



CELEBRATING OUR HISTORY & OUR FUTURE, TOGETHER



Acknowledgment

In recognizing the 150th anniversary of the formation of the County of Ventura, we also acknowledge our presence on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded land of the Chumash peoples. We seek to prioritize respect for the Chumash culture and the contemporary and future presence of Native Americans and other Indigenous peoples throughout Ventura County. We recognize the Chumash as the original stewards of this land while simultaneously recognizing our collective responsibility together, to continue to care for this land.

Image of mosaic commissioned by Museum Docent Council, depicting a scene in a Chumash village featuring an 'ap, baskets, and grinding stones. Copyright Larissa Strauss, 2008.



Our History 150 Years Ago Today

Jeffrey Wayne Maulhardt is a local historian with a deep connection to Ventura County, specifically to Oxnard, where he was born and raised. He is a fifth-generation descendant of two prominent families in the area, the Maulhardts and the Borchards. In 2003 he founded and became the director of the Oxnard Historic Farm Park.

Jeffrey Maulhardt has taught American history for thirty years in the Oxnard Elementary School District, and has written extensively about the history of the region. He has published several books on local history, including two titles in the Images of America series about Oxnard, as well as other books on the area's agricultural heritage and the history of the Oxnard Historic Farm Park. His latest book, "Oxnard Now & Then," is his 16th local history book for Arcadia Publishing. The book is likely to provide a detailed account of the changes and developments that have taken place in Oxnard over the years.

VENTURA BECOMES A COUNTY

January 1, 1873

Pictured:

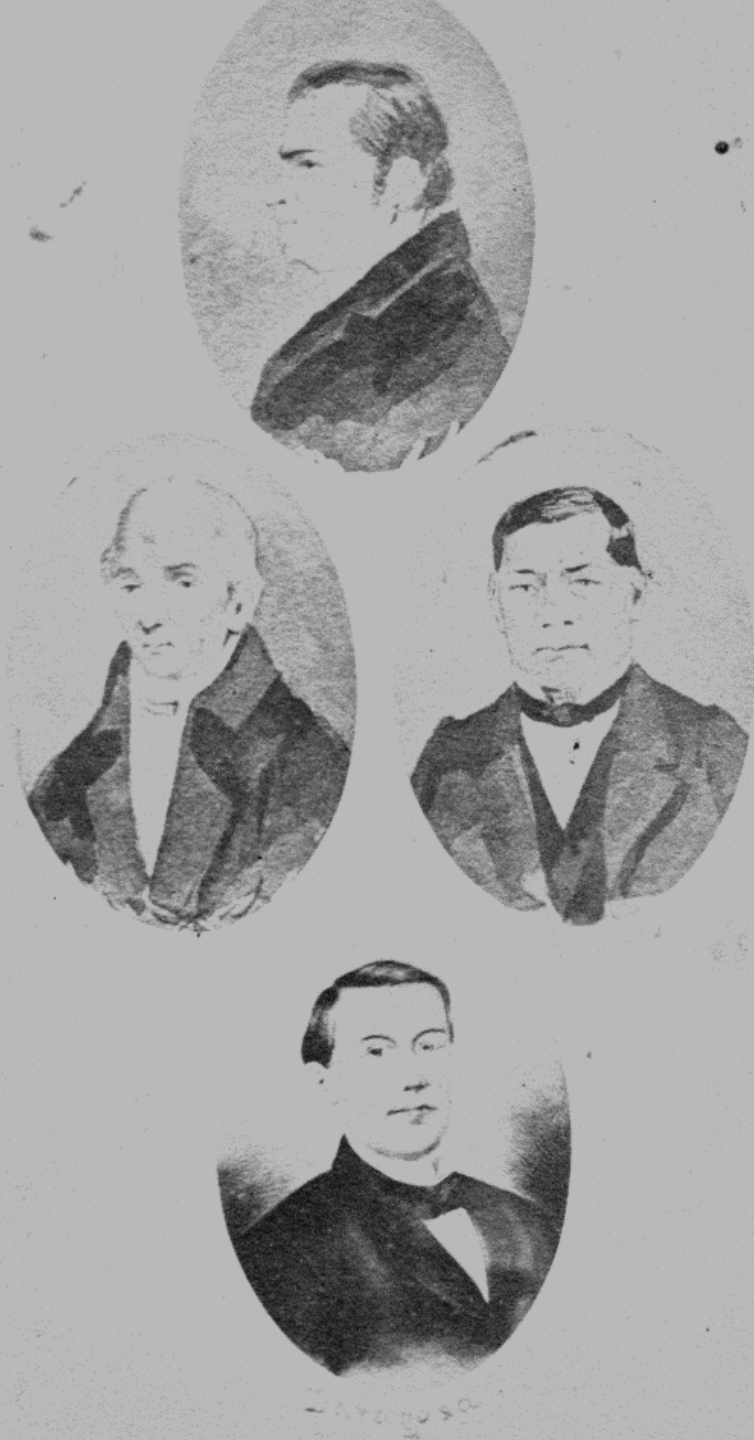
- Decaying mission
- A few scattered adobe buildings
- San Buenaventura - post office in 1861



