

TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER



Wolf Store

November 2020
Volume 20 Issue 11

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

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“Where the hell is” TEMECULA?

A bumper sticker once seen around Southern California

Darell Farnbach Remembers

First Wave of Newcomers To Temecula in 1980's

(Editor's note: Darell Farnbach loves Temecula. He is dedicated to preserving history. Was a founding member of TVHS, and served as President of VaRRA for most of the duration of the organization. As a child he lived on a ranch, where his Mom was cook. Also lived many other places in California.)

By Darell Farnbach

The first wave of the 2nd Pioneers came to Rancho California in the 1970's. I was in the second wave of second pioneers who came in the 1980s.

We didn't come in covered wagons, but in station wagons, Suburbans, and pickup trucks with trailers. Our horses weren't pulling our vehicle, they were loaded in fancy trailers.

When I decided to move here I bought a new pair of cowboy boots, a new Western hat and Western shirts. I had not worn Western clothes since I was about 9 years old. I was then 39.

This is my story as well as the story of Rancho California. The first time I saw Temecula was in 1980. I was living in Arcadia with my first wife and 2 children, Darya 13, and Todd 9. We lived in a beautiful home with a 7 car garage. My wife and I had our own businesses, she had an interior design studio, and I owned a hairstyling salon. Arcadia had great schools and was a great community, but we were looking for something else more rural and smaller. We looked around Central California. We even made an offer on a farmhouse in Oregon but nothing was working out.

Our friends had once owned property in Rancho California. They sold it and were always sorry. One Saturday we joined them on a trip to Rancho California, it was July 1980. As we approached Temecula it was foggy when we pulled off the freeway onto Rancho California Rd. As the fog lifted we could see hot air balloons, probably 10 or 12 of them. It was a magical and very dramatic entrance to Temecula. They were staging at a vacant lot at the

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First Wave of Newcomers in 1980's

corner of Rancho California Road and Front Street. That was the beginning of what was to become the annual Balloon and Wine Festival.

We came down the next weekend and bought 20 acres in the De Luz area, paying \$55,000. It was the beginning of my Temecula Adventure.

Kaiser & Aetna had purchased the Vail Ranch as well as adjoining acreage for a total of around 90,000 acres in 1964. The population by 1980 was 1,783. The ranch was developed under the name of Rancho California. They established a commercial zone at the corner that straddled Hwy. 395 or I-15, and extended out to Hwy. 79 South or Temecula Parkway.

The different housing developments Kaiser created were: Meadowview, with ¾-acre home sites surrounding an open meadow, a clubhouse, swimming pool, a stable for horses and tennis courts. Glen Oaks 5 -acre parcels suitable for agriculture, lemons, oranges, grapefruit. Kiwi and jojoba were also tried but failed. It also included a clubhouse and a horse training ring. Lake Village had single family homes on small lots surrounding a lake with a clubhouse. Los Ranchitos had 2- or 3-acre custom home sites close to the core. Hill 27 had single family homes, mostly built for Kaiser employees, with no more than 15 homes with a view. La Serena featured 4 small homes that shared a common driveway and originally sold for \$17,000. Heritage Mobile Home Park had a clubhouse and a pool. There were Condominiums at La Paz and Hwy. 79 S, as well as acreage zoned for mobile homes west and south of where Maurice Carrie is located and in Deluz where there were 20-acre parcels suitable for avocados.

Kaiser established strong CC&Rs - Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions – stating barns and outbuildings had to match the home façade and roof color.

Soon Old Town Temecula was surrounded by Rancho California and was not subject to Kaiser rules. Old Town sort of developed on its own with the following businesses: Restaurants in Old Town included The Bank of Mexican Food, The Corner Sandwich Shop (where the Temecula Olive Oil Company is today), Swing Inn, Texas Lils and Texas Lucy's, Mexico Chiquita (always packed with locals), Colony Kitchen (now Denny's), Penfolds, Jolly Cannook,, and Rainbow Creek Inn (a distance from Old Town).

