

THE CARMEL VALLEY HISTORIAN

CARMEL VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 33, ISSUE 2 * JUNE 2019

The Madonna in the Village

By Elizabeth Barratt, CVHS Historian

Known locally as “The Immaculate Heart of Mary,” the graceful statue of the Virgin Mary has occupied a spot at White Oak Plaza for nearly 70 years. The saga of the figure, and its serendipitous journey to the heart of Carmel Valley Village, was recounted by its sculptor, Djey Owens. In his 1977



The Immaculate Heart of Mary-1949
Sculptor Djey Owens *Photo by Ron Pierce*

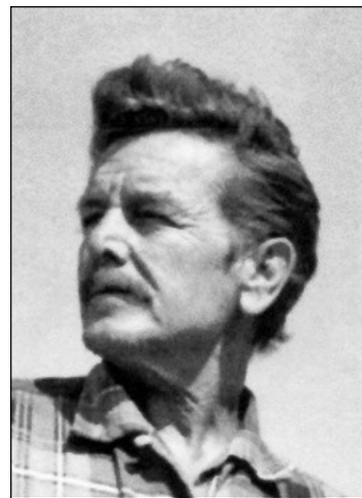
volume, “Poetry and Sculpture,” he published a melancholy poem to the Madonna which he titled “Our Lady of Sorrows,” possibly referring to his thwarted early efforts in finding a home for his cherished masterpiece.

The simple account goes like this: in 1949 Owens had been commissioned to create the

statue for Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Catholic Church of Montecito, California, which by coincidence shared the same name as Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church in Carmel Valley. Sadly, once Owens had finished the statue, the church rejected it. But there was more to the story: a parishioner had offered the church a different statue. Created by a sculptor named Jose Ferreira Thedim (1894-1971), the likeness portrayed the saint as she appeared to three small shepherd children at Fatima, Portugal in 1917. The parish accepted the donation in lieu of Owens’s commissioned work. Perhaps this was understandable: in 1920 Thedim had completed a statue of the Virgin for the Chapel of the Apparitions at Fatima. Visited today by thousands, the sanctuary marks the exact location where the three children reported the Virgin Mary’s appearances.

Hurt and rejected, Owens loaded the Madonna statue into his pickup and left Santa Barbara county, heading north without apparent destination. Along the meandering drive, he ended up in Carmel Valley Village at Marion Wilson's White Oak Art Gallery. She agreed to let him place the statue in the plaza next to her newly opened shop.

Djey Owens was born on June 10, 1905 in Long Island, New York. He moved to Los Angeles in 1930 and began working for the Federal Art Project, a New Deal program. Sponsored between 1935 and 1943 by the WPA (Works Progress Administration), the program employed about 10,000 artists and crafts workers during the Great Depression. Among his **(See Madonna, page 7)**



Djey Owens, 1950s
Photo Courtesy Carmel Art Association

A Message from the President

Are you interested in the most up-to-date news about the Historical Society and museum? Well, the most up-to-date news is now on Facebook and on our updated website. CVHS Volunteer Christine Williams is now posting weekly on our Facebook page. If you have Facebook, please help us share who we are and what's new, by "liking" with a ♥, making a comment, and sharing with your friends. We want everyone to know about us and come visit!

Facebook Page: **@Carmel Valley Historical Center**

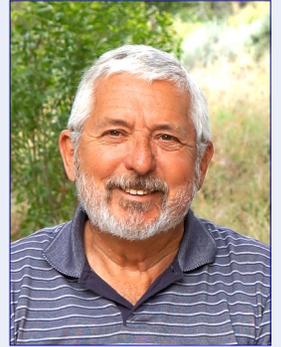
Website: **carmelvalleyhistoricalsociety.org**

At our annual meeting, a PowerPoint presentation informed the audience of our 2018 achievements. For a small group, a LOT got done, thanks to very committed volunteers. Thanks to each of you. The PowerPoint is on our website, as well as on Facebook.

Do you want occasional emails of upcoming events? Please email me at cvhspresident@gmail.com. That will guarantee you will be in the know.

Come find us at the **Fiesta, August 3-4, 10 am-5 pm.....**an easy way to buy our publications as well as see an exhibit. ***The Museum will be open during the Fiesta both days.*** Bring your friends, and help us share our wonderful history.

And while you are doing your spring cleaning, save some items for the Better than Rummage Sale coming up in September. See info in the article below.



