

Hike #479

# HIKE FOR 11 AUGUST 1999

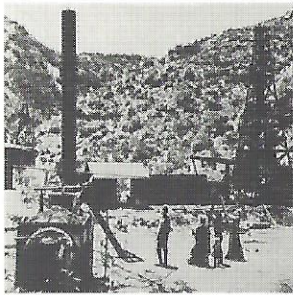
## PICO CANYON AND HISTORIC MENTRYVILLE

Hike Leader: John "Shady John" Chady

**THE HIKE:** This hike will be short, approximately 6 miles round trip, as the day is sure to be warm. (This is the way people from the Valley spell "HOT"!) Elevation gain/loss will be about 1200 feet. The principle hike will follow the service road depicted on the reverse side to the Viewpoint at 2801 feet. (When the trail is completed to Towsley Canyon we can return someday and do a shuttle.) Now the good news - there is **NO POISON OAK!** The service road is paved and/or packed earth so **BRING YOUR BICYCLES** and explore a side trail! Few of the Mentryville buildings remain but there are some relics of the oil producing days especially the replica of an early well at Johnson Park so **BRING YOUR CAMERAS**. No one was here the day I checked it out and birdlife was abundant so **BRING YOUR BINOCULARS!** It will be hot but there is lots of shade in the canyon...not so on the ridge so **BRING WATER!**..

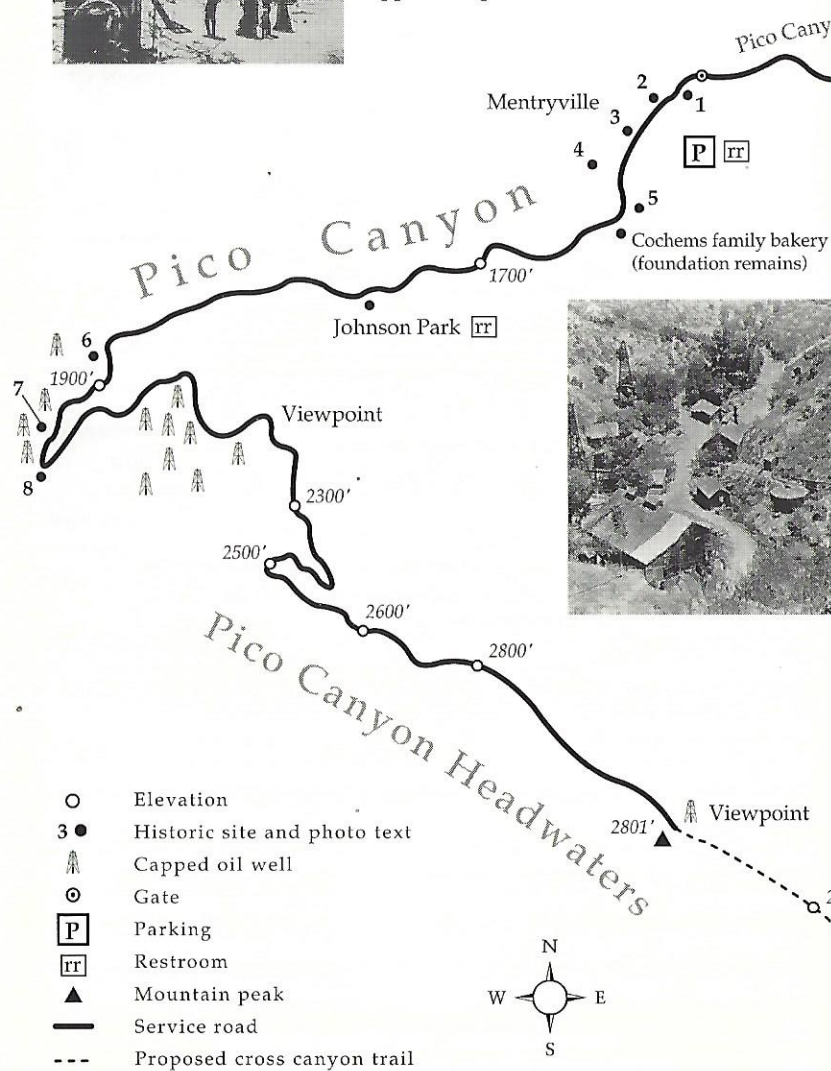
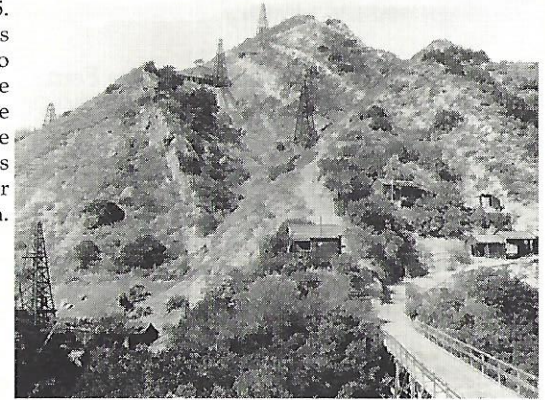
**HOW TO GET THERE:** Go NORTH on the I-5 into the Santa Clarita Valley. Exit on Lyons Avenue (next one **after** Calgrove). Turn LEFT at the top of the off-ramp, cross over the freeway and continue straight on. After passing through the developed area the pavement narrows to a two lane road, Pico Canyon Road. Continue on to Mentryville by avoiding all right turn opportunities. At the locked gate at Mentryville (approximately 3 miles) make a left turn and follow drive around the barn to the parking lot.

