

# TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER



Wolf Store

February 2021  
Volume 21 Issue 2

*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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*Farnbach Homestead residence in 1945*

## Homesteading in Southern California

Contributed by Rebecca Marshall Farnbach

President Abraham Lincoln signed the 1862 Homestead Act to give up to 160 acres of public lands or lands owned by the government to someone who would “prove it up”, meaning to improve it, within five years of filing a claim on the property. The requirements were to build a house of at least 12 feet by 14 feet and to continuously live on the property. From the date the Homestead Act was signed until it was repealed in 1934, over 70 million acres were acquired.

In our area Amos Kolb took up a 160-acre homestead just east of the Dripping Springs Ranch in 1895 and supported his family with fruit trees and a garden. His homestead cabin is still standing in what used to be Tony Tobin’s Woodchuck campgrounds, a property now owned by Korean nuns.

Also, the nearby Dripping Springs Ranch just southeast of Vail Lake was homesteaded by Ramon Manzanedo. They received title on the property on August 17, 1903.

Gus and Leaneore Hindorff came by train from Iowa to file on land in Rainbow, where the southbound truck weigh station is now. Gus died in 1889, but Leaneore Hindorff stayed on the land, made the required improvements, and received title to the property herself.

My husband Darell Farnbach lived for several years of his childhood on a homestead filed on by his grandparents. Darell’s mother Alberta Cash Farnbach wrote how her parents and her future in-laws homesteaded land together in the Wrightwood area.

I think you will enjoy the story:

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# Homesteading in Southern California

I was born on February 18, 1910 in Los Angeles.

My mother came down with the flu epidemic and almost died. Oh, how happy we all were when she recovered. I also remember Uncle Steve coming home from the war at about that time.

The doctor told Mama she should move out of the city for her health. She found an ad in the newspaper for piece of property to homestead in the mountains in the Mt. Baldy Range of the Angeles National Forest on the desert side.

Our first trip to the mountain property on Big John Flats was about 1919. This was beginning of summer vacation in the mountains while my folks proved up on the 80 acres they filed on. Daddy had a Ford truck Model T. We loaded it up and started. We got as far as the Newhall Tunnel, where we had to unload and take half the load up and then return for the rest. Then we got as far as Bouquet Canyon where we had to do more unpacking and carrying half a load. The hills were too steep for the fully loaded truck.

The next day we arrived in the small settlement called Little Rock and the following day we arrived at the bottom of a canyon called the Blue Jay Cut Off of Dead Man's Canyon. (It is called Largo Vista Canyon today). We had to walk up the canyon carrying what we could. The first load up was carried in a wagon with a pair of mules. The canyon always washed out in the wintertime and was only wide enough for a trail, not a wagon road.

Our mule Jenny was a wonderful little animal. She carried hundreds of pounds of supplies up that canyon. Later we got a white horse we named Nell, but she was tall and hard to load. Nell would scrape off the load if you didn't watch her.

We were always eager to go up to the mountains. Mama got lessons from the school and I had to study. I never missed a grade. Those months in the mountains were rugged but healthy for us all.

We had many memorable experiences due to weather conditions and dangers on the trail. One year we went up at a different time than usual. It had something to do with the amount of time a homesteader had to spend at the place to "prove it up" and get a deed.

It was snowing as we started on the trail. My hair hanging against my cheeks got wet and froze and felt awful. I did not like it and I cried about it. We arrived at the cabin and built a fire after dislodging all the earth creatures that had taken up squatters' rights while we were gone. That night it snowed about nearly two feet deep.

Daddy had to get back to work. Mama begged him to stay, but he left the next morning. He left our place walking. In some places snow had drifted waist deep. He made it into the desert where the snow was about 18 inches deep. He plodded the six miles to our

nearest neighbors, John and Maud Miller and fell at their gate. Mrs. Miller looked out their window and saw a lump in the road. She said to her husband, "Old Man, go see what that is out in the road." It was Daddy. They got him in the house and got him warmed up and fed. When he was able to travel, the Millers took him into town where he came down with pneumonia and almost died.

