

Hathaway Ranch Museum

News From the Ranch



Autumn 1997
Volume 7, Number 4



CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

In this issue we present two very different kinds of Christmas celebration, nearly half a century apart.

"A Koontz Christmas" (see page 3) was written by Lola McCarric and found in letters that she had written to her fiancé, Jesse E. Hathaway. The scene of this high-spirited activity was the Koontz family farm house which stood on the Southeast corner of what is now Norwalk Boulevard and Telegraph Road in Santa Fe Springs (then known as Fulton Wells).

The account of Christmas, 1944, in a German prisoner of war camp was written by Luis Franco, based on his own experience.

Stalag IV was a German prisoner of war camp located some 30 or 40 miles southwest from the then free city of Danzig in Poland. The scene inside this camp was one of evident hunger, silhouetted oppression reflecting calamity.

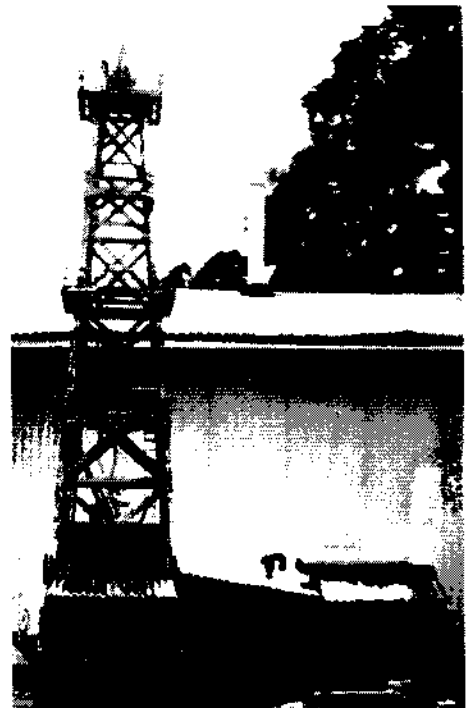
Christmas time in 1944 was perhaps a season that brought on nostalgias. Men became introverted, tears would denote that absence from their loved ones. Their feeble hands had become like fangs sinking into their empty stomachs craving for a piece of black bread. Friendships were broken over that piece of bread. Just like animals in a cage trying to survive, so were some of the hungry prisoners of war. Their dreams were of stuffed turkey, cranberries, hot biscuits, mashed potatoes and everything else to make a Christmas dinner. But their dreams would evaporate into the bleakness of day, especially that Christmas season.

Americans are known to be ingenious. Some men in the compounds decided that the prevailing conditions of suffering on this Christmas Day would not deter them from observing Christ's birthday in the fashion to which they had all been accustomed back home.

Thank goodness they still had a laughter, which had been easing their pains; so perhaps a musical comedy would be the antidote for further survival. POW talent was in every barrack in the camp. Musicians, actors, writers, stage hands were mustered for the musical revue. Mother Nature also contributed with a wonderland of snow in the region. Pine trees which were plentiful outside the camp were cut and used to decorate the stage. The roar of the Russian cannons from the East, which slowly were approaching Stalag IV, made the German officials become more accepting to our requests for food and materials for the Christmas

Continued on page 3

The Perfect Derrick...



This miniature oil-drilling rig was once famous. It and its builder, Julian I. Hathaway, was featured by General Petroleum Company in its advertising for Violet Ray Gasoline at the Sacramento State Fair, and then again during the Los Angeles County Fair at Pomona in 1928. A Sacramento newspaper estimated that the little working oil-rig increased Violet Ray Gasoline sales by 50,000 gallons per month. During the State Fair Standard Oil Company of California asked to buy the display from Hathaway, Standard Oil wanting it to become part of their advertising.

When this miniaturized rig was built the Hathaway Ranch was being drilled for oil. Now the little rig rests quietly at the museum. Turn to page 5 for the full story.

Museum Schedule

Except during major holidays
the weekly schedule is as follows:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday
Tours & Activities 11:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

First Sunday of Each Month
Tours & Activities 2:00 to 4:00 P.M.

Have a Happy Halloween
from the Museum, docents and all the
Ranch Hands!