At the south end of Front Street was Hank's Lumber & Hardware, Patton Nursery, the Ranch Market that offered prepared food and bread baked daily. They served beer at a window that opened onto a porch that faced Front Street. They also had a little white structure where you could buy block ice. It was coin operated.

For haircuts there was Butcher Bob's for men. For women it was Madam Sheri's Hair House. Also there was a sporting goods store where they sold fishing licenses, and the Sears Catalog Store.

Most of the other business were devoted to real estate of-

fices and antiques.

Pujol Street consisted of small older houses & mobile homes. At the south end was an abandoned slaughter house and a tin barn the VFW used for city events. Behind the tin barn was the tractor race track. A number of the commercial stores on Front Street were mobile homes converted to offices and shops.

To promote Rancho California, Kaiser built Butterfield Country with camping, fishing, swimming and a lot of Western events all under large oak trees. It was located at Dripping Springs, reported to be a water stop for the Overland Butterfield Stage. Across from Butterfield Country was Woodchuck Campground established by Tony & Mildred Tobin on property that Mildred's grandfather traded for a black bull (as the story goes). Later Tony ran a small museum on Front Street which was the beginning of the Temecula City Museum, the Temecula Valley Historical Society and the Little Temecula History Center.

There was no place to buy underwear, no grocery stores, no movie theater, no fast food. One of the most popular stores in Old Town was Dublinos VHS video rental. TV reception was poor, so renting 1 or 2 movies for the weekend was common. Occasionally we would go to Hemet, Escondido or Oceanside for a movie and dinner. Sometimes we would go to the Oceanside mall. Oceanside was our favorite.

In 1980 Southern California and Arizona experienced what was called the 100-years rainfall, resulting in a lot of flooding in the eastern part of Rancho California. It was flooded and cut off from the western part. Helicopters were used to rescue those who had emergencies



First Wave of Newcomers in 1980's

also brought hay and grain for stranded animals. Ironically, 1981 also had what was called a 100-years rainfall, but not so much flooding as in 1980.

In 1993 Old Town was flooded, because the Army Corps of Engineers were not allowed to clear the Murrieta Creek channel because of environmentalists protecting bird & animal habitat. Kaiser had built a lot of new roads that were not completed. They had cleared a lot of land for future development. As a result, roads were cut off and erosion was everywhere.

The first time I drove up Rancho California Road where Target is now, there was a ditch along the road with a car buried in the ditch, its top level with the road. Another time we were driving on Mesa Road heading for Tecalota Valley. As I rounded a corner and started down a decline, the pavement ended abruptly where the dirt had washed away. When I braked, our heads hit the top of the car.

Kaiser established The Plaza at the corner of Rancho California Road and Ynez. It consisted of a gas station, Homestead Restaurant, Scarcellas Pizza, Bank of America, Market (little more than a liquor store), professional suites with dentists, doctors and Kaiser's main office, a 5&10 cent store with a few shops catering to tourists and a store front library.

Schools consisted of one elementary, one middle school, and one Christian High School. Other high school students were bussed to Elsinore, and some parents drove their high schoolers to Fallbrook.

We loved the Can-Do Attitude and all the future plans for the area, and it didn't take much to come to the conclusion that Temecula would be our new home. We opened a small interior design office across from where McDonalds is now. Our office was at the front, and in the back was a machine shop owned by our landlord. Our office always smelled like machine oil.

We also committed to a 1,500-square-foot commercial building yet to be built on Diaz Road near the old airport. Our goal was to move here in time for our children to enter school in September 1981. I planned to commute back to Arcadia to my hair salon, which I did for the next eight years.

We were desperate to find a place to buy or rent. After we had explored all options, finally, in August 1981 we found a year-old home in Meadowview. In the early 1980s interest rates were 10 to 12%. It was difficult to get a loan and most construction had come to a halt. The seller was anxious to sell. We gave \$20,000 down and he would carry the loan at 10% interest. We paid interest only. At the end of five years the loan would be payable and we would get a new loan. We had to do a similar thing to sell our house in Arcadia. As it turned out, in about 3 years we were all able to get new loans at reasonable rates. We could all breathe a sigh of relief. Meanwhile, Kaiser was trying to sell land to developers for tract homes. Land sales had dropped to a trickle. They did a bold thing, they

built the first phase of Starlight Ridge and brought down the interest rate from 10 or 12% to 5 or 6%. The result was that people were camping out to be first in line to buy a home. I think they built two or three more phases. This was a signal to other developers, and land sales were booming with new tract homes popping up all over. The result of this growth was the interior design business was good; selling carpet, drapes and mini blinds.

