

Welcome to all the new volunteers. You have joined a special group of people. We hope everyone has a great season.

WE NEED AUCTION ITEMS for June's Super session. Our first super session of the season will be our second annual Silent Auction. We will meet at the Arcadia Park, corner of Santa Anita and Huntington Dr. June 19th at 6:30pm. We need you to bring things you would like to auction off. It will be a potluck. Paper products and drinks will be furnished. The money raised will go to the organization.



The late "Samson The Jacuzzi-loving Bear"



FIRE LOOKOUT ASSOCIATION Newsletter

CONTACTS

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VETTER LOOKOUT CALENDAR as of 6/01/03

Bob Gregg boblg1@earthlink.net or 818-249-5052

June 1 Kesling 9-5 **8th**-Adams/Leighton 9-5

14th-Rini 9-5 **16th**-Opalka 1-5 plus o/n

17th-Opalka 9-5 plus o/n **18th**-Opalka 9-1

21st-Passeros 9-5 **22nd**-Kalandjian 9-5

24th-Wartman/Drobner 9-5 **25**-Dooley 9-5

28th-Rini 9-5, Fleming 9-5 plus o/n

July 3rd-McCracken o/n

4th-McCracken 9-5 with Moores o/n

5th-Rini 9-5, Moores 9-5 plus o/n

11th-Lemen o/n **12th** Lemen 9-5

13th-Adams/Leighton 9-5 **18th**-Passeros 9-5

19th-Fleming 9-5 plus o/n **20th**-Kalandjian 9-5

SUPERSESSION Thursday, June 19, 6:30pm at Arcadia Park. Don't forget to bring grub, money & auction items. Kevin Copley has studied the bears around Vetter and will be giving us a presentation - including an update on George's bear.

We welcome ideas for future sessions. If there is something you would like to know more about or have for a super session please let us know.

Keep up to date: www.anffla.org

Two Major Reasons for Reconnection each season. *George Morey*

Why is there a reup every season? Do we have to attend? The answer to the second question is "YES" and there are two groups of reasons in response to the first. The **first** group is it gives us a chance to let you know what changes have taken place over the winter months; and it lets us know who is returning to the program so that you can go on the volunteer agreement with the Forest Service and we can update our records. The **second** group encompasses the hugs Pam expects from each of you.

Vetter Lookout

April stats; Staffed 6 days by 10 people. 129 visitors for month. Yearly total of 249 visitors. Most visitors in one day - 41 on 4/27 with Kevin and Jean in the tower. Max temp 68. Minimum temp 27. Peak wind gust-40 mph. Opalka reported snow on the 5th.

May stats; Staffed 12 days. 348 visitors for month.. Hi temp (28th) - 83; lo (9th) = 28. Peak wind 50 mph

Chilao

April Stats; Hi temp 69. Lo 27.

Hi wind 45 mph. Precipitation 2.42"

May Stats; Hi temp (28th) - 90. Lo (9th) - 30.

Hi wind 46 mph. Rain 1.19". Wettest May since '98; 6th wettest since 1940.

Slide Mountain Lookout will not be a rental. Due to its low elevation (usually below snow level) it may be open year round, except during rainy periods. It will be a busy lookout where



we all will not only be looking for smoke, but also watching the traffic on I-5, the boats on Pyramid Lake and *maybe* the returning **Condors**.

We will be of good use to many services, not just the forest. And, in our spare split seconds, we will be able to enjoy the changing seasons and the area's great selection of wild flowers and animals.

Special thanks to Jim Mayfield, Ked McCracken, Dick Wagoner, Bob Moore and Kermit Eller for sticking with George and I on putting in the trail to Slide Mtn. We know it has been hard work and you have given a lot of sweat and blood to those no-see-ums so THANK YOU for that. We also want to thank Mary Wagoner, Ruth Eller, Maria Moore, and Alyssa for sending all the goodies to eat when we get back to camp Saturday night.

