

Corriganville Park

(BELOW ARE TWO BROCHURES)

Brochure #1

is

General History and a drawing of how
The park use to look when it was a
Popular Tourist destination



CORRIGANVILLE PARK

CORRIGANVILLE PARK IS REGISTERED AS
VENTURA COUNTY HISTORIC SITE NUMBER 150

7001 SMITH ROAD
SIMI VALLEY, CA 93063



CORRIGANVILLE PARK IS OWNED AND OPERATED BY THE
RANCHO SIMI RECREATION AND PARK DISTRICT.

The Corriganville Preservation Committee members have conducted extensive research into the names and numbers of movies filmed at Corriganville. A short list of movies and TV shows include:

Movies

- "The Kid's Last Ride"
- "Wagons West"
- "Fugitive Valley"
- "Boot Hill Bandits"
- "Vendetta"
- "The Baron of Arizona"
- "Fort Apache"
- "The Gun That Won The West"
- "Fort Savage Raiders"
- "Riding With Buffalo Bill"
- "Jungle Book"
- "Black Spurs"
- "The Bandit of Sherwood Forest"
- "Duel in the Sun"
- "The Man From Colorado"
- "Streets of Laredo"
- "The Robe"
- "How The West Was Won"

TV Shows



- "Adventures of Rin Tin Tin"
- "Lassie"
- "The Long Ranger"
- "Cisco Kid"
- "Gunsmoke"
- "Have Gun, Will Travel"
- "The Fugitive"

CORRIGANVILLE PARK

7001 SMITH ROAD, SIMI VALLEY, CA 93063 · PHONE: (805) 584-4400

OWNERSHIP HISTORY (1937-present)

Ray Bernard changed his name to Ray "Crash" Corrigan after he played the Crash Corrigan film character in a Saturday serial titled "Undersea Kingdom." Historical records show that Ray was born in 1902 and died in 1976.

Corrigan entered films in 1932 as a stuntman and bit player. He became what is called

a "body double" for the Tarzan movie series starring Johnny Weissmuller. This association may be the reason most people erroneously call the Corriganville lake the Tarzan lake. It should really be referred to as the Jungle Jim lake. No Tarzan movies or TV series were ever filmed at Corriganville.

By 1936, Corrigan starred in serials and action pictures. Crash is best known for the character he created named Tucson Smith. As Tucson Smith, he appeared in two dozen films featuring the Three Mesquiteers, riding alongside Max Turhune, Bob Livingston and sometimes John Wayne. Between 1937-43, the Three Mesquiteers movies made the Western movie top ten list, peaking at Number 5 in 1938.

Following the success of the Three Mesquiteers, Corrigan appeared in a series of films called Range Busters. He co-produced this series during the early to mid '40s. After this series of Westerns, Corrigan retired to become a businessman with interests that included the Corriganville Movie Ranch.

Clark Gable sparked Corrigan's interest in Simi Valley. The two actors met when Corrigan performed stunts in the movie "Mutiny on the Bounty." In 1935 while Corrigan was filming a movie just east of Santa Susana Pass, Gable took him quail hunting in the Simi Hills. Corrigan later purchased the property, named

it Corriganville, and used it as a movie ranch for nearly three decades.

Entertainer Bob Hope, who purchased the property from Corrigan in 1965, renamed it Hopetown. Hope used the property as a movie ranch for only one year before all movie production was stopped.

Fires in 1971 and 1979 destroyed the last of the standing sets. Vandals also damaged the old barn which was the last remaining building on the site. Today only the

Photos courtesy of Corriganville Preservation Committee



exterior rock walls of the barn remain.

In 1985, Hopetown was purchased to build homes. Early in 1988, the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District and the City of Simi Valley formed a joint powers authority called the Rancho Simi Open Space Conservation Agency (RSOSCA) with the express purpose of owning, planning, developing and maintaining Corriganville Park. On April 30 1988, RSOSCA accepted a deed to 188 acres. With recent acquisitions, the park is now 206 acres. In 2001, RSOSCA was disbanded and the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District became the sole owner and operator of Corriganville Park.