Because we were so isolated, we didn't know what had happened to Daddy. One day after the snow was gone, our Uncle Melbourn came with our grandmother and told us the story. Mama went back to the city to take care of daddy. My father was sick with pneumonia and it was nip and tuck whether he would live. Our grandmother stayed with us kids in the mountains. We had to stay on the property to make our deed from government legal.

Another time Uncle Mel came up, after we had a terrible flood down Big Rock Creek. He could not get across with his car, so he was helping people get through the water. There was a family trying to get home from the west side of the creek to the east. He made a deal with them. He helped the mother and children get across and then loaned them his car. He took their car and went back to L.A. Later, when the road was passable again, they exchanged cars. This was in the 1920s.

One time some of us kids went down the canyon without any adults. Our burro Jenny shied away from a wall. We found a small rattler there, so we went around him very carefully. Mama and Dad always told us not to let a rattler get away because we might run into him again. They told us never to step on a dark spot at night because it could be a snake. We were told to always be alert when walking out in the brush. I guess it paid off. We never got bit by a rattler.

Once, my mother decided she wanted to render some snake oil. She shot the snake in the head. I skinned the snake and took a picture of it, then Mother cut it up and put it in the oven. It smelled just like fresh bacon frying. We usually killed about seven rattlers every summer when we were up there.

We lost our dog Tippy one summer when she got bit by a rattlesnake. The dog ran into the space under the house and got bit by a snake there. Mama took her little pistol, and while laying on her stomach on the floor, she shot the snake. Mama went to the swamp in front of the house to get mud. She cut open the wound with a razor blade and then slathered the wound with mud. After a couple weeks Tippy got better, but she was never the same. When Tippy died a while later, Daddy told us not to cry. He said animals do not live as long as we do, and we must let them go. He said we would have others. And we did.

On one trip up there, Daddy brought Mrs. Arilla Farnbach and her fourteen-year-old son Gerald. Daddy had trouble with the truck between the Millers and the canyon trail. Mother, my brother Oliver and I went down to meet them. Daddy sent Gerald to the Millers for gas. Daddy told me to go back and walk with Gerald. I didn't want to, but Mama insisted, and I went.

Gerald's father worked as a conductor for my father on the Los Angeles Railway Streetcars. The Farnbachs were

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## Homesteading in Southern California

from Kampsville, Illinois and owned property on Eagle Rock Boulevard in Los Angeles. Eventually, the Farnbachs helped my folks prove up on the homestead and for that my folks deeded to them twenty acres of the east end of the eighty acres. Joe and Arilla built a cabin, hand-dug a well, and had their twenty acres stepped off.

Mama decided to do something about our trail that was too steep and always washed out in the winter. She decided we would work on it. Mama scouted a trail from the east end of the property to Big Pines.

Gerald's dad and my dad bought pair mules. We worked the mules to make the trail wide enough for a car. The woman who owned the property east of us donated money for the project, but Joe Farnbach, Gerald, and Daddy did most of the work. It was longer than the original trail, but after the first 200 feet it was not so hard because it went around the side of the mountain instead of up the canyon.

We had a buggy, so I took the one mule and took the buggy around and brought it in the makeshift road. I remember the mule being used to working double did not like the idea of working alone, so I had quite a time. Finally, the road was good enough for Gerald and his dad to bring in a stripped down Model T. They had a 2 X 4 to balance it on the sides of the hill, so the car would not tip over. Joe sat on the 2 X 4 that stuck out on uphill side.

My dad dug a well and put up a windmill. He built a two-room cabin and a shed. We made a breast collar for our mule Jenny so she and I could haul sand from wherever we could find good sand for the cement that Daddy put into the walls of the well.

The well was never finished, and the cherry and apple trees died for want of water. One apple tree survived and is still there as sort of a memorial to the hard work of my Mother, Father, and the Farnbachs.

