



Volume 4, No. 1

Antelope Valley Rural Museum

MARCH 2020

AVRM EXECUTIVE BOARD

OFFICERS

Chairman

Giovanni Simi

Vice-Chairman

David Pickus

Finance Officer/Membership

Bill Rawlings

Secretary

Ruth Godde

DIRECTORS

Dayle DeBry—Military & Aviation
Newsletter Editor

Lynn DuPratt—Public Relations

Jeff Godde—Agricultural Equipment

John Knapp—Vehicle Mechanics

Luci Pickus—Volunteer Coordinator

Brandy Royce—Curator & Librarian

Sheila Sola—Timeline Display

Barbara Sterk—Farm & Garden

Jerry Sterk—Ag. & Dairy Research

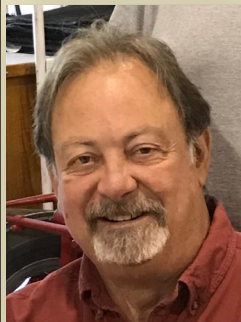
Kristi Word—Student Field Trips

TABLE OF CONTENTS

AVRM Officers & Chairman’s Message	1
Bill Rawlings & Upcoming Events/Meetings	2
Coming to Lancaster—Dorothy (Thomsen) Rawlings/Bill Rawlings	3-4
War Eagle Field/Royal Air Force at L.A. County Air Show	5
3rd Annual Flapjack Fundraiser—January 18, 2020	6
Newspaper articles 100 & 110 years ago in the AV	7-8
Membership application and Interesting AV News Items	9
Donations, Gift Store, Books, Museum Hours & Website Info	10

CHAIRMAN’S MESSAGE

Giovanni “G” Simi



Woo Hoo! The foundations are being dug and formed and the steel for the building has been ordered and will arrive on April 8. This wonderful project of a local history museum has been in the conceptual stage for at least one generation and now is becoming a reality. We will need all volunteers ready to go as soon as the building is up for the finishing touches, and the big move as we plan to be ready to welcome our patrons at the 2020 Fair.

We will be having a big fundraiser in the future and we will keep you informed of the date and time. Our efforts to date have been a true grassroots effort, but now we need to take it to another level to allow the museum to grow.

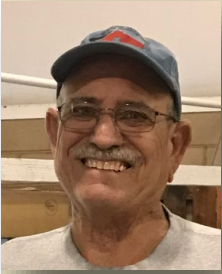
The Board of Directors has been outstanding in what has been done so far, but now the biggest part of our journey begins. Please plan on helping out with your special skill.



February 26, 2020



RAWLINGS' REVIEW



Construction Has Begun!

As reported in the previous newsletter, Toneman Development Corporation has ordered the Pre-Engineered Metal Building. It is scheduled to be delivered on April 8th. In the meantime, the foundation and underground utilities are underway. This will be followed by the first courses of masonry walls and concrete floor. Our museum will be built in time for our opening during the 2020 AV Fair.



February 24, 2020

Cost Increases are even more than anticipated due to greater seismic, wind shear, and insulation requirements from the State. Larger steel columns, beams, girders, and rafters along with wider and deeper footings with more concrete and steel reinforcement, has driven the costs up dramatically. This also means that some of the extra amenities we had planned to include may have to be delayed or even eliminated. We will be having a fundraiser probably sometime in June to show off what we have done and to hopefully raise a large piece of our shortfall. (See upcoming events)

Volunteers...We Will Need You! During construction we will be furnishing the labor for the interior carpentry and several finishes in order to save money. If you have skills you can offer, please contact me. We will be packing up in mid-June for the big move.

Membership Renewal season is here. If you have not paid your 2020 dues, now is the time. For those who already paid, *THANK YOU!*

UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2020

MARCH 7: Board meeting at 10:00 a.m. Museum open 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

MARCH 21: Museum open 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

MARCH 21-22: Los Angeles County Airshow AVRMTent with War Eagle Field/Polaris Flight Academy displays and Royal Air Force F-35 airmen. Fox Field Airport, Lancaster, CA 9:00 a.m.—3:30 p.m.