MOVIE RANCH HISTORY (1937-1965)

Filming was done between 1937-1965. In 1949, the Corriganville Movie Ranch was opened to the public as a Western-style amusement park. At one time the ranch had a train ride that ran through the park; as well as stage coach rides.

There was a time in the late '50s when the weekend attendance at Corriganville was greater than the

attendance figures for either Disneyland or Knott's Berry Farm. Weekend daily attendance estimates ran between 15,000 to 22,000 people.

For a brief time, perhaps between 1957-58, the ranch was leased to the Lone Ranger production company for filming the TV series of the same name. Most of the time, however, the movie set town was called Silvertown. Corrigan often boasted that more than 3,500 movies and TV series were filmed at Corriganville. While these figures cannot be confirmed or denied, there were many movies filmed at the historic movie set. ■

CORRIGANVILLE*

GATEWAY TO A DAY OF FUN, THRILLS, AND RELAXATION
IN THE "OLD WESTERN TRADITION"

(*SHOWN AS AN AMUSEMENT PARK AND MOVIE RANCH AS IT APPEARED DURING THE 1950S.
THE MOVIE RANCH AND AMUSEMENT PARK NO LONGER EXIST.)



"CRASH" CORRIGAN...

IN 1937, RAY "CRASH" CORRIGAN, WHO STARRED IN THE POPULAR "RANGE BUSTER" AND "THREE MESQUITEERS" MOVIES, FOUNDED THE FAMOUS CORRIGANVILLE MOVIE RANCH AS A FULFILLMENT OF HIS CHILDHOOD DREAM. HE DEVELOPED THIS RANCH SO THAT VISITORS BY THE THOUSANDS COULD COME OUT AND HAVE A RIP-ROARIN' TIME.

** VARIOUS HISTORICAL RECORDS INDICATED THAT JUNGLE JIM LAKE WAS ALSO CALLED ROBIN HOOD LAKE, SHERWOOD LAKE AND CORRIGANVILLE LAKE. THE FORESTED AREA WAS SOMETIMES CALLED ROBIN HOOD FOREST.

CORRIGANVILLE MOVIE RANCH

ONE OF THE MOST INTERESTING PLACES IN AMERICA TO VISIT.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. MAIN ENTRANCE AND OFFICE | 12. SILVERTOWN |
| 2. ARENA | 13. MOVIE SOUND STAGE |
| 3. REST ROOMS | 14. RESTAURANT |
| 4. PARKING AREAS | 15. CHUCK WAGON |
| 5. SHOPS | 16. CHURCH |
| 6. FORT APACHE | 17. SCHOOL |
| 7. BURMA ROAD | 18. JUNGLE JIM LAKE** & SHERWOOD FOREST |
| 8. CORSICAN VILLAGE | 19. CAVES |
| 9. HORSES FOR HIRE | 20. EXITS |
| 10. PICNIC AREA | 21. COUNTRY STORE |
| 11. MEXICAN STREET | 22. SALOON |

AND MANY OTHER NEW INTERESTING ADDITIONS.

Corriganville Park

Brochure #2

Mainly Trail Information



Welcome to CORRIGANVILLE PARK

7001 SMITH ROAD
SIMI VALLEY, CA 93063

Welcome to historic Corriganville Park. This beautiful open space park has more than four miles of hiking, biking and equestrian trails, stunning vistas, majestic sandstone cliffs, an ancient oak forest, a year-round stream, shaded picnic areas, the Camp Rotary Youth Campground and picnic shelter, and more.



The Rancho Simi Open Space Conservation Agency (RSOSCA), the joint powers authority with the responsibility of owning, operating and maintaining Corriganville Park, wants each visitor to enjoy themselves to the fullest. Corriganville Park is owned jointly by the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District and the City of Simi Valley.

Under the former ownership of Ray "Crash" Corrigan, Corriganville Park was once the site of the Corriganville Movie Ranch where more than 3,500 movies, TV programs and commercials were filmed between 1937 and 1965. As visitors first enter the park, they are able to view the remains of the foundations of old 'Silvertown,' home to many Westerns filmed during the heyday of the movie ranch. Corriganville Park is registered as Ventura County Historic Site number 150.