I remember Mrs. Miller was very ill one summer so Mama went down to take care of her. By this time, I was very much in love with Gerald. I remember him coming up and then he had to go back to the city. I went down the canyon and sat in his car and talked until dark. The moon came up and Gerald left. I had to walk up the canyon in the dark.

Relatives came to visit and their young son and dog got lost. We hunted all day for them. Finally, they found him. There was snow on the ground and Mama followed his tracks. The dog had stayed with him. The next day they saw mountain lion tracks that had followed them.

In 1924 I went to High School in Los Angeles. Gerald was already there. His mother wanted him to go to Bible School. She and Gerald had joined the Four Square Church of Aimee Semple McPherson. Gerald quit High School in 11<sup>th</sup> grade and went

to Bible School. I went with a few boys to the show and skating but that's all. After Gerald graduated from Life Bible School and graduated as a minister, he and a friend left to preach around country just before I graduated from High School.

Gerald spent almost a year in Nebraska and we corresponded. I was attending Aimee Semple McPherson's Angeles Temple and went to Life Bible College for one semester. I took a short course in telegraphy and met a cute boy. We walked to the show and when the lights came on at Intermission my mother was sitting three rows behind us!

My friend Mildred Berger went to Angeles Temple, too. Her boyfriend gave her a ring about same time Gerald sent me a ring from Nebraska, so we decided to have a double wedding at Angeles Temple on Thanksgiving, Nov. 28, 1929. The evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson herself officiated for our ceremony.

Gerald and I drove an old Maxwell touring car to the mountains and spent our honeymoon there.

That is all Alberta wrote about the mountains. She and Gerald lived in the Los Angeles for many years, but always returned to the Homestead on Big John Flats. Alberta's parents sold their acres and the older Farnbachs gave their twenty acres to Gerald and Alberta.

In the early 1940s Gerald and Alberta took up fulltime residence at Big John Flats with their three children. Gerald commuted to the Lancaster area to work as a machinist for Muroc Air Force Base, now known as Edwards. So Darell Farnbach lived on the homestead in the mountains until he was about five years old.

In 2000 Darell and I made the trip to the homestead with Alberta and Darell's older brother and sister. At age 90, Alberta enjoyed seeing the place while Darell's siblings pointed out things that jogged their memories, like the one remaining apple tree.

Our hosts, a couple of down-home-type folks, built a modern cabin and we enjoyed an afternoon and an evening meal with them. They enjoyed hearing the old stories as they told their own.



Darell Farnbach and older brother Garry in homestead corral with horse barn and milk shed, 1948.

# FEBRUARY HISTORY READING RECOMMENDATIONS

*By Bonnie Martland*

I am writing this article in the interval between the terrible events that transpired on January 6th surrounding the counting of the electoral college votes and President Biden's inauguration. We are in a transition time between one President leaving office and another taking his oath of office; and in February we will celebrate the birthdays of America's two most iconic Presidents, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. The books I am going to recommend are quite relevant, not only to those presidents, but to the times in which we now find ourselves.

The first is *Presidents vs. the Press* by Harold Holzer, a noted Lincoln scholar, and presidential historian; and a Lincoln Forum friend. Holzer notes that in American history, the press has almost functioned as a fourth branch of government, and as Thomas Jefferson said, serves as our first bulwark to defend liberty. Nonetheless, presidents and the press have had a rocky relationship since the very beginning of our republic. "The fake news media is the enemy of the American people," so tweeted President Donald Trump. He may have been the most recent, presidential exasperation with the fourth estate, or as we say today, the media, has a long and storied history in American politics. Presidents convinced of the righteousness of their convictions, and reporters convinced that journalistic vigor is what is needed to keep the nation from danger, have often been at odds. George Washington protested against the "malicious falsehoods and violent abuse" he suffered from the press, and that may have been a contributing factor in his not seeking a third term as president. John Adams enjoyed brawling with press and Andrew Jackson blamed a malicious press article for his wife's early death and a lost election. Some presidents have used the press/media well. Abraham Lincoln had the newspapers publish his speeches, almost like putting out press releases today; and when campaigning wrote articles himself that he delivered to editors. Woodrow Wilson and Teddy Roosevelt worked to open relations with the press, initiating something akin to an early press corps. Franklin Roosevelt used the new media of radio to inform the nation. Much like today, the press in our nation's early decades was blatantly partisan and, in many ways, things seem to have gone full circle. Mr. Holzer notes that the free press may never have faced as great a threat as it does now. But certainly, in other decades and centuries, the press and the public have held the same sentiment.