MARCH 27—29 Home Show at the AV Fairgrounds. AVRMTent will have a booth.

APRIL 4: Board meeting at 10:00 a.m. Museum open 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

APRIL 18: Museum open 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

MAY 2: Board meeting at 10:00 a.m. Museum open 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

MAY 3: Flea Market at the Fairgrounds. AVRMTent will have a booth.

MAY 16: Museum open 10:00 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

JUNE 6: SAVE THE DATE! FUN RAISIN' FOR A BARN RAISIN' BBQ/Fundraiser. Tickets are \$75.

Membership Renewal, continued.

Only \$20 per person, per year helps the museum with costs of operation such as insurances, license fees, and maintenance. Pay in person at the museum during our regular hours, mail to our P.O. Box, or renew on our website. You may also donate, purchase books, and pay memberships using *PayPal* or by using your credit card. You may even offer a monthly donation with your credit card on our website.

Please see page 9 of this newsletter for the Membership Application.

Bill Rawlings – Finance Officer

Here's a question for you: *What's the largest house number in the world?* Answer on page 9 of this newsletter!

COMING TO LANCASTER

A story of love, marriage, alfalfa farming and the tough Depression years

A tribute to the Rawlings and Thomsen families

Written in 2008 by Bill Rawlings with Introduction by Dayle DeBry



Dorothy & Scott Rawlings

"If Model T Fords could go to Heaven, my Mom and Dad would probably enjoy another parade together now that they are reunited." Bill Rawlings.

Introduction: The Antelope Valley has lost a member of an important pioneer family who helped shape the past, and also the future of this area—Dorothy (Thomsen) Rawlings, mother of Bill and Linda Rawlings, and wife of H. Scott Rawlings. Dorothy passed away on February 3, 2020 at the age of 95.

These two families—Thomsen and Rawlings—have left a permanent mark on the AV. We thank both of them for adding to the history of the Valley and nurturing their children to value, preserve and protect our past by helping to establish the Antelope Valley Rural Museum of History and the Rural Olympics Hall of Fame.

Editor's note: Paragraphs in italics are from Dorothy's autobiography. "Now and Then," written when she was 14 years old—two years before she married Scott Rawlings at age 16. Normal text written by Bill Rawlings.

My ancestors, as far as I know, were not anything out of the ordinary. I am pretty sure that they didn't come over on the Mayflower. Neither were any of them generals in the Revolution or members of Congress. Even so, I am satisfied. Those I have known I have loved and respected just as much as if they had been famous."

On April 1, 1923, on the west side of Lancaster, my grandfather proposed to my grandmother. According to her journal, my grandmother, Emma Kugler, came from Wayne, Nebraska to California early in the spring of 1923 to visit people in Lancaster, San Diego and Sacramento. She stayed with the Thomsen family when she stopped in Lancaster and thus met my grandfather, Wilhelm "Bill" Thomsen. During her last visit with them, Bill drove Emma to the west side to see the wildflowers and proposed to her there. She returned to Wayne, Nebraska to plan their wedding, which took place in Wayne on September 20, 1923. They returned to the alfalfa ranch on the east side of Lancaster where my mother, Dorothy, was born in November 26, 1924. They later had sons Carroll and Richard, and a daughter, Judith.

THE THOMSEN RANCH

My great-grandparents, Carol and Bertha Thomsen came from Wayne, Nebraska to the Antelope Valley in 1920. They purchased three ranches between what is now 60th and 70th streets east and between avenues H and I where they grew alfalfa. After a few years he settled his son, Bill (my grandfather) on the home ranch, his other son Carroll on another, and his son-in-law Chester Phillippi on the third. My mother recalls that when her Grandpa Carl retired he built a house in town, which still stands on Cedar Avenue, next to the Masonic Lodge near Newgrove Street. He moved Grandma Bertha into the house. My mother also recalls that every Monday



Dorothy Thomsen, above 10 1/2 months. Right: Bill Thomsen bailing with Emma and her sister.



morning he walked nine miles to the ranches and stayed all week to make sure everything was being done right. Every Saturday night when everyone went to town for groceries and supplies, they took him back to Grandma's house. In those days the stores and markets stayed open as long as there were customers.