By 1866: Town was incorporated

Trustees:

- Angel G. Escandon
- Walter S. Chaffee
- Juan Camarillo
- Victor Urtusuastegui
- Fernando Tico, Jr.
- A few scattered adobe buildings



Talks of separating from Santa Barbara County in 1868

- Subdivision in 1867 of Rancho Santa Paula y Saticoy
- Rancho El Rio de Santa Clara o la Colonia
- Farmland tracks attracted many from northern California

Former Gold Rush seekers



Christian Borchard



- Before this, the majority of the land used to raise cattle
- A devastating drought of 1863-64
- Christian Borchard arrived in 1867
- Purchased 1000 acres from Jose Lobero of Rancho Colonia
- He viewed thousands of acres of wild mustard plant which he harvested 25 Tons & he sold for 2 cents a pound
- He planted the first commercial crop of 30 acres of barley & agriculture was born

Gottfreat mouthart June the
 24 brock down 22/21/25 headed
 valantear barley
 54 1/2 akors 150 for akors — 81 75
 for work 3
 balance due from Gottfreat — \$ 78 75
 Gottfreat paid cash tow. \$ 56 00
 Edward to pay for barley 4 20
 51 20

Since early crops were examples of dry farming (did not need irrigation) such as barley, beans, and corn, there was no need for an imported workforce. The first field workers were the first farmers.

Above is an excerpt from a crudely written ledger by John Edward Borchard in 1872 showing he paid "Gottfried Maulhardt headed volunteer barley 54 acres at \$1.50 an acre."

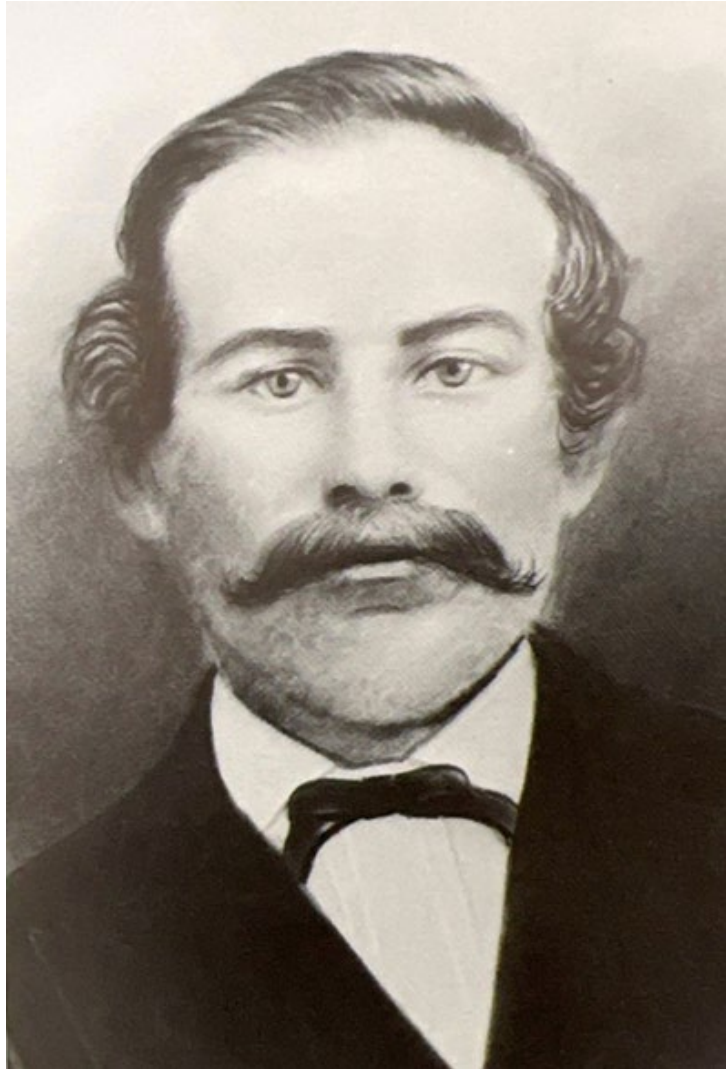
Daily Alta California newspaper
wrote on September 16, 1868:

