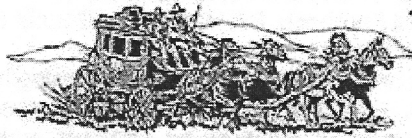


# Temecula Valley Historical Society

## Newsletter



### 2006 Officers

President	<i>Barbara Tobin</i>
Vice-President	<i>Leslie Karp</i>
Secretary	<i>Charlene Fink</i>
Treasurer	<i>Keith Johnson</i>

### Additional Directors

<i>Eve Craig</i>	<i>Laura "Sis" Herron</i>
<i>Bill McBurney</i>	<i>Carol Marsden</i>
<i>Paul J Price</i>	<i>Jack Roripaugh</i>
<i>Carol Strode</i>	<i>Norm Taylor</i>

### Committee Chairs

Research & Development  
*Darrell Farnbach*

Historic Markers & Plaques  
*Pam Grender*

Wolf Tomb Restoration  
*Eve Craig*

Public Relations & Membership  
*Bill Harker*

Planned Giving  
*Keith Johnson*

Speakers & Events  
*Audrey Cilurzo*

Website  
*Elaine Eshom*

Youth Projects  
*Paul Price & Open*

Old Family Cookbook  
*Myra Gonsalves & Pat Metro*

Historian  
*Myra Gonsalves*

Newsletter  
*Eve Craig, Bill Harker, Leslie Karp*

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

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## President's Corner

As your new President, my main goal is to continue (with the support of the membership) to preserve and to make the public aware of the wonderful history of this valley. We have lots of plans for the next year, one of which is a car tour of some of the historical sites around the valley. It will prove to be very worthwhile. More information on this and other ideas to enhance the Valley's rich history will follow in later newsletters. Suggestions from you, the membership, is not only welcomed, it is encouraged.

Another goal is to increase our membership. Great things happen in numbers! We need all of us working together to be good stewards in preserving our history. If you are aware of anyone who might be interested in becoming a member of the Society please invite them to join us.

Let them know that we meet on the first Friday of the month at the old library at 12:00 Noon. After the business meeting we have a speaker who will either talk on the history of the area or something interesting that may have an effect on our valley.

Our past president, in conjunction with many volunteers, has been working diligently for the past couple of years to complete the restoration of Wolfe's Tomb. I'm happy to say that it is very close to completion. What a shame if it was just left to deteriorate further. This is just another way that the Historical Society continues to preserve our history! And, thank you Eve, for all your hard work in spearheading that effort!

Through a generous Grant we are also in the process of restoring a couple of stagecoaches. Present plans are that they will most likely be on display at the Vail Ranch Headquarters after its restoration. (By the way VARRA is well on its way to having that become a reality.)

Anyway, you can see that we are working hard within the Society to keep our History alive for future generations to enjoy. And we need all of you to help us! I look forward to serving as your president for the next year and would love to hear from you and see you at our next and future meetings.

*Barbara Tobin*

## Closing Comments from Eve

We had a delightful Annual Dinner Meeting on December 6<sup>th</sup> at the Assistance League's Chapter House and introduced the three new Board Members of the Historical Society, who are Carol Marsden, Carol Strode and Norm Taylor. Our retiring Board Members are Audrey Cilurzo, Darell Farnbach, Bill Harker and Bonnie Reed who are required to take a year off and may return after the time has elapsed.

The entertainment was a joy, with Lauren Arasim playing her harp and Christina Comer singing some fun tunes. Everyone enjoyed and appreciated their great talents. Paul Price did the final educational and historical expose DVD about the devastating loss of historic Indian Rock Art. It was absorbing and fascinating as well as painful to know how much of it has been destroyed.

Everybody had a great time and didn't want to leave. Audrey brought us her own delicious hors d'oeuvres and some excellent wines donated by the Riverside International Wine Competition. Dinner, provided by Volker's "Vineyard Gourmet Catering Company" was irresistible.

The end of the year reports from Committee Chairs have been submitted and are filed for future reference.

Our first meeting of the year took place on January 5. At that time, the Nominating Committee, chaired by Barbara Tobin presented the following slate for the years new officers. President, Barbara Tobin; Vice-President, Leslie Karp; Secretary, Charlene Fink; Treasurer Keith Johnson. The slate was unanimously approved.

In addition we voted on the proposed plans for the fate of The Shire. It is one of the most significant Historic Structures in not only Old Town, but in Temecula. Also Paul Price discussed future plans for Youth Projects. Darell Farnbach alerted everyone to some upcoming historic tours. The meeting ended with a talk of plans and showing of renderings by John Meyer, Director of the Redevelopment Agency.