We have racked up over 930 hours on the trail. and are all the way to the top and ready to start clearing around the lookout. So if anyone would like to join in we will be happy to share in the fun. **Stay current: www.anffla.org**



Monte Christo *a Kevin Copley adventure*

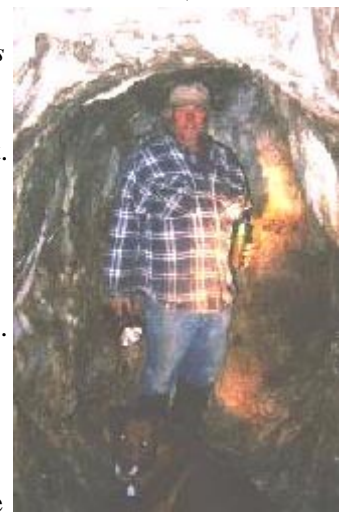
Few of the local gold mines have a history quite as colorful as the Monte Christo, located off Angeles Forest Highway near the Monte Christo campground. It's history dates all the way back to Indian days, and was possibly the site of the first job ever held by the famed bandit Tiburcio Vasquez, using an arrastra to pulverize gold ore.

The filed claim on Monte Christo features some interesting owners. Captain Ed Fuller was one of them. He'd lure "partners" up to see the mine, sign them on as co-owners, then they would **(poof)** disappear. One local mountain man, Delos Colby, said he once found one of Eds' partners with "his head blown off." (*The current caretaker, Milt, has*

unearthed many bones & articles of clothing from the area around the mine.) After Capt. Fuller left, a Mr. Carlisle took over and the Monte Christo reached its zenith of production. But WWII came along, and the mine was shut down for good. Right?

Wrong! The Monte

Christo is still mined today. The old fashioned way. With shovels and picks and sledgehammers. But don't try jumping this claim; Milt and his crew don't take kindly to trespassers, and have the firepower to run you off (or put you where Capt Fuller put his partners.)



Jean Clark and I visited the mine and its buildings a few weeks ago. Milt showed us the buildings, fully restored in their original splendor, and took us deep into the mine. It was breathtaking to say the least. Hopefully we'll be seeing it together soon, as a group, for a field trip. Stay tuned for when!!!!

***Psssst! Hey Kevin & Jean!
The sign says "Go Away"!***

THE NEWCOMBS *Bob Gregg*

Lewis Newcomb was born in Susquehanna, Pennsylvania in 1860 and was raised in Marshalltown, Iowa. He came to Pasadena before 1888 but did not like urban life and moved to Sierra Madre a few months later. He then began to explore the mountains above town. When he sighted the Chilao region he fell in love with the area and decided to make it his home. He built a cabin there in 1890 about a quarter mile northeast of today's Newcombs Ranch inn.

It was a small structure with the walls only three logs high and the roof just tree bark and a door so low one had to almost crawl in. He filed for 160 acres in east Chilao in the 1890s and received title in 1907. In 1896 he and his friend Sturtevant with ten laborers began building a toll trail from Sierra Madre to Chilao. The divide between the West Fork of the San Gabriel River and Santa Anita Canyon was named for Newcomb. The trail was finished in 1897. The toll of 25 cents per hiker was hard to collect and the toll was dropped but the trail system became one of the most used in the San Gabriels until the Angeles Crest Highway was built.

In 1898 Newcomb was one the first rangers in the new San Gabriel Forest Reserve. The same year a fellow ranger killed the last Grizzly in the region near Newcombs cabin. He served mainly in the Chilao region where he laid out and repaired trails, found lost hunters and hikers, fought fires and chased flocks of sheep out of the area which were not allowed to be there. He became one of the best cabin builders in the San Gabriels. He helped build the West Fork Ranger Station (the first built in California with government funds; today standing at the Chilao Visitor Center) and in 1900 built the Sturtevant Camp Ranger Station which still stands today. In 1910 he built a larger cabin for himself in Chilao. By 1905 the San Gabriel Forest Reserve had 19 rangers. He was a loner and was choosy about friendships. He quit the Forest Service in 1911 after a dispute with supervisor Rush Charlton (of Charlton Flats). He then worked for Los Angeles County laying telephone lines in the mountains.

