better breeze might have beaten the train to the bridge.

When the "Redlands" locomotive crossed Water Street most of the 1,000 residents of the East San Bernardino Valley cheered along the route to the depot. Modern transportation had arrived and Redlands had its own private railroad. The name "Redlands" on the side of the locomotive was an added treat. Both Redlands and Lugonia were heatedly debating incorporation and the name issue was a sore point for both. Redlands name cheerleaders saw the name and little else.

Regular service began June 4, 1888. Motor Road train transportation quickly linked Redlands to Highland via San Bernardino riding the "Pepper Box." Redlanders could travel to Colton, Riverside and Arrowhead Hot Springs. Rumors flew that railroad extensions were planned for Crafton, Mentone, Terracina, Yucaipa and the San Bernardino Mountains reaching Bear Valley.

T. J. Wilson was the SBRR superintendent. William F. Mayo was the first engineer; Charlie Kessler was the brakeman; P. J. Brown was the first mechanic; G. W. Gordon was the first conductor followed by Bert Osbun. Osbun won the most popular railroad employee for the entire county in February of 1892. Local newspapers conducted the vote with Osbun as a run-away favorite.

Bert Osbun opened Osbun Iron Works near the

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Motor Road depot that was an expanded blacksmith shop and the first machine shop in Redlands. In his spare time after working twelve-hour days, he placed a water wheel in the Zanja allowing an electric dynamo to produce power. The power plant lit an arc light over Water Street, two electric lights for the Motor Road depot and two for his iron works shop. The June 1891 electric plant produced the first electric power for Redlands and foretold the demise of the SBRR.

Despite the crawling movement of the motor roads the small railroads proved to be a threat to public safety. No crossing guards were employed at the street crossings or intersections; the shrill locomotive whistle was the only warning. Engines hit horses, sheep, cows, swine, wagons, carriages, vagrants and small children. Runaway carriages were an everyday event along the route of the railroads. When Redlands incorporated in 1888 the city fathers granted a franchise with stipulations for safety. From the Water Street crossing to the downtown a speed limit was imposed. All street crossings in the city required wood planks between the rails for easy crossing. County supervisors required fencing along pastures with ranging animals. Trains obstructing travel on streets, roads or byways were limited to five minutes.

The popularity of the SBRR was never in doubt. Within two years the directors had received their \$200,000 investment back in full. One train set a record with 232 passengers in 1889. Mission, Crafton, Lugonia, Kingsbury, Barton, and McKinley elementary schools used the transportation for field trips to dairies, fire stations, parks and recreation spots such as Urbita Hot Springs, Arrowhead Springs and Harlem Springs.

Southern Pacific Railroad began to realize the potential of Redlands freight when those thousands of acres of citrus land began to reach production maturity. The Brookside siding along the San Timoteo main line below Terracina rarely had a stop. The stage that ran from the siding only ran sporadically from June of 1888 charging 50 cents for the trip to Redlands or Lugonia. Samuel J. Hayes managed the Terracina Hotel and upon request would meet hotel guests at the siding for a carriage trip up Winery Grade.

Southern Pacific negotiated with the directors of the SBRR to purchase the 2.874 miles from Motor Junction (California and Mission Road) to Redlands. The deal included outright ownership of the Motor Junction Station, Barton Station and downtown Redlands depot. The SBRR would still use the narrow gauge track from Motor Junction to Redlands and Southern Pacific would add a third rail to allow standard gauge trains.

Southern Pacific could arrive in Redlands without paying for expensive right of way land, since the SBRR

used the siding along county and city streets. County supervisors and the Redlands Board of Trustees would need to franchise the operation to use county and city streets. In return, Southern Pacific would enlarge the depot in Redlands, extend the narrow gauge SBRR track a half mile to the main line of Southern Pacific at a new location dubbed "Redlands Junction."

Mainline Southern Pacific trains could now stop at Redlands Junction to allow passengers to ride the SBRR to Redlands. Freight trains could now enter the Redlands market and extend to the east valley as needed. From June 17, 1891 Southern Pacific wasted no time. They quickly added the third track to the Redlands depot in one month and built a new Southern Pacific depot in Redlands just east of the demolished SBRR depot.

The Redlands Junction depot was operational February 20, 1892 and passengers boarded the SBRR to Redlands. Redlands Junction was just east of what was later known as Bryn Mawr. Three packing houses were built there and another near Motor Junction, now Barton Road and California Street. Bert Yerington became the first ticket agent.

Southern Pacific Railroad moved the Indian cemetery established by Myron Crafts on the northwest corner of Crafton Avenue and Colton. A depot was constructed on the site following the Southern Pacific pattern. Three packing houses were built to the west of the depot, a post office, market and trading post followed and Craftonville was born. Crafton Retreat, a resort health haven since 1872, received a new wave of guests from the railroad traffic.