Lifetime Members

O.K. Flood	Thomas Scott
Nadine Hathaway	Ray & Phyllis Stenson

HATHAWAY RANCH MUSEUM GUILD

Youth (high school or younger)	\$1.50
Individual	\$3.00
Family (two adults & minor children)	\$5.00
Business	\$10.00

"Angel" Membership Categories

Supporting	\$50.00
Sustaining	\$100.00
Lifetime	\$500.00

Make checks payable to Hathaway Ranch Museum, 11901 E. Florence Ave., Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

Notice of membership dues are sent on a twelve-month basis. Donations are tax-deductible in the amount allowed by law.

The MUSEUM GUILD supports the aims and activities of the HATHAWAY RANCH MUSEUM, a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation dedicated to preserving and presenting the eras of farming, ranching and oil development in early Santa Fe Springs.

HATHAWAY RANCH MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

Published by	The Hathaway Ranch Museum
Mailing Address	11901 E. Florence Ave. Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
Telephone	(562) 944-6563 or (562) 944-7372

This Newsletter is a general news journal and solicits articles regarding the general interest and the technical aspects of historical maintenance or restoration. Submissions must be sent to the Hathaway Ranch Museum, 11901 E. Florence Ave., Santa Fe Springs, California 90670.

Miscellaneous Stuff...

We learned from the newsletter of the Montebello Historical Society, "Adobe Dust," that Eleanor Brown and Tom Sanchez will be teaching blind children how to make adobe bricks. Eleanor is President of the Society. Anyone who is physically challenged in any way should take lessons from Eleanor in motivation. She is a great lady and an inspiration to all who know her.

In our summer, 1997, newsletter was a picture of two very tall pecan trees on the museum property. We asked if any of our readers knew of any others. We had two responses. Dolores Ball told us that there are two at the Whittier Downs Mobile Home Park, 11730 Whittier Boulevard. Mary O'Connor, one of our docents, said that she saw two on Sunshine (street, avenue?) near Shoemaker in South Whittier. Do they always come in pairs? Who knows about pecan trees? Except that they are a haven for crows?

Generous Members and Donors

Members who have donated more than basic dues since previous acknowledgments in the summer, 1997, newsletter:

- Sheila Cantrell
- Gil and Lucy Cota
- John and Jeanine Fitzpatrick
- Henry and Marty Newton

New Members

- John and Jeanine Fitzpatrick
- Robert and Rebecca Jaramillo
- Floyd D. and Neva J. Smith
- Irene Swift
- Rocio Trejo

Volunteers

The following people gave time to the museum during the third Quarter of 1997:

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Frances Agopoff | Frank Martinez |
| Mary Rose Bertucci | Betty Putnam |
| Mildred Carlzen | Josie Ramirez |
| Elizabeth Hathaway | Francine Rippy |
| Jean Hathaway | Slats Seeley |
| Jesse R. Hathaway | Melvin Smith |
| Meredith Hathaway | Phyllis Stenson |
| Remy Hathaway | Ray Stenson |
| Jack Johnson | Mollie Teschler |
| Carrie Long | Louise Thorson |
| Henry Lynn | |

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

continued from page 1

show. An order was issued to let down the shutters from the windows and most of the men marveled at the night sky they had not seen for months and years. Some even hoped they would be able to see the Northern Lights.

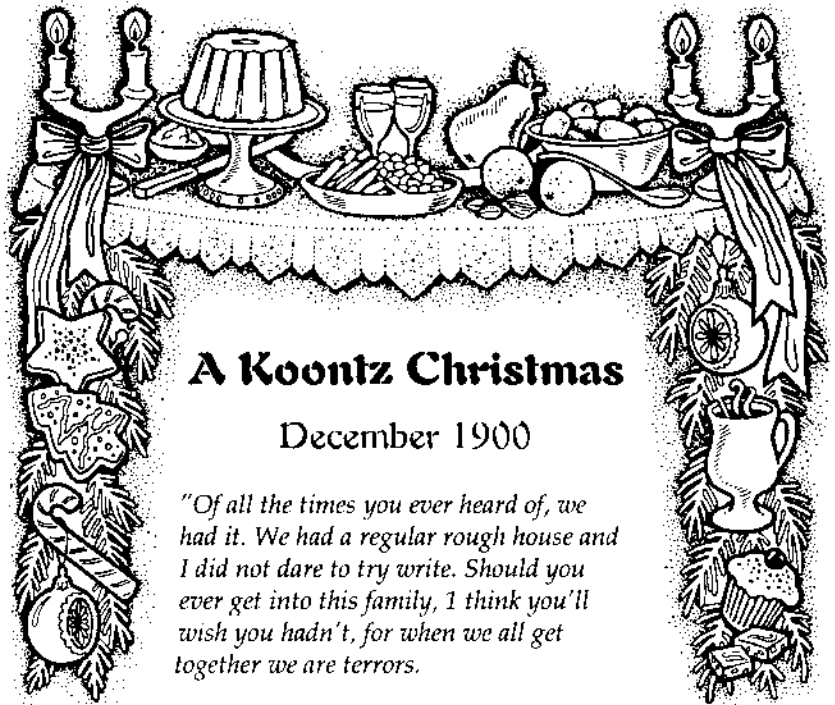
A festive mood was in the air. The Catholic POW priest made arrangements for a Christmas Mass. Protestant POW ministers also held services and Jewish POWs attended some of the religious observances. The whole population of prisoners of war had banded to relieve and forget the agonizing pangs of hunger.