He married Grace Crandel in 1920 after his 60th birthday and lived in Sierra Madre altho he spent most of his time in Chilao. He sold most of his Chilao property to his cousin Lynn Newcomb in 1929 and moved out of the mountains in 1940 because of his age (80) and the fact the Angeles Crest Highway had reached Chilao with all it's traffic. In 1954, at age 94, he died in Sierra Madre.

In 1939 Lynn Newcomb, who is still living, built the two story Newcomb Ranch Inn. It had 15 rooms, a restaurant, store and gas station. It burned in 1976. He rebuilt it with just a restaurant and bar and renamed it Newcomb Ranch. In 2001 the 10 acre property was purchased by Dr. Fred Rundall, an oncologist from La Canada, for \$545,000. He proposes a gift shop, store and beer garden along with the existing



Smokey & the Bikers at Newcomb's Ranch



restaurant and wants to add six cabins. Lynn also owned the Mt. Waterman ski area and built the first rope tow in 1939 and in 1941 built what was the first the first single chair lift in Southern California and the second in the State. In 1999 he sold to new owners who hope to put in snowmaking machines.

Stay in touch:
www.anffla.org

THE VIEW FROM THE CATWALK - BARLEY FLATS *Bob Moore* From Vetter Lookout, set the Osborne to 245 degrees and you'll see a beige-colored water tank peering out of the trees. Set the Osborne to 240 degrees and you have located the direction of the Los Angeles County Sheriffs Air Rescue 5 Heliport, both at three miles. This entire area of trees is known as Barley Flats. It has an interesting history.

I think it is safe to assume that Native Americans hunted the Barley Flats area even though I could find no notice of that. They would have been enticed by acorn and game. In the mid 1800s a handful of cattle rustlers and horse thieves would hole up at Barley Flats seeking refuge for themselves and forage for "their" livestock. One such outlaw was Tiburcio Vasquez of Vasquez Rock fame.

Barley Flats got its name one of two ways. Either early cattlemen sowed barley seeds there to create pasture for their cattle or a variety of wild rye grew there which resembled barley. In either case about 1865 and onward the flats became a summer grazing area for cattle. One can imagine the difficulty of driving cattle up and down the Arroyo Seco or the Big Tujunga canyon. The cattle were probably targets for mountain lions also.

In the late 1800s the area became a hunting camp. Sorry Kevin, they were hunting grizzlies and black bear. It was frequented by adventure seeking outdoorsmen; hunters and hikers. Once the Shortcut Trail was built in 1893, Barley Flats was by-passed as people made their way to the high country.

Between 1955 and 1961 Barley Flats became the base of the Nike-Ajax missile. Administration buildings were constructed which are still there and in good repair. It was staffed by the California Army



National Guard 240th Signal Battalion. Once the base was closed down the Los Angeles County Sheriff used the facility as a probation camp. This was in place until 1992. Now then, I remember someone telling me that it was then used as a church camp, but I cannot substantiate that. However, today there is carpeting in parts of the facility.

Maria, Kevin, Jean and I have roamed throughout the facility. It is huge, eerie, but tells a lot. There are the administration buildings, sleeping quarters, kitchen and dining area. Outside are handball courts, basket ball courts, dog kennels, and a sewage treatment plant. The area is extensively landscaped with stone walks and plants. I do not recommend anyone going there. Rave party promoters do attempt to use this old base and the Sheriff department stops them and probably frowns on trespassers.

The old trail from Barley Flats to Alder Creek is overgrown. I had to crawl for several yards and Gerry Reponen reports that this trail is slated for abandonment. Do not try it. You can see that trail from Vetter as it descends on Alder Creek at Big Tujunga.

The next time at Vetter check it out. It is now covered with Coulter and Jeffery pines, big cone spruce and live oak and you can not see any buildings but the water tank. You will see almost every weekend Air Rescue 5 hovering above its pad. It may be lifting off or landing. Air 5 is a wonderful Sikorsky H-3 painted green, yellow and beige. That is another story for another time.

A good amount of this material comes courtesy of Jane Strong and Tom Chester at http://la.2net.com/~shester/angeles_mtns/places/barley_flats_road.html and John W. Robinson's book, The San Gabriels.

Everything else: www.anffla.org