Bill and Emma Thomsen stayed on the ranch for eight years, after which they lived in Eugene, Oregon and Wayne Nebraska before returning to the alfalfa ranch in Lancaster in 1935.

"I was born in Los Angeles and made my home in Lancaster, California. I lived there on a ranch which belonged to my grandmother. She had two ranches. My grandfather and grandmother lived on one ranch and we lived on the other.

The ranch we lived on was eight acres in all. There was a five room, shingled house which we lived in, two large barns, two corrals, a bunk house for ranch hands, chicken yards and houses, a tank house, and a tool shed.

We were a half mile from the nearest store. Our nearest neighbor was just across the highway which was very unusual for that part of the country. The neighbor had a small boy, Sonny, (their grandson) living with them who was my age and my best playmate.

Sonny had a pony and a burro, besides being allowed to ride the horses, his grandfather had to ride and sell. Naturally, I rode also. And I still remember the looks of envy that many other children cast at us.

Sonny and I would ride to the fields to watch the men bale hay, thresh wheat, ride on the wagon and drive the horses for them while they hauled in hay bales. Since we lived on the desert where many of the days were as "suffocatingly" hot, as others were cold.



Thomsen ranch—Bill and Emma Thomsen.



Thomsen ranch on Avenue I in winter.

ranching and canning and harvesting fruit in Quartz Hill and Littlerock. The ranch sold in 1939 and Bill worked in the feed store. They then moved to El Segundo, California, where mom married my dad, Scott Rawlings, in 1940, on the same day her sister Judy was born. They brought my sister Linda and me to Lancaster in 1955. My mother has lived here ever since.



Wilhelm "Bill" Thomsen working in the alfalfa fields. Ave. I & 70th St. East. Later owned by Larry Lake, and now owned by the Van Dam family.

Our favorite past-times back then would be to climb high in the weeping willow trees which bordered our yard and either cool off in the breezes there, or make tree houses, swing on the lower branches of these same trees, or go in swimming in the water reservoir and ditches used for irrigating.

On warm days, we would sometimes gather armfuls of wild flowers from the desert where they grew in abandon. We went barefooted all day long in summer." Dorothy (Thomsen) Rawlings.

Mom recalls what a hard life it was during the depression,

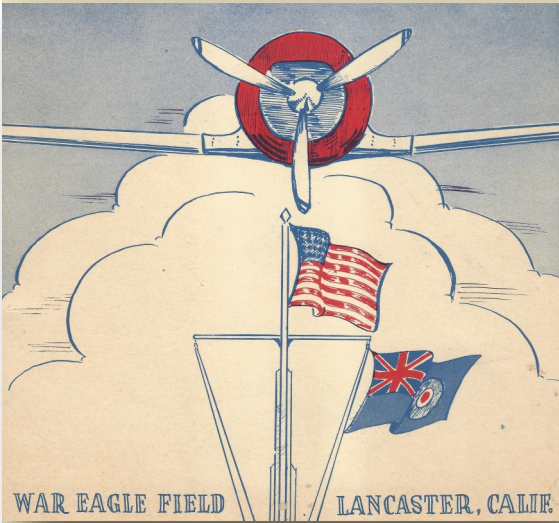


*Lancaster Studio
Dorothy—Halloween costume.*

Royal Air Force F-35B Squadron 17 Steps Back in Time With “Wings Over War Eagle Field” at LACAS

Los Angeles County Air Show, March 21-22, 2020

Written by Dayle DeBry, AVRМ Director—Military & Aviation



The LACAS and the Antelope Valley Rural Museum have teamed up with the Royal Air Force Squadron 17 at Edwards Air Force Base to provide a step back in time with a *Wings Over War Eagle Field* display.