In homage to Abraham Lincoln's birthday, and President Biden's inauguration, I recommend another excellent book, *Lincoln on the Verge, Thirteen Days to Washington* by Ted Widmer, a Distinguished Lecturer at the University of New York. If you are a train enthusiast, I guar-

antee that you will enjoy *Lincoln on the Verge* very much. The book tells the story of the precarious period between Abraham Lincoln's election in November of 1860, and his inauguration on March 4, 1861. The author's focus is the thirteen-day trip by train that took the president-elect from Springfield, Illinois to Washington D.C. Again, you may be surprised at how closely one period in history mirrors the other. One chapter describes a government in peril as states secede and the president-elect, days away by train, is nearly helpless to intercede. Pro-slavery, pro-secessionist, rioters threaten the capitol while vice-president John Breckenridge is tasked with counting and certifying the votes of the electoral college. The situation was very precarious, indeed, as the government was in the hands of a lame-duck, self-isolating, President Buchanan and a southern sympathizing vice-president. Indeed, John Breckenridge would, within weeks, be a general in the service of the confederate states.

There were threats bandied about that he would take not only the electoral ballots, but all the country's founding documents, before Lincoln's arrival and set up the confederacy as the new United States of America! It begged the question; would the nation's capital even still be a part of the nation by the time Lincoln arrived in the city? And indeed, for those of you who think the 19<sup>th</sup> century may have been a kinder, gentler time, the profane invectives aimed at the president-elect and his supporters were almost word for word those tweeted out, yelled out etc. on January 6, 2021 and the days following.

As Lincoln traveled closer to the capitol, he grew closer to the people as well. On Washington's birthday, at Independence Hall in Philadelphia, Lincoln gave a beautifully meaningful speech and hoisted a new American flag above the seat of liberty. A dark-horse candidate, relatively unknown, people were nevertheless drawn to him; many traveling miles in country wagons to see him, or at least to glimpse his train. People were ready for the country to get on with things, move forward. Crushed and overwhelmed by crowds to a point of danger, mostly by over-zealous supporters and the curious; he nonetheless had to navigate volumes of profane hate mail, physical danger, and assassination attempts to reach the capital and his inauguration. In the first few days of his trip, he encountered incendiaries placed inside a carpet bag and secreted onto his train, obstacles placed on the tracks meant to derail the locomotive, and unprincipled handlers. However, the president-elect remained unflappable. As he journeyed eastward the uncouth, rustic, western politician journeyed closer and closer to becoming a President. He saw, he touched, he connected with the people, the cities and the vast landscape, and he internalized the tenor and vibrancy of the United States. He absorbed it all as he moved toward the nation's capital, and he evolved, and he became tempered. He became steeled to the task ahead.

# President's Message

February, 2021

Welcome to February. That means the last time we saw one another face to face was a year ago, when we had our last presentation together. We were innocents then.

However, the work of the Historical Society continues. Our website is well maintained by Roger Cude'. It is a treasure trove of local history, indexed and easily searched. This window to the world brings us interesting queries about local structures and events, as well as copies of newly discovered information. One of those incredible pieces of documentation came to us a year ago, and set our Secretary, Past President, and newsletter editor Dick Fox, on a new project to transcribe hand written documents from an 1886 Coroner's Inquest and complete a story we knew very little about.

