



HISTORY CENTER

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

Peter Boysen
Dairyman and Civic Leader





Peter and Anna Boysen in 1927
Courtesy of Marilyn Kinsey

Boysen Avenue borders University Square and the neighborhood of apartments that flow up to Highland Avenue to the entrance of Cal Poly. The street is named for dairyman and civic leader Peter Boysen and his twenty-seven acre Boysen Ranch.

Born in Schleswig, Denmark in 1872 Peter fled his homeland to avoid the German Army, according to granddaughter Marilyn Kinsey, immigrated at age 16, and became a naturalized citizen in San Luis Obispo Superior Court at the age of 26 when the population of the city was shy of 3,000 residents.

Peter grew up dairying. Schleswig-Holstein today continues its cheesemaking heritage, as cows graze on picturesque rolling green hills, just as cows did in San Luis Obispo when it was cow heaven.

Anna Cristina Jepsen exchanged matrimonial vows with Peter Boysen in 1894 and gave birth to Ella, Frida (Marilyn's mother), Peter, Raymond and Clarence.

It was important to the Boysen's and the Danish community on the central coast to keep their heritage alive and so the folk school Atterdag College was established in Solvang in 1914, which Marilyn attended. As time went on there were intermarriages between the dairying Danes, Portuguese and Swiss-Italians. One such marriage was between Peter's son Raymond and Mabel Fiscalini, who continued the Boysen Ranch name.



Traditions were a part of Danish life. Butter, cream and cheese played an important role in their cuisine with such dishes as Smorrebrod made with rich pumpnickel bread coated thickly with creamery butter and Aebleskivvers, those light fluffy pancake balls dipped in sugar that can still be enjoyed in Solvang. Holidays included toasting with Akvavit or schnapps, a distilled clear spirit of 42% - 45% alcohol that was drunk with precision. Each person sitting at a table took their glass in hand and making eye contact

Courtesy Marilyn Kinsey with each person, toasted then drank and again looked around the table at each individual before putting the glass down to repeat because one, so say the Danes, is needed for each leg.

Fellow Danes, Johanne Davidsen and husband Christian Anholm purchased 162 acres from Alice Venable and created the housing subdivision known as the Anholm Tract which borders Foothill and Santa Rosa straddling Chorro Street on both sides.

Recognized for his civic contributions by the Telegram Tribune, Peter Boysen shared his leadership skills at the Bank of America, selective service board and federal housing authority. At the turn-of-the-century Peter was involved in politics, raised his family on "The Monte" or "Miles Station" for it was the Pacific Coast Railway station just one mile from Port San Luis where farmers and businesses imported and exported goods by steamship. In addition, Peter was trustee for the one-room Santa Fe Schoolhouse where daughter Frida was educated.

As the population was approaching twenty-thousand in 1956 it lost dairyman and civic leader Peter Boysen.

By Marilyn Darnell. Marilyn is the historian for the Land Conservancy's Octagon Barn, which played an important role in the history of our county's dairy industry. You can learn more on the [Octagon Barn Website](#). The History Center is grateful to Marilyn for her many contributions to local history.



Virtually Visit the Dallidet Gardens!

We miss being able to share the Dallidet gardens with the public, so we created this video to give us all a taste of what's going on. If this is a success, we can make more of these videos. Please let us know what you

think!

We're also working on a way to give live tours of the inside of the house, so keep an eye out for that in the near future.

[Click here to watch the video](#)

May Flowers

We are thrilled to be taking part in Downtown SLO's #TheMayFlowerInitiative. We will be projecting the works of the incredible artist [Liz Maruska](#) onto our windows after dark. Check out [Downtown SLO's website](#) for more information.



Butterfly Orchid by Liz Maruska

Looking for more to do?

- Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Instagram](#). In addition to our regular Theme Monday and Throwback Thursday posts, we'll now be posting every weekday with photos from our collection that will inspire activities you can try in your very own homes.
- Take a [virtual walking tour](#) of historic San Luis Obispo. These video series feature short vignettes about significant local landmarks.

If you have any ideas of content you'd like to see, share it with us! And if you enjoy what we share with you, and if you are able to, would you please consider [supporting us](#)?

Thank you for being a part of our community. Everybody stay healthy and safe.

Sincerely,



Thomas Kessler
Executive Director

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