War Eagle Field, a 640-acre training base located in Lancaster, California, opened in 1941. Polaris Flight Academy at War Eagle Field (Ave. I & 60 St. West in Lancaster) graduated its first 50 British cadets on Oct. 30 1941. Polaris was one of four schools run by Cal-Aero Flight Academy under government contracts.

With Britain already deep into World War II, the skies over England were no place to train these young men. Along with the Polaris Flight Academy instruction, the Antelope Valley provided the perfect climate for the cadets to learn how to fly and master the maneuvers they would need to win the war back home.

In December 1942, War Eagle Field saw the last class of RAF pilots trained here. 1942 also saw U.S. Army Air Forces trained at WEF. In 1944 Polaris merged with Mira Loma Flight Academy.

In August of 1945 after nearly 7,000 pilots were trained (both RAF and U.S.), its founder, Major C.C. Moseley, announced the shutdown of the school.

Since then the site has had many other uses including the current California State Prison, Los Angeles County. The original War Eagle Field tower, offices, hangars and many other buildings still remain at the original site.

The Antelope Valley Museum will display photos and memorabilia and will host the Royal Air Force’s 17 Squadron, the first UK squadron to take delivery of the F-35B Lightning II. Come out and give them a warm U.S. welcome at the LACAS!



R·A·F

BALLOON-BUILT HOUSES
LANCASTER, Cal. (U.P.)—Houses for aviation selectees at Polaris Flight Academy are being built with balloons. The balloon is inflated to the desired size for the house, then it is sprayed with concrete and after the concrete has hardened the balloon is deflated and removed. The result looks like a village of Eskimo igloos.



APPLEBEE'S 2020 FLAPJACK FUNDRAISER

A great time was had by all at the Flapjack Fundraiser, January 18, 2020. A very successful fundraiser for the AVRМ and a fun community event. Lots of conversation and laughter between the AVRМ volunteers, members and families. Thanks once again to Applebee's in Lancaster and AVRМ members for their continued support.



HAPPENINGS IN THE ANTELOPE VALLEY

110 YEARS AGO—1910

January 7, 1910
Oxnard Courier

MR. HIGH GOT INTO FOUR MILES OF SNOW

W.C. High, the well known sewing machine magnate, was in Oxnard again this morning, after having taken a trip to mines at Palmdale, Cal., in which he is interested. He says that the country was so well snowed in that he couldn't catch a stage line that was supposed to be running to Palmdale and along with a companion or two was compelled to walk four miles in the snow.

It was a trying experience for a thin-blooded resident of the coast and when he arrived in Palmdale he was as nearly frozen as a man gets without the actual reality.

March 1, 1910
Los Angeles Times

Sullivan-Webber Wedding.

Mrs. Myrtle Sullivan and George Webber of Lancaster, Cal., were married recently at the residence of the bride on West Fifty-fourth street, this city.

May 31, 1910
San Francisco Examiner

ARMY AND NAVY NOTES

Second Lieutenant Edward A. Evarts, Eighth Infantry, will proceed from Acton, Cal., to Lancaster, Cal., for station and for the duty assigned him in connection with the progressive military map of the United States.

July 16, 1910
Los Angeles Herald

ARREST PALMDALE MEN

George Adams and Matt Martin of Palmdale were taken into custody yesterday morning by deputy sheriffs, they being accused by A.W. Brodie of having maliciously made a break in a dam. Both men gave bail to assure their appearance in Justice Summerfield's court on Monday.

December 20, 1910
New Jersey Home News

PROF. HOLLAND IN RUNAWAY ACCIDENT

Prof. Joseph Holland, of Lancaster, Cal. formerly of this city, while driving with his daughter recently over a mountain near his almond ranch, met with a rather serious accident. When he had driven to the summit of the mountain and had begun to descend the horse ran away. The Professor and his daughter were thrown out. Miss Holland escaped with minor injuries, but her father sustained serious injury to his back and was unconscious for a time.

