

# TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## NEWSLETTER

October 2004 Vol 4 Issue 10

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### LEGENDS NAMED LOUIS AND LEVERNE

In most towns there is a central park or a gathering place where an ancient tree stands or perhaps the statue of a founding father, a local resident who made good, or a famous person now long dead.

Oftentimes little is written of these persons in their lifetime, but at some point the nuances of their character, their achievements, and their contributions will gain attention.

To family and friends, Louis Roripaugh was always "legendary". Physically fit, hard-working, a family man and cowboy extraordinaire, he was an early resident of Temecula Valley.

So too, Leverne Parker was a woman of special and diverse talents. Her love of Temecula endured til her recent death. She, and husband Horace, created a dynamic family heritage in this valley. Their writings and paintings are treasures of great historical significance, and through their labors of love those who may never have known them personally, will certainly come to know them because of their dynamic and enduring cultural legacy.

See inside for biographical sketches on the legendary Louis, and the incomparable Leverne.

[www.temeculavalleyhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.temeculavalleyhistoricalsociety.com)  
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### *President's Corner*

At our last Board meeting we approved the submission of a Letter of Inquiry to the Roripaugh Family Foundation for a grant to produce a television/DVD program documenting the history of Temecula. This production would be distributed to the Temecula Museum, Temecula Library, Temecula schools and used by the Historical Society in its outreach effort to inform the citizens of Temecula of our rich heritage. We also have finished our application to the City of Temecula for additional money for the completion of the Wolf Monument project and to purchase plaques and print additional brochures for the walking tour of Old Town. The brochures, which are available at many local merchants sites have become very popular. It has been a long time since Bob and Bea Taylor were distributing maps of Old Town.

During the Board meeting we also conducted a brain-storming session to generate a list of ideas that the Historical Society might want to become involved with in the future. The list that we developed appears elsewhere in this Newsletter. At our next meeting on October 4th we will prioritize this list, plus any ideas that you may have. Please give me a call at (951) 302-9536 if you have an idea that you would like us to consider.

During October members of the Society will be receiving ballots to elect four members of the Board. Don't forget to mark November 12th on your calendar as the date of the Annual Meeting, at which time we will install newly elected Board members. It will be held at the Community Center on Pujol. Audrey Cilurzo will be chairing the event and she is well known for her parties so we should have a great time. This year the Board voted to serve wine with the meal.

*Jimmy Moore*

## LEVERNE PARKER, 1914 - 2004

*A long life, a loving family, and always a lovely lady, Leverne moved to Temecula in 1960. As remembered by her daughters, Judy Hancock and Pat \_\_\_\_\_, we now know what fortitude, strength of character, and wealth of learning she leaves. A "collector of the human record" is one phrase that comes to mind when visiting her home, for it is filled to the rafters with Temecula's history. It's a home that breaths of achievement, and at the same time announces, "Here, here is where the noteworthy places, people and events of a lifetime are kept ... in book, in furnishings, and in time." Thanks to Pat and Judy for the background information they provided, and the chance to step into Leverne's past for just a little while.*

In the grand scale of the universe, the lifetime of any one person may be viewed as a blip in the milkyway. It is the brightness of the blip, its duration and the orbit it travels that we notice. Leverne Parker didn't think of herself in terms of brightness, but her endurance, her adventures, and her talent for recording what her heart and eyes saw, enlighten us now and will for decades to come.

In a collection of her childhood memories, Leverne relates how her Dad, Harvey S. Wagner, left the family farm in Iowa and headed to Chicago to work as ticket agent for the railroad. Transferred to the rail office in Des Moines, Harvey met Hazel Carey Kline and they became engaged. The discovery of gold in Nevada was lure enough to draw Harvey and his three brothers out west. They filed a claim, and a short time later, on June 19, 1907, Hazel joined them. Harvey met her at the train station with "a ring made of gold he had mined, a marriage certificate, and a preacher." A real neat package!

The first test of their joint mettle came on the heels of their marriage when the contractor hired to build their house skipped town leaving the newlyweds with lumber bills and a lien against their home. Their ingenuity led them to a spot in the desert where they built a structure like many other structures of the time -- a wooden platform with a tent atop it. With make-do furniture, they managed to create a "home" by expanding their living space with another platform and tent which they used for a kitchen.

Their second test came when a strong desert wind ripped through their site, overturning the kitchen and all its contents. Everything was carefully gathered up, as nothing should be wasted, and life carried on. Enough water was hauled by wagon from a fresh water spring, and with an entrepreneurial flair, the excess was sold for \$.75 cents a barrel.

As word of a new strike reached them, they sold this claim and moved to Rawhide, Nevada. They built a rock house from stones gathered at the site, however, the new claim was no better than the last, so Harvey decided to return to work for the railroad. The job was in Portland, Oregon, and the story of how the couple managed to make the move with its humorous but almost hopeless hurdles is another example of human ingenuity.

Portland is where Leverne's life began in 1914. Moves were made from Portland, to Spokane, to Montana, and a new life in ranching began with plenty of attendant hardships that shaped the day-to-day childhood for Leverne and her brother Phil. In her own words, Leverne recalled these times as "wonderful"; she felt the years in Montana were years of challenge sheparding in new solutions. You can't outrun trouble, but you can outsmart it. These were the days that forged Leverne's character. And with amazing detail, the events of childhood have been captured in her self-illustrated biography titled, Treasured Memories of My Childhood in Montana, 1918 - 1928.

After a series of crop losses due to an unbroken cycle of drought-hail-grasshopper infestation, the family headed to California in a camper built on the bed of a Chevie truck. The journey proved a delightful experience, with lots of stops to visit relatives along the way. The journey ended in Elsinore, California, in 1928, where the Stewart Ranch was leased and the family grew alfalfa and raised pigs.