About this time my wife of 23 years was starting to choose another path which did not include me. We agreed to an amicable divorce.

I was still working in Arcadia but had decided to start to build a clientele in Temecula. I went to work in a little salon in a mobile home on Front Street that was shared with a real estate office and a welding shop. When you stepped on a certain spot on the floor the lights would get dim. And if you used the blow dryer and the curling iron at the same time, the lights would get brighter. I found out later the building was wired incorrectly.

I had owned and operated a salon in an upscale neighborhood for 17 years. Here I was working in a mobile with no air conditioning, just fans that picked up hair and blew it all around. I also found out later that the owner, a native of Austria, did not have a license to do hair in California. We were successful because we used and sold top-of-the-line products and every stylist was a good solid hairdresser.

It was about this time when one of my long time Arcadia clients set me up on a blind date with a woman she referred to as a red-haired angel. Of course, that was Rebecca. We got married 11 months later. On October 1st of this year we celebrated our thirty-second wedding anniversary.

Shortly after we were married, I heard of a new salon that was about to open in the new Target Center. I contacted the owners and moved my business there. Tract homes were selling like hot cakes and the population was exploding. Within a year I was asked to become a partner, and I agreed. We were so busy we made the decision to open a second salon in the Target Center. Both salons were doing very well. After a couple of years the Gulf War started, the Marines left town and the real estate people left. Some of my hairdressers left for new salons that had been popping up all over town.

All of a sudden I was paying my lease with our credit card. I was finally able to negotiate with the landlord and was able to fully pay off my lease at the end of the 5 years. I then leased a smaller location in the Target Center and completed another five year lease.

Boom and bust economies are hard on small businesses. In 2000 I was done with the salon manage-

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ment business, but I continued to work as an employee stylist until I retired in 2016.

Sometime in the late 1980s, Kaiser sold their remaining interest to one of their board members, Peter Bedford. He retired the Rancho Rose logo and replaced it with his own diamond-shaped logo. He also built the office building at the corner of the 15 Freeway and Rancho California Road with the diamond-patterned roof tiles. There is also a street named Bedford Court. The Rancho Rose was adopted by the Meadowview Home Owners Association.

There were rodeo grounds near where Armstrong Nursery is today. The Tractor Race became very popular, but was scrapped because of insurance, and the loss of a proper location. Kaiser had sponsored a car show that started in the 1970s in the plaza. The city moved it to the Sports Park and then abandoned it. Murrieta picked it up as the popular Father's Day Car Show. The Temecula Rod Run started as a spontaneous gathering by the Over the Hill Gang from Orange County in the mid 1980s.

In the early days there were a lot of active civic clubs doing good things: The Temecula Town Association, Women's Club, Rotary, Lions and Soroptimists. Organizations did fund raising for Pop Warner Football, Little League and so on. The merchants were very generous. I sold Christmas trees for one group, and I sold hot dogs and sodas at high school football games.

A few more things. In 1980 the real estate market was pretty quiet. There were a lot of spec houses for sale. You could drive around Rancho California and see an open house. The price was displayed in big letters on the garage doors. You didn't even need to get out of your car, but if you wanted to tour the house, you could walk in the front door. It was unlocked, with no one there. There were at least three houses I toured in Meadowview, and one in Glen Oaks. The realtors eventually had to abandon this practice when vandals started to steal appliances.

Because this had only been a cattle-grazing area, one of the things you had to be careful of when you bought a property for a home site was whether or not it pass the perk test, or whether the property had a certified perk test. Because there was a limited number of sewer lines, you would have to put in your own septic tank with leach lines extending out. The soil needed to soak up the moisture at a certain rate. A soil engineer would perform a perk test. I remember a few lots in Meadowview that had trouble finding a spot that would pass a perk test.