The Germans had amassed tons of Red Cross parcels, which inside had coffee, Spam, crackers, salmon, cigarettes, powdered milk, etc., and they decided to let the POWs have them in the spirit of Christmas. They also opened the doors so the men could have strolls singing the favorite season's carols. Extra bowls of soup were allotted to every man. However, some of the contents appeared alien to many, as the meat was either horse or police dog. In a hungry world it was delicious.

The musical revue featured improvisations, lip singing, dancing, singing and some acting. It had to be shown in five separate hours, as the kitchen which had been turned into an auditorium could not hold everybody. The German high command was invited and they were seated in the front rows. The star of the show did an improvisation and lip singing act, and took the opportunity to cuss the Germans in Spanish which they did not understand. The song, "I Walk Alone" brought tears to many men and the dancing by the follies brought laughter. The band was exceptionally good; the drummer, who had been in Vaughn Monroe's band, enhanced the music.

As the festivities ended, everyone in the camp went back to the daily routine of wishing for food, liberation and home. Prisoner of war life was back to the normal profanity, vulgarity, and also dreams of Rita Hayworth and Betty Grable. Merry Christmas was over... Heil Hitler once more for the Germans.

*from the EX-POW BULLETIN
December 1991*



A Koontz Christmas

December 1900

"Of all the times you ever heard of, we had it. We had a regular rough house and I did not dare to try write. Should you ever get into this family, I think you'll wish you hadn't, for when we all get together we are terrors.

Christmas morning Elsie, Mabel, Emma and I got up early, went down stairs, got some spoons, pans, a bell and a guitar and went into the parlor and began to make music. Fred was up and locked us out of the dining room and kitchen, so we climbed through the dining room window, and all the doors were locked, so we sat down and began to imitate the Times whistle and various other things. Fred was in the kitchen, and when we stopped for breath he brayed like a donkey. I don't know what the neighbors thought was going on at the Koontz's, but then, they saw us at the Christmas tree Monday night. We girls blamed the music on Grandma and Aunt Ellen and the braying on Grandpa.

I don't know whether Mr. Biddle was shocked or not; we can't help it if he was. We had lots of fun and by Friday night we were all gone, but Dolly and Dave, and they are still there. We had twenty-three for dinner Christmas - all children and grand-children - and there are twelve who were not there, so you see we have quite a family."

