

De Luz School



De Luz School 1889 on Wilmot property and in 1892 On the left the school before the porch was added. Palm tree the only landmark remaining in 2022

The first classes in De Luz were held in a small building on the Day property in the 1880's. The pioneer homesteaders included several families. The students were most likely Jessie and Frank Day, Irvine and Eldon Camp, Joseph and Nellie Carr, Harry Moeller, Arthur, Charlie, and Edith Wilmot.

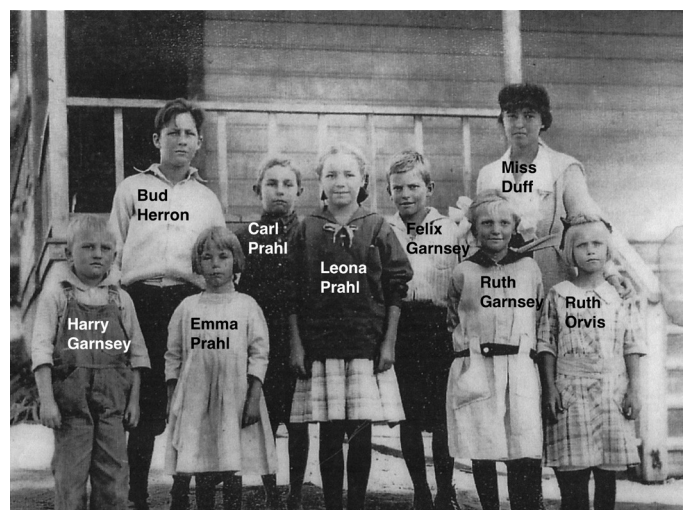
In 1888 a wood-frame school with a bell-tower and front porch was built on the Wilmot acreage. It was located about one-half mile up from the junction of the west and east forks of the De Luz Creek. There were oaks, sycamores, wild blackberries and lots of critters. A palm tree grew next to the building that is the only remaining artifact left today.

In 1890 the district was called the Santa Rosa District. There were nineteen registered students with these pioneer families listed: Camp, 2, Carr 2, Day 3, Heylmann 4, Sherman 1, Moeller 1, Stewart 2, Wilmot 3 and Behre 1. In 1908 the district was named the Tenaja Joint District with children from both Tenaja and De Luz attending. The 1909 register mentions that Recluse (Tenaja) had classes on Saturdays.

All eight grades were taught by one teacher, and this person usually lived with one of the families, as was the rural custom. Sometimes, to help with family income and also to keep up the enrollment for average daily attendance, families boarded children who needed foster homes. The county inspected the homes and paid for room and board. Many of the boarded boys were juvenile court wards with Los Angeles or San Diego counties. If teachers had children that helped the enrollment too.

Other families mentioned in more than one register included: Garnsey, Brode, Day, Hill, Tittle, Leslie, Orvis, Ferrero, McCulloch, Stoner, Prah, Stewart, Tiffany, and Herron. Some of the teachers in the first school were: Len Harvey, Annie Howard, Nona Reid, Miss Harrison, Lillian White, Lillian Greenfield, Faith Ferbotz. Eunice Ward, Lillie Cosner, Laura Noble, Mildred Dubb, Hazel Butte, Vivian Miller, Olive Wilkowske, Miss Nelson, and Marion Strittmatter.

Old school house 1920



1890 class attendance Santa Rosa School District
 Len Harvey Teacher

GENERAL RECORD.

NAME OF PUPIL.	AGE.	NAME OF PARENT.	RESIDENCE.
Camp Irvine N.	16	H. J. Camp	De Luz
Camp Charlie	12	" " "	"
Carr Nell	14	A. Scott Carr	"
Carr Jos S.	12	" " "	"
Day Frank	13	Henry K. Day	"
Day Jessie	10	" " "	"
Day Edith	7	" " "	"
Heylmann Fred		Otto Heylmann	"
Heylmann George	10		"
Heylmann Dora	8		"
Heylmann Emma	6		"
Lacey Sherman	7	D. S. Lacey	"
Moller Harry	11	Mrs. Moller	"
Stewart Lillie	13	Henry Stewart	"
Stewart Mattie	10	A. O. Stewart	"
Wilmot Arthur	7	B. Wilmot	"
Wilmot C. W.	7	W. W. Wilmot	"
Wilmot E. S.	6	" " "	"
Behr Robert	7		Los Angeles



1891 Daily Program
Santa Rosa School District
Len Harvey Teacher

PROGRAMME

Term beginning _____, 18____, and ending _____, 18_____.