This brochure, however, was designed for the visitor who wishes to explore the park by hiking one of the five trails that wind through the 205-acre natural preserve.

There are two maps pictured on this brochure. The first map at the right shows enough of the park to depict all five trails.

The second, smaller map on the reverse side shows the interpretive trail in more detail with each of the 20 information signs.

THE CORRIGANVILLE PARK TRAIL SYSTEM CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING FIVE TRAILS:

LOOP TRAIL

The Loop Trail is a 1.2-mile-long trail that "loops" the massive sandstone rock outcropping that sits in the middle of Corriganville Park. The views along this trail are spectacular and include Silvertown, a natural stream bed, Sherwood Forest, the famous Jungle Jim Lake, the Camp Rotary Youth Campground and picnic shelter, a narrow canyon pass, and the former site of Fort Apache where the TV series "Rin Tin Tin" was filmed. The trail is considered to be easy to moderate, with a gentle-to-moderate climb on the north side of the rock promontory. This trail can be accessed from just about anywhere in the park.

WILDLIFE CORRIDOR TRAIL

The Wildlife Corridor Trail can be reached by hiking the Loop Trail to the northeast. Before turning to the west, a trail marker provides hikers with directions to the Wildlife Corridor Trail. This .5-mile-long trail ascends the steep slopes of the east end of Corriganville Park to reach the wildlife corridor which cuts beneath the Ronald Reagan SR 118 Freeway. This is a moderate-to-strenuous trail, and hikers should be prepared for some rest stops along the way. The views looking down onto Corriganville Park and Simi Valley are worth the hike.

Once hikers have passed through the wildlife corridor, they are outside the boundaries of Corriganville Park and are standing on property owned by the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy. Hikers who have the time, energy, are in good hiking form, and are carrying plenty of water, may want to continue up the rocky slopes to the Rocky Peak Trail. To reach the Rocky Peak Trail, hikers should take the path to the right at the fork in the trail. Hikers who frequent this trail have reported sightings of deer, cougar and bobcat.

STAGECOACH TRAIL

The Stagecoach Trail is a 1-mile-long trail that roughly follows the old Butterfield Stage Lines Trail used during the mid to late 1800s. The trail is a branch of the Wildlife Corridor Trail, and it is clearly marked with signage at the Wildlife Corridor Trail's halfway point. The Stagecoach Trail climbs its way through some very rugged but beautiful terrain. Hikers will be able to view portions of the historic Butterfield Stage Lines Trail, one of the original roads used by people visiting the Simi Valley during the last half of the 19th Century.

The trail, which is more than 100 years old, has a moderate-to-steep climb up-canyon to the east. The views are worth it, however, as hikers are treated to wide sweeping vistas of Corriganville Park, Simi Valley, the Santa Susana Mountains, and Simi Hills.

Additionally, the Stagecoach Trail links up with the trails owned and maintained by the National Park Service. From a point near where the Stagecoach Trail and Lilac Lane meet (Lilac Lane is a vehicular road maintained by Ventura County), a trail leads off to Chatsworth Park located in the San Fernando Valley.

