



Murrieta Valley Historical Society Newsletter

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September 2021

It is our mission to identify, preserve and promote the historic legacy of the Murrieta Valley and to educate the public about its historical significance.

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Murrieta Valley Historical Society

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The former restaurant was located at 41529 Ivy Street. Cottage Charm, an antique store, was the last business to occupy the building.
Photo taken by author on October 16, 2016

The Silver Swan

By Jeffery G. Harmon

Ralph Bates sold his restaurant and service station at the corner of Ivy Street and Jefferson Avenue to Mrs. Ethel Jones, of San Bernardino, in 1937. Mrs. Jones renamed the restaurant the Silver Swan and owned it for about five years. Though Mrs. Jones and her restaurant are not remembered by Murrieta residents, the man she hired to operate her new business left his name and his legacy in the community. The manager of the Silver Swan was

Mr. King.

Rolla Ward King was born on January 18, 1905 in Marysvale, Piute County, Utah. He was the son of Henry and Mary (Thompson) King. He attended school in Richfield, Utah. In 1920, he started working for the Union Pacific Railroad in Ogden. He was a dining car steward for four years.

On December 15, 1924, Rolla King married Hilda Marie Thompson in Beaver, Beaver

ANNOUNCING THE
GRAND OPENING!
OF THE
Silver Swan
CAFE and COCKTAIL ROOM
Wednesday, Aug. 25

Having completely remodeled, enlarged and refurnished the place formerly known as "Ma's and Pa's Place" at Murrieta, in the most modern manner, we believe we now have one of the nicest and most attractive places in Southern California.

We wish to announce our Grand Opening on the above date. Wednesday, August 25th.

We take great pleasure in extending to the public a hearty invitation to come to our opening and view for themselves this beautiful cafe.

Our employees shall always be the most competent and most courteous obtainable, and we shall serve only the finest of foods and the very best of drinks.

Again we invite you to call at any time and refresh yourself with our foods and drinks.

Ethel Jones, Proprietress

Silver Swan Announcement

Source: August 19, 1937, Elsinore Leader-Press

County, Utah. Hilda was born December 30, 1905 in Greenville, Beaver County, Utah. She was the daughter of James and Josephine (Dalley) Thompson. The young couple first settled in Milford, Utah and had two sons, Keith (1925) and Robert (1927). The family then moved to Riverside, California by 1930 where Rolla King managed a café for four years. He then took a job as a bartender in Colton, California.

Mrs. Hilda King sepa-

rated from her husband on June 15, 1932. She returned to Utah for reasons unknown. It is believed that she took her two sons with her when she left her husband.

On June 30, 1934, Rolla King was involved in a tragic car accident in Colton, California. He had left the bar early Saturday morning and drove home. At the intersection of 8th and F Street he crashed his car into Raymond Anderson's car. Anderson, age 31, was ejected

from his car and died at the scene. Also injured in the crash was his wife, Virginia, age 25, their three children, Barbara, 8, Joan, 6, and Billie, 4, and a friend, Joseph Pastell, age 19. The Anderson family was from Dealsville, Alabama and was moving to Ventura, California to be with relatives.

King suffered three fractured ribs, a broken nose, and leg injuries from the accident. He was arrested on manslaughter charges and placed in the San Bernardino County Jail. His bail was set at \$2,000, which he could not pay. He remained in jail until his preliminary hearing on July 11th. During the investigation, Dr. R. O. Ingham, a Colton physician, examined King an hour after the accident. He found that King was slightly intoxicated.

"King told me that he had a bottle of beer six hours before the accident." Dr. Ingham testified. (July 3, 1934, San Bernardino Sun)

The preliminary hearing was delayed for a month because King's defense attorney, R. E. Hodge, went on vacation. King was released from jail when his bail was finally posted. In August, the Colton Justice Court decided that King would stand trial on manslaughter charges.

King refused to accept the charges and believed he should instead be charged for reckless driving. The jury trial was set for October 16th in the San Bernardino County Superior Court, but the defense requested

that the trial be postponed till October 30th. King finally agreed to the manslaughter charge in hopes of leniency from the judge.

On November 17, 1934, Superior Judge C. L. Allison sentenced Rolla King to one year in the county jail and three years probation. Furthermore, during King's probation he was to send \$3 a month to Mrs. Virginia Anderson. A few months later, in March 1935, Rolla King filed divorce papers from Hilda on charges of desertion.

After the divorce, Hilda married Charles S. Fine on June 14, 1935 in Farmington, Davis County, Utah. Charles and Hilda's marriage only lasted a few years. Hilda then married David L. Muir on May 9, 1940 in Lincoln County, Nevada. David and Hilda's marriage lasted less than two years. Hilda then married her fourth husband, Clyde V. Mapes, on July 16, 1943 in Huntington Park, Los Angeles County, California. Clyde and Hilda were married for 43 years. Hilda died on November 18, 1988 in Riverside, California

In November 1935, Rolla King and Roy Paine formed a partnership and opened a club at 225 East 48th Street in San Bernardino. The King's Club 225 featured nightly music from

the King's Men, and patrons danced until 1:00 a.m. King operated the club for two years, and then left to work at the Silver Swan Café in Murrieta.

The grand opening of the Silver Swan Café and Cocktail Room took place on Wednesday, August 25, 1937. The former Pa and Ma Bates restaurant was completely remodeled, enlarged, and refurnished. Mrs. Jones hired Rolla King as the restaurant manager and his wife, Minnie.