-
- 9 - 9.10 Music
9.10 - 9.20. Assignments of work to 1st. & 2nd Grades.
9.20 - 10.40 Arithmetic } 8th 4th 3rd.
 } 6th 5th
10.40 - 11 Recess
11. - 11.20 Spelling & Numbers } 1st Grades
 } 2nd
11.20 - 12 Writing or Drawing.
- 1 - 1.15 General exercises.
1.15 - 2. Reading } 1. 6th Grades
 } 2.
 } 3.
2 - 2.15 Spelling of 6th grade
2.15 - 2.30 Physiology or English.
2.30 - 2.45 Grammar or Geog. 6th Grade
2.45 - 3 Recess.
3. 3.20 8th Grammar
3.20 - 3.40 6th Geography
3.40 - 4. History.



Teacher Miss Eunice Ward and class in 1922

In 1926 the old school was torn down and according to a note by Louis J Garnsey the wood from the school was used by John Kuhn to build a cabin.

De Luz Elementary, was built in 1927 on the present De Luz Murrieta Road. The board member, including Louis J. Garnsey, argued about architectural style, and the mid-west design, favored by other board members, prevailed over the mission one.

1927



A personal story of her school experience by De Luz resident in 1933, Margaret King Yandell. "My one room school in De Luz consisted of my family, three sisters and a brother, six neighbor children and five reform school boys from San Diego's Detention School. These boys were farmed out to help pick the seasonal crops and assist with other ranch chores. They were also there because of their good behavior. Our teacher, Miss Nelson, was new to the teaching profession. She was Norwegian by birth, tall, blond, and taciturn. She stood at the head of the classroom demanding absolute silence before uttering a word including the daily Pledge of Allegiance. Once that was complete we opened our desktops, took out our books and waited for further instructions. The first grade (no kindergarten) sat at the front row and back at the rear were the older grades. Most of the reform boys were in the upper grades. One particular morning Raymond H., one of the five reform boys, big for his age with a slight lisp, refused

to sit at his desk. Miss Nelson went up to him and instructed him to sit down, again he refused. She raised her voice and instructed him to sit in his seat. He crossed his arms across his chest, clenched his jaw and stood his ground. The third time Miss Nelson repeated herself he left the classroom. She followed him outside. He picked up speed and started running around the school building. She took off after him. They made a complete circle before she went to the wood shed at the back of the school. She picked up a big log. When Raymond passed her she threw the log on his foot knocking him down. She turned around and reentered the classroom. We all scampered back to our seats having crowded around the windows not to miss anything. Shaking a bit from all the activity she passed out our papers and told us to begin our assignments. Very soon the front door slowly opened and Raymond limped into the classroom and returned to his desk.

At home during dinnertime that was all we could talk about, We kept asking how could she throw the big log on Raymond's foot? He limped the entire day. My father, in a commanding voice, said, "If Miss Nelson hadn't put Raymond in his place, the remaining reform school boys would continue to defy her in their own respective ways. Miss Nelson was in charge of that classroom and if one of those boys could take over she would lose her classroom control." My father said this with such affirmation that no further questions were asked.