The horse was captured after running some distance and father and daughter were picked up by friends and taken to their home, which is about 70 miles from Los Angeles.

Besides running his ranch the Professor is engaged in teaching music. His son, Clifford Holland, is a member of one of the Los Angeles orchestras.

October 22, 1910
The Santa Maria Times

For Sale—Relinquishment. 160 acres 5 miles West of Lancaster, Cal. Decomposed granite soil, 300-ft. well water within 26 ft of surface. Well will pump about 30 miners inches of water. 2-room shack and chicken house. This will make a fine ranch to raise alfalfa, pears or apples. Located near good county road. Price \$1600. For full particulars address Box 507, Lancaster, Cal.

June 17, 1910
Weekly Times-Advocate

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Densmore and family of Gopher canyon accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Atmore of Lancaster, Cal., picnicked at Woreland Sunday.

June 18, 1910
Monrovia Daily News

Mr. and Mrs. Reeves Snowden, of Lancaster, Cal., are making a round trip of Southern California, and arrived here yesterday, by way of San Bernardino. They stopped to meet Mr. Kettle and other friends of Lancaster, Cal., and are delighted with Monrovia and vicinity. A more extended visit is promised later.

February 8, 1910
Los Angeles Herald

Miss Lucille Fox and Hugh F. Lovell were married in the home of the officiating clergyman, Rev. J.M. Schaeffle, recently. Mr. and Mrs. Lovell will reside in Lancaster, Cal.

HAPPENINGS IN THE ANTELOPE VALLEY

100 YEARS AGO—1920

January 4, 1929
Bakersfield Morning Echo

DRILL FOR OIL IN ANTELOPE VALLEY

Believing that oil exists beneath the desert lands surrounding Lancaster, which is now a rich farming community in the Antelope Valley, a Long Beach company is taking supplies twenty-five miles west of town in preparatory to drilling for oil. C.C. Carter, founder of the town, also thought oil existed, but after drilling 2,000 feet and spending several thousand dollars he ceased operations.

January 18, 1920
Los Angeles Times Ad

RANCHO DEL SUR The Home of Orion's King Gano
Grand Champion at the 1918 Liberty Fair
A few top spring boars for sale.
DONALD GRAHAM
LANCASTER CAL.

April 3, 1920
Bakersfield Morning Echo

SQUIRREL DRIVE OPENS IN SOUTHERN DISTRICT

Farmers of Los Angeles County under the supervision of the county horticultural commission will begin a squirrel drive in Antelope Valley today. The drive will continue four days in an effort to exterminate many squirrels by poisoning.

November 10, 1920
San Francisco Examiner

POSSE TRAPS SLAYERS IN HILLS, KILLS 1

Companion Surrenders When Cornered After Shooting Constable Who Approaches Them

Los Angeles, Nov. 9—The slaying of Constable G.H. Glidden today at Lancaster, 75 miles northeast of Los Angeles, by one of two men in an automobile which had aroused his suspicions, was followed by the killing of one of the men, partly identified as W.L. McCabe and the capture of the other, who gave his name as Dan Morris, after a man hunt over many miles of desert waste in the Antelope Valley.

The bodies of Glidden and McCabe were in a morgue at Lancaster tonight, while Morris was brought to a cell in the Los Angeles County Jail here.

\$1 Hoosier
Puts a **Hoosier**
In Your Home
With an Assortment of Ten
Iris Food Products Free
"The Housewives Office"
Hoosier kitchen cabinets
This Week Only!

October 14, 1920 Los Angeles Times ad

ALLEN TRACTOR
Model "A"
Allen
Red Seal Continental Tractor Engine
No Differential
Turning Radius 7 Ft.
All Bearings Timken, including front wheels.
Community Mfg. Company
E. G. JUDAH, President
General Offices, Marsh-Strong Bldg.,
Los Angeles.
Main Factory, West Alhambra, California.