About a month after we had purchased our De Luz property, we read in the local paper there was going

to be a barn dance at the Tin Barn on Pujol Street. We decided it would be fun to go with our friends who had also decided to move here. One Friday night we donned our new cowboy clothes and headed for Temecula. We had trouble finding the Tin Barn as it was dark. As we pulled into the dirt parking lot our headlights revealed a guy facing away from us. He was urinating on the side of the barn. We thought, "Well, this is Temecula, a different culture".

In the early 1980s, and on until cityhood in 1989 the county pretty much left us alone. If you wanted to sell homemade cookies, sandwiches, or tacos at some event, you just told the event coordinator and set up a booth. There was a couple who sold Indian tacos. They would drag out an old refrigerator that was as rusty as a junk car, but it apparently worked. At the first Tractor Race we attended I ordered a taco. The man asked me if I wanted salsa, I said, "Yes". So he just reached into a bowl of salsa with ungloved hand, picked up a serving of salsa and shook it from his hand over my taco. Oh well, this was Temecula.

After we moved here, many family members and friends visited. We developed a routine. We would take them to Old Town, then we visited two or three model homes, before making a trip to the Old Vail Ranch HQ and the Wolf Store stage stop. We eventually became friendly with the caretaker who lived in the old Foreman's house at the Vail HQ. That was the start of our interest in local history and the start of another long story, and the beginning of another Temecula adventure.

Before I moved to Temecula, I was an antique collector and restorer. I also restored cars. I had two beloved convertibles, one Packard and one Mercedes. After moving I became an antique dealer selling my collections to keep my other business going. The Packard and then the Mercedes also became victims of the need for capitol, but I have never once been sorry I moved here.

Kaiser with its great foresight and organization and later the City of Temecula laid the foundations of a wonderful place to live. I have collected many gems in my life, the best is the one I wear on my arm, and I call her my redhaired angel.



Darell & Rebecca in past July 4th parade in Old Town

* President's Message *

To Members and Friends of the Temecula Valley Historical Society

My Dad broke his hip at the beginning of September. He was experiencing some symptoms of dementia, but not enough to keep him from driving to the golf course on a beautiful late summer day. He slipped in a sand trap and two months later, after surgery, rehab, another fall at home, and back to rehab, the slide into oblivion has been precipitous.

This has been our family's CoVID story. Missing the weddings of three of my nieces, graduations from high school, college, and medical residency, vacations, and all the other things we have not attended this year, none have compared to having my Dad in a skilled nursing facility where no one can visit, except at an outdoor window. My Dad has been confused, disoriented, intensely lonely and isolated.

Knowing historians will look back at these times to see how everyday folks navigated them, we encourage you to write your thoughts down. What has this been like for you? Your family? What has been the hardest? Have there been any silver linings? Who has been lost? What has been lost? How have you coped with work, school, kids, and grandkids?

I read a post that said, "What to say when your friend tells you they are sending their kids to in person school: I know you thought a lot about that and did a lot of research. I'm sure it was a hard decision." The post continued, "What to say when your friend tells you they are not sending their kids to in person school: I know you thought a lot about that and did a lot of research. I'm sure it was a hard decision."

That captured it. We are all doing a daily calculus of acceptable risk. This has been a hard year. As we head into the holidays, we wish you all well with all those decisions. We can't wait to gather together again. Although certainly not the same, the Society has had a very productive year. Our annual meeting, instead of being a November dinner, will be held by Zoom on November 16. We hope you will join us for a summary of this year with the Historical Society and to be introduced to our Board Members.

