



Issue no. 1

# Fountain Valley Historical Society Newsletter

## Welcome to the Fountain Valley Historical Society's Newsletter - THE BLAST

The Fountain Valley Historical Society was created to share the unique and varied history of the Fountain Valley. As we continue on our mission to serve the residents of the Valley, we have started this newsletter to share the history and provide a way to let everyone know about our events, and share stories of the history of the Fountain Valley .

The name for the newsletter comes from one of the "big" events in Fountain Valley history. On May 14, 1888, train boxcars carrying explosives broke free from the railroad yard in Colorado Springs and travelled south down the tracks to Fountain. The "Kansas City Flyer" was at the Santa Fe Depot in Fountain at the time. The alarm was sounded and the passenger train attempted to back away. The trains collided and there was a great "blast" that destroyed most of the town, killed three people and injured 19 more people. "The Blast" today will be our way of sharing the history of the area. Visit the museum to learn more about this fascinating story or watch the video on [YouTube](#)



## Celebrating 20 Years of the Museum Opening

Honoring the members and the work they did to start the Historical Society

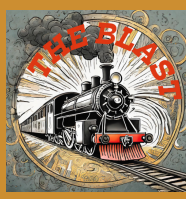
The grand opening of the Fountain Valley Historical Society and Museum was held December 6, 2003. Many businesses, organizations, and private citizens had stepped up to make the Fountain Valley Historical Society & Museum a reality.

The work and planning of a museum started in December of 2001. The first official election of officers was held in October of 2002.

The recorded minutes of the meeting held by the Fountain Valley Historical Society in March of 2003 indicated that much work behind the scenes was going on to make the museum an official part of the town of Fountain. The Historical Society and Museum was incorporated in April of 2004. The first membership list was that same year and included the names of approximately 55 charter members.

On January 13, 2024 many friends of the Historical Society & Museum attended the festivities celebrating the museum's 20th anniversary. We honored the 15 people who had worked tirelessly to make the dream come true. The items currently on display in the museum have been donated by many residents of the Fountain Valley who were interested in preserving the rich heritage of this area. The mission of the historical society remains the same – to preserve the history of the Fountain Valley and ensure a legacy of history for the generations to come.

Date: April 2024



# May 18, 2024 Presentation - Doc Susie

Join the Fountain Valley Historical Society on May 18th at 10 a.m. for the first presentation of 2024. The Presentation will occur at the Fountain Library, 230 S. Main Street

The talk will be given by Owen and Dory Briggs on the legendary Doc Susie.

Doc Susie was Owen Briggs next door neighbor for several years when he was younger. His Aunt Hazel was the executor of Doc's estate, and had the monumental task of disposing of all of Doc's belongings and deciding what to save.

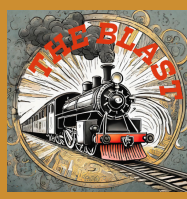
When Aunt Hazel died, all this responsibility was passed to Owen. In this presentation he shares all his recollections and photographs of Doc Susie. Among the hundreds of patients that Doc treated was his Aunt, Uncle, Grandfather and himself.



## Upcoming Events

- **Saturdays:**  
Museum is Open 10AM - 3PM
- **Monday, April 11:**  
Museum Meeting 10AM
- **May 18, 2024:**  
• Doc Susie Presentation, 10AM , at  
Fountain Library, 230 S. Main St.

Click Here for [Website](#)



# History of the Museum's Building



The building at 114 N. Main St. where the Fountain Valley Museum now resides was once known as the Fountain Community Building. And community it was. If this building could speak it would tell stories of folks coming together united by the purpose of each organization to ensure the good of the community. This building saw many pancake breakfasts, chili suppers, monthly lodge meetings, dances including square dancing, birthday parties and wedding receptions. Also were Girl and Boy Scout meetings, 4-H meetings, Fountain Valley Home Demonstration Club meetings, bake sales, Wells Baby Clinic (El Paso County Well-Baby clinic?) and activities of the Golden Agers group. For a short time it was used for church services. This was a grand era with lodge ladies wearing beautiful formals and fur stoles and men in suits and ties, 4-H project judging, fragrant cooking aromas coming from the kitchen, decorations galore and music for parties and receptions, and brides and their grooms arrayed in their finest for their special day.

The following history of the Fountain Community Building was written by Stella Neugebauer and Elizabeth Sluder in 2001 using Grange scrapbooks and Planning Board minutes. [The National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry began in 1867 to promote the social & economic needs of farmers.]

