

TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER



Wolf Store

March 2022
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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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Empire Foreman McFadden, Chappo the cook & his family, and Harry Hefner one of Walter Vail's partners.

Vail's Operated from 1876 - 1928

First Vail Ranch Was in Arizona

(Compiled from Internet Sources)

The first Vail Ranch was in Arizona about 50 miles southeast of Tucson, and is now known as the historic Empire Ranch. It has been a working cattle ranch for 140 years. Its rich history includes successive ownership by two prominent ranching families, two corporations, and finally by the federal government on behalf of the general public.

The Empire Ranch was originally established in the 1860's as a homestead ranch of 160 acres with a flat topped four-room adobe ranch house and adjoining adobe-walled corral. In 1876 the ranch was owned by Edward Nye Fish, a Tucson businessman, when it was acquired for \$2,000 by Walter L. Vail, a native of Liverpool, Nova Scotia, and Plainfield, New Jersey, and Herbert Hislop, an Englishman. John Harvey, an Englishman from Bermuda, joined the partnership a few months later.

Over the next 20 years, as a part of the historic expansion of ranching, railroads, mining and other growth in the West, Vail and various partners expanded the original land holdings to include over 100,000 acres. The Total Wreck silver mine was discovered and developed, adding to ranch prosperity.

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Vail's Operated from 1876 - 1928

First Vail Ranch Was in Arizona

The Ranch House became an extended complex with more than 22-rooms and a number of outbuildings and structures were added. Their original flat earthen roofs were later replaced with wooden gable roofs.

Continuing Empire Ranch operations were overseen by Vail Company foremen until 1913 when William Banning Vail, Walter's third oldest son, took over ranch management. He and his wife Laura Perry Vail, and their three children lived at the ranch until it was sold by Vail Company in 1928.

In 1896, in order to turn his attention more fully to growing corporate holdings in California, Walter Vail moved his family to Los Angeles where he established his corporate headquarters. 1905 saw the establishment of the Vail Ranch in Temecula with an initial purchase of land and the rapid expansion to encompass 87,500 acres. The Temecula operation consisted of two primary areas of cattle grazing; the Santa Rosa Plateau and the Pauba which included most of modern day Temecula.

The Empire Ranch was purchased by the Chiricahua Ranches Company (CRC), and incorporated by three brothers, Henry, Frank and Charles Boice, who were respected ranchers known for their promotion of the Hereford breed of cattle in the Southwest. During their years of ownership, the Boices added many modern conveniences to the Ranch House. Propane, and eventually natural gas, was piped into the house; a large electric walk-in refrigeration unit was installed; plumbing was upgraded and cement stucco was applied to the exterior house walls. During the 1940 and 1950s many Hollywood films were shot at the Empire Ranch and in the vicinity. The Boices hosted numerous film stars, including John Wayne, when *Red River* was filmed at the Empire Ranch.

In 1969, the Boices sold the Empire Ranch to Gulf American Corporation (GAC) which planned to build a large residential community development. GAC contracted with Pancho Boice to continue ranching the Empire Ranch under lease arrangements. However, in 1974 Anamax Mining Company purchased the Empire Ranch from GAC for its water rights and mineral potential. Anamax leased the Empire Ranch to rancher John Donaldson. Neither of the planned corporate enterprises materialized, so that to this day the Empire's lands and ranch headquarters have supported only cattle operations and further remodeling changes to the ranch house and buildings have been minimal. In 1976 the Empire Ranch House was listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

In the 1980s a groundswell of public support developed to preserve the ranch and its natural resources in their pristine condition. In 1988 a series of land exchanges put the property into public ownership under the administration of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), a division of the U.S. Department of Interior. In 2000, the U.S. Congress officially designated these 42,000 acres to be Las Cienegas National Conservation Area (LCNCA).



Harry Hefner was a foreman overseeing the cowhands at the Empire Ranch and later came as foreman to the Vail Ranch in Temecula. After Walter Vail died Hefner managed the Vail Ranch until Mahlon Vail reached adulthood.

President's Message

March, 2022

Having just gotten home after spending 6 days in the hospital where I had plenty of time to reflect on my own overall state of health, I began to also pose questions to myself about the health of the Temecula Valley Historical Society. When we receive notes like the one below, we can reassure ourselves that we are doing things right, and fulfilling a need in our area community. Kudos to all who contribute time and effort to a healthy Notable Men & Women of Temecula group.

Notable Men & Women

TVHS received a \$50 donation and Note from the American Association of University Women. "Thank you to Michele Elling for a fascinating and entertaining presentation of Edna Swanguen. Our members always enjoy the Historical Society's presentations."

— Dick Fox

Don't Forget . . .

History Center Open

Every Sunday

12 to 5 p.m.

Stop by and say hello, share with a neighbor, friend or visitor the wonderful history of Temecula.

Also

Every Tuesday

Farmer's Market

9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Bring the kids and take a ride on the train or the stage coach.

