Three Rivers
Historical Times

A short story from Thelma Crain’s “Sunbeams & Buzzards”

Editors note:
The following is but one of the fascinating stories from Thelma Crain, taken from her book, which is available in the gift shop at the museum.

“Sunbeams & Buzzards” will be on sale during our Holiday Open House & Sale, Nov. 19-20.

Britten’s Store
In the early 1920’s when residents of “Old Three Rivers” mentioned going to the store, they probably were referring to the establishment of Nellie and Noel Britten. There was another grocer in the area of which the proprietor’s initials were “H.P.” and were jokingly referred to as meaning “High Priced.” This may have been my mother’s reason for opting to shop with the Brittens.

The definition of “store” covered many things other than just foodstuffs. There were such things as coal oil, chicken feed, lanterns, coal oil lamps, shoes, work clothes, etc. Some staples in larger amounts were kept in the back room such as sugar in 100 pound sacks to be brought at canning time when the fruits were ripe.

In the front, on the right side, one encountered glass cases with esthetic and more colorful goods such as hair ribbons, lace and eyelet for trimming by the yard, and perhaps some boxed candies to be used as gifts, and sometimes an odd assortment of toys left over from the previous Christmas season.

Across and on the left side above and behind the counter which held the large metal cash register were a variety of shelves which held canned and boxed goods. These shelves were inaccessible and “off limits” to the customer, with the clerk assuming the task of retrieving them once he had been advised of one’s wishes. No meandering around the place with a wheeled grocery cart to pick and choose at one’s will. What a ridiculous idea this would have been!

Near the entrance was a small post office where some residents picked up their mail. The majority of citizens were served by a mail carrier driving up and down the roads depositing mail in boxes along the way. Sometimes workers in the post office were willing and able to pick up interesting facts about the town by accidentally glancing at barefaced postcards written to the locals.

Noelie, as he was affectionately called, was usually on duty to take care of customers. He was not what one would call swift on his feet and many times my mother would get frustrated at the length of time he would use to shuffle here and there to put up her order. He sometimes disappeared into the back room to retrieve something and she thought he was never coming back.

Well, Noel, Nellie, the mailman, and my mother are all gone now one day I shall also which will finally put an end of drivel such as this. So be it.
Living History Day 2011

If you didn’t come to our Living History Day you missed a great event. About 2 years ago my wife Dody and I were trying to come up with something that we could do to introduce the local Native American life into our museum. For the past eight months we have been in meetings with representatives of the Wukchumni and Wuksachi Indian Tribes to develop an authentic Native American village next to the museum. We did not want to put up our interpretation of what the village should look like and so our little village is the genuine article, built and will be maintained permanently by some of the greatest folks you would ever want to meet. Throughout the entire process we all felt very happy that our museum is promoting the life style of our first peoples.

So, what did we do with all our new found knowledge and friends. Well, we started by sending out letters to all the elementary schools in Three Rivers, Lemon Cove and Visalia. We received replies and on October 7th we had ‘kids day’ at our Living History Day event. Various demonstration including village construction, basket weaving, acorn flour and mush preparation, mat weaving, drumming and story telling were all done by Native Americans to over 200 - 4th and 5th grade students. The kids also made individual medallions. In addition each student was given a small hand made basket made from pine needles and crafted especially for our event by Native Americans.

That Friday kids did that classes next ‘kids’ day again allow us to October and in settlers. We Following this Saturday, Oct brought their demonstrations. On this day the Native Americans added the sale of ‘Indian Tacos’ and they sold like hotcakes. This day brought in approximately 250 more people so all total for the two days was around 500 people. The first thing that happened on Saturday was a ‘blessing of the village’ conducted by the tribe elder, Eddie Sartuche and his son Johnny. Approximately 70 people lined up to be a part of this very special event.

Three Rivers Historical Times is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization
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President’s Corner

This time of year is a very hard time for non-profit organizations. We all are trying to make our members, donors and general public aware that we need help to keep the doors open. I get all the mail too and wish I could contribute to everyone that comes along, but I can’t.

So here is my pitch to you to help us protect our little corner of the world and ask that you consider us in those year end donations that need to be done now. And don’t forget, any monetary or artifact donation to the Museum is tax deductible.

Have you thought about giving a membership to the Historical Society to a family member or friend. We will provide you with a gift card and membership card for that special person. I am enclosing a membership application to help.

The Buddy-System Really Works!

This means two people work the same shift but on alternating weeks. Example; I work the 1st and 3rd Tuesday and my buddy works the 2nd and 4th Tuesday. We can also use subs to fill in as needed. A shift is 3-4 hours.

We will train each of you to open and close the museum, and the daily operations. You do not need to know about the history of Three Rivers - you will learn that as you go. It will be fun, it will be interesting and you will learn a lot about your community, neighboring National Parks and people visiting from all over the world.

If you are thinking of becoming a volunteer for the museum, why not ask a friend to join you. Call Susan Wolff at 592-9790 or the museum at 561-2707 to sign up.

OLD FAMILY RECIPE

This months recipe comes from Elizabeth Wilcox of Three Rivers. She says that once you try her recipe you will never be the same.

Chili Rellano Pie

- 1 can whole green chilies
- 1 pound jack cheese, shredded
- 4 eggs
- Pinch baking powder
- 2 T milk
- 2 T flour

Remove seeds & pith from chilies and tear apart long way.
Layer cheese and green chilies.
Beat eggs, milk, flour & baking power in blender, pour over cheese.
Bake at 325º for 25 minutes in 8x8 greased pan

HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE AND YEAR END SALE

Sat Nov 19, 9am-5pm
Sun Nov 20, 9am-3pm

Join us for holiday refreshments, see what has happened at the Museum and do all your holiday shopping at reduced prices.
Coming Events

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Visitor Count At The Museum

January 2010 and part of February 2010 we were remodeling.

We will be advertising our open house and the holiday bazaar in hopes of bringing more visitors to Three Rivers for holiday shopping.

Museum closed for Thanksgiving holiday

Community Caroling, located at Three Rivers Mercantile, 5pm to 7pm

24th—museum open from 9am-3pm
25th—museum closed for Christmas Holiday

Museum open 9am-3pm
museum closed both Jan 1 & 2 for New Years Holiday

Contacting the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors meet monthly at 9am on the second Tuesday of the month. Members of the Society are welcome to attend. If you have something you wish to bring to the attention of the board contact Tom Marshall at history@3rmuseum.org

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