Leverne attended Elsinore High School. Another student, Horace Parker, was an athlete and serious student who seemed to have solid goals and a winsome personality. After graduating Elsinore High School in 1933, Leverne attended beautician's college in Riverside. Horace had a car and Leverne sometimes hitched a ride from Riverside to Temecula or Elsinore to visit family. In 1934 she opened Leverne's Beauty Parlor on Lake Elsinore's Main Street. It was a class-act parlor, and she was a successful business woman from 1934 to 1936, with gold script lettering on the shop's windows and on the tire cover of her automobile boldly proclaiming the parlor's Elsinore, California, location.

In 1936, the spunky but quiet Leverne and Horace the high school "jock" were married. Horace became a teacher and taught school in Newport Harbor until 1944. During this time the Parkers lived on Balboa Island. Horace taught the agriculture and chemistry classes.



## LEVERNE PARKER, 1914 - 2004

Daughter Pat was born in 1940, and daughter Judy was born in 1943. Horace now felt called to go back to school to get a degree in veterinary science, so the family moved to Pullman, Washington. With his DVM completed, Horace and Leverne returned to Costa Mesa in 1946 and purchased a dairy barn which they converted into an animal hospital. The first "patients" were large animals from the dairies and farms in the area.

From the beginning it was a "family" business, and Leverne doubled as office staff, veterinarian assistant and dog groomer when needed. Judy recalled starting kindergarten in 1948 at a school in Corona del Mar, and after school she helped her mom and sister grooming the dogs. At the end of World War II, the areas around Newport Beach, Costa Mesa, and Santa Ana were changing rapidly, and so did the nature of the business; now the focus was turned almost exclusively to the care of small animals. Pat and Judy always had the love and warmth of their parents attention, and when they could plan time away from the business, their jaunts usually brought them to Temecula. They often stayed with family in Elsinore.

"Pop", as the girls called Horace, was friend and good buddy of Billy Friedeman. The Friedeman family were butchers, who eventually opened the Friedeman Meat Market in Elsinore, later they owned the slaughterhouse and meat market on Front Street in Temecula. A trip to Temecula always meant visits with Billy Friedeman. Smoked meats, especially smoked hams, were a very popular item of the meat market. Customers drove to Temecula from nearby counties just to get their fresh cuts and smoked meats "direct" from the butcher. And the secret ingredient of the smoking was the deadfall oak that was gathered on the Vail Ranch. What fun for two little girls to scavenge among the rangeland and oak stands to gather this deadfall! Their playground included the slaughter house, old houses dotting the hillsides, wildflowers and the Pico de Gallo festivities of the Mexican cowboys south of town.

Another special friend of the Parkers was "Aunt" Bessie Barnett (Ysabel), Malcolm's grandmother. Aunt Bessie's place was along the banks of the Murrieta creek about where the Stater Bros market is now on Jefferson Avenue. Bessie had a pond stocked with bass and the girls would fish with a stick, a string, and a hook. Twas nothin' to catch a big bass in Bessie's pond.

Karl Bennis was another resident Horace was fond of talking with. Karl was a former employee of a sugar refining company. He'd inhaled sugar, which over a period of time led to health problems that seemed to be

eased with dryer climates and open air. He owned Dripping Springs and kept two mules he'd trained to do little things such as ring bells. Midnight and Oscar were more "spirited" than some mules, Midnight being half race horse. And a race developed between Karl's mules and the horses of local cowboys. The mules held up well with Karl holding onto one mule's tail, ending the race course so far ahead of the nearest contender that he had a fire going and coffee brewing as late finishers arrived! Do you believe that? Well, some swear to its truth!

The trips to Temecula were notable for other reasons. One of Horace's other talents was journalism. He started researching and writing about the tin mines in these parts, and of course, anything else that interested him. He made visits to and spent long hours in discussion with nearby cowhands, Indians, and town residents. Leverne and the girls went everywhere Horace did, Leverne usually painting or sketching for hours. She completed a series of 21 watercolors of the old Indian Chapels that are part of the California Mission system. Eventually, the original paintings were donated to the Sherman Library in Newport Beach/Corona del Mar.

On yet other trips to Temecula, the family trekked the Anza/Borrego Desert in a 4-wheel drive Jeep named "Little Joe". Karl Bennis went along on these trips, as did Leverne. At these times, the threesome observed the plants and animals that formed the natural history "fabric" of desert habitats. The information gathered was compiled as the [Anza/Borrego Desert Guide Book](#), and included maps and illustrations.

Still living on Balboa Island, all of the stories and research that Horace gathered of this area were used as fodder for a column he wrote from 1950 to 1957 in a local newspaper. The column was called The Brush Country Journal; copies are now archived at the Sherman Library.

Though busy with her roles as veterinary assistant, homemaker and mother, Leverne went to work for a Newport Beach entrepreneur named Carl Rehnberg. Carl devised a way to sell alfalfa in capsules. He marketed this natural product as a vitamin and health aid. Leverne was his first employee and worked filling capsules and running the office. The company was Nutralite, now a major producer and packager of vitamins with several thousand employees and distributors nationwide. The corporate headquarters are located near Corona. (At a special event in September of 1997, the company honored Leverne, picking her up in a limo, giving her a tour of the plant, and introducing her to all the

*continued next page ....*

## LEVERNE PARKER, 1914 - 2004

department heads. What a change from the days of the one-woman operation in Newport Beach!)