Kim Williams

Better-than-Rummage Sale

WHAT: Better-than-Rummage Sale to benefit CVHS and the CV Kiwanis

WHEN: September 20-22

WHERE: At the History Center

DONATE: Items must be useable and in good condition, gently used

DESIREABLE ITEMS: Collectibles, shabby-chic, yard art, knick-knacks, antiques, clothes (but please nothing stained, torn, or zippers broken), tools and men's items, small furniture, chests of drawers, small cabinets and tables, dishes and kitchen items

CANNOT TAKE: electronics (but a large flat screen TV with remote is OK, but no old big ones), couches or large pieces of furniture (unless Sale Coordinator Cindy Thatcher deems it too good to pass up)

DROP OFF: Starting now—at the History Center during operating hours which are Saturdays 1-4 and Sundays 11-2. Please call Cindy Thatcher (831) 601-7657 or email Kim Williams at cvhspresident@gmail.com, if you cannot drop off at regular times and we will happily meet you at the History Center to accept donations. Arrangements can be made for a pick up if you cannot get out or don't drive by calling Cindy.



Financial Contributions (February, March, April)

General Fund: Keith & Kathrin Brown, Nancy Porter, Carmel Valley Kiwanis Foundation, James Sweeney, Carole Ray French, Kerlin & Jane Nogle, Melvin & Joy Pritchard, Kim & Christine Williams

In Memory of Susan Francis: Ellen McGrath

Donations: Documents, Photos, Artifacts, Library Materials (February, March, April)

Elizabeth Barratt: Vintage book: *History of the State of CA and Biographical Record of Coast Counties, California*

Ron & Angie Bulta: (Indefinite Loan) Original wooden sign from Rancho San Carlos, erected on RSC Road at CV Road in the early 1940's by Arthur Oppenheimer. It was removed by Santa Lucia Preserve around 1995 with the realignment of Rancho San Carlos Road and the installation of the traffic light at the intersection.

Leigh Cecka: T-shirt—Carmel Valley's Flood 1995, depicts Rosie's Bridge washed out

Buffi Collins: 6 CV Phone Directories from years: 1985, '87, '88, '90, '93 & '94, and 1990 CV Chapel Directory

Joe Hertlein: Posterboard with series of 8 8.5"x11" photos (4 each, front & back) of Community Center Park pre-CVHS, some with story poles or renderings of proposed buildings

Bob Mattson: Pair of vintage English riding spurs used by Pat Herman of The Farm Center, who wore them and played polo at a site off of Robinson Canyon Road

Ron Pierce: Book: *Poetry & Sculpture by artist Djey Owens*

Nancy Porter: Trail & Saddle Club History: 1956 to 2006

Charlene Randazzo: Two Shirts — 1) Hank Ketcham T-Shirt from Carmel Valley Fiesta, 1990 and 2) Carmel Valley Market T-Shirt: "Carmel Valley and Proud of It"; newspaper clipping re: Taj art piece hung in Cannon Rotunda, Washington DC with Leon Panetta

Sarah Soares: 2 matted 9"x13" photos of Francois Martin of the Tantomount Theater, circa 1978, taken by Martha Casanave

Thank you all for your generous support!



Antique Typewriters

Jeff Ohlson recently completed researching and repairing several of our antique typewriters for display. Come on in the museum and try your typing skills and bring back memories of days-gone-by.

Several young students try their hand at typing.
Photo by Jeff Ohlson

Carmel Valley's Early Land Developer Remembering Paul Franklin Porter

By Jeff Ohlson, CVHS Historian



Frank and Jet Porter raised their two children, Paul and his sister Peggy, in their Maple Park subdivision home in Salinas. During the Great Depression, Frank and Jet built and moved to a charming redwood home located southeast of Carmel Valley Village at the end of Salsipuedes Road, overlooking the Carmel River's "Porter's Pool" and the Lower Circle area. In 1927 Frank Porter developed the Robles del Rio Subdivision and its post office, which eventually became Rosie's Cracker Barrel.

From his parents, Paul acquired a lifelong love of animals, birds, and the outdoors. The Porter family enjoyed trips to Yosemite, hiking and fishing. In turn, Paul passed down these same passions to his daughters Nancy and Patricia and to his nephews Mike and Skip Marquard.

Paul was educated in the Monterey School District, graduating from Monterey High School

before getting a business degree from the University of California at Berkeley. He first went to work for the Bank of America in Truckee and then for Bechtel Engineering and Construction Company in San Francisco where he became their youngest manager of a project in Portland, Oregon.

Paul met his bride-to-be, Barbara Manners, on a blind date just before WWII. With the world at war, Paul enlisted in the Army Air Corps and completed flight school in Long Beach. He ferried airplanes around the U.S. before being sent to India, where he flew the famous Curtis C-46 "Commando" transport over "The Hump." This entailed flying over the Himalayas to supply the Chinese with fuel and materials for their war effort. Flying over the Himalayas was extremely dangerous, not only because the C-46's were unarmed, unreliable, and had poor navigation systems, but due to the Himalaya's unpredictable and often vio-

lent weather extremes. For all its shortcomings, the C-46 was labeled the "flying coffin" by its aircrews, and only 4 of the 27 men in Paul's group returned from the war. For his WWII service, Paul was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

After his military service, Paul returned home and settled down in Carmel Valley with his new wife Barbara. He soon followed in his parent's footsteps in the real estate development business. On the side, he raised chickens to sell, until he became too busy with real estate.