“The traveling for more than half the distance was heavy upon the horses owing to the undermining of the ground by the many gophers, squirrels & mice.”

“Lack of any trees until reaching the Santa Clara River where there was a considerable body of willow, cottonwood, and some sycamore trees.”

Sacramento
Daily Union,
November 2,
1869, described
housing
conditions on
the disputed
Government
land of La
Colonia:

“Every conceivable material that one could imagine was appropriated for the erection of their habitations,” and many “dwelt in tents and a number constructed their domiciles of poles and mustard stalks.”



By 1869, Angel Gonzales Escandon, the mayor of San Buenaventura was elected to the Assembly to propose a plan of separation but faced opposition from the Santa Barbara representatives.

The Ventura Signal, the area's first newspaper, began in April of 1871

- Feb 17, 1872, *Ventura Signal* wrote, new county 2,000 sq mi & pop 3,500
- Santa Barbara's population would shrink to 7,000 residents





William Hobson was successful in getting both the Assembly and the Senate to pass the bill to create the County of Ventura on [March 22, 1872](#).

IT TOOK EFFECT ON [JANUARY 1, 1873](#).

New Townships and Election Precincts

NEW TOWNSHIPS

- Ventura
- Saticoy
- Hueneme

ELECTION PRECINCTS

- San Buenaventura
- La Canada Mountain View
- Sespe
- Saticoy
- Pleasant Valley
- San Pedro (present day Oxnard/El Rio)
- Hueneme

The First Election was February 25, 1873

630 voters elected:

**Pablo de la
Guerra**
District Judge

Milton Wason
County Judge

J. Marion Brooks
District Attorney

Frank Molleda
County Clerk

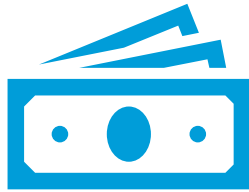
Frank Peterson
Sheriff

F. S. S Buckman
Superintendent
of Schools

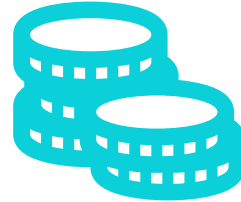
Dr. Cephas Bard
County Coroner

**Dr. S. P
Guiberson**
County Physician

A final settlement with Santa Barbara County was announced on April 13, 1873



Assets totaling
\$72,256



Debt of \$70,574



New county excess
assets of **\$1,682**



1873

- 95 ranches of 100 to 200 acres
- 16 ranches between 200 to 500 acres
- 17 ranches between 600 to 1,000 acres
- 12 ranches between 1,000 to 10,000
- 7 with more than 10,000 acres

Total 383,761 acres in farming

Both Hueneme and Ventura built a wharf by 1872

The Steamer Kalorama began arriving every 10 days to deliver goods and transport the county's growing produce