The information came from college student, Lindsey Jauregui, who stumbled upon the documents while researching old railroad right-of-ways. She said the Riverside County Transportation Commission had been talking about "rebuilding at least a portion of the former line (especially between South Corona & Elsinore), but the old Right-Of-Way has been blocked by residential construction in Murrieta. It is a corridor that would be very important for Metrolink passenger service, with maybe even some limited BNSF freight . . ."

Study of local histories, reveals our roads are built on roads used for hundreds of years. The quickest, easiest path remains the quickest, easiest path. So next time you are driving down Temecula Parkway, know you are following the path of the Pechanga Nation, the Butterfield Stagecoach, the 1846 Mormon Battalion, and many others.

Hopefully you caught Dick's presentation. If not, you can find it archived on our website or Facebook page.

Take care and carry on –

*Shari*

## Temecula Telephone Exchange to Have New Switchboard

*(This is reprint of article that appeared in the Elsinore Leader Press, April 25, 1946)*

A new thirty-line switchboard is to be installed at the Temecula Exchange of the California Water and Telephone Company within two weeks, according to Fred Cope, area manager.

The board will be a manual, common battery type and will be installed in the Swanguan Café. It will replace one which has become inadequate due to the increased traffic through the exchange, according to Mr. Cope.

## EVENTS CALENDAR

**Tuesday, February 2** — Every Tuesday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Farmer's Market at Vail HQ. Come get fresh veggies.

**Monday, February 22** — 6 p.m. TVHS invites all to watch a Zoom presentation by author and historian Rebecca Farnbach about the colorful history of the building known today as "1909". See article below.

### Colorful History of "1909" Building In Old Town to be Presented

The Temecula Valley Historical Society invites the public to use modern technology to step into the past to access a live zoom program at 6 pm on Monday, February 22. Historian and author Rebecca Farnbach will present photos and stories about the 1909 restaurant and the colorful characters who had businesses there varying from a Wild West saloon to a Lutheran church.

Farnbach, a founding member of the historical society and an advocate for historic preservation, has co-authored six books in the Images of America series. During her presentation on February 22, she will answer the question of which building in Old Town Temecula is the oldest.

To access the zoom presentation, find the link on the homepage of [www.temeculahistoricalsociety.org](http://www.temeculahistoricalsociety.org).

Questions may be directed to Ms. Farnbach at [info@temeculahistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@temeculahistoricalsociety.org) or 951-775-6057.

## Oldster Chronicles

Morris, an 82 year-old man, went to the doctor to get a physical. A few days later, the doctor saw Morris walking down the street with a gorgeous young woman on his arm.

A couple of days later, the doctor spoke to Morris and said, 'You're really doing great, aren't you?'

Morris replied, 'Just doing what you said, Doc: 'Get a hot mamma and be cheerful.'

The doctor said, 'I didn't say that . . . I said, 'You've got a heart murmur; be careful.'

### Membership News

**Thank you for your renewal:**

**Dave Wilson**

**Thank you for your donation:**

**Roger and Lynn Cudé**

# 100 Years Ago in Temecula

Selected items from Lake Elsinore Valley Press, Temecula Gossip Column — February 1921

**February 11, 1921**

**By Mrs. V. B. Sands**

O.E. Larson and sister, Mrs. Minnie Meeks, motored to San Bernardino Monday. Mrs. Meeks will remain for a week visiting friends.

Mrs. W. T. Barton entertained the Whist Club Wednesday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. E. B. Miller, who have been guests of Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Bender, have returned to their home in Los Angeles.

A.F. Nienke is moving his lumber yard across the river by the depot and is erecting an office building and lumber sheds. Henry Gray has bought his old site and will build a garage for his personal use this spring.

Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Burnham of San Francisco were guests at the home of G.A. Burnham a few days last week.

Hampton Watts of Los Angeles was the weekend guest at the home of A.F. Nienke.

