



MARCH 4, 1997

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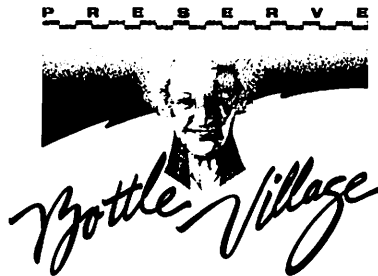
## GRANDMA PRISBREY'S BOTTLE VILLAGE AND THE NORTHRIDGE EARTHQUAKE CURRENT ISSUES:

### BOTTLE VILLAGE DAMAGE FROM THE NORTHRIDGE EARTHQUAKE:

- Date of Northridge Earthquake: January 17, 1994
- Quake damage: Extensive. 5 structures completely collapsed, 7 structures seriously damaged, 1 structure minimal damage, one non-structure object collapsed.
- The Damage Survey Reports (DSR'S) put together by the Bottle Village rebuilding team claim that 95% of damage at Bottle Village was caused by the Northridge Earthquake. Rationale for 95% damage figure: Even though Bottle Village had some damage before the quake, the magnitude of quake damage minimizes pre-quake damage to five percent.
- Non-quake damage: decaying beams, mortar cracks, chipped paint, vandalism. Trailer Enclosure and Cabana Room already partially disassembled. Many items not meant to be outside are exposed to weather. Walls around property disassembled a long time ago.
- Enough historic integrity remains for Bottle Village to have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places after the Earthquake; Bottle Village was listed onto the National Register on October 25, 1996.

### FEMA/ BOTTLE VILLAGE FACTS:

- Purpose of project: to rebuild Bottle Village back to its state the day before the quake. This is a rebuilding project, not a restoration.
- FEMA approved a budget of \$495,489 to repair Northridge Earthquake damages at Bottle Village.
- Bottle Village receives 90% (\$445,940) with obligation to fund 10% (\$44,594) because Bottle Village is a 501(c)(3) private non-profit corporation. This total sum will repair 100% of Bottle Village Northridge earthquake damage.
- Is Bottle Village the first folk art environment to receive FEMA repair money? No, Watts Towers received over \$900,000 toward earthquake repairs.
- Amount of time Bottle Village and the rebuilding team have worked with FEMA toward money approval: 2 years, 10 months
- Amount of money the Bottle Village Committee members themselves have received from FEMA over this time: 0
- Money that the Preserve Bottle Village Committee has spent over last three years toward the FEMA agreement: over a couple thousand dollars, mostly from Committee member pockets and private donations by individuals.
- Amount of FEMA money already given to the Bottle Village earthquake repair project: \$18,900 in 1995 toward the Architectural and Engineering report that the rebuilding reports are based upon.
- Simi Valley City Council unanimously approved a HUD /Community Development Block Grant for the 10% (\$2100) match to the \$18,900 mentioned above.
- Date of FEMA approving earthquake funding: November 13, 1996
- Anticipated rebuilding will take 1 1/2 to 2 years



CONGRESSMAN ELTON GALLEGLY AND BILL HR175:

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- On January 7, 1997, Congressman Elton Gallegly (R-23rd District, Ventura CA) proposed Bill HR175.
- Text of HR175:  
"Notwithstanding any other law, no federal funds may be obligated or expended for any repair or restoration of Bottle Village in Simi Valley, California, relating to any damage caused by an earthquake:"
- Has Gallegly ever been to Bottle Village? "I went to see it in 1969. I spent 25 cents each for my wife and myself and we took a look around. If it wasn't for me feeling sorry for Grandma Prisbrey, I would have asked for my money back"--quoted in LA WEEKLY, January 17-23, 1997
- Has Gallegly ever seen the FEMA reports he has drafted legislation against? No.
- What is Gallegly's reason for this bill?: taxpayer waste toward an "eyesore"
- In March 1983, then Mayor Gallegly voted to give Bottle Village \$25,000 in Federal funds in the form of a Community Development Block Grant

GRANDMA PRISBREY'S BOTTLE VILLAGE AND THE CITY OF SIMI VALLEY:

- City of Simi Valley sent letter to FEMA saying Bottle Village was declared unsafe in 1984, therefore closed. If Bottle Village was not open before the 1994 quake, the project is not eligible for FEMA money.
- Was Bottle Village open before the quake? Yes, by appointment only. From the time in question (1984) to now, Bottle Village has hosted many educational and community service groups.
- Did the City know about this? Bottle Village special events and functions have been in the press to City's knowledge. Even though City claims not to permit anyone on property, they still charged a rock group for permit to film a video at Bottle Village in 1991.

ASSORTED MISINFORMATION ABOUT THE FEMA/ BOTTLE VILLAGE AGREEMENT:

- "Half the money goes toward administration [of the FEMA/ Bottle Village Damage Survey Reports]" - Simi Valley Mayor Greg Stratton. Actually, FEMA has provided an administrative allowance of roughly \$15,000: three percent of total money approved.
- As stated on her "Bulldoze Bottle Village" petition, Simi Valley Councilmember Sandi Webb believes this money is toward a "restoration" of Bottle Village; in actuality, the approved FEMA money is strictly for earthquake damage repair.
- Councilmember Webb, who has never seen the damage survey reports, accused them of being fraudulent in that they claim 95% of damage was from the quake and 5% was pre-quake
- No record exists of Councilmember Webb or her agents ever visiting Bottle Village.
- If HR175 passes, can the money in question be transferred to another FEMA project in Simi Valley?  
No.
- The funding amount or eligibility of other local FEMA projects is not contingent on the Bottle Village /FEMA agreement. If HR175 passes, the money in question ends up in Washington, not in Simi Valley

BENEFITS TO THE LOCAL COMMUNITY:

- Even though the collective Simi Valley taxpayer share of cost of this approved money is only one hundred and ninety three dollars, an estimated \$300,000 will be spent locally for supplies, equipment, services, and twelve part time workers.
- Grandma Prisbrey's Bottle Village is an internationally regarded National Register listed property that has been written about, filmed and seen in exhibitions across the world by over 1,000,000 people. Because of this high acclaim, Bottle Village has the potential to be a strong heritage tourism draw.