EVENTS CALENDAR

- Every Tuesday** — 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Vail HQ Farmer's Market. Antique store open and train rides for kids. Same schedule every Tuesday.
- Friday, March 4** — 6 to 8 p.m. Herrkooled VW Club meet, 20-30 cars parked on property.
- Sunday, March 6** — 11 s.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday Funday. Family fun, entertainment and vendor market. Antique store open and rides on train or stagecoach available for kids.
- Saturday, March 12** — 3 to 8 p.m. Thistle & Sage Vegan friendly vendors and food, activities and Entertainment.
- Sunday, March 13** — 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday Funday. Family fun, entertainment and vendor market. Antique store open and rides on train or stagecoach available for kids.
- Saturday, March 19** — 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Herrkooled VW club meet up AND mini swap meet. Local VW Club will park their cars on property. Swap meet of Parts / accessories. 15-30 cars expected.
- Sunday, March 20** — 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday Funday. Family fun, entertainment and vendor market. Antique store open and rides on train or stagecoach available for kids.
- Friday, March 25** — 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Starlight Bazaar, local maker's market, live music, and Family entertainment. Antique store open & train rides.
- Sunday, March 27** — 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday Funday. Family fun, entertainment, and vendor Market. Antique store open and train rides for kids. History Center also open.
- Monday, March 28** — 6 p.m. monthlu history presentation, this month IN-PERSON at Little Temecula History Center (the red barn next to Kohl's). Our speaker will be Richard Beck, owner of the historic Hotel Temecula in Old Town. He will tell about his experiences in renovating the historical property. Come to hear a fascinating presentation and to reunite with friends in the society.

Membership News

**Welcome New Member:
Lauren Tapley**

100 Years Ago in Temecula

Selected items from Lake Elsinore Valley Press, Temecula Gossip Column – March 1922

Issue of March 3, 1922

By Mrs. V. B. Sands

O.E. Larson, of Los Angeles, spent the weekend with old friends here.

Mrs. Thompson, Mrs. Andrew and Mrs. Cheney of Murrieta, were calling on Mrs. W.H. Haynes last Wednesday.

Vetsie Cantarini was quite ill last week with the prevailing ailment, la grippe, but is able to be out and around now.

Mrs. H.M. Fisher and family and Frank Fisher, of Los Angeles, and Bill Fisher, of the Monserrate ranch, spent Sunday here with their mother, Mrs. Fisher.

Mrs. A. Cantarini is visiting at the home of her son, John Cantarini, in Riverside.

G.A. Burnham and son have been working overtime taking inventory this week.

The election of the school trustees will be held on March 31st at the school house.

The bad colds and la grippe that seem to be traveling around have stopped here for a while. Quite a number of our citizens are on the sick list this week.

Mrs. Petrie, one of our former teachers, and a friend from San Bernardino, were visiting old friends here last Wednesday.

The Indians played the Ontario "Hot Points" Sunday on the Murrieta Hot Springs diamond and beat them with a score of 8 to 4. There was quite an exciting time when Tano made a homerun with three men on bases.

The teachers and pupils are busy getting ready for the school meet at Wildomar, March 22nd.

S.M. Smith, of Yuma, was here a couple of days this week, loading a car of Alfalfa seed which he purchased from Vail Bros.

E.C. Greenfield and G. Veazy spent the weekend in Los Angeles at the home of Walter Cloetta. Mrs. Greenfield returned with them Sunday evening, after a delightful ten days visit with her daughter, Mrs. Cloetta.

Issue of March 24, 1922

By Mrs. V. B. Sands

The Indians played the Chino ball team on Sunday on the Murrieta Hot Springs diamond. The score was four to one in favor of the Indians.

Mr. and Mrs. W.M. Friedemann and Mr. and Mrs. V.B. Sands attended the Eastern Star Chapter at Elsinore Tuesday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. A. Knott and family, Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Haynes and Miss Domenigoni attended the high school play at Elsinore last Wednesday evening.

Mr. and Mrs. V. B. Sands and son spent the weekend at San Bernardino with Mr. Sands' mother.

Mrs. W.T. Barton was a San Bernardino visitor Friday.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Roripaugh and family and

Ralph Barnett attended the high school play at Corona last Wednesday evening.

The Temecula Indians played the Los Angeles Angels on the Elsinore diamond last Friday and beat them with a score of 5 to 4.

The rain of last Thursday gave the valley another inch, making a total of over 32 inches for the season.

W.H. Crane is again shipping the Lepidolite ore to Wheeling, West Virginia.

Will Vogel has purchased a Chevrolet roadster.

A.F. Nienke has received several car loads of lumber in the past two weeks.

Mrs. W.M. Friedemann attended the O.E.S. social club last Tuesday afternoon. Mrs. Small, of Murrieta, was hostess.

G.A. Burnham and family motored to Los Angeles Sunday and expect to be there several days. Mr. Burnham is buying his spring stock.

March 31, 1922

By Mrs. V. B. Sands

The Temecula ball team played the Riverside Colored Giants at Riverside Sunday, the score being 19 to 8 in Favor of Temecula. Our team is surely keeping up the record they made last summer, the champions of Riverside County.

Ben Higgins and family are domiciled in the Walters cottage. Mr. Higgins is driving a truck for the Murrieta Valley Freight line.

Miss Verna Rail of Murrieta is taking care of Mrs. Vern Spivey and children, who have been quite ill with the flu.

G.A. Burnham has purchased a new Hudson sedan.

John Cantarini returned to his home at Riverside last Thursday. Mrs. Canttarini is visiting at the home of her son, John Cantarini, in Riverside.

Jack Domenigoni and little Jessie Marie Nicolas spent Sunday at Winchester.

Mrs. Linn Smith and children spent the day with Mrs. A. Knott Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. W. T. Barton and O.E. Larsen motored to Oceanside Sunday.

William H. Crane has just returned from a business trip to New York City.

Mr. and Mrs. W.M. Friedemann and son were Riverside visitors Monday.

A.F. Nienke and family motored to Riverside Sunday.

Quite a number of our citizens journeyed to Wildomar last Wednesday to attend the school meet..

Chester Barton, Henry Gray, O.E. Larsen, A. Escallier, A. B. Barnett, W. M. Friedemann, V.B. Sands and G. Veazy attended Masonic lodge last Thursday evening at Elsinore.