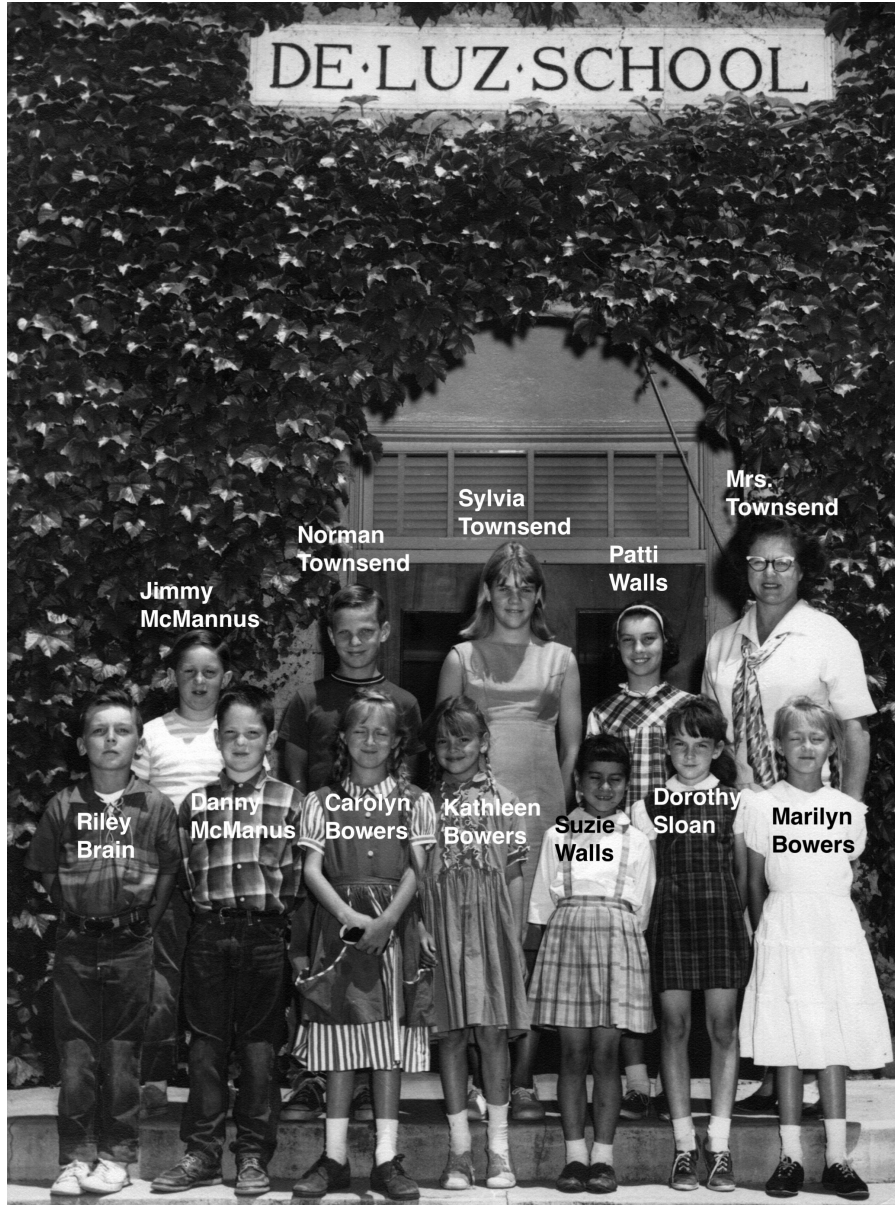
Raymond and the log story got around the community very quickly, There was no response from any of the students, parents, or the caretaker. When a few days he was running around the playground as if nothing had happened."

In 1968 the board of supervisors and community reluctantly decided to close the school. The building had no bond beams and did not meet the mandatory Field Act Earthquake Standards. Also the enrollment was small, with only sixteen students. So the pupils were transported to Fallbrook schools.

The Fallbrook Union Elementary School board brought the building up to code after a year or so, and then the building was used as a community center and became known as the De Luz Nature Study Center and later Ecology Center. Nature trails were laid out by the Forestry and Soil conservation volunteers. Clarence Tedford's family put in a native plant garden in his memory.



De Luz School 1966



Jimmy
McMannus

Norman
Townsend

Sylvia
Townsend

Patti
Walls

Mrs.
Townsend

Riley
Brain

Danny
McManus

Carolyn
Bowers

Kathleen
Bowers

Suzie
Walls

Dorothy
Sloan

Marilyn
Bowers

After the school building was no longer used as a school it was used for community functions such as square dancing and meetings. Picnics were held on the school grounds. There are 120 acres of oak woodland, native chaparral and trails.

In 1970 the school board decided to locate an ecology center in the old school building. Judy Judd, an energetic young woman who was a graduate in biology and anthropology applied for the position of full time director of the program. Working under the supervision of Governing Board member Linda Cowen, Judd restructured the program and supervised the renovation of the center to teach students from the third to the fifth grade.

De Luz Ecology Center

The De Luz Ecology Center is 128 mostly natural acres containing a one-room schoolhouse built in 1928 and an old-fashioned grass playground. It is used for educational field trips for Fallbrook elementary school students, and is open to the public on weekends. It is located 11 miles north of Fallbrook on De Luz Murrieta Road.

The area has 5 miles of hiking trails, an intermittent stream and picnic tables

In 1970 Judy Judd and assistant used the nature walks to teach students about wildlife, plants, soils, rocks and Indians. In the school house, the students studied displays of insects, ants, birds, other wildlife, and Indian culture. They heard stories of the early-day De Luz pioneers and their way of life.

In 1983, Gale Cunningham, developed and organized a unique nature program for the Nature Center. In a week-long pilot program, sixth-grade students from Fallbrook schools built primitive dwellings, called a wikiup from local bushes, and wove grasses and grapevines to make the dwelling more snug. The wikiup was the dwelling made by the Luiseño Indians. The students made and played with corn husk dolls. Hiking on trails they learned to identify native plants such as wild onion, manzanita, live and scrub oaks, a plant used by Indians to quench their thirst (lemonade berry) and the all important, poison oak. They made ink out of strawberries with the homework assignment of making a pen out of a piece of wood. On Friday the students dressed up in old-fashioned costumes for Little House on the Prairie Day. They played old time games like Mumblety-peg.