- Lola McCarric

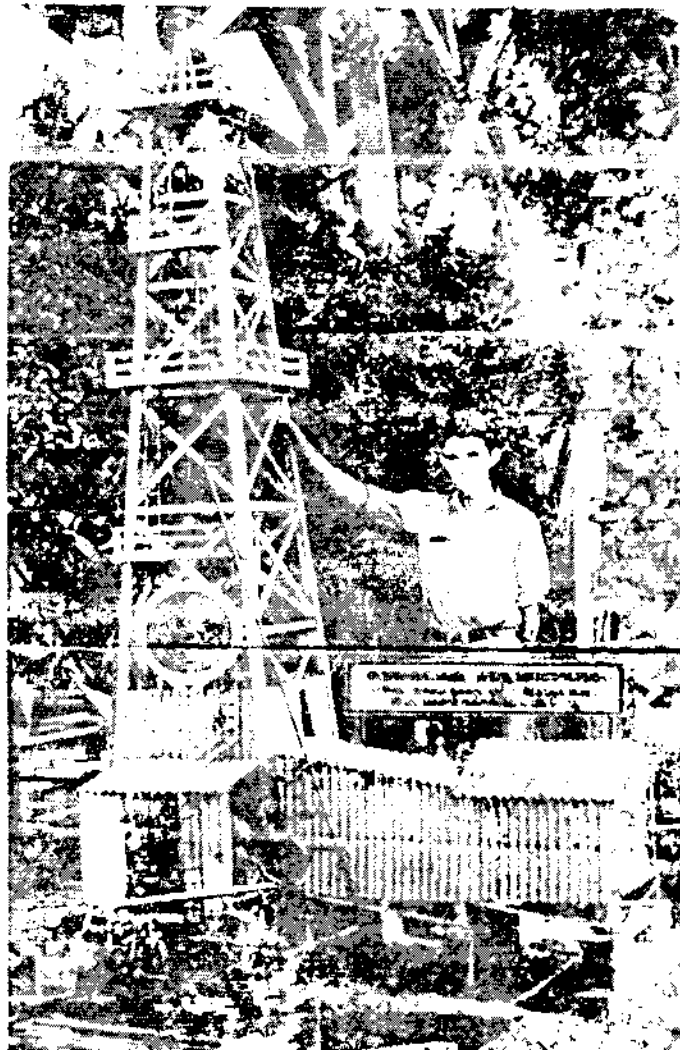


The Koontz family home in Fulton Wells.



*Lola McCarric
circa 1901*

MINIATURE RIG SINKS HOLE



BOY EVOLVES TINY BUT PERFECT DERRICK.

Julian Hathaway, 16, of Norwalk, Has Built This Complete Drilling Outfit—Engine, Derrick and Drilling Equipment—With Which He Has Sunk a Hole Ninety Feet Deep in His Father's Citrus Ranch. The Equipment Is to Be Shown by a Large Oil Company at Many Expositions This Fall.

SCHOOL BOY BUILDS OIL DERRICK

Drills 90-Foot Well on Father's Ranch Norwalk, Aug. 16.—Julian Hathaway, 16-year old boy, bears the distinction of having built with his own hands an oil well drilling outfit with which he has recently sunk a ninety foot hole on his father's citrus ranch on Little Lake Road.

Born on the Hathaway ranch in the shadow of Santa Fe Springs oil derricks, and coming of a family through whose veins runs a strain of mechanical genius, young Hathaway at an early age felt the urge to create mechanical marvels. When fortune smiled upon his father through the discovery of oil on a part of his ranch, the latter fostered his son's abilities. He equipped a shop with a battery of precision tools that would delight an Edison or a Ford and gave Julian and his two brothers carte blanche to go ahead. His only demand was that anything attempted must

be completed. The finished oil rig built by young Julian, probably the only one of its kind in America, is the present outstanding accomplishment.

Nine Feet High.

The miniature derrick stands nine feet high. In its building ninety feet of galvanized angle iron and 150 feet of galvanized girts and crossarms were used. All of this iron was cut, bored and bolted together by the boy. It is a true replica in every detail of the big derricks, even to the "A" frame through which pipe and tools are maneuvered.

There is a rotary engine house, a standard engine house and a mud pump house, all constructed and equipped to simulate the regular equipment of the big oil companies even to the corrugated roofs and walls.

The outfit is capable of performing all the operations of oil well drilling, including rotary drilling, mud pumping and fishing for tools. Power is furnished by twin steam engines hooked to a two horsepower boiler fired by gas.

Amazingly Complete.

The outfit is amazingly complete. Catwalks at strategic heights and steel ladders add to the realism of the miniature rig. Sixteen electric lights in engine house and derrick make night drilling practical.

Julian Hathaway and his two older brothers, Elwood and Richard, are all natural born mechanics and have built several miniature engines. It is nothing unusual at all, after seeing a new engine or other machine, for them to go home and duplicate it in miniature. Richard is working on a Corles engine of complicated design to duplicate a big one used on a well at Santa Fe Springs. Julian is now a student in the Norwalk High School. He expects to spend some time in college in the study of engineering and will then enter the oil business.

His miniature rig is to be exhibited by General Petroleum Corporation at numerous fairs this Fall.

Editor's Note: Born in June of 1912, Julian I. Hathaway is the only surviving son of Lola and Jesse Hathaway. Generally known as "Doc," due to his attentiveness to injured animals as a youngster, still works in the SFS oil fields to this day.

The Los Nietos School District is the second oldest school district in California, and will be celebrating its 136th birthday.

A bronze plaque is expected to be installed at the corner of Norwalk Boulevard and Los Nietos Road at the beginning of 1998 to celebrate the Old California school site where an adobe building was built in 1790.