HUMMINGBIRD CONNECTOR TRAIL

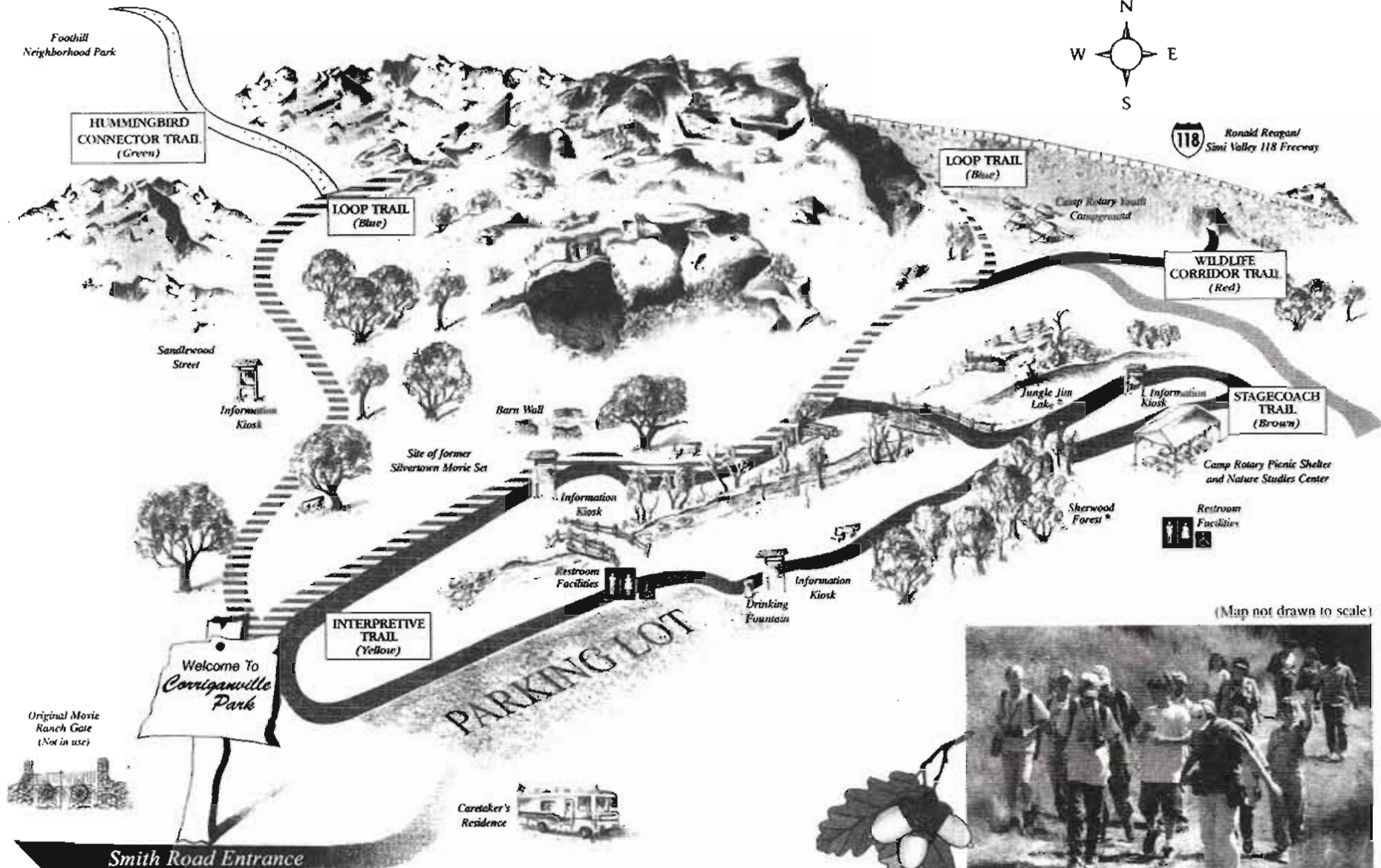
The Hummingbird Connector Trail heads west from the northwestern tip of the Loop Trail, connecting with Foothill Neighborhood Park. This short trail segment is one-quarter mile in length. The trail, which runs west to east, has some gentle up-and-down grades along its entire length and generally parallels the SR 118 Freeway.

Hikers can get glimpses of the area's unusual rock formations and portions of the east end of Simi Valley from the Hummingbird Connector Trail. The actual Hummingbird Trail, which is located north of the SR 118 Freeway and east of Kuehner Drive, can be reached from Corriganville Park by walking through Foothill Park, then west along Charring Street to Kuehner Drive. Hikers should continue to walk north on Kuehner Drive and under the SR 118 Freeway. Approximately one-quarter mile north of the freeway off ramp, turn east and start your hike at the trailhead kiosk.

INTERPRETIVE TRAIL

The Interpretive Trail is a 1.1-mile-long trail that straddles both sides of the streambed (which is one of the headwaters of the Arroyo Simi). This is the first trail visitors see when entering Corriganville Park.