— *Shari*

**Thank you for the donation
from Julia M. Miller and Krista A. Miller
In Honor of Anne J. Miller, PhD.**

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Sunday, November 1** — Each Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Antique Store is opened and the train will be running, all operated by TVHS at Vail HQ
- Tuesday, November 3** — Every Tuesday 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Farmer's Market at Vail HQ. Come get fresh veggies. Antique Store open, train operating & special events
- Monday, November 9** — 6 p.m. Murrieta Valley Historical Society invites all to watch Zoom presentation of an Evening with Jose Estudillo by Bill Veale. See information on next page to get Zoom log-in info.
- Wednesday, November 11** — *Veteran's Day*
Give favorite Vet a hug, and thank for their service.
- Saturday, November 14** — Vintage Soul Flea Market. Opens 10 a.m. at Vail HQ. Train operating.
- Sunday, November 15** — Vintage Soul Flea Market. Opens 10 a.m. at Vail HQ. Train operating.
- Sunday, November 22** — SoCal vendors 11—6 p.m. At Vail HQ.
- Saturday, November 28** — Small Business Saturday, At Vail HQ.

SHOOTING AT TEMECULA

Justice Welty and R. Hathaway
Try to Perforate Each Other

Word was received here Tuesday that Justice Welty and R. Hathaway, two worthy citizens of Temecula, indulged in a little shooting practice Monday night, about 11 o'clock. Mr. Hathaway opened the festivities, and his honor responded in a fitting manner, but all the shots went wild and nobody was hurt.

The cause of the trouble is not known, but it is presumed that the gentlemen had not yet recovered from the Christmas celebration and its bright red liquor accompaniment that are somewhat in vogue at Temecula.

Both the bad marksmen were arrested Tuesday and arraigned at Murrieta.

*(Reprint from the Riverside Independent Enterprise,
January 1, 1898)*

Membership News

Thank you for renewing your membership:

*Perry Doubt
Dale Garcia
Phil & Connie Harris
John & Sharon Harrison
Mindy Johnson
Mahlon Wilkinson Lawton
Vernette Mackley
Dennis & Karen Sterner
David & Karen Strauss*

Presentation Notice . . .

Murrieta Valley Historical Society Presents: An Evening with José Estudillo

Time: Monday, November 9, 2020 06:00 PM

Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Bill Veale

*a member of the "Notable Men and Women of Temecula,"
will portray José Estudillo, by ZOOM.*

José Estudillo was an early settler in the San Jacinto Valley. He was a husband and father of twelve children. He was an Amansador (horse trainer), rancher, and later became a politician.

*To watch the presentation, please download the ZOOM app,
and then click on the link below to join the meeting.*

Join Zoom Meeting Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84914889385?pwd=YmZGaTlJbk5GWmtxVzkrK3g0QnJOQT09>



Books Needed . . .

We need books for the Little Library at Vail HQ. It is so gratifying to see the children playing on the grass or reaching for a book at Vail HQ, instead of focusing on hand-held electronic devices. Since the beginning of COVID, most of the used bookstores are closed so we have a limited supply of refills for the Little Library when the books are taken.

Do you have some gathering dust at home?

We prefer stocking the Little Library with children's books to keep them reading, but we also welcome durable books oriented to older readers.

Books may be placed in the Little Library anytime or handed to our volunteers at the History Center or Antique Store, or even left at the door to the Antique Store when it is not open.

The Little Library is located in front of the white picket fence between Vail Pizzeria and The Craft House.

Thank you!

100 Years Ago in Temecula

Selected items from Lake Elsinore Valley Press, Temecula Gossip Column – November 1920

November 5, 1920 by Mrs. V. B. Sands

Mrs. Marcus E. Barnett was called to Los Angeles last Wednesday on account of the death of her brother.

Messrs. Friedemann, Smith and Walters, were hunting early Sunday morning.

The Whist Club met at the home of George Burnham last Wednesday evening. Miss Bessie Escallier made the highest score of the ladies and received a beautiful box of stationary. Mr. Edward C. Greenfield was the lucky gentleman and received a pocketknife. At a late hour dainty refreshments were served after which the carpets were rolled up and an hour of dancing was enjoyed.

Mr. Jacques Escallier, who has been in Los Angeles for several months under a specialist's care is home again much improved.

Higgins has a new Ford sedan.

Ole E. Larsen left Tuesday for Spokane, Washington, his place of business being in charge of Orville Meeks during his absence.