Rolla King's second wife was Minnie Bryan Garr. She was born October 29, 1908 in Orange, California. She was the daughter of Quintus and Frances (Lankford) Garr. Rolla and Minnie King had one child, Henry Charles King, born on October 2, 1940 in Lake Elsinore, California. The couple also adopted, a young girl, Marlene Anne on November 10, 1941.

The King family kept their property in San Bernardino County. However, in May 1940, Ralph Bates built an additional room onto his house. The Kings stayed in this new room while they were working in Murrieta. During the same month, King built an addition to the café, expanding the business. The Silver Swan had become very popular over the years, es-

pecially with guests and employees of the Guenther's Murrieta Hot Springs Resort.

A wedding took place at the Silver Swan Café on August 14, 1940.

"The arbor of the Silver Swan Café at Murrieta was the scene of a beautiful and impressive wedding Wednesday evening, August 14, at nine o'clock, when Miss Dorothy Flippen of Corona plighted her troth to Herdis Lisby of Murrieta. The ceremony was performed by A. B. Barnett, Justice of the Peace, before nearly 200 guests.

The bride was attired in white net and wore an arm length veil. Mrs. Arlean Garrison, wearing blue stain, acted as bridesmaid, while Kenneth Stollar served the groom as best man. The bride was given in marriage by her uncle, Charles Flippen. The wedding march was played by the Murrieta Hot



On November 3, 1948, Lt. Keith R. King, 23-year old son of Rolla W. King, drowned during Army maneuvers at Neah Bay, Washington. The boat in which he was crossing the bay, capsized. Source: November 10, 1948, San Bernardino Sun

Springs orchestra, and Wylie Tarwater sang "I Love You Truly."

The happy young couple spent a couple of weeks honeymoon at San Clemente. Mr. Lisby is employed at the Silver Swan." (August 29, 1940, Elsinore Leader Press)

Rolla King expanded the café again in August 1941. A few months later a fire ignited in the kitchen. The Perris fire crew was called into service. The damage to the kitchen was estimated at \$150.

Around 1942, the Silver Swan Café closed. It is unknown the reasons for the closure. The café reopened in May 1945 and was renamed King's Café. Prior to the reopening, Rolla had purchased the business from Mrs. Ethel Jones. Other changes took place during this time as well.

Robert Beauchamp had been operating the service station next to the café. Max Thompson purchased the Union Oil Station from Beauchamp in 1945. A year later Clayton Erdel, of Los Angeles, took over operations of the station on October 12, 1946. He built a garage for the station in November 1948. By 1960, Marvin Curran took over the Chevron service station.

In January 1947, King's Café was sold to two war veterans, Winfield Rash and John Inchausti. Rolla and Minnie King then moved to San Bernardino.

Rolla's sons, Keith and Robert, lived with their mother in Utah. During the summer and the holidays they came to Murrieta to spend time with their father. When America entered World War II, the brothers enlisted and served. After the war, Keith continued to serve in

the Army Air Force and was in Germany for three years. He returned to the states with his new German wife, Sue, in February 1948.

Keith King was then stationed at McChord Field near Tacoma, Washington. On November 3, 1948, Keith was on a ship crossing Neah Bay near the northern border of Washington during war practice maneuvers, when the ship capsized. He was not found, and drowned. Rolla King traveled to Washington to recover his son's body and brought it back to be laid to rest in the Inglewood Park Cemetery. Then Sue King moved to Colton to live with Rolla and Minnie King for awhile.

The King family lived in Colton the rest of their lives. Minnie King died on February 17, 1977 and was laid to rest in the Montecito Memorial Park. Rolla King lived twenty more years until he died on January 21, 1997. He was laid to rest beside his wife.

Rolla and Minnie King left a lasting impression on the community. Their hospitality and their generosity to the community will be long remembered. Today all that remains of the former Silver Swan/King's Café are the memories. On May 26, 2021, the former King's Café was demolished in order to build a large apartment complex on the property. Though the structures are gone, the place will always be remembered as King's Corner.



Pictured left to right: Brother, Bryan King, mother, Mary Ellen (Thompson) King, brother, Orville King, and Rolla King.
(Source: www.familysearch.org)

Museum Update

We have received more items donated by Marvin D Curran and Tony Guenther. Some items are on display now and more to come. Our hands on displays are now open.

The museum will be open on Thursday evenings from 4-7 pm during the Murrieta Downtown Market Night on the first and third Thursday through Septem-

ber. The museum's regular hours are Thursdays 1-4 pm (later on the Market nights) and the first Saturday of the month from 10 am – 2 pm. The museum is also offering private tours. For an appointment or more information email us at

info@murrietahistoricalociety.org

I would like to thank all

of our members who donated or renewed their membership. With your support we were able to purchase a printer/scanner for the museum and we are able to continue to preserve our history for the future generation.

Thank you,
Annette Jennings

Museum's Market Night Hours

4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on

September 2nd and

September 16th

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Next General Board Meeting TBA

General Board Meetings are virtual in a Zoom meeting format. Anyone interested in joining us, please send an email to info@murrietahistoricalsociety.org and we will email you the Zoom link before the meeting



The Murrieta Museum,
41810 Juniper Street
at Hunt Memorial Park.

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