The trail winds its way through Sherwood Forest on the east end of the park and the remains of the old Silvertown movie set on the west side. The trail includes 20 interpretive trail signs installed by local Boy Scouts with information on the natural and human history of the park, as well as information on the flora and fauna that inhabit the area. A description of each sign is listed on the reverse side. ■



*Various historical records indicate that Jungle Jim Lake was also called Robin Hood Lake. Sherwood Lake and Corriganville Lake. The forested area was sometimes called Robin Hood Forest.

The board of directors of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District hopes that you enjoy your visit today and will return to Corriganville Park with family and friends someday soon. Please follow these simple rules while visiting Corriganville Park:

- **No smoking.**
- **Stay on the trails.**
- **Do not litter.**
- **No climbing on rocks, trees or structures.**
- **Stay out of the streambed which is filled with poison oak.**
- **No open fires.**

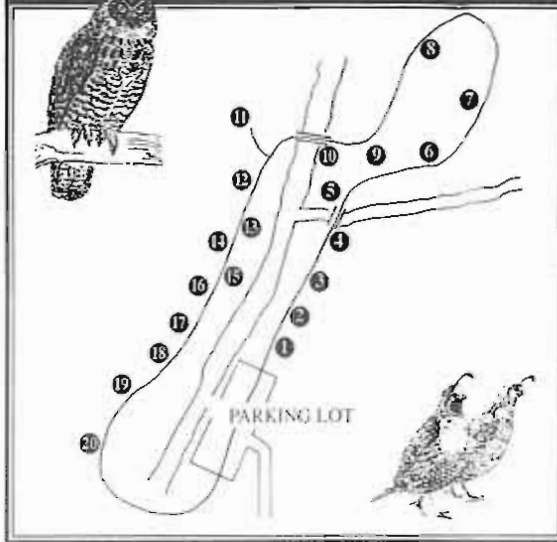
- **No speeding throughout the park. The speed limit is 15 mph.**
- **Do not pick any flowers, plants or trees.**
- **Do not disturb or remove any animal life.**
- **Dogs must be on a leash.**
- **Be aware of plants and animals**

such as poison oak, rattlesnakes, and more.

- **No Alcohol except by special permit.**

Corriganville Park hours of operation are dawn to dusk daily. The park is closed during inclement weather.

INTERPRETIVE TRAIL MARKERS



DECOMPOSING TRUNK

Insects eat the wood, leaving little tunnel patterns in the trunk. Other decomposing elements, such as fungi, help create humus which adds nutrients to the topsoil. This, in turn, provides an opportunity for a fallen acorn to sprout into a new tree.

WILLOWS

Willow trees contain the same chemical as our current-day aspirin. The Chumash Indians chewed the willow bark to relieve the pain from toothaches and headaches. Willows are very bitter tasting. The branches were used to build Indian homes and to weave finely decorated baskets. (Never taste any of the plants in the park because they may be poisonous.)

CHINESE CAMPSITE

Historians claim that blue and white pottery shards (broken pieces) associated with Chinese railroad workers have been located at this site. The railroad through Simi Valley was built around 1904. The Chinese have been

credited with helping to build many of America's Western railroad systems.

SHERWOOD FOREST

Sherwood Forest got its name from the movie "Robin Hood" which was filmed here. This is a very good area to observe many birds native to Simi Valley. Stop and listen to the sounds of many different species of birds. Can you identify any? Some of the oak limbs are hollow which makes for a great nesting location. The oak grove provides shade for many woodland plants.

BLASTING HOLES

Notice the two rocks with a hole in each one. Holes were drilled deep into the surface of the rock in order to provide space for dynamite. When blasting through the train tunnel, dynamite was used to break up large sections of the mountain into smaller, easier-to-handle pieces of rock.

FALLEN OAK

This coast live oak (*quercus agrifolia*) fell over during the winter storms of 1995. The tree was not removed because it is still alive. Notice how the new branches are growing vertically from the trunk. This oak tree is an important part of the outdoor community. Birds live in the tree, squirrels live under it, and beetles feed on the fallen bark and leaves.

CONCRETE POOL

The concrete pool was built to film many of the movies and underwater scenes made during the 1940s-1960s at Corriganville. Movies such as "Robin Hood," "Jungle Jim" and the "African Queen" are just a few of the movies filmed at this location. The square portholes located on the sides of the concrete walls were used as camera windows to shoot the underwater scenes.