It was a real treat to see what our new Civic Center will be like.

Come to our meeting Feb 2 when Al Rattan will give exciting updates on the Shire and the River Walk.

We are expecting to have a fascinating year ahead and wish you all a very wonderful new year. Have a Happy one.

*Eve Craig, Past President*

## *"Making sure tomorrow has a yesterday to remember."*

As a historic society it is our duty to protect the past. We must be good stewards of any part of that past that is left. Currently in "Old Town" Temecula our past is being "improved" on an almost daily basis. The quotes around Old Town and improved are quite deliberate. There is not much about "Old Town" that is old any longer, and the recent trend to make all buildings bigger and taller is not necessarily an improvement. The historic core of old town exists at the intersection of Main and Front Streets. The Welty Building, The Bank, and the Machado Store are all located there.

The building now known as The Shire was built by Mac Machado in 1909 and was called the Mission Store. Amazingly, the structure remains much as it was when erected almost one hundred years ago. The building does, however, have some serious structural issues. Because of the expense needed to address these issues and bring the building up to code so that it could be used for another type of enterprise, the current owner has determined that it may be best to tear the building down and build yet another large, three story building. If that happens, the oldest piece of "Old Town" will be gone. There are other options available, some of which have been discussed with the owner.

Because you receive this newsletter that implies some interest in the history of Temecula. If that is indeed the case, it is up to all of us to do what we can to make sure that this integral part of Temecula's history remains intact. Let our City Council know that this is important with your email, letters or phone calls. All of those contacts are available at [www.cityoftemecula.org](http://www.cityoftemecula.org)

We will keep you informed on the progress of this issue and everyone is welcome at our meeting on the first Friday of the month at noon at the old library to learn more.

Please help us save this piece of our history.

Leslie Karp

Vice President Temecula Valley Historical Society



Reflections Part II  
Sandy Wilkinson 1923-2006  
By Carol Marsden

Arriving in the "50s, the only paved road in and out was highway 395 and a narrow 70 south. Is that why Sandy flew his small plane landing on the dirt strip near Uncle Mahlon's adobe ranch house behind ranch "headquarters"?

Sandy described his Vail job "as a little dab here and a little dab there". Uncle Mahlon was a strict taskmaster, "If you did a job right...OK; if wrong, you heard about it in no uncertain terms". Here again Mahlon, like his father, did not spend a great amount of time at the ranch. Louis Roripaugh ran the cattle operation; Sandy was the administrator. Foreman of the Pauba Ranch was among his first duties in addition to the general management of the irrigation system; the fences; the hay, the leases of the bottom land to tenant farmers who grew potatoes, carrots, squash, beets; the operation of the Feed Lot where steer were fattened with special feed before shipping out on that long last ride to the packing house.

With the fight for water rights developing, the Vail Dam had been completed in 1948. Between the Vail Corporation and Camp Pendleton, Sandy was the obvious one to be the chief litigator during the years of court negotiations that ensued.

In the "50s Sandy married Virginia "Gina" Spear who was described as the "girl next door" and commenced building the ranch house on Pauba Road which would be Sandy's forever home. He was here to stay.

Weekends were for "roaring". They hunted, fished and gathered their influential friends to party. Sandy knew them all... the visitors and the locals. Yoder, McSweeney, Burnham and Freeman, Al Knott, Mark Machado and Joe Winkles and yes, Erle Stanley Gardner. Sandy knew him well. Sandy claimed that Joe Gomez, who is one of the "magnificent seven" in that famous photograph of Vail Cowboys taken by "Uncle" Erle, was the best teacher he ever had.

For fifty years the little town of Temecula was confined, "It's never going to be a monster", Sandy said, but as we all know the Ranch was sold in 1964. Was it because as Mahlon claimed, "that taxes got him"? Or, was it, as Sandy seemed to think, "they just lost interest". But is it not strange that Mahlon, like his father Walter, died within the year after receiving \$21 million for his now famous Vail Ranch.

Sandy stayed. He worked as the first manager of the Rancho California Water District; tooling around town in his green Ford pickup; gathering the *Los Angeles Times* on de Portolo...undeliverable to his ranch on Pauba Road, and visiting with his many friends.



Historic buildings at the intersection of Main and Front Streets. The Machado buildings above, the Bank and the Welty building make up the heart of "Old Town" Temecula.