In the late 1940s Paul and his sister, Peggy purchased 1,000 acres from Muriel Vanderbilt Phelps that was located north of Carmel Valley Road from Bernardus Lodge on the west to Laurel Drive on the east. They also acquired acreage on the south side of Carmel Valley Road from just east of Sycamore Farms to Panetta Road, including Garzas Road.

To market these properties, they built a one-room sales office in the 1950s located at West Carmel Valley and Boronda Roads and formed "Rancho del Monte Subdivisions" (see photo of Paul and Peggy with their real estate sign). This business later became Porter-Marquard Realty, then sold to the Mitchell Group in 1996 and is now Sotheby's Real Estate. To support the development of these subdivisions, Paul created the Rancho del Monte Water Company that was eventually acquired by California American Water Company. Along with local contractor Frank DeAmaral, they proceeded to lay out and construct roads.

In the late 1940s, Carmel Valley was still a remote area and many houses were weekend homes. To encourage home sales, Paul and his father built "country clubs" to attract people to the area, hence the Robles del Rio Lodge and Rancho del Monte country clubs were constructed along with the developments. Life was simpler in those days, and the country clubs provided attractions and gathering places for locals as well as those moving to the Valley, as the golf clubs did later. Paul's major developments in Carmel Valley were: *Rancho Del Monte Subdivisions (late 1940s)*, *Brookdale Drive Subdivision (mid 1950s)*, *Rancho Del Monte Country Club (1948)*, *Tierra Grande Subdivisions (1962)*, *Mid Valley Shopping Center (1966)*, *Mid Valley Garden Apartments (1970)*, *Porter Marquard Ranch (Sleepy Hollow, 1970s)*, *Garland Ranch Subdivision (1970s)*, and *Willow*

Creek (1980).

In spite of an active business life, Paul was very much involved in the community. In the late 1940s he was one of the founding members of the Carmel Valley Volunteer Fire Department, the Community Center, and later helped acquire and finance the Carmel Valley Trail and Saddle Club. He was an active member of the Carmel Valley Chamber of Commerce and served as Chairman of the Grand Jury. Along with others, just for fun, he



formed the "Los Pobres Club," sponsor of the "Bull's Head Feed," the proceeds of which went to pay for more parties throughout the year.

In the late 1970s, Paul's daughter Nancy joined him and Skip and Mike Marquard as a partner in Porter Marquard Realty, taking on the management of Mid Valley Shopping Center. In 1980 Paul eased into retirement and spent most of his time at his beloved Willow Creek property. During this time Paul was diagnosed with melanoma cancer and, at age 66, died in 1983.

The author thanks Nancy Porter and Skip Marquard for their collaboration with this story, including photos, without which it could not have been told.

History Center Hosts Area Roundtable Meeting

By Cherie Ohlson, Photos by Jeff Ohlson

CVHS hosted the *Monterey County Regional Collections Roundtable* meeting in March. Each month, representatives from history-minded organizations from around the county meet to share and discuss common issues. They are essentially the “caretakers of our history” and are comprised of archivists, curators, historians, librarians, archeologists, and museum professionals from around the area. Some of the familiar organizations are: Defense Language Institute, Hopkins Marine Station, Monterey Library, Hartnell Library, CSUMB, Monterey’s Colton Hall, and Big Sur Historical Society.

Jeff Ohlson presented Part 2 of a talk on the *Turn-of-the-Century “Cirkut Panoramic Camera”* and how it was used to take amazing panoramic photographs. Cameron Binkley, Deputy Command Historian-Defense Language Institute and Jeff collaborated on the two-part series that highlighted the life of A.C. Heidrick, who took the HC’s panoramic photo on the east wall in the 1920s and many others, and of the design & operation of the camera itself.

At the conclusion of the meeting Jeff took the photo below, bottom using his 1960s film camera with a real flashbulb.



Photo archivist Pat Hathaway (caviews.com) holds up a 10”X36” large panoramic camera negative.



Pat Hathaway, Kim Williams and Krissy Huston enjoy a light moment in the discussion,

Roundtable members sharing activities of their organizations.

Photo taken with a 1960s film camera with an actual single-use flashbulb.