A recent visitor to the ranch was Louise Conley, who taught school in Los Nietos for 33 years, from 1944 to 1977.

Remembering Little Lake

By Nadine Hathaway

Little Lake School District was per capita the third richest school district in the state of California when I was married in 1935. This was because of the high valuation placed on the oil fields. Not that the wealth would have made that much difference. There wasn't that much to spend the money on.

There was one school in the district with a school population fairly stable at 210 students. There was one first grade class, one second grade class, and so on, through the eighth grade. After the eighth grade students took the bus to Whittier High School, which was then the only high school in the Whittier Union High School District. I was shocked when one of my daughter's friends reported that her mother thought that it was too bad that more fuss wasn't made over the 8th grade graduation, because it was taken for granted that not every student was going to graduate from high school. I guess that mother knew what she was talking about. Her one (and only) son dropped out.

My mother-in-law, Lola M. Hathaway, was on the school board for 20 years. She took her office very seriously and bought ice cream and cake for the entire school on the last day of school. She ordered the white sheet cakes from the driver of the Helms Bakery truck who came into the yard regularly. "Frenchy" was always glad to take her order and deliver the cakes to the school.

I don't recall that the school board elections were very competitive at that time. It wasn't always easy to fill the slots. When one deadline approached, Harold Keck was practically pulled from his bed and urged to run. He was less than enthusiastic, I believe, but he was reminded that it was his civic duty—or someone's civic duty. A total of seven votes was cast in that election.

I went to school functions occasionally just to have something to do. I remember seeing Virginia Myers Boles and Teta Oglesby Smart graduate, both now "big wheels" in Whittier. When my oldest daughter was ready for kindergarten I marched her to school and was greeted by Helen Cruickshank, a pleasant faced woman who was President of the Parent-Teacher Association, and who offered to be of assistance. This was only the second year for a kindergarten class at Little Lake. Betty Weiskopf was the teacher. She became Betty Johns while still teaching at Little Lake, and invited former students to her wedding.

Just as there were only three members of the school board, there were proportionately few "regular" members of the P.T.A. Not more than 12 of us would sit around in a circle in the gym. Offices would revolve around, with occasional pressure to convince someone that she owed it to the rest of them to take her turn. I remember calling on Neta Gray,

along with other members of a nominating committee, to convince her that she should be president. She felt that she couldn't do that. She washed on Monday, ironed on Tuesday, mended on Wednesday There was no time to be a P.T.A. president, she declared. However, she was eventually persuaded to accept the office and she presided with competency and grace.

Neta's husband, Harold Gray, was the local milkman and, I believe, remained so until he and Neta bought a book store and card shop in Fullerton.

I remember that sometimes we had speakers at the P.T.A. meetings, often they were county specialists. I remember Grace Addams, a woman of wit and perception, and I particularly remember her response when we were discussing a family whose children had caused a certain amount of turmoil in the school and community. Most of us felt relief when the family moved out of the district, including Grace Addams. Someone pointed out that Betty Weiskopf, the kindergarten teacher, felt no such relief — just a sense of frustration that the family's problems hadn't been solved, at least partially. Addams' tart reply was "Betty is BIG. I'm not." I thought it was a loss to our community when Grace left here to work at the University of Maryland.

Another favorite was a woman — a reading specialist, I suppose — whose first name was Faith. I am not sure of her last name but "Scudder" comes to mind. She was a patient woman who knew how to handle the prickly mothers who couldn't understand why their sons or daughters could not read as well as their neighbor's sons or daughters and were willing to do battle over the situation. After one such encounter Faith said quietly, "I was raised in the mountains, and I was eight years old before I went to school."

Two adult education classes met at Little Lake during those early years. The first was an upholstery class, and members moved chairs and sofas to the stage of the auditorium where they could be worked on under supervision. The second was a class in square and folk dancing and attracted a group of regulars. One couple was the parents of twins. The mother of the twins and other children in the family said that sometimes she was so tired before she came to class that she almost didn't come, but once there and whirling to the music, she forgot about how tired she was. Everyone had a good time. Kathryn Berry reported that Katie Keck, the matriarch of the Keck family, told Kathryn that she really didn't mind if Kathryn and her husband Ted went out dancing; she just wished that they would call it something else. Katie was a straight-laced Methodist.