On one occasion in the late 1950s after a visit to the Temecula Cemetery, Horace announced he wanted to be buried in Temecula. "Well", he was told by Cheater Escalier, "you can't be buried here because you don't own land here." With this as his compelling reason, Horace quickly bought 10 lots for \$100 each to insure his credentials as a Temeculean were established. He also offered, should it ever become available, to buy the old Welty Hotel. Soon the hotel was on the market and the Parkers acquired it lock, stock and barrel in 1960. Structural and interior upgrades were required to bring the building to fire code, and Leverage and the girls painted walls and renovated furnishings. Other than that, the hotel remains today as it was from 1926 through 1960, with the architecture and ambiance of its glory days at the turn of the last century.

The hotel came with 30 cats and a 24-year-old turkey named "Luscious Lulu." In time, these tenants were gone. Still, Judy and Pat chuckle at the thought of the built-in menagerie that a family in the veterinary business would acquire as unlikely boarders!

Never still for long, Horace now developed Paisano Press, a publishing and distributing company, with Leverage as the chief "employee" organizing the work, and the girls, now in their teens, as the chief helpers. In the beginning, the family collated pages and spiral bound all the books themselves.

It was during the 1960s that Governor Ronald Reagan appointed Horace to the State Parks Commission. As a Commissioner, Horace worked to promote a preservation and reproduction program for the California Condor -- a large carrion-eating bird whose populations were seriously threatened. Earlier work in Anza/Borrego Desert had uncovered the State's use of a highly toxic chemical to "control" rodent and other animal populations. This practice however had unintended consequences, chief among them being that as small animals died, they were taken up in the food chain as food for other species which in turn became poisoned and died. In nature, the foot of the chain is filled with small animals that reproduce quickly, but at the top of the chain are the large animals, much fewer in number and with longer reproductive cycles. Concern for the condor became a sensitive political issue and it has only been fairly recently that any meaningful program for re-establishing the condor and preserving its habitat has begun to reverse the damage done earlier.

As the years of Horace's life came to a close, Leverage continued to live in the Welty Hotel, keeping its treasures intact and maintaining the place with the passion of a historian and concerned property owner. She loved Temecula. The once-shy young woman was sustained by her rugged and determined upbringing in Montana as well as the adventures of her middle years, but according to Pat and Judy, she emerged with a strength which welled up as her own and carried the next generation even to the next. As their lives created a strong union, the deaths of Horace and Leverage now bond them eternally.

In memory of gentle, persevering Leverage, we quote this poem [we understand she knew by heart]:

### Grandpa's Old Dapple Gray Anonymous

He carried Grandpa all through the war,  
From the first to the very last day.  
He wasn't afraid for the shells and the guns,  
Grandpa's old dapple gray.  
And when he died they buried him,  
In the orchard where we play.  
And I often think him lonesome  
There on decoration day.  
So I just peeked over the old stone wall,  
And carefully look to see,  
If anyone had remembered his grave,  
Anyone but me.  
And there I saw the blossoms  
Of the apple, peach and plum,  
With every breeze so gently down would come.  
Then I knew that God remembered  
If all the rest forgot,  
The grave of that old brave soldier,  
Down there in the orchard lot.



## FRIENDS PAY TRIBUTE

To the Family and Friends of  
Leverne Parker

Over a decade ago it was our good fortune to meet Leverne and to be befriended by her. Her love for her family, her boundless energy, her enthusiasm for life and her wit and kindness were wonderful personal qualities and we enjoyed basking in the sunshine that she beamed upon us.

She was a good friend, one who was always ready to help if needed. Life seems to divide people into givers and takers and Leverne was always a giver. She gave of herself not because it was required but because she thought it was the right thing to do.

We enjoyed her many talents; her creativity, her art work and of course her wonderful culinary skills. We don't think that anyone ever left one of her dinners in a condition other than "stuffed." We were guilty of that feeling on many occasions.

She was dear to us, she touched our lives in a very special way and we will miss her. As she walked into and out of our lives Leverne left footprints upon our hearts and we will forever treasure those fond remembrances as we recall a kind and gentle lady.

Some years back we received an unusual letter at a time when we had lost a member of our family. It was of some comfort so we are sending it on and we hope that you will also find it so.

Kindest wishes,  
Judy and Duane Preimsberger



# LOUIS RORIPAUGH, CATTLEMAN

by Louise Beesley

*This powerful and engaging article provided by Louise, daughter of Louis, will enlighten and delight you. Thank you, Louise, for putting pen to paper to make this special vignette of one of California's legends come alive for us.*

My father, Louis Roripaugh, was born in Temecula in 1907, and began working on the Pauba Ranch when he was a teenager. At the age of twenty-three, he became foreman of the Santa Rosa Ranch. At that time, during the 1930s, my grandfather, Jack Roripaugh, was foreman at the Pauba Ranch. So when Jack moved on to farm on his own property, Mahlon Vail didn't need to look very far to find a qualified person to take over management of both ranches.

Even as a child I realized that my father was an important person, that he was "the boss." As an adult, I have come to appreciate how difficult and challenging it was to manage 96,000 acres and as many as fifty employees twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

From Monday through Saturday, a typical day began at 6 a.m., when the ranch hands would start filling the benches in the big dining room of the cookhouse. Like all the meals served there, breakfast was hearty. I remember as a small child watching as the cook cracked and dropped several eggs at a time onto the griddle of the big black stove in the adjoining kitchen. In addition to the fried eggs, there were pancakes, bacon, toast, juice, and plenty of strong coffee.

Between 6:30 and 7:00, workers would gather in front of the ranch office. Dad would give them their job orders for the day, and they would drive off in groups to various parts of the ranch. If it was a school holiday, I would be over at the tack shed, saddling my horse along with the cowboys. After getting all the others "lined out," my father would come over and confer with Joe Gomez, the head cowboy, about what needed to be done with the cattle that day.