Mr. and Mrs. V. B. Sands entertained Mr. Harry Mann and Mrs. Grace Reed and daughter, Sylvia of Perris, Sunday.

Mrs. W.H. Haynes of San Jacinto is here for a week or two and is having some work done on the home place. Mr. Haynes was here over Sunday.

McSweeney brothers of Los Angeles have bought the Crew lease on the Pauba ranch and expect to plant a greater acreage to potatoes.

A. Escallier and W. Friedemann attended Masonic lodge at Elsinore last Thursday evening.

E.F. Carmichael, assistant master mechanic of the Pauba ranch, has moved his family to Los Angeles, where he will have a much better position.

**February 18, 1921**

**By Mrs. V. B. Sands**

There was a holiday at the school Tuesday so that the teachers could attend the conference held at Elsinore by Miss Winifred Van Hagen.

W.H. Haynes motored from San Jacinto Sunday. Mrs. Haynes returned with him after spending a couple of weeks at their home here.

Dr. Froom and family are again domiciled at the hotel.

Mr. and Mrs. F.H. Hanson of Emporia, Kansas, were visitors here Monday.

Mrs. Harry Walters and daughter, Peggy, are visitors at the home of her sister at San Diego.

The pupils of the Union school who were neither absent nor tardy last month are as follows: Albert Ceas, Emilie Ceas, Pauline Smith, Nathalie Crouch, Ignacio Garcia, Rubert Duncan, Albert Escallier, Ralph Barnett, Louis Roripaugh, Richard Barnett, Bruce Clogston, Frances Warner, Edward Escallier, Leo Roripaugh, Edward Sands, William Banks and Dorothy Clogston.

W.T. Barton and family motored to Oceanside Sunday.

Mrs. Minnie Meeks has returned from San Bernardino where she has been visiting the past week.

Miss Ethel Burnham entertained at dinner Sunday, covers were laid for twelve. The guests were friends from Escondido.

E.C. Greenfield was a business visitor in Los Angeles Friday and Saturday.

Mrs. W.T. Barton and daughter, Miss Ethel, was shopping in San Bernardino Friday.

H.R. Price and family and E. J. Bender and family motored to San Bernardino Friday.

E.J. Bender has purchased a Dort car.

A. Escallier was a Riverside visitor Friday.

A.F. Nienke and family attended church at Murrieta Sunday morning.

The Whist Club met at the home of Mrs. W.T. Barton. The beautiful prizes were won by Miss Billie Friedemann and Mr. Sommerville. Delicious refreshments of tamales, sandwiches and coffee were served by the hostess.

L.A. Ernest and wife motored from Corona Sunday. They were looking over their ranch interests here.

**February 25, 1921**

**By Mrs. V.B. Sands**

Some court house the William S. Hart Company is erecting at Main and Pujol streets. Ten carpenters arrived from Los Angeles last Thursday evening to do the work. The movie company will be here for several days. It is understood this will be William S. Hart's last production.

James Nienke, who is employed in Los Angeles, was home a few days last week on the sick list.

Dr. Froom and family motored to the Murrieta Hot Springs Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Peace, of Rushville, Indiana, are the guests of Mrs. Peace's sister, Mrs. Spivey. They will make their future home in Southern California.

W.T. Barton motored to San Bernardino Sunday to attend the Orange Show.

S.A. Seiple of San Bernardino relieved E.J. Bender Monday as brakeman on the passenger run. Mr. Bender will move his family to San Bernardino.

Mrs. G.A. Burnham was hostess to the Whist club Wednesday evening.

The Misses Ethel Burnham and Elizabeth Nienke spent the weekend with friends at Elsinore.

W.M. Friedemann and family attended the Orange Show at San Bernardino Sunday.

Mrs. W.T. Barton has as her guests her sister and daughter of Los Angeles.

V.B. Sands and family attended the Orange Show at San Bernardino Tuesday.