The Halloween carnival was something to look forward to, especially to children who didn't have many perks in their lives. Game booths, food booths and costume contests were all part of the fun. Classes competed against one another to see how many P.T.A members they could bring

in during the annual drive. I recall that one day my oldest daughter came home in tears because her class was running second in the membership contest. The day was saved, however. We took out memberships in the names of our dogs.

There were paper drives, of course. After one such drive, where it was learned that the P.T.A. had only cleared \$40, Jack Starr claimed that it had cost that much to put his wife's back back in place, and next time he would donate the \$40.

Jack Starr became a member of the Board of Directors of the Whittier Union High School District, and the first to represent the southwest area of the district since Mrs. Eugene Baker, who lived on Imperial Highway, had held that post. It seemed to me, watching the personalities come and go, that one of the best ways to break into community life was through the P.T.A. People could put their toes in the water and see if they liked the come and go of such activity.

One day Kathryn Berry showed up on my doorstep and explained a problem that the P.T.A. Board was having. Members were split evenly on whether or not the P.T.A. — the whole school, for that matter — should sponsor a recreation program during the summer. The argument for the program was that there was no organized activity for the children who lived in the new subdivision of Imperial Crest, located south of Lakeland Road, but still part of the Little Lake School District. This was 1950 and organizing recreation was a watershed issue, because the old-timers took the view that every kid had a sandlot in his own back yard. Why did we need a recreation program?

I was called in to break the tie, which I did, in favor of a program. Of course that involved personal responsibility for helping the program to take effect. We had games and contests. I still have the rubber stamp marked "Special" which we used on different colors of ribbon to designate various winners.

An outgrowth of this program was the "Teen Club." We played records in the gym on Friday nights (remember "The Tennessee Waltz?") and I brought in cases of orange and grape drinks, which we sold for a nominal price. The only requirement according to E.V. Murphy, the school principal and district superintendent, was that the drinks should not be carbonated. Holy Cow! Look at us now! How did we become so sophisticated in the last fifty years?

Another requirement, as I recall, was that we needed at least four adult chaperones for the Teen Club. I was one, of course. I could count on Mary Hewitt, and I was tremendously grateful to Franklin Anderson for giving up his Friday nights to help with this. What other school official or teacher do you know who would do such a thing? Franklin came to Little Lake as a 5th grade teacher. And such a

5th grade! That group of kids had caused one teacher to leave in mid-term and sent another to the verge of a breakdown. Franklin, with his many talents and creative energy, kept those little busybodies so active that they didn't have time to get into trouble. He was quickly moved to the 8th grade, a grade that has peculiar problems of its own. And from there he went to the new Lake View School as its principal. He finished his scholastic career as assistant superintendent (in charge of curriculum, I believe) for the Little Lake School District. He was a dedicated man and one of great good will.

Santa Fe Springs is now a small city, and one of community involvement. At least its residents have the opportunity to become involved. It has much to offer. When a city councilperson told me recently that some who were raised in Santa Fe Springs are moving back to Santa Fe Springs, I was not surprised.

Members in the News

NOVELLA WALLER, a long time member of the Guild of the Hathaway Ranch Museum, made news recently when it became evident that a black rooster, which had taken up his abode in her yard, was not about to leave and was too wily to be caught. Do you still have "Turkey," Novella?

JOHN MCMILLEN noticed a license plate on a white Dodge van at the intersection of Telegraph and Orr & Day roads in Santa Fe Springs that spelled out M R N Z G Y. John interpreted this as "Mr. Nice Guy".

LUIS FRANCO, JOHN MCMILLEN, JOE RAMIREZ and **HAROLD RUMMEL** have recently expressed their views in the Letters to the Editor column of the Whittier Daily News.

EDDIE AYCOCK had a walk-on (sit-on?) part in the "Pirates of Penzance" this summer. The production was the eleventh for the Santa Fe Springs Community Playhouse and Eddie has had a part in all of them. Betty Putnam is President of the Playhouse. May Sharp is secretary and Lynda Short is treasurer. Al Sharp is council liaison. Other HRM members who are members of the board of the Playhouse are Eddie Aycock, Paula Minnehan, Larry Short, and Armido Trujillo.

CAROLINE LONG guides the Santa Fe Springs Friends of the Library this year as President.

We are grateful to **REMY HATHAWAY** for the self-guided tour handouts and map, which he had ready for us in time for the Biola University tour in early October. Museum buildings and display locations are numbered and correspond to places on the self-tour map. And thanks for the duplicating, collating and stapling, Remy!