**WHEN TO GET THERE:** Typically, we will depart on the hike at 9:30 AM. However, if any group is delayed by traffic we will wait until they arrive. I will even try to get there on time myself.

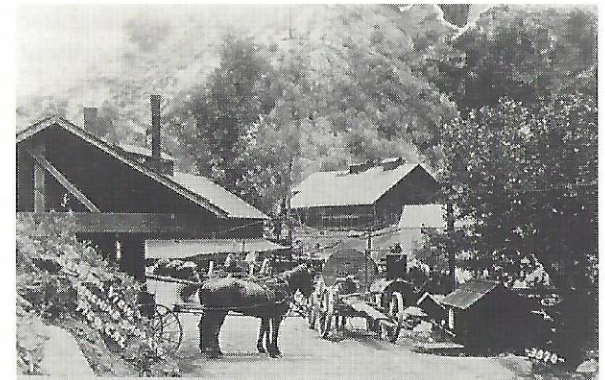


7. Carleton E. Watkins' photo of California Star Oil (C.S.O.) #4 (Pico No. 4). June 26, 1877. This National Landmark not only was the first commercially successful oil well in the western United States, but No. 4 was the longest, continually-operating oil well in the world. In Sept 1876 it was tapped to a depth of 617 feet by driller Alex Mentry; the well was capped in Sept 1990.

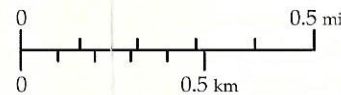
6. C.S.O. Hill in Pico. 1885. Derrick on lower left marks well #32. The long bridge to the right was destroyed by the 1893 earthquake. Structures are redwood lodgings. From the road, look for the three peaks and tilted strata for comparison.



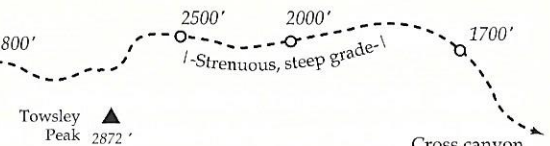
8. "The Works". (Left and below). These two photos show the location of Pico's machine shop and blacksmith. Mentry and his workers crafted their own tools and parts needed for work in the oil field--some of which can be found today at the Union Oil Museum in Santa Paula.



Photography, text, map and design by Ann Dittmer (CSUN), 1997. Historical photographs from SMMC's Chevron collection and Leon Worden. Funding for this publication by: California Urban Environmental Research and Education Center and SMMC.



Pico/Towsley Divide



Cross canyon trail exits into Towsley Canyon here at "The Narrows". Refer to the Towsley trail map for detail.