Southern Pacific built a locomotive storage facility with a mechanics barn. Several empty old boxcars became cheap employee housing. Cahuilla and Serrano Native Americans rode the rails from Crafton to Redlands Junction doing minor repairs while living in the box cars. Southern Pacific built a long spur towards Mentone to turn trains around for the return trip to Los Angeles. Eventually a longer spur was built to Greenspot because of the large citrus acreage there.

Southern Pacific saw the advantages of the SBRR with track all the way to San Bernardino. They brokered a deal to lease the entire line, including the San Bernardino depot on First Street. The name San Bernardino and Redlands Railroad was to continue but SP bought all the stock and actually owned the entire motor road. The good name of the SBRR was valuable to SP, whose name was under suspicion by the Sherman Anti-Trust Act. SP bought two new locomotives and two more cars for the line.

Southern Pacific really wanted to build a standard gauge track to San Bernardino using the SBRR right of

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way. Their civil engineers informed the corporate leadership that the sharp curves of the SBRR made standard gauge construction impossible. Even when the "dinkey" was no longer economically viable, SP continued to pay the lease and run one train daily to keep the county and Redlands franchise.

The official San Bernardino Redlands Railroad Board of Directors meeting of 1906 was scheduled for April 21<sup>st</sup>. Three days after the San Francisco earthquake and fire, the Southern Pacific directors E. H. Harriman, president; E. E. Calvin, vice president; William Hood, chief engineer; N. T. Smith, treasurer and J. L. Wilcutt, secretary, discovered the ruins of their Market Street headquarters. The official seal of the company was destroyed, no bylaws existed and all the SBRR records were burned in the fire. The gentlemen sat on makeshift chairs with a charred table in the smoldering lot of a previous six-story building. The usual 4% dividend was voted and a continuation of the SBRR lease.

By July 1898, the Redlands Street Railway Company was founded by Henry Fisher, John Fisher, his son, and Abram C. Denham, utilizing Redlands Electric Light and Power Company for electricity. Their tracks laid throughout the city foretold the end of the SBRR.

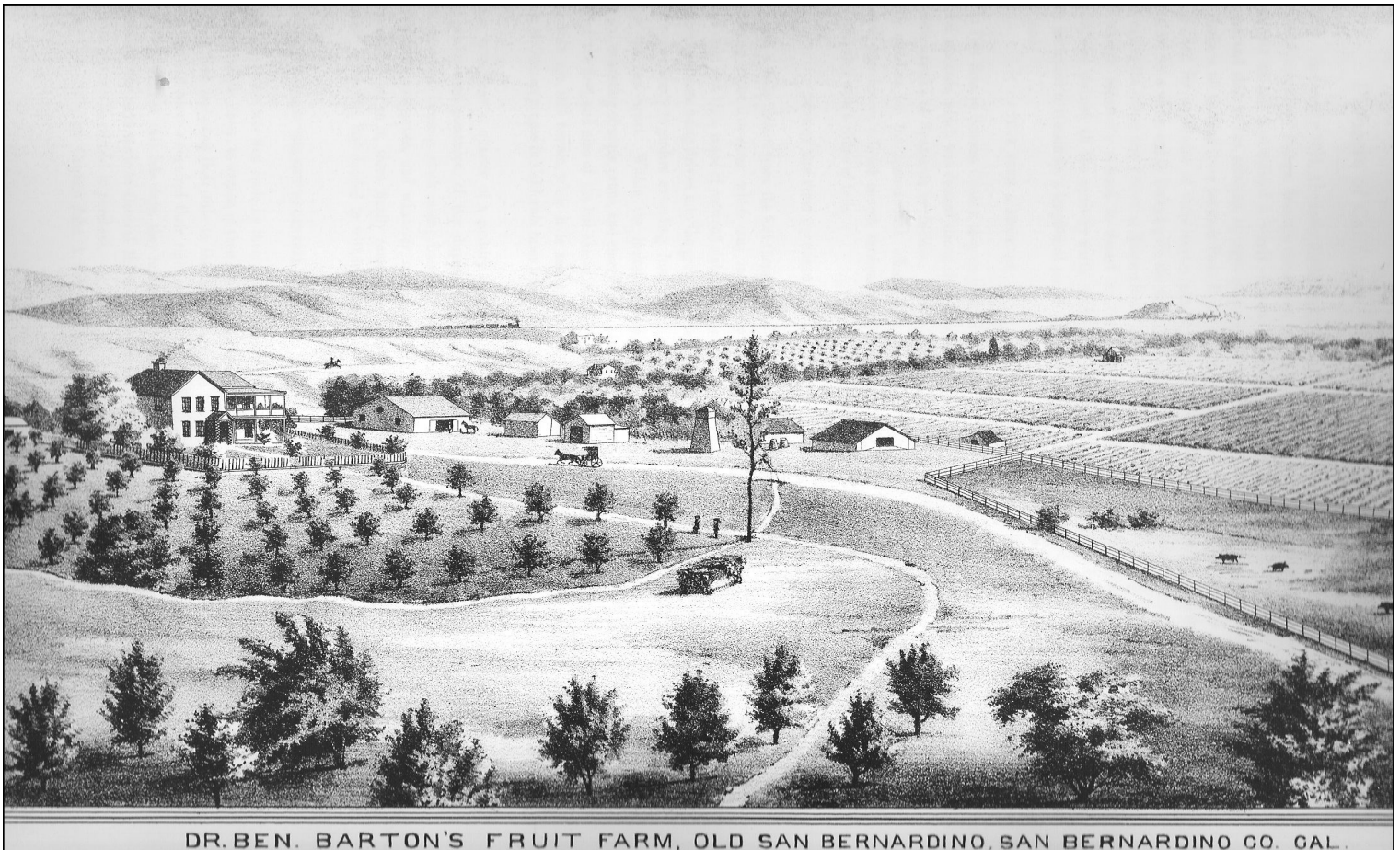
The San Bernardino Valley Traction Company bought all the small electric street car lines in the east valley and incorporated the new company in June 1903.