First Shipping Exports from the Wharf

- Barley
- Corn
- Beans
- Wool
- Pigs
- Sheep
- Petroleum





First Schools

There were 809 students in the County

- San Buenaventura 323
- Santa Paula 39
- Pleasant Valley 66
- San Pedro 76
- Santa Clara 46
- Briggs 36
- Live Oak 31
- Ocean View 68
- Ojai 35
- Sespe 89
- Simi 4
- Las Posas 5



First Fair

- The Trotting Fair began in 1874
- Showcase the different types & importance of horses
- Led to the inclusion of more animals & produce
- Evolved into the Ventura County Fair



1st Baseball Game

November 29, 1873



Ventura Club - 56

Citizens group of "*Picked 9*" - 17

Ventura Signal article, on January 4, 1873

Wanted

A thousand men, with or without families, to do general farming on their own account or on shares. Five thousand ditto, to plant fruit trees; 500 dairymen, 500 gardeners, and as many common laborers. In fact, no one need fear to come to Ventura County who is not afraid of work and who is willing to sow and wait for the harvest



150 years later...

we bear the fruit to a population of
850,000 residents

150th Events

- *The Soil Will Save Us: The History of Ventura County* exhibit at the Agriculture Museum – Opens on October 19.
- **Community Festival** – October 21, a family-friendly celebration with games, crafts, food trucks, performances, and more.
- **Oxnard Historic Farm Park Celebration** – Sept 9 & 10
- **Local Community Celebrations** – Four installations of history exhibit will be opened in Districts One, Two, Four, and Five. Each community will participate in a celebration reflecting its unique identity. Dates TBD.
- **Kickoff** – June 23, the first official 150th-anniversary party will take place at the MVC in Ventura, featuring the opening of three new exhibits, speakers, regional musicians, performances, and more.
- **State of the County 2023** – November 2, the 150th Anniversary will be the theme of this year's State of the County event, planned for November 2 at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library & Museum.
- **Library Events** – Author talks, local history speakers, film screenings, and live performances are planned, including a talk by author Carina Forsythe at Fillmore Library in April and a history of surfing presentation in Port Hueneme on May 23, 2023. Other events are being confirmed.

**Additional events will be announced on the anniversary website.*





Programs

- **Interviews with Innovators** – A film series featuring personal stories of local leaders who have impacted our lives.
- **Feast or Flop Show** – A show uncovering unique regional recipes in partnership with local chefs.
- **Oral Histories Come to Life** – Selected oral histories will be digitized for the first time ever with a video accompaniment.
- **Commemorative Photo Book** – A magazine-style publication by Pacific Coast Business Times showcasing Ventura County's history and future through diverse contributions.



Save the Date!



What	Where	When
150 Days of Celebration Kickoff Event	Museum of Ventura County in Ventura	June 23 rd
Oxnard Historic Farm Park Celebration	Oxnard Historic Farm Park	September 9 & 10
Museum Special Exhibit	Agriculture Museum in Santa Paula	October 19 th Opening
150 th Community Celebration	Agriculture Museum in Santa Paula	October 21 st
Local Community Celebrations	4 Events in Districts One, Two, Four & Five	TBA
Library Events	Fillmore, Port Hueneme, El Rio, Saticoy, Ojai	See Website for Details
State of the County Celebrating 150 Years	Ronald Reagan Presidential Library & Museum in Simi Valley	November 2 nd
More Events to be Announced	Countywide	TBA





VC 150 Memories



- Online Community Photo Album
- Community is encouraged to submit
- The collection will be housed at the Museum to be featured 150 years from now
- Why should people participate?
 - Be part of History
 - Access to the collection, sortable by tags
 - Opportunity to be featured on the website and social media
 - Great for nonprofits, businesses, families, & individuals Be part of HISTORY!

www.VenturaCounty150.com

How to Get Involved

1. Contribute personal memories and stories to the VC 150 Memories project, celebrating our shared history
2. Attend various events and activities organized throughout the year, fostering unity and connection
3. Host or support complementary community events that celebrate Ventura County's vibrant culture and heritage

Visit the Website: www.VenturaCounty150.com

Contact: countypio@ventura.org





Thank You!
To our Partners
Celebrating the 150th Anniversary