The program changes from year to year according to who is the director and budget constraints with the school district. This is a typical schedule:

Fallbrook third-grade students come for two consecutive days, one class at a time, from September through December. Scott Gordon, lead teacher at the ecology center, tells what they experience: the students re-enact a day from 1906 in the one-room schoolhouse. They write on slate boards and read from the old McGuffey readers. We also make cornbread, butter and ice cream using the old-fashioned methods. The third-graders also learn history about the local American Indians, the Luisenos, and hike to observe the plants and animals



used by the Indians. Fallbrook fifth-grade students spend four consecutive days at the center, focusing on environmental and other natural centers. They do more extensive hiking, study fire ecology, hunt for aquatic insects and dissect owl pellets.

Ongoing program with Scott Gordon

Third Grade (one day): Third graders experience a day learning about the local **Native Americans**: the Luiseño. They learn about the Luiseño tribe by taking a hike on the property, grinding and processing acorns, participating in a Native American dance, making pictographs, and by playing two games (Peon and Wasaa).

Fourth Grade (one day): Fourth graders become immersed in the **California Gold Rush** during their visit. They learn about the historical significance of the event, identify rocks and minerals, create a miniature shelter, and pan for gold in a “man-made” creek on the property.

Fifth Grade (two days): **Outdoor Education** is the focus for each fifth grade class that visits De Luz. They identify local aquatic animals, dissect owl pellets, take a hike to the top of one of our tallest peaks on the property, and participate in a two day decathlon.

Sixth Grade (two days); Sixth graders participate in a two day **survival** program. They would have read The Hatchet by Gary Paulson and their activities reflect events from the novel. They learn to sew (making a bag to hold “survival items” that they might need to use during the first day). They make cordage from a yucca leaf. Students attempt to create an ember by using a hand drill. A shelter is created using provided resources. They are taught archery as well as knot tying. On the second day they learn about the quality of our local water. This is done by analyzing macroinvertebrates found in De Luz Creek. They analyze PH, turbidity, oxygen levels, as well as temperature of water in De Luz Creek. They also create a filter which will, hopefully, purify the same water that they analyzed.

The program is up and running this year with the third grader program being the first. Sixth is next, then the fifth graders, ending with the fourth grade program.

De Luz Ecology Center timeline

1972-73 There was a self-guided program created by Patrick Russell, Gale Hawk, and Susan Shimmin. There also was an optional program directed by the classroom teach utilizing a manual put together by the individuals listed above. All grades were invited to use the center The system did not seem to work well as established. Most of the teachers stayed inside of the building with the students: they were weary of getting lost and the poison oak known to exist on the property.

1973-74 Mellousise Miller was hired as full-time to direct the program.

1974-75 Mellousise Miller gets married and Wayne Elder takes over.

1975-76 Wayne Elder runs the program.

1976-77 Is is not known who ran the program.

1977-78 March to June the school building was used by local students due to the area being flooded (54 inches or rain). The students were not able to be transported to schools in Fallbrook. An unknown person was the local resident with a teaching credential and she became the one-room-schoolhouse

teacher.

1978-79 Center closed

1979-80 Candy Layton a teacher's aide and a former employee at the San Diego Zoo reopens the center as hourly-rate employee. Proposition 13 prohibited the hiring of a full-time teacher to run the program.

1980-82 unknown

1982-83 Pilot "Conservation Program" by Gale Cunningham. Short term program for sixth grade students. There were sixty students visiting the program for five days a week. Jerry (Gina) Palculich assisted Gale.

1983-87 Jackie Judd developed programs that are still in use today. Jackie passes away in November. Scott Gordon who is a student teacher is selected as temporary replacement.

1988-89 Katy Duffin-Tobler, who is bilingual takes over the program and Jerry Palculich is an able assistant.

1990-91 Katy Duffin-Tobler moves away and is replaced by district teacher Scott Gordon.

1991-92 Scott Gordon continues the program at a 60% rate due to budget limitations. He finished the school year at La Paloma Elementary. Jerry worked as a teacher aide until 1992.

1992-93 47 inches of rain once again closes the roads to Fallbrook and Gail Cunningham is back as a teacher to work with the students that live in De Luz

1994-2019 Scott Gordon is back at the center

2019-2020 Program closes due to Covid-19. Fifth grade program is completed but the fourth grade Gold Rush Day is canceled.

2020-2021 Program closes due to Covid-19.