At noon, everyone working close enough would drive back to the headquarters for the midday meal, called in by the big bell which hung over the cookhouse. The cookhouse was misnamed; it really was a ranch house. In addition to the workers' big dining room, the kitchen and adjacent food storage areas, there was a smaller dining room, a very plain living room, several rarely used bedrooms, a bathroom, and living quarters for both the cook and the ranch secretary.

My father and those who assisted him in various capacities, such as foremen and feedlot managers ate in the smaller dining room. Over the years this group included Sandy Wilkinson, Russ Vail, Willard Wagner, Glen Robertson, Jim Ramsay, Raoul Noriega, and Margaret Cameron, who was the ranch secretary for many years. There were several others who came before or after my time there. Of course, there was some socializing over these meals, but most of the talk was about ranch work.

After eating, almost everyone took a little siesta, the bosses in the cookhouse living room, the ranch hands in the bunkhouse or under a cottonwood tree. A rest was really a necessity, after five hours of hard work in the sun and a big meal. At 1:00, the bell rang again, and everyone went back to work until 5:00, when the workday ended.

My father almost always continued his workday at home, making telephone calls before and after dinner. The calls were a combination of business and socializing, or networking, to use a modern term. That was how he kept track of cattle and feed markets, weather and pasture conditions throughout the West, all of which allowed him to plan for the purchase and sale of cattle. Sometimes helpful neighbors would call late at night to report livestock out on the highway, or poachers seen spotlight hunting on some remote part of the ranch. He always carried a revolver and a deputy sheriff's badge in the glove compartment of his car for these occasions.

Every fall, Dad would go on extensive cattle buying trips to stock the Pauba and Santa Rosa Ranches as well as the ranch on Santa Rosa Island. He put in many long days and nights, driving all over the West in the days before air conditioning and roadside motels. Once in a while, I was invited to go along. If our trip took us near the Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, or some other place of interest, we would stop for a brief visit. For many years, these side trips were as close as he ever got to taking a vacation.

There is no way to know how many years of my father's life were spent behind the wheel of a car, but it would be an impressive statistic. In addition to the cattle buying trips, for a few years he drove to the Imperial Valley every

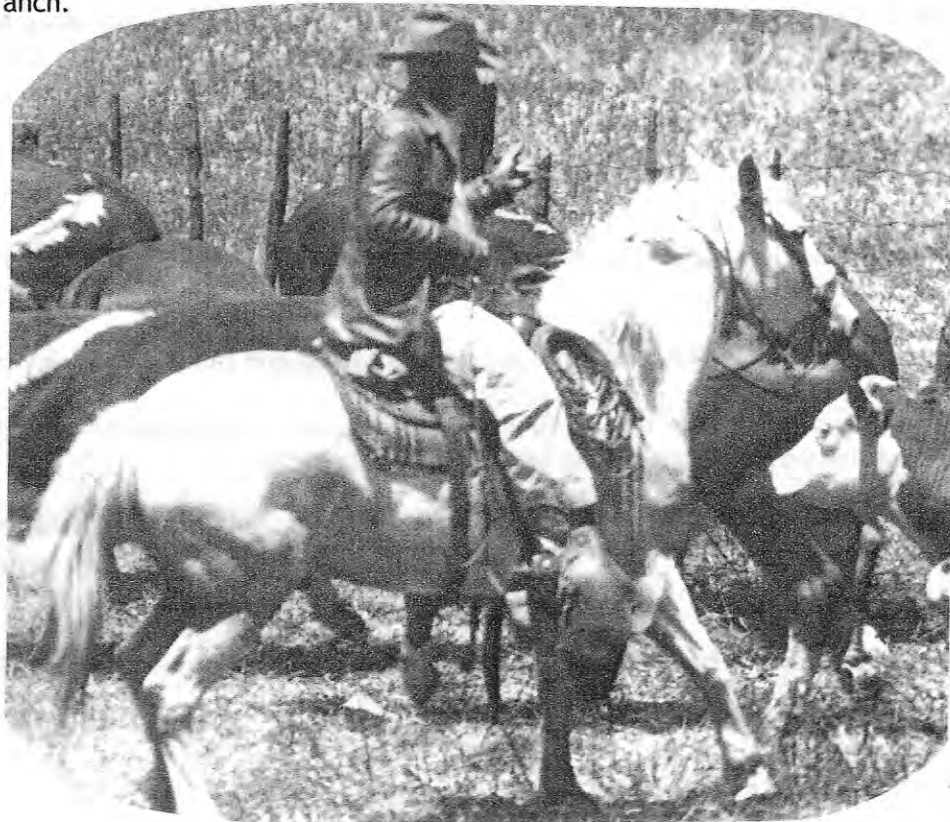
weekend to oversee property owned by the Vail Company. On a typical workday, he would visit many sites on the Pauba Ranch, checking on the progress of work crews, the condition of fences, cattle, windmills and irrigation ditches. Depending on the time of year, he would drive to the Santa Rosa Ranch one or more times each week. He drove big, sturdy cars, a 1942 Oldsmobile throughout the war years, and a 1945 Chrysler purchased as soon as the war ended, followed by a succession of more Chryslers and Cadillacs. He drove those cars everywhere, through stubble fields, cow pastures, feed lots, mud holes and creek beds.