WILDLIFE CORRIDOR

The wildlife corridor was built to connect Bob Hope's 1,740-acre ranch that was bisected during the construction of the 118 Freeway. Caltrans was required to build the tunnel to allow Hope to reach both sides of his ranch. For years, wildlife have been using the tunnel to move between the Santa Susana Mountains to the north and the Simi Hills to the south to hunt for food and water.

CAVES (ROCK SHELTER)

These caves and rock shelters were home to the Chumash Indians for hundreds of years. The Indians mostly used shelters facing east and south due to local weather conditions. Bedrock mortars can be found near the shelters indicating early Native American activity in the immediate area.

FIGHTING FOR SPACE

Which was here first, the rock or the tree? Actually, the oak tree started growing next to the rock. (The rock came first.) As the tree grew over the past several hundred years, it started to expand toward the rock. As the tree became taller and larger, it started to grow on and around the rock. This is an excellent example of how living things in nature fight for a share of limited space.

LICHEN

Notice the tricolored plants growing on the sandstone rocks. This plant is composed of both algae and fungus growing as a single unit. Algae produce the food, and the fungus holds onto the rock. It is a good example of a symbiotic relationship where one part cannot survive without the other. "Algae and fungus took a lichen to each other, but the marriage ended up on the rocks."

RIPARIAN

The term "riparian" refers to the community of plants and animals that live along a stream. The dragonfly and tree frog are good examples of insects and amphibians that depend on water for survival. During the hot summer

months, the stream can become a popular and active spot for many animals, especially when the surrounding chaparral becomes dry.

HOLE IN THE TREE

The hole in this tree once held a branch. Over a period of time, the branch fell off and the area left behind became hollow. This, in turn, created a cavity for a place in which animals could live. The hole doesn't hurt the tree because its outer layer (cambium) is used as protection. Nutrients to keep the tree alive are absorbed through the roots, up through the trunk, and into the leaves.

SANDSTONE ROCKS

The large rock formations throughout the park are made of sandstone. Sandstone is a sedimentary rock that is made of compressed sand. Millions of years ago, these rocks formed at the bottom of the ocean floor. Thick deposits built up to form these cliffs. Over millions of years, the rocks were exposed to the weather through upheaval and continental plate movement.

WOOD RAT NEST

The wood rat builds its nest with sticks that are found in the surrounding area. These sticks are used to form the wood rat's home. Inside the pile of sticks are tunnels and chambers where the rat lives. Consider this pile of sticks as the wood rat's house with hallways, bedrooms and a kitchen to store food.

STABLES

This location was famous for filming movies during the Corriganville Park heydays of the 1940s-1960s. The foundation and a few low-lying rock walls are all that are left after several fires raced through the park in the 1970s. The barn that was located here was used as the stables for the work horses and the horses used during filming. Inside the barn was a jail cell also used in the movies.

VALLEY OAK (*quercus lobata*)

This type of tree loses its leaves in the fall. It can live to be hundreds of years old. Notice the galls on the stems. These are formed when a gall wasp lays eggs in the stem. Growth is formed around the egg mass to protect the eggs during incubation. The larvae eat their way out of the gall and emerge as adult wasps. ■

COAST LIVE OAK (*quercus agrifolia*)

This oak tree is referred to as "live" because its leaves stay green year-round (evergreen). The seeds from oak trees are called acorns. Acorns were used as a staple in the diet of the Chumash Indians. The coast live oak is characterized by its gray, smooth bark and holly-shaped leaves.

ELDERBERRY

The elderberry has clusters of blue to black berries with white flowers. Leaves are gray-green in color. The Chumash Indians relied on the elderberry for many uses. The flowers were made into fritters, and the berries were eaten as a tasty source of fruit. The stems of the plant were used to make flutes for playing music and arrows for hunting game.

RAILROAD TUNNEL MOUND

The railroad tunnel between Chatsworth and Simi Valley was completed in 1904. The tunnel is more than 1-1/2 miles long. The large mound in front of you is the rock material that came out of the tunnel during construction. Note the age of the trees that are growing on top of the mound date back to only 1904.