2021-2022 Scott Gordon is back at the center. One-room school day for third grades is removed as well as third day for fifth grades. A two-day "survival program" is created for sixth grade classes.

2022-2023 Program will begin again October



School playground in the early days

De Luz Ecology Center comes alive with hands-on lessons

Rick Monroe
Special to the Village News

When fourth grade students in Kimberly Yerkes' class at Live Oak Elementary School visited the De Luz Ecology Center last week, they learned from an expert about the California Gold Rush.

The expert is Scott Gordon, the center's teacher who obtained or designed most of the authentic props – including hides, a prospector's tent, a wash board, sewing and rope-making tools, a hand water pump, and of course pans for prospecting or "winning" gold for answering classroom questions correctly.

The students also did chores from the gold rush era like making butter and rope, and washing clothes, then checked off tasks from a list on a clipboard.

"It gives them the flavor of what it was like to study in a one-room schoolhouse," Gordon said.

"I enjoy working with the kids," he added. "It really brings me joy."

Students are taught both in the classroom and outdoors and enjoy having lunch under the trees.

The original De Luz Post Office building was hauled onto the property, which is scattered with majestic oak trees. The nearby stream has dried for the season, but students from Potter Junior High School have built an area where students can pan for "gold" as a final activity.

Except for San Onofre Elementary, all the schools in the Fallbrook Union Elementary School District send their students in grades three through six to the center. (Because of its distance and location, San Onofre has its own programs based on its nearby beach environment.)

The expanded program at De Luz has different programs for each grade level.

Third graders study Native Americans, specifically the Luiseño Indians. Students examine their culture including the significance of the oak trees and acorns and go on a nature hike.

Fourth graders look at the history of California, focusing on the Gold Rush and Sutter's Fort.

Fifth graders take a closer look at the local crops and food chain.

Sixth graders have a new Survivor program based on the book "The Hatchet." Two of the



Brooke Mobley, left, and Jaymee Humphreys select snacks from lunch bags at the De Luz Ecology Center. In the back are Marbella Rodriguez and Harmany Beasley.



Teacher Scott Gordon uses a clipboard to make wind to test the quality of a home built by Anthony Garcia, left, and Jarrett Bechtol.



Jaymee Humphreys, left, and Brooke Mobley work to secure their miniature house.

see **ECOLOGY**, page C-8



Scott Gordon, instructor, explains the project of building secure miniature homes.



Xzavier Souris ponders the condition of this house's construction.



Area students can pan for gold in this water feature built by Potter Junior High School eighth graders.



Using the water pump station are, from left, Jarrett Bechtol, Antonio Mendoza and Anthony Garcia.



Omar Robles builds his model home as part of a lesson at the De Luz Ecology Center.

ECOLOGY

from page C-1

highlights are archery and having teams build life-size water-tight tents from local material.

Third and fourth graders have a one-day program, while the fifth and sixth graders make back-to-back day trips.

The program is finishing for this school year and the center won't be part of the summer school options. For 2022-2023, third graders will visit in August through October, sixth graders in October through January, fifth graders in January through March, and fourth graders in April and May.

The De Luz Schoolhouse was established in 1927 as a one-room school and served the community until 1968 for students through eighth grade.

After the school closed, the 120-acre property was deeded to

the Fallbrook Union Elementary District and retrofitted so students could visit for field trips. Nearby residents used it as a community hall and nature trails were established. It was later developed as an ecology center for district students.

Gordon took over as instructor and has served in the "unique place and teaching position." He's been an instructor since 1987, first as a student teacher. Katy Duffin-Tobler was the teacher for 1990-1991 before moving to Northern California and Gordon came back in 1991 on a 60% basis because of budget limitations.

In 1992-93, 47 inches of rain closed the roads to Fallbrook and Gail Cunningham worked with the students that lived in De Luz. The center remained closed in 1993-94, and the next year Gordon returned.

The program closed in March 2020 due to COVID-19 and this

year Gordon came back.

Recent improvements have been for air conditioning and internet, but the district also wanted to establish a three-year curriculum plan.

Third and fifth grade students were the focus in previous years, but when it reopened this school year, it was based on a new program developed by a team of district staff.

"De Luz holds a nostalgic place for residents because they went there as kids themselves," said Aimee Plette, one of the staff members giving a report to the school board on March 28. "Now, they are getting to experience it through their own children and it's just very delightful."

Others on the planning committee are Stephanie Hall, Maria Flaherty, Lukas Smith, Brittini Rudolph and, of course, Gordon.



Scott Gordon listens to a student's question.



Scott Gordon quizzes fourth graders about the California Gold Rush at the end of their lesson.

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