Another aspect of his job involved looking out for the well being of the workers and their families. Ranch work can be dangerous, and accidents happened, especially in the summer, when there was a large crew. When someone tangled with a piece of farm equipment or a mean bronc, it was usually my father who took the injured person to the doctor's office or the hospital, both located in Elsinore. Many of the ranch hands were Mexican nationals, and he devoted a good deal of time to helping them obtain or maintain their legal status. He spoke good ranch Spanish, learned entirely on the job. Once in a while, a call would come on Monday morning from the jail in Elsinore because someone had celebrated too much over the weekend and needed bail money and a ride back to the ranch. Dad tolerated an occasional slip of this kind if the person involved was a loyal, hard worker. Over the years, he complained more about the cooks than any other group. With a few exceptions, they were a temperamental, flighty bunch and sometimes quit without warning.

I have no idea how many people shared a property line with the ranches, but it must have been dozens. As far as I know, my father had cordial relations with these neighbors, as well as with the farmers who leased land from the Vails. The names I remember are John and Jean McSweeney, Irv Phillips, and the Davis Brothers, all potato farmers, and M.J. Yoder, who dry farmed on land near Temecula.

The Pauba Ranch completely surrounded the town of Temecula. My dad knew almost everyone there, and stopped frequently at the Swing Inn, the Bar B H, or Edna Swanegun's Cafe to drink coffee and catch up on local news. Problems with townspeople rarely arose, but I do remember a couple of times when packs of dogs from town were chasing and harassing cattle in nearby pastures. Temecula was so small that Dad knew in short order who the dogs' owners were, and warned them of dire consequences if the dogs weren't kept at home. Just about everyone in Temecula had social and economic ties to the ranch; they respected the Vails and their property and helped out by reporting problems.

When the ranches were sold in 1964, the new owners, Macco Realty and Kaiser Aluminum, hired my father as a consultant. They undoubtedly recognized that no other person knew the property as thoroughly as he did. He stayed on for about two years, before buying a ranch in Montana with his longtime friend, Dan Cameron, thus fulfilling his dream of having his own ranch.



## LOUIS L. RORIPAUGH, 1907-1994

*from Cattlemen of Imperial Valley - an anthology  
by permission of writer and editor*



*In her forward, Marianne Wilson, author, writer and editor of Cattlemen of Imperial Valley, acknowledged Hedy Roripaugh, wife of Louis Roripaugh as the contributing writer for this material. Hedy now lives in Fallbrook, California.*

Louis L. Roripaugh was born on March 20, 1907, in Temecula, California, the son of Annetta Pearl Garnett Roripaugh and John Elmour Roripaugh. He attended grammar school in Temecula, high school in Elsinore and Fallbrook, and later took a business course in Riverside, California.

In 1921, when Louie was fourteen or fifteen years of age, he assisted in driving some 200 head of cattle (owned by Jim Freeman of Temecula, from Temecula to a pasture near Calipatria. Mr. Farrell Freeman, brother of Jim Freeman, was in charge of the drive which lasted approximately one week.

Shortly before reaching the pasture, Louie left the drive on horseback and headed for home and Temecula, traveling via Ocotillo Wells, Borrego Springs and Terwilliger. His first stop was near Borrego Springs, where a family was raising alfalfa gave him a sandwich and where he was able to secure feed and water for his horse.

After resting a few hours he decided to continue, traveling up Coyote Canyon. About two-thirds of the way up the Canyon his horse gave out, so Louie walked and led his horse, alternating walking and riding through the night, finally arriving at Fred Clark's place at Terwilliger Valley. The Clarks and the Roripaughs were friends, so Louie was fed, given a bed and spent his second night after leaving the drive with the Clarks. As his horse was in need of prolonged rest, the next day Louie borrowed a horse from either Mr. Bailey or Mr. Parks, who lived within a few miles of the Clark place, and rode home to Temecula.

The summer of 1926 Louie worked for the Vail Company's Pauba Ranch as a cowboy and general ranch hand. In 1927, he resumed employment with the Vail Company until December 1, 1964, when the ranch was sold.

From January 1930 to September 1, 1936, he was the cattle foreman at the Santa Rosa Ranch, a division of Vail Company. The Vail Company also owned a citrus ranch in Calipatria that was sold just before World War II. Louie would go down there on weekends to check on this ranch. From September 1, 1936 to December 1, 1964, he was Ranch Manager of the Pauba and Santa Rosa Ranches. From 1942 until 1964 these ranches had an annual turnover of from 6,000 to 8,000 head of cattle, and in 1948 a feedlot (4,500 head capacity) was added which operated until the ranch was sold.

In addition to the ranch operations, Louie bought cattle to stock the Santa Rosa Island, owned by Vail and Vickers, and sold most of their fat cattle.

The total cattle turnover for these two operations was between 12,000 and 14,000 head per year.

Louie Roripaugh served as a director of the California Cattle Feeders and the California Cattlemen's Association for about fifteen years and also served a term on the California Beef Council.

After the Vail Ranch was sold, Dan Cameron and Louie Roripaugh were partners in the Six Quarter Circle Ranch at Miles City, Monrana until the ranch was sold in 1993. Dan and Louie also ran and fed cattle in Imperial Valley under the name Mission Livestock Company.

When the Vail Company sold the Pauba and Santa Rosa Ranches, Al Vail turned over the Heart Brand (to be used on the left rib) to Louie.