Allen Tractor Model "A" ad Nov. 8, 1920
Los Angeles Times



THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING THE AVRМ!

Membership Application for the **Antelope Valley Rural Museum**

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

Annual Dues \$20/person _____

Special Interest as a volunteer? _____

Tax deductible Donation \$ _____

Bronze = \$100 Silver = \$1,000 Gold = \$10,000

Please make checks payable to: AV Rural Museum

Mail to: AVRМ P.O. Box 1316, Lancaster, CA 93538

Donate and pay dues via **PayPal** on our website: www.avmuseum.org

Answer to question on page 2: According to the *Akron Beacon Journal*, April 10, 1966 edition, *Action Line* column; "The highest-numbered house in the world in No. 51,202 on N. 170th St. W. in Lancaster, California!" Who knew?! Don't forget to send in your Membership application!

More Interesting Antelope Valley News Items

February 2, 1936, *San Bernardino County Sun*: Root Purchases Farm, to Raise Thoroughbreds Hollister, Cal.—Charley Root, veteran major league baseball pitcher, is going to be a horse-breeder when time slows his speed and takes the cunning from his pitching arm, it was revealed today.

Root, who helped the Chicago Cubs win the National League pennant last year has purchased a San Benito county farm on which he plans to raise fine Arabians and thoroughbred saddle horses.

A.W. (Zip) Moore of **Lancaster, Cal.**, an old-time westerner known for his accurate rifle shooting in the wild west shows, will be manager of Root's ranch.

May 19, 1953, *Noblesville Ledger* (Indiana): **Lancaster, Cal.:** Jacqueline Cochran, veteran Aviatrix who is the first woman to fly faster than the speed of sound: "Passing through the sonic barrier with its shock waves and other strange effects was the most exciting and interesting experience in my more than 20 years of flying."

April 13, 1954, *Sandusky Register* (Ohio) **Lancaster, Cal.:** Where's the Building? William Fram, 23, has nothing to show for a recent investment in an 18 x 20-foot brick building. Thieves dismantled it over the weekend and carted it away—brick by brick.

Website: www.avmuseum.org
[www.facebook.com/Antelope Valley Rural Museum](https://www.facebook.com/AntelopeValleyRuralMuseum)

Mailing address:

AVRM
P.O. Box 1316
Lancaster, CA 93584



Contact us:
avmuseum@verizon.net

Donate and pay dues via PayPal and credit card on our website

ANTELOPE VALLEY RURAL MUSEUM GIFT STORE

Annual membership dues	\$20.00
Hats—all baseball hats (Members)	\$10.00
Hats—all baseball hats (Non-members)	\$15.00
Lancaster, CA Through Time	\$25.00
History books—all books are priced at:	
Images of America “Lancaster”	\$20.00
Images of America “Palmdale”	
Legendary Locals of the AV	
(Above AV history books signed by Norma Gurba)	
P-38 Lightning	
Images of America “Edwards Air Force Base”	
DVDs Listed DVDs are priced at:	\$20.00
Jane Pinheiro Wildflowers NEW!	
Yester Years—AV History 1876—1942	
1987 Rural Olympics (narrated)	
Evolution of the Rural Olympics book	
(On DVD—Excel & Word Doc format)	

The AVRM is a 501(c)(3) public charity
EIN: 27-1002922

MISSION STATEMENT: The AVRM will honor the history of the Antelope Valley with documentation, preservation, exhibition, and education.

DONATIONS

Pickus Challenge 2019—2020 Building Fund	\$1,000
Honor the Past Plaques and Display Sponsorship (Custom laser cut wood plaques with Personal memorial or message)	\$1,500
Bronze Sponsorship Donor	\$100
Silver Sponsorship Donor	\$1000
Gold Sponsorship Donor	\$10,000

Antelope Valley Rural Museum
P.O. Box 1316
Lancaster, CA 93584

