



Perris News

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Bells Ring for Historic Wedding Reenactment

Wedding bells rang this weekend at the historic Perris Valley Depot, where staff members and docents re-enacted the nuptials of a couple who played an important role in Perris' development and whose descendants continue living in the City.

Perris Valley Historical and Museum Association docents Alejandra Pena and Javier Porras played the parts of Felicitas

"Happy" Bernasconi and Valentine Reynolds, who were married in 1910 and began a hardware store that continued in the City for the next 60 years.

The granddaughter and great-granddaughter of Happy Reynolds were among those who attended the re-enactment. Mayor Daryl Busch was on hand to represent the City.

Katie Keyes, a member of the museum association, said the Depot will be the scene of several interesting events this summer, including a gold-panning exercise and old-fashion ice-cream social. Keyes said it is important to remember Perris past while training a new generation of teen-agers and young adults to serve as docents at the museum. About 25 high-school students currently work as volunteer docents.

Pena and Porras serve as docents.

Pena, 16, is a senior at Perris High School. Porras, 17, graduated this year and will enter Cal Poly Pomona in the fall to study engineering. Both said they find the Perris Valley Museum inside the Depot educational and exciting.

The museum explains the history of the Perris Valley, including the impact of the pioneering families who settled here in the late 19th Century.

"I really like coming to the museum," Pena said. "It's fun to learn more about where I live and I like to help in the community."

Porras, a high school valedictorian, said he learned that Perris was named after railroad surveyor Fred T. Perris.

"It's very cool to know that we have a lot of history in our City," Porras said.

Visitors ate strawberry cake and drank punch. Those in attendance included Happy Reynolds' granddaughter, Valerie Goff, and great-great-granddaughter, Jessica Reynolds. Goff still lives at the family residence on 4th Street west of Perris Boulevard.

Goff said following the original wedding, Happy and Valentine Reynolds operated a hardware store on D Street between 5th and 6th streets. Happy Reynolds continued operating following the death of her husband in the 1930s and became a "certified ladies plumber" in addition to working the hardware store.

The couple had two sons, Robert and Elmer. Happy Reynolds was in her 90s when she died about 25 years ago.

Reynolds said it was nice to see her relatives get some recognition almost a century after they exchanged wedding vows.

"I love it," she said.



Alejandro Pena and Javier Porras re-enacted the wedding of Perris pioneers Felicitas "Happy" Bernasconi and Valentine Reynolds in a ceremony at the historic Depot Building.



Visitors enjoyed strawberry cake after the nuptials.