The Purple Cow: A Dairy Daughter’s Heritage, has arrived! To say that staff, volunteers, and contributors are excited would be an understatement.

Like a lot of projects, the dairy book started out as a dream when in 2013 the museum honored National Dairy Month with a display in June of that year. Laura Dias and Norma DeBernardi gathered the valleys “milk” memorabilia together for a display, including a full sized Holstein model.

Once a very lucrative and extensive business in the Santa Maria Valley, the dairy industry has passed into history. However, The Purple Cow has captured many firsthand recollections from those dairy families. The dairies and the creameries are gone, but not forgotten.

Laura Lee Tognazzini Dias is our author. Michael Farris, historical museum obituary guru and all around IT guy became her editor-in-chief. Shirley Contreras wrote the Forward. It is sure to be a real Santa Maria treasure. So many families, so many years, and so many memories, from Dairy Princesses to Mr. Milkman, the book is a wonderful and accurate accounting of an important aspect of the Santa Maria Valley’s history. You may purchase a book for $30 at the Museum. Add $8 for postage per copy to have it mailed to you.

SOCIETY CELEBRATES IN 2015

September 7, 1955, in association with the city’s Golden Anniversary, the Santa Maria Valley Historical Society was incorporated. With the inspiration of Ethel May Dorsey, first president of the society, our story began 60 years ago. It is with great pride that we continue her dream to preserve, protect and present the history of the valley.
Looking for a Few More Board Members

The Santa Maria Valley Historical Society is looking for three or four people who have an interest in the history of the valley.
We meet at 4pm on the fourth Thursday of each month for about an hour and a half.

We currently have ten board members. We could use more people with the time and interest to support the Society. If you think you would be interested, please contact Brooke Bradley at 805-720-5192 or by email at brooke@allamerican-screenprinting.com

If you would like to volunteer at the museum, contact Cindy Ransick at 805-922-3130 or by email at smvhsmuseum@outlook.com

What’s up at the Museum

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of the end of the American Civil War, Cindy Ransick, with the help of Jim Zemaitis, has created a booklet of the Santa Maria Cemetery on the Civil War veterans buried there. The booklet is intended to honor the Civil War Veterans who took their final rest here in Santa Maria.

We hope to offer the booklet in the summer with an introductory cemetery walk with Shirley Contreras, local “Cemetery Queen.”

The release date is pending.

Exhibit of the Month

Our featured exhibit this month (June) will be the Santa Maria Little League. Most of us can remember great summers playing ball on local sandlots and sometimes in the streets. A few may remember a broken window or two! It was Carl Stotz, a resident of Williamsport, Pennsylvania, who founded Little League Baseball in 1939. He began experimenting with his idea in the summer of 1938 when he gathered his nephews, Jimmy and Major Gehron, and their neighborhood friends. They tried different field dimensions over the course of the summer and played several informal games. The following summer Stotz felt that he was ready to establish what later became Little League Baseball. The first league in Williamsport had just three teams, each sponsored by a different business. The first teams were Jumbo Pretzel, Lycoming Dairy, and Lundy Lumber. In Santa Maria, teams were sponsored by Cocoa Cola, Union Sugar, Half-way Saloon and a number of other local businesses.
**A New Book is Underway: Historic Santa Maria Valley**

The Purple Cow is completed, and the Santa Maria American Civil War Cemetery Walk booklet is with the editor for final revisions. Now we are beginning a year-long project to write and present an update to This is Our Valley. Written in 1955 and completed and published by 1959, This is Our Valley was the first book published by the historical society. Ethel May Dorsey wanted to capture the pioneer stories she had heard at dinner parties before those who told them passed. She and a crew of volunteers worked tirelessly to interview, record on cassette, and, in some cases, hand write the stories of the first pioneers in the valley. Those original folks were the inspiration to make Santa Maria a beautiful and thriving community. This is Our Valley captured the first days of our town when even our identity was changing. Firsthand knowledge was an important aspect of the book.

This year, our 60th anniversary year, we are hoping to carry the story forward. Briefly recounting those first years, then chronicling the next 50 or so years of our valley’s development.

The book will be a full-color, hard-bound book. It will contain pictures and newspaper clippings, as well as the stories of families and businesses: the history of our valley.

If you would be interested in helping with this book or would like to be sure your family story is included; there are a couple of ways this can happen. You can begin by contacting us at the museum at 922-3130 or you can contact our publisher directly through our representative, Daphne Fletcher. Her contact information is as follows: by phone at 805-350-9430 or by email at Daphne.HPN@gmail.com

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**Going Digital**

As many of you know, the museum has been busily preserving the future of our photographs and scrapbooks by converting them to a digital format. Using scans, clippings, photos, etc., volunteers have been spending nearly 500 hours a month on tasks that will ensure the future of our treasures. The County of Santa Barbara is undertaking a similar process. The County Supervisors, under Doreen Farr’s supervision, are converting their old board minutes to a digital format so that they may preserve the history of their meetings.

To recognize this achievement, a community event is being organized to launch in July and continue through the summer months. The Santa Maria Valley Historical Society, along with other county historical societies, will be providing photos and maps for the show, which is slated to be held in Santa Barbara. The artifacts being provided are representative of the actions and support the Board of Supervisors has provided the county over the history of their influence. For example: Santa Maria downtown flooding was offset by the building of Twitchell Dam. All the displays will highlight actions such as the flooding and the building of the dam. Historical photos will be matched to the legislation that was written. Watch local newspapers and media for more information on this presentation.
Many of you may know that we name our computers at the museum. We recently received another one thanks to the generosity of our Board President Jim Zemaitis. We named our new computer Bradley. Bradley is joining Hattie, Ethel May, Wickenden, Minerva, and Rice.

Bradley’s job is to present the 6,000 obituaries that we now have scanned and indexed. Bradley is outside the front office for the public to access this database. We are also trying to teach Bradley how to share our nearly 6,000 photos that have been scanned by our great core of volunteers!

We hope you will stop by and give Bradley a chance to show you what he has learned!