## 4th ANNUAL MEETING

Members and guests are cordially invited to

join the celebration

Friday evening, 6:00 to 9:30pm

# November 12



for dinner, an entertaining  
audience-participation "Show & Tell",  
and installation of Board members



Temecula Assistance League  
Chapter House  
28720 Via Montezuma  
Temecula

\$35 per person

Do you have a photo, a short story, an artifact or an antique to share?  
Bring it to Annual Meeting! Others may be stumped, amazed or  
intrigued .... best of all, we will all learn something new!

for information, RSVPs, or to coordinate your "Show & Tell" item  
call Audrey Cilurzo (951) 304-3666

## THE TRAIN IN FALLBROOK

Originally Published in *Village News*, Nov 26 & Dec 3, 1998

Contributed by the Fallbrook Historical Society

Don Rivers, President

[http://la.znet.com/~schester/fallbrook/history/memories/train\\_in\\_fallbrook.html](http://la.znet.com/~schester/fallbrook/history/memories/train_in_fallbrook.html)

*We gratefully acknowledge the help of John C. Ludy to locate this information on the rail line that once ran through the Santa Margarita Canyon south from Temecula down to the coast at Oceanside. We hope it will shed additional light on the early railroad days in Fallbrook and Temecula. The first few paragraphs of the article are omitted, and we pick up the narrative where it reviews the original construction of the line....*

...Going back many years to the actual construction of the California Southern Railroad, a part of whose main line became the Fallbrook Branch of the Santa Fe, We find that errors by the locating engineers were the contributing factor in the abandonment of the line from Temecula to Fallbrook Station in Temecula Canyon.

Eastern engineers, unfamiliar with California rivers, set the grade stakes in Temecula Canyon just a few feet above the riverbed. Old times of the area pointed out their mistake, tried showing them water marks much higher up the sides of the canyon walls. The engineers, convinced that the dry river never carried that amount of water, buolt the line as originally surveyed.

The winter of 1883-1884 was an exceedingly wet one. The Santa Margarita River went on a rampage through the canyon, and eight miles of track were washed out between Temecula and De Luz. Months later the line was rebuilt on the original grade. This time the track held until the winter of 1891, when floods once more raged through the canyon and many miles of track were washed far out to sea. A new line, having been built between Oceanside and Santa Ana, the old line was never rebuilt between Temecula and Fallbrook Station.

The part of the old line from Fallbrook Station to Los Angeles Junction (later called Fallbrook Junction) in Oceanside was operated as the Fallbrook Branch, about 20 miles in all. Fallbrook Station was located in the bottom of the canyon a mile and a half north from the town of Fallbrook.

The branch left the Surf line a mile north of Oceanside and dropped down to the Santa Margarita River, where it curved sharply to the east along a narrow bench between the river and some high cliffs. Farther on it came out into an open valley, which was followed to De Luz canyon. Beyond De Luz it entered Temecula Canyon to Fallbrook Station. Fallbrook Station consisted of a small depot, post office, store, water tank, turntable, storage tracks and homes for the train crew and engine watchman.

Between De Luz and Fallbrook Station the Santa Margarita River was crossed four times by means of "Floating Bridges." The first one was a quarter of a mile above the De Luz station. Two more were on a short horseshoe curve a mile farther on, and the fourth was near Fallbrook Station. These bridges lay flush with the river bottom, the track sloping down approaching them on a four or five percent grade, and leaving the river on the opposite side on the same gradient.

The two bridges on the horseshoe curve were 50 and 100 feet in length respectively, and were so close together that the track took on a roller coaster aspect. Extreme skill was required in both the use of the throttle and air brake in getting trains over this piece of track. Too heavy a brake application would result in the train stalling in the river bottom, and too light an application might result in derailment. Both engine and cars rocked alarmingly over these bridges.

As to the construction of the bridges, piling was driven in four rows across the river, flush with the sand. Large timbers or caps were laid across the tops of these piles. On top of these cross caps, stringers were placed parallel to the track, but not fastened to the caps. The rails were spiked directly to these stringers instead of ties. The track gauge was maintained by several three quarter inch, or larger, iron rods, threaded at both ends, fastened with bolts and lock washers, through holes bored in the web of the rail.

The idea was not so much to save the bridge, but their floating on the surface as the water rose, but more, that when debris piled up against them to form a dam, the rails on one side of the river would pull loose and allow them to swing down stream parallel with the river. When the water receded they could be pulled back into position. In event the whole bridge was lost down stream, there would be no great financial burden in replacing it.

During high water it was the custom to stop the train before crossing any of the bridges. The brakeman would don hip boots, take a long pole and cross ahead of the train, prodding to see if the stringers were still resting on the cross caps. If all were well the train would drive down the river and follow him across.

Heavy rains in January of 1916 again caused floods to pour through Temecula Canyon. At Fallbrook Station the bed of the river was scoured down to bedrock, some 20 to 25 feet below the former riverbed. Much of the exposed bedrock was pitted with ancient Indian metates indicating that the canyon had been a favored camping site of the Indians untold years ago. Much of the Santa Fe property was swept away. The engineer's house, surrounded by flood waters, remained as did the engine watchman's house, water tank turntable, the engine of the train and a few cars spotted on higher ground.

*continued nex page....*

## SALVAGING THE REMAINS

With the completion of the new railroad line to Fallbrook the question of salvaging the equipment still in the Santa Margarita river canyon was considered. The Santa Fe Railway Company placed a value of \$25,000 on what was left after the flood.

Superintendent Hitchcock stopped off one morning at Oceanside for a consultation with agent and branch line train crew. He told them that the company had advertised bids for the salvage of the stranded equipment. The bids specified that the salvager was to deliver the engine, cars, turntable and all available scrap to a connection with the new line within 90 days from the time of the awarding of the contract.

He said he had received a bid of \$40,000 from a responsible and reliable firm in Los Angeles, which proposed to construct a temporary line from Fallbrook Station to a connection with the new track, and that they had gone as far as to have the Santa Fe bridge area foreman go over the proposed route and estimate the cost of temporary bridges.

The superintendent further stated that he had received a low bid of \$6,000 from a housemover in Pasadena. He was in some doubt about the housemover's ability to do the job, but as they had made good on several other company moving jobs, on the Arizona Division, and there being such a large difference in the amount of the bid, it put him on the spot. He wanted to know what the agent and train crew thought of the matter as four bonding companies had refused to bond the work. If the housemovers were successful it would mean a large savings for the company. After thinking the problem over for a while he decided to give the housemovers the job.

