** CELEBRATING 140 YEARS OF LAKESIDE—1886·2026 **

HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

LAKESIDE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LHS ESTABLISHED 1972

Volume 46, Number 5E *May 2026*

LAKESIDE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BITS & PIECES

The next time you're visiting our historic Olde Community Church, take a look at the exterior signs. After years of the Lakeside sun and other weathering, they were getting a little faded. Now they look fresh and new again – thanks to our friends at Danos Signs Graphics & Designs in El Cajon. Danos has refreshed the signs at the front entrance, the courtyard, the museum, and in front of the Gift Shop.

On a similar subject – that being the care and maintenance of our 130-year-old church – we are making plans to replace the roof. It's been many years since we have done this and we must take care to do it the right way, so as to preserve the look and historic character of the building, which also honors the folks who planned, designed, and constructed the structure in 1896. We are hopeful the new roof will be in place by sometime this summer.

Speaking of summer, get your calendars out and mark the dates of August 7th and 8th – when we will be hosting another Vintage Sale in the old church. The Museum Committee is making plans now for an interesting and fun event in our air-conditioned chapel and social hall. More information to follow.

In April, we received a wonderful letter from one of the original architects of the Lakeside Historical Society: none other than Mr. Leighton "Gene" Claussen! Thank you sir!

Check out Page 2 for another treat about a longtime member: Yrene Woods. Yrene is this month's "Member Spotlight," our regular column in which we get a chance to highlight the work and contribution of some of our many valued volunteers.

LAKESIDE HISTORICAL SOCIETY
9906 MAINE AV DOWNTOWN LAKESIDE
GENERAL MEETING AND PICNIC LUNCH

Saturday, May 16, 2025
11 am—Meet with Friends
12:00 pm—Picnic Lunch
1:00 pm—History Presentation

Come join us for an old fashioned Picnic Lunch featuring Pulled Pork Sandwiches and all the fixins' and dessert too!

$5 donation
PLEASE RSVP by May 11!

Historical Presentation
"Electricity on the Farm: Lakeside's First Hybrid"
by Gordon Shackelford

Please RSVP with us at (619)561-1886

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING LHS EVENTS

MUSEUM COMMITTEE: Thu, May 7 @ 10 am
BOARD MEETING: Thu, May 14 @ 4 pm
GENERAL MTG/PICNIC LUNCH: Sat, May 16 @ 11 am
Historical Presentation: Gordon Shackelford
"Electricity on the Farm: Lakeside's First Hybrid"

Coming in June

LIVING HISTORY DAYS: Jun 2—4
Setup: Mon, Jun 1 @ 9 am
BOARD MEETING: Thu, Jun 11 @ 4 pm

Meetings & events are held at LHS History Center unless noted

GIFT SHOP / MUSEUM HOURS
OPEN: Tuesday - Thursday & Saturday: 10 am - 1 pm
CLOSED: Sunday, Monday & Friday
ARCHIVES OPEN EVERY WEDNESDAY
MUSEUM OPEN UPON REQUEST OR APPOINTMENT

Member Spotlight: YRENE Q. WOODS

(Part of a series highlighting our hardworking volunteers of the Lakeside Historical Society.)

This month we highlight one of our dearest and most senior members – Yrene Woods.

Yrene came to San Diego in 1958 as a new bride. Before her marriage to Sam Woods, she had lived in many Southern California communities, including San Bernardino, Riverside, Santa Barbara, Los Angeles - even in Mexico for a time. She has worked five different careers, the last one as a paralegal for the county before she "retired." In 1980, Yrene started taking quilting classes and soon became a Charter Member of the San Diego Quilt Show, serving first as Vice President and then as President. She was also a Charter Member of the American Quilt Society. Yrene became a judge for the events as well as a guest artist in western shows and Canada. It's no wonder she started the Lakeside Quilt Show. Yrene is still considered a "fabric artist" who shows work at various events and galleries.

Her involvement with Lakeside history began even before LHS was established. According to Yrene, "Marcella Willaims asked me to join her group. In 1966, we started cutting newspaper items about Lakeside and posting them in scrap books. Then in 1976, Flossie Beadle's family gave Marcella all of Flossie's paperwork and the Archives were started. We first met on Tuesday, then changed later to Wednesday." (This is why the Archives is open every Wednesday! –Ed.) As a representative of LHS, she participated in the Grape Day Festival in Escondido for three years. Yrene was involved with the lease and purchase of our Olde Community Church and was part of the legendary "Mortgage Burning Ceremony" held when LHS paid off the church in three short years!

Her late husband, Sam (who passed in 2005) was also involved with LHS, in charge of mailings for a number of years. "He did whatever Betty, Marcella or Edna asked," she added. Yrene was on the Board as a "Member-at-Large" for several years and, more recently, chaired the Museum Committee until 2025.

Currently, Yrene still likes to help out when she can. She is a regular attendee on Tuesdays with the Sewing Club which, she adds, was started when Margaret Sherman was in the Gift Store on Tuesdays. She was once President of the Garden Club. She is considered a plumeria plant expert and is even recognized for her knowledge of pineapple cultivation – which until recently she was still growing in her front yard garden!

When asked what she likes best about LHS, Yrene says it is the friends she made. Though many are gone now, she enjoys the new ones as well.

Later this year, Yrene will celebrate her 95th birthday. We are very fortunate to have her as a member of LHS!

A LETTER TO LHS

In April, LHS received the following letter, which included a donation to our Western Days Breakfast event. Then we noticed the letter was from none other than one of our founding members: Mr. Gene Claussen!