The traction company was later purchased by Pacific Electric combining all the electric street car companies in Southern California. The electric street cars were fast, economical and connected all of Southern California.

Southern Pacific appeared before the County Board of Supervisors asking to abandon the Dinkey Line in August 1914. President Paul Shoup of Pacific Electric offered to remove all the rails and ties. One train had traveled the rails daily since 1903 to keep the franchise. Redlands Junction Station was abandoned. The last chief engineer was Pillsbury and last passenger agent was named Pontius. The last run for the railroad was made August 1, 1915 with a goodbye editorial in the *Redlands Review* on August 8<sup>th</sup>. The last section on the old narrow-gauge was removed in August 1951 just west of the intersection of "E" Street and Rialto Avenue.

Pacific Electric petitioned the City of Redlands to abandon the city street car lines in June 1924. Petitioners to the city requested the city to deny the petition to abandon the car lines and compel transportation to Redlands despite the non-profitable section. Pacific Electric ended service to Redlands July 20, 1936. The last track was visible at the intersection of Redlands Blvd and Orange Street until revitalization in the 1980's placed bricks in the intersection and the rails were removed.

Proposed light rail service was discussed in the *Redlands Daily Facts* March 5 with the mayor and city councilmen wanting a Redlands connection. ✦



DR. BEN. BARTON'S FRUIT FARM, OLD SAN BERNARDINO, SAN BERNARDINO CO. CAL.

Conversely, Riverside farmers propagated citrus and vineyards. Alcohol consumption was shunned. Culture and refinement were noteworthy with a newly built downtown and ambitious citizens that wanted to have more local political control.

Real anger between the two communities reached the high point when San Bernardino County supervisors elected to build an expensive new county facility instead of a new bridge to cross the Santa Ana River. Riverside residents crossing the river braved sandy bogs, some quicksand sinks and treacherous raging waters each winter. The new San Bernardino County courthouse built with Riverside tax dollars was the straw that tumbled the political pyramid.

Steve Lech's presentation broadens the understanding of local history in an entertaining fashion. The general public is invited to attend this presentation.

room and started making the house their own.

While recently touring the property I noted Sandie is an avid gardener and Bill is quite the woodworker having added detailing to the large garage / guest house to match the wood trim on the main house. Daylight saving time should allow members time to enjoy the back yard and to see both the exterior of the house.

Samuel Hayes built the home originally as a rental property. According to an "Illustrated Redlands" biography, Samuel J. Hayes, was an orange grower and one of the organizers and the Vice President of the Union Bank. He was also involved in many other local ventures including to one degree or another, the Terrace Villa Hotel the Terracina and the Windsor Hotel. Samuel J. Hayes lived on Cypress Avenue, and was born in Litchfield County, Connecticut, June 20, 1826. His father, Gaylord Hayes, was a second cousin to President Rutherford B. Hayes.

"Folk Victorians" were made possible by the expansion of the railroads and were constructed primarily between 1870 and 1910 as affordable homes for "folks". Detailing made popular in pattern books (brackets, trim, etc.) could be mass produced and shipped to all parts of the county via rail for personalized incorporation into the new or updated, middle class homes.

In 1899, San Bernardino County assessed the improvements at \$500.00. The Sanborn map of 1900 shows this as the only house on the

block. The first known occupants were W. E. Phelps, a veterinary surgeon and his wife Hester. It wasn't until 1913 that the home became owner occupied when Herman B. Harbes, a chauffeur, bought the home. Interestingly his wife Myrtle was not added to the title until after Herman's death in 1917.

Please come and join us for an evening at the Greens home to hear about their restoration efforts and help cheer them on for their wonderful up keep of another of Redlands' historic homes. Members do not need reservations and membership is available that night. Call Leslie Irish (951) 201-5742 with questions.



*Samuel J. Hayes and his  
Cypress Avenue Residence  
from Illustrated Redlands  
(1897)*