Rather Bros. of Hemet is loading four cars of wheat here this week.

The rainfall Saturday and early Sunday morning amounted to about an inch.

Quite a number of young folks motored to Elsinore Saturday evening to attend the American Legion dance. Among the number were Mr. and Mrs. William M. Friedemann, the Misses Grace Greenfield and Ethel Walters and Messrs. Joe and Dan Cantarini.

Messrs. Edward C. Greenfield, Alex J. Escallier and Henry Gray were hunting Sunday.

November 12, 1920 by Mrs. V. B. Sands

There were thirty boys and girls of the Union School who were neither absent nor tardy last month. They are as follows: Barney Roripaugh, Albert Escallier, Ralph Barnett, Louis Escallier, Bruce Clogston, Frances Warner, Annie Marruffo, James Freeman, Edward Escallier, Dorothy Clogston, Mary Roripaugh, William Banks, Albert Ceas, Emilie Ceas, Aileen Duncan, Robert Duncan, Chester Barnett, Billy Roripaugh, Nathalie Crouch, Clora Marruffo, Ramaldo Marruffo, James Arviso, Harry Helms, Gilbert Helms, Harvey Freeman, Albert Barcello, Maxie Banks, Joe Marruffo, Paul Marruffo, Petra Marruffo.

The Whist Club met at the home of Mrs. William T. Barton Wednesday evening. Edward C. Greenfield and Mrs. Frank A. Hall made the highest scores. Dainty refreshments were served by the hostess at a late hour.

Master Louis Roripaugh was thrown from a horse last Sunday. His leg was badly cut. He is still confined to his room but doing nicely.

Sawday and Moore of the Warner Ranch received eighteen cars of feeder cattle from Arizona Tuesday.

The Santa Fe is putting in a 150-foot extension to the present ore-loading track.

November 19, 1920 by Mrs. V. B. Sands

Joe Nichols received a large car of cattle from Utah Wednesday and is expecting several more within the next week or so.

L. A. Ernest has sold his ranch and will move his family to Corona.

Sawday and Moore received ten more cars of cattle from Arizona, Sunday.

Effective November 14th, we will have combined passenger and freight service between here and Perris, leaving 6:30 a.m. and returning at 4:30 p.m. instead of 4 o'clock. This train will make the same connection as heretofore.

Henry Gray went to San Diego Monday to buy a new ten-ton Federal truck.

Mr. and Mrs. Van Slyke of San Bernardino were this weekend guests of Mr. and Mrs. William M. Friedemann. Mr. Friedemann and Mr. Van Slyke were quail hunting Sunday morning and brought home the limit.

William H. Haynes has taken the passenger run out of San Jacinto and will move his family there. Mr. and Mrs. Haynes have resided here for the past 25 years and have made many friends who will miss them.

Albert F. Nienke has been appointed chairman of the school board to take the place made vacant by the resignation of Vance B. Sands. We feel sure Mr. Nienke will preside well. The board met last Monday evening and had quite a number of things to discuss, as it was the first meeting since the opening of the school.

The Christmas fund is swelling rapidly, so far \$51.50 having been donated and the other district was not able to get the amount of their donation in time for this writing.

November 26, 1920 by Mrs. V. B. Sands

Mrs. Alfred Knott gave a surprise party for her husband last Friday evening. A number of young folks from Murrieta were among the guests. Ye old time games were played during the evening and at a late hour dainty refreshments were served.

Mr. and Mrs. George A. Burnham motored to Escondido Sunday to get their daughter, Miss Ethel, who has been visiting there for the past three weeks.

Messrs. Escallier, Barton, Friedemann, Sands, Ben Barnett and Gray attended Masonic lodge at Elsinore last Thursday evening. Mr. Gray was raised to the sublime degree of Master Mason.

The Whist Club met with Miss Serena Cantarini last Wednesday evening. Frank A. Hall and Mrs. Vance B. Sands made the highest scores. Dainty and delicious refreshments were served by the hostess.

There were 37 car loads of Lapidolite ore left here for the east last month and if the weather permits there will be a much greater output this month than last.