Equipment to be moved out of the canyon consisted of an 80-ton 2-8-0 locomotive No. 721, a 36-ton turntable, four refrigerator cars, one passenger coach, one baggage-passenger combination car, one tank car, one box car and an assortment of scrap material. Some of the cars were on their sides along the riverbank. Total weight of the equipment including loads, was about 400 tons. The distance to be moved to a connection with the new line in the town was 8400 feet with a vertical rise of 463 feet up a maximum grade of 14 percent with a 50-degree maximum of curvature.

The salvage work was performed by five men and four horses, using two capstans and about 3,000 feet of one-half inch cable, several one-inch chains and cussin'. The capstans had 10-inch spools with a sweep of 108 inches and were each operated by two horses. At several places along the route the clearance was so close that it was necessary to dig out the hillside to allow room to operate the capstans.

Throughout the work every precaution was employed to safeguard the equipment on the unusual grades. Ties were placed behind each pair of tracks and 12x12 chocks were carried behind each pair of drive wheels. These ties and chocks were wired to the equipment in such a manner that they dragged

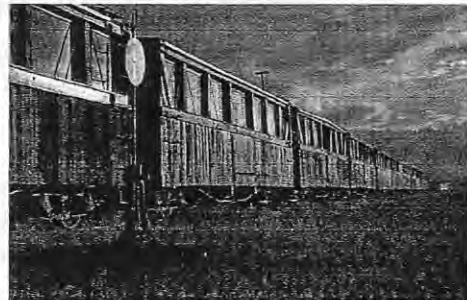
along the top of the rail as the equipment moved forward. In the event of a broken cable or chain, the wheels would settle against the timbers and avoid any possible chance of a runaway. Each piece of the equipment was chained to the track when not in motion.

Everything in the canyon that was salvageable was brought out. All available scrap was loaded in the box car and refrigerator cars, the turntable loaded on a flat car and, to reduce weight, the tender was cut away from the engine, the engine being the last piece of the equipment to be brought out.

A short distance from the starting point in the bottom of the canyon the equipment was switched over to a county wagon road, but as they neared the top of the hill the movers were forced to leave the county road and build their own right of way. Fifty pound rails spiked to ties were laid ahead of the equipment and torn up behind it and re-laid ahead as the work progressed. Two capstans, four horses, six single-sheaf blocks pulled the 80-ton locomotive up the 14 percent grade. On higher grades, two cars were moved by the same method at an average speed of six feet per minute. No "engine trouble" developed, and on grades under 10 percent, two horses easily moved loads up to 50 tons.

The engine was stripped to a 15-foot rigid wheelbase and was pulled around 50-degree curves without derailing. A maximum super-elevation of four inches was used on curves, and the inner rails were kept well greased with crude oil. Experience showed that the greasing of the inner rail on curves was necessary to keep the engine on the track, and that a four-inch super-elevation was the maximum that could be used without overturning the rails.

Work was begun March 14, 1917, and all of the equipment was cut in on the new line in Fallbrook Sunday, June 10, 1917, well within the contract time. Superintendent Hitchcock was highly pleased. The housemovers, or "The Boys" as he called them, got their \$6,000 and were rich.



*The removal of salvage would have been hazardous work, in my mind. No wonder there were no companies ready to bond and insure the project! Though I've never trekked the whole length of the canyon, I have been to the canyon floor when the stream was running low. Even so, it's easy to see the old water marks and sense the speed the water gathers as it rushes toward the river's outlet in Oceanside.*



## Ticanu

Where the blackened leaf lies  
    Curled and seared;  
There it was sacred;  
    There beyond time  
Was an eyrie sublime  
    Where the hawk  
    Came to rest  
    And the quail  
    Made her nest  
    They said..  
    It was Ticanu

On Pala's sheer flank  
    Its wise oaks clung  
Like pillows of leaves  
    In the noon's sun:  
The first time I saw them  
    I thought of an Eden  
    That no one could  
    Enter except  
    He was Indian  
    And knew it as  
    Heaven..  
    Ticanu.

And there was a woman  
    Shadowed and sheltered  
Who stood for the grove  
    And yet was not  
    Of the People.  
But she drew from its side  
    The life-blood of Pala  
And then echoed the song  
    Of the timeless Spirits  
    Who clung there,  
    With hands that  
    Carressed white ivory  
    In her deep woodland  
Whose eye was the hawk's  
    Whose heart was  
    Its music..  
    Mrs. Dorlund

I would not want  
    To see Ticanu again;  
To find its Persian rugs  
    Ash-woven

Into the blackened earth.  
I would not go there  
But to hear the hawk  
Once again soaring  
And singing  
Of the Old Ones.  
Would I find there  
The broken tea cup  
Charmed by flames  
That once brimmed  
With words  
Wisely serene  
That once spoke  
Of the magic  
Of Ticanu?