The letter read: HISTORICAL GREETINGS: I was impressed by the super photos and article – well done! The same is true for Darlene's shot of "down-town." Enjoy the juice (Mr. Claussen's donation to the Breakfast), Leighton "Gene" Claussen

To give you an idea of Mr. Claussen's significance, here's an excerpt from "Legends of Lakeside," our seminal history book on all things Lakeside:

"(In) March 1972, Gene Claussen called a meeting at Lakeview Elementary School to form the Lakeside Historical Society (with) those who loved Lakeside and wished to preserve its history for succeeding generations."

Mr. Classen was the principal of Lakeview when he held that first fateful meeting, which resulted in the official incorporation of the Lakeside Historical Society. Later this year, he will celebrate his 90th birthday. Thank you for your support, Mr. Claussen – it was great to hear from you!

In Remembrance

Shay Smith
Lifetime Member, Past Co-Vice President
1971—2026

Our Heartfelt Condolences

Thomas "Tommy" La Madrid
Lakeside Legend
1950—2026

Judy Tanimoto Coz
MARA, VFW, Wreaths Across America
1964-2026

In Loving Memory

Donations have been made in the loving memory of:

Thomas "Tommy" La Madrid
Normand Croteau

When you make a monetary donation to our Memorial Fund for your friend or loved one, a brass plaque will be made with their name, date of birth and death, and then placed on the Memorial Wall in our History Center. The family receives a written notification; the donor receives a written thank you, which can be used for tax donation purposes.

Most have heard that our good friend and Lakeside Legend, Tommy La Madrid, passed away in March 2026. Military services were scheduled for Wednesday, April 29, 10:30 A.M., at the Miramar National Cemetery. His local memorial service is planned for Sunday, June 14, at the Rodeo Grounds. At left: Tommy visited with us at our annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon this past March 14, at the Olde Community Church. He will be missed!

HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS

The official publication of the Lakeside Historical Society since 1980
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*Articles, stories, emails & photos welcome * Deadline: 2nd Friday of the month*
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MAY MILESTONES

NEW LIFE MEMBER

RICHARD PONCE

NEW MEMBERS

J. Shannon Scott
Martha Maddox
Colin Campbell
Rebecca Taylor

BIRTHDAYS

2 Farrie Ann Paul Nichols
3 Penelope Anderson
9 Calvin Bowman, Jr.
10 Loretta Mitrovich
10 John Sandoval
12 Margaret Ann Head Berg
14 Lawrence Roberts
15 Elizabeth "Elsie" Clifford
16 Daryll Barham
19 Terry Puhn Clark
19 Kathy Laws Savage
20 Len Buckel
21 M. Gale Ruffin
22 Sally Nelson
23 Richard Cabanilla
25 Daniel Morgan Evans
25 Joan Oppenheimer Kouns
25 Janice Kouns Malm
26 Debbie Galusha
26 Natalie Springer Mates
27 Christine Sherman Herzog
28 Martha Kursave Hess
28 Marjorie Kursave Smith
29 Tom Pendarvis
29 Larry Taylor
31 Rex Anderson, Jr.

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MAY 2026
EMAIL EDITION

THE "COWBUSTERS" Dance Orchestra, which will play modern and old-time dance tunes at the 49er benefit dance Friday, July 1, at the Rodeo Grounds. The VFW Auxiliary will serve refreshments later, votes to be credited to Pat Kuhner, candidate for Queen of the Days of '49. Dance votes will be credited to Claire Vance, candidate of Hamlet's Market and "The Cowbusters."

Read and enjoy! The advertisement at right is dated March 31, 1951 and highlights the (Tom) La Madrid Lakeside Inn (in today's Eastbound building), featuring Millie and the Cow Busters. A few years before, the "Cowbusters" Dance Orchestra (above) played a fundraiser at the Rodeo Grounds during the 1949 "Days of '49" event. Wish we had the names of the men in the band! (LHS Archives)

LHS FLOAT HIGHLIGHTS 61ST ANNUAL WESTERN DAYS PARADE

For the first time in many years, LHS participated in the Western Days Parade (*above*). Co-VP Rob Harding was at the wheel, with Billy "Outlaw" Ortiz riding shotgun. We had a couple of great historic photos displayed in the truck bed.

The "Old Timey Old Timers" band was on the trailer, with Carl "Broken Hand" Constentino, Chuck Preble, and the other Chuck – "Doc" Francis. Connor Hall, our other Co-VP was on board as well, with past president Gary Mitrovich and his sister, Karen Mitrovich-Dotson. At the rear was Betsy, our Rocky Home Dairy cow, and T-Bone, the Pinnacle Peak mascot from years' past. Thanks to all who joined us and helped out!

Special thanks to Tim Melville of Ironman Enterprises for the use of his truck, and to River Oaks Ranch in El Monte Valley for the use of their trailer. The float was dedicated to the late Tommy La Madrid, a Lakeside legend.

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Here's the story on this one: A few weeks back, we discovered a couple of old photos in the archives that were in bad physical shape. One in particular was the front yard and view of the Lakeside Inn, probably from 1901 (top photo). We had not seen these photos in our collection and were saddened at their condition. So we took them to our friends at Giant Photo to see what they could do. They did a very high resolution scan and then did some digital repair work, but there was almost too much damage—though the new scans were better than nothing (middle photo). Then I called upon my son (and LHS member) Alex and asked what he might be able to do with AI (Artificial Intelligence). I'm not totally sold on AI, but it seemed like the only solution. The incredible photo (bottom) is the result. AI was able to sharpen the picture and hide the blemishes (thought we still have a few fixes left to do). Now this wonderful photo will live on! (From your Editor...)