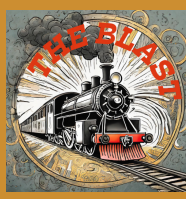
On August 28, 1946 six area organizations joined together and purchased lots 4, 5, and 6 in block 16 in Fountain, Colorado from El Paso County for \$100. This purchase was to formulate plans to build a Community Building for the town of Fountain. Purchasing committee for the building was Charles Wetzel, Ray Ream, and Claire Peebles. Charles Wetzel drew up the plans for the building. January 1948 Clark Hannah, a Grange member and member of District 8 School Board, suggested to the Grange that it enter the Colorado State Community Service Contest. It seems all agreed and a planning board was formed.]

In the spring of 1950, work started on the building. A barracks was purchased from Peterson Field, dismantled and hauled to Fountain. Claire Peebles was hired to supervise the construction. He gave half his salary back to help pay on the building. Remainder of the work was done by volunteers from the organizations. Mrs. Spencer Penrose donated \$500 to buy blocks and steel window frames. This was not quite enough, so Roy Jackson donated the rest. The cinder blocks were laid for the basement and other materials from the barracks was installed to enclose the basement.

[There were 10 organizations involved throughout construction and later renovation. Volunteers numbered 92 adults and 8 youths.]

The Lions Club asked the Planning Board to fix dinners for them at their meetings and serve them in the basement and members of the Planning Board agreed to do this as a fundraiser as funds were needed to finish the building. In April 1951, the VFW Post #6461 wanted to sponsor dances on the top floor. They held one dance and said no more until they got a hardwood floor installed, as it was too hard to dance on the subflooring. At that first dance they raised \$96 and it was donated for the hardwood flooring. New shingles were put on the roof. Sears and Roebuck took \$2 off each bundle. (Continued on page 4)





# History of the Museum's Building - con't

Fountain businesses bought advertisements to have their business names printed on the stage curtain. Tables and cabinets were built. The first folding chairs came from the Manitou theater building and cost \$0.25 each. The kitchen stove and heating stoves were donated by members of the organizations. The town of Fountain agreed to always supply water for the building.

The building was completed in 1953 and rent was assessed at \$4 per meeting. The following were allowed to use the building free of charge: PTA, Wells Baby Clinic, 4-H groups, Boy and Girl Scouts.

Renovation of the Community Building started January 11, 1979. A grant of \$19,000 was received from Community Development to build a new entrance on the South side of the down stairs. Fire extinguishers for the kitchen and fireproof doors throughout the building were installed. Organizations paid for the new tile for the downstairs floor. The cost was \$1,478 plus \$177.30 in interest. Furnishing the paint for the inside of the building was the VFW post #6461 and their members. The Pioneer Bank paid \$263.64 for the paint for the outside of the building. A new heating system for the upstairs and downstairs was installed. Price was \$2,480 and was paid for by the organizations who held fundraisers.

Donations included: drapes, pianos, paint, tables, windows, flags, construction materials, meals for volunteers and hours upon hours of volunteer time.

Since the inception of the plan for a Community Building, all the area organizations have supported the Community Building with monetary donations and individual labor and it is an accomplishment to be justly proud of. [The Community Building Planning Board won the Colorado State Community Service Contest and was awarded \$100 which was donated to the building fund.

Lodges and organizations who were owners of the Community Building in 1986 voted to give this building to the city of Fountain with the stipulation that they would be able to continue to use it for 15 years at \$15 per meeting and if it was torn down or used for something else, the city of Fountain would provide the organizations and the community with a meeting place during this 15 years. It was also provided that the Golden Agers would always be able to meet in the building for \$12 per meeting.

In December 2001, all the organizations decided to stop meeting in the Community Building. Fountain City Council gave them a place to meet in the Lorraine Community Center. At that time six ladies representing the organizations requested the City Council to allow the Community Building to be used for a museum maintained by a Historical Society. By October of 2002 the Fountain Valley Historical Society was in place and the grand opening of the museum was held December 6, 2003.

All of the people involved in the building, renovation and maintenance of our Community Building had generous hearts, persistence, and strong backs. When you visit the museum you just might get a glimpse into the lives of these community-minded heroes who call Fountain home.

## Why the Museum Matters to Me

Hi, my name is Kay Hulen. I have been a member of the Fountain Valley Historical Society and Museum since 2008. I grew up in Fountain as did my Mother and Father. Fountain and the Fountain Valley has a rich history. We have artifacts generously donated and shared by Fountain residents, as well as family histories and historical events. Come by the Museum and I would love to share some of them with you.

## MUSEUM Hours - Saturdays 10 am- 3 pm