I will only dream  
The gentle pond  
Crowded by shadows  
Will find me  
And take me back.  
I will hear the piano  
That played to the world  
From that sacred niche.  
I will remember Mrs. Dorlund  
And the hawk  
That lifted her music  
And winged it from  
An oaken haunt  
To heaven..  
Ticanu

*Rob Lindquist*

Upon learning of Ticanu's reduction by wildfire

2004



## LIST OF POTENTIAL PROJECTS FOR CONSIDERATION

*At the Board meeting on September 3rd, President Jimmy Moore asked directors to present ideas for future projects. The list will undergo further consideration and be prioritized at the Board Meeting on October 1.*

1. Build a kiosk in Old Town to distribute maps, literature, information.
2. Produce a TV/DVD of historical Temecula.
3. Request space in new library for archiving copies of historical documents.
4. Produce bumper stickers advertising the Historical Society.
5. Prepare flyers of available speakers.
6. Rent and staff a booth at the Southern California Fair.
7. Publicize the TVHS website.
8. Clean up Aguanga and Pala grave sites.
9. Mark unmarked graves in the Temecula Cemetery.
10. Conduct a BBQ to raise funds.
11. Develop lesson plans for Temecula history classes in schools.
12. Erect a monument at the Dorland entrance.
13. Preserve the adobes at Vail Lake.
14. Acquire old locomotive and place along original tracks.
15. Restore J. Escallier house.
16. Build protective roof over adobe wall of 2nd Magee Store.
17. Reenact the robbery of the Temecula Bank on the 75th Anniversary of the original event.
18. Erect monument at old slaughter house.
19. Obtain office space for the Society, preferably in Old Town
20. Document the site of old Rancho California airport.
21. Restart the Society's quarterly programs.
22. Have an historical garden area within the Rose Society's garden.
23. Develop a family writing project on history of Temecula.
24. Send delegate (or delegates) to National Trust conferences.
25. Make more inroads with Pechanga re our shared local history.

*Members are encouraged to review the suggestions above and contribute ideas. Contact Jimmy Moore via the cell phone at (951) 501-9159. Members are free to attend the Board meeting October 1, Noon, at the Temecula Library to make their wishes heard.*

### MUSEUM LECTURE

Thursday, October 7

6:00pm

#### Guest Speakers

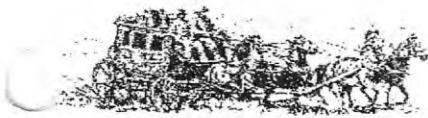
**Rob Hicks, Park Interpreter, Santa Rosa Plateau**

**Myra Gonsalves, Temecula Valley Historical Society**

#### Topic

**The Vail Ranch History on Santa Rosa Plateau**





## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS !!

Aug 15 to Sept 15, 2004

### New Members

### CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Have you moved? Changed your email or phone number? Don't forget to report these changes to us. We depend on the accuracy of our mailing list to keep your newsletter coming.

Send a postcard, FAX, or call:

Newsletter Editor, 32800 Hupa Drive,  
Temecula, CA 92592; phone (951)  
302-0180, FAX (951) 302-0171.

[www.temeculavalleyhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.temeculavalleyhistoricalsociety.com)  
or  
[www.temeculavalleyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.temeculavalleyhistoricalsociety.org)

### CHECK IT OUT !!

### The Newsletter

Articles must include author's name and contact information. Historical research, biographies, and local history articles will be given preference.

All submissions are subject to editing. Some articles may be held for publication in the next newsletter or in a journal to be published at a later time.

Editor..... Charolette Fox  
Printing..... Potamus Press

## Calendar

Board Meeting	Oct 1, Noon
Museum Lecture	Oct 7, 6:00p
Shopping Extravaganza	Oct 16 all day
ESG Mystery Weekend	Nov 5, 6 & 7
Landscape History	Nov 5, 6 & 7
4th Annual Meeting	Nov 12, 6:00p

#### Active Committees:

Research & Preservation

Wolf's Tomb

Plaques & Markers

Youth & School Programs

Board meetings and member programs are held in the Conference Room of the Temecula Library, unless otherwise stated.

Date, time and location of committee meetings or special events fluctuates. For information, contact committee or event chair.

When possible, member reminders are sent via email or postcard prior to the meeting or event. In addition, public service announcements are usually placed in local newspapers.

### VOLUNTEER HELP IS ALWAYS APPRECIATED

### PLEASE REMEMBER US IN YOUR WILL OR TRUST

Questions? You can now reach the Society by phone!

Call (951) 501-9159

### Mission Statement

*The mission of the Temecula Valley Historical Society is to identify, preserve and promote the historic legacy of the Temecula Valley and to educate the public about its historical significance.*

### Quotes

*Virtues are learned at mother's knee and vices at some other joint.*

*Plenty in the purse cannot prevent starvation of the soul.*

*Blunt words often have the sharpest edge.*

*Money will buy a fine dog but only kindness will make him wag his tail.*

*What we need in this country is a car that eats oats.*

## FUNDRAISER

The Society announces a fundraiser



### "SHOPPING EXTRAVAGANZA" (ONE DAY EVENT)

10% - 60% discounts

fashion shows

gourmet box lunch & free  
winetasting

entertainment

prizes

in-store demonstrations

grand prize drawing of \$500

SATURDAY, OCT 16

10:00 am to 4:00 pm

LAKE ELSINORE OUTLET



For tickets contact Duane  
Preimsberger @ (951) 699-6619



**TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
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 TEMECULA, CA 92592

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If you enjoyed this issue, why not  
 share it with a friend? Please pass  
 it on and help us build our  
 readership. Thank you.

**TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

A tax exempt-charitable & educational organization

**Membership**

*Membership/Donation Categories:*

<input type="checkbox"/> Student	\$ 10.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Historian	\$ 300.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Single	\$ 25.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate	\$ 500.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$ 35.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Founder	\$ 1,000.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Contributor	\$ 50.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$ 5,000.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron	\$ 100.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Supreme	\$10,000.00

*The Board of Directors formulate and vote on policies. The membership may vote for Directors at the annual meeting.*

*Membership is open to anyone regardless of race, color, religion, sex or national origin.*

*Dues and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Donations may be designated or undesignated.*

**Checks payable to:**

Temecula Valley Historical Society

**Mail to:**

P. O. Box 157

Temecula, CA 92593-0157