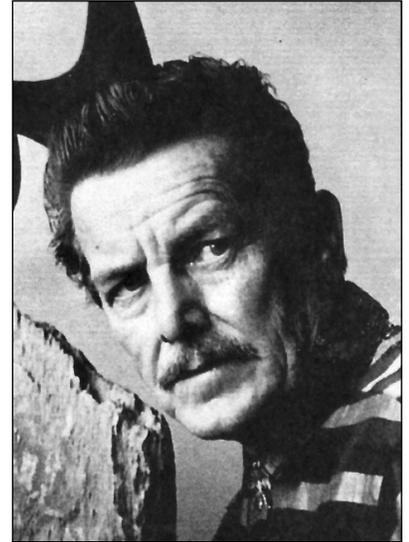


(**Madonna from page 1**) other commissions, Owens was hired in 1934 to sculpt one of six historic figures for the Astronomers Monument at Griffith Observatory in Los Angeles. His work was exhibited in 1935 at the California-Pacific International Expo in San Diego and in 1939 at the DeYoung Museum, along with other WPA era artists. Sometimes using the professional name Djey El Djey, Owens remained in the Los Angeles area until the late 1940s. For part of that time, he was married to Hollywood actress Meeka Aldrich (1903-1996), a Hungarian immigrant who appeared in several films between 1926-1940.

By 1948, Owens was living at 918 Anacapa Street in Santa Barbara and working as a sculptor. At the time, he applied to the U.S. Coast Guard for a motorboat operators license, claiming on the application that he had ten years' experience operating sail and motor boats on the East and West coasts as well as the Great Lakes. By late 1949 he had moved to Monterey, where his oceangoing expertise soon led to employment. Besides his primary occupation as a sculptor and artist, Owens became a skipper for the research vessel *Tage*,

owned by the Hopkins Marine Station. The boat made weekly trips into Monterey Bay to take depth temperature samples.

For close to 30 years, Owens lived and worked out of his Monterey home and studio at 2300 Prescott Street. He was active in the local arts scene, a member of the Carmel Art Association, and in 1961 participated in the Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art's first Artist Studio Tour. One of his most recognizable sculptures is located in Carmel, a winged freeform seagull that sits in front of the Butterfly House on Scenic Road.



Djey Owens, 1960s
Photo: Blaisdale 1962

Perhaps falling on lesser times, by 1977 Owens was living at 512 Ninth Street in Monterey and listed his livelihood as gardener. He died at Driftwood Convalescent Hospital on March 25, 1980 at age 74, leaving no known relatives.

For Carmel Valley, the Owens legacy remains in his "Immaculate Heart of Mary" statue, still standing next to the former White Oak Art Gallery, once the Del Monte Milk House, now the Cima Collina Tasting Room. Seeking income in 1962, Owens had decided to put the statue up for sale and many residents feared the graceful figure would be purchased and vanish from view. Fortunately, Mary Delfino and her late husband, Peter, bought the work and left it in place for the entire community. The form depicts the Madonna gently cradling her Immaculate Heart with one hand while the other softly points to it, and to a crucifix the sculptor claimed was blessed by Saint Pius X.

Now a beloved and irreplaceable Village landmark, the Madonna received ecumenical blessings by local religious leaders in 1964, again in 1971 and a rededication in 1989 during the Carmel Valley Centennial observances.

And that is how, seemingly by happenstance, the lovely statue found its meandering way from Montecito to a permanent home in Carmel Valley.



The 1949 Thedim "replacement" Madonna, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, Montecito, California
Photo by Nels Henderson

Carmel Valley Historical Society

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Sundays: 11-2
 Library: By Appointment

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Upcoming Events

Saturday, June 1

★ Talk by Jeff Ohlson and Reggie Jones:
Jamesburg Earth Station and the 50th Anniversary of the Apollo 11 Moon Landing (CV Library 10:15-11:30)

Saturday, July 6

★ Talk by Jeff Ohlson:
Carmel Valley Ranching (Palo Corona Discovery Center 4:00-6:00)

Saturday/Sunday August 3-4

★ Carmel Valley Fiesta CVHS Booth (Community Park 10:00-5:00)
 ★ History Center Museum Open (10:00-4:00)

Friday thru Sunday, Sept. 20-22

★ Better than Rummage Sale (History Center)

**50 Years Ago – The Carmel Valley Connection
 Our Other-Worldly Moment of Fame**

This photo of Buzz Aldrin is one of the most historic photos of all human history. One might ask why it is linked to Carmel Valley.

The Jamesburg Earth Station in Cachagua was an integral link in bringing Apollo’s “first step” video to TV sets around the world. This year commemorates the 50th Anniversary of this historic event.

Learn more about the story: On June 1 the CV Library is hosting a talk by CVHS members Jeff Ohlson & Reggie Jones as part of its First Saturday Series. The talk begins at 10:15am. The History Center Museum has a spotlight exhibit showcasing this amazing event. Check it out!



Jamesburg Earth Station, Cachagua *Photo by Orville Meyers*

