



Temecula Valley
Historical Society
Newsletter

February 2008 Vol 8 Issue 2

*****NEW MEETING PLACE*****

We meet at the historical Pujol School on Santiago Road on the first Friday of each month from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m. Plan to be there for a board meeting followed by an interesting speaker.

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Happy Valentines Day!

**Great Presentations Scheduled for
this Year**

If you love history and want to learn more about the Temecula Valley, be sure to attend our Historical Society meetings and social events this year. A few of the interesting speakers scheduled include Harmon Johnson, who will be coming from Idaho to join his son, Gordon Johnson, a local writer, to talk about the history of their ancestors, the Magees of Temecula Valley.

Another program will be presented by a group of people who recently published a book about the "permanent residents" of Murrieta's Laurel Cemetery. This genealogical group accessed public records and conducted interviews of descendants to make this comprehensive record about people who lived, loved and worked in Murrieta. Come to hear stories of how they tackled this undertaking and what surprises they uncovered.

Our own Dr. Anne Miller will give two presentations, "Mapping the Southern Emigrant Trail Through Temecula" and "The Life of Maria Apis, 1830-1863". Anne, an avid researcher, rolls up her sleeves and grapples with questions by delving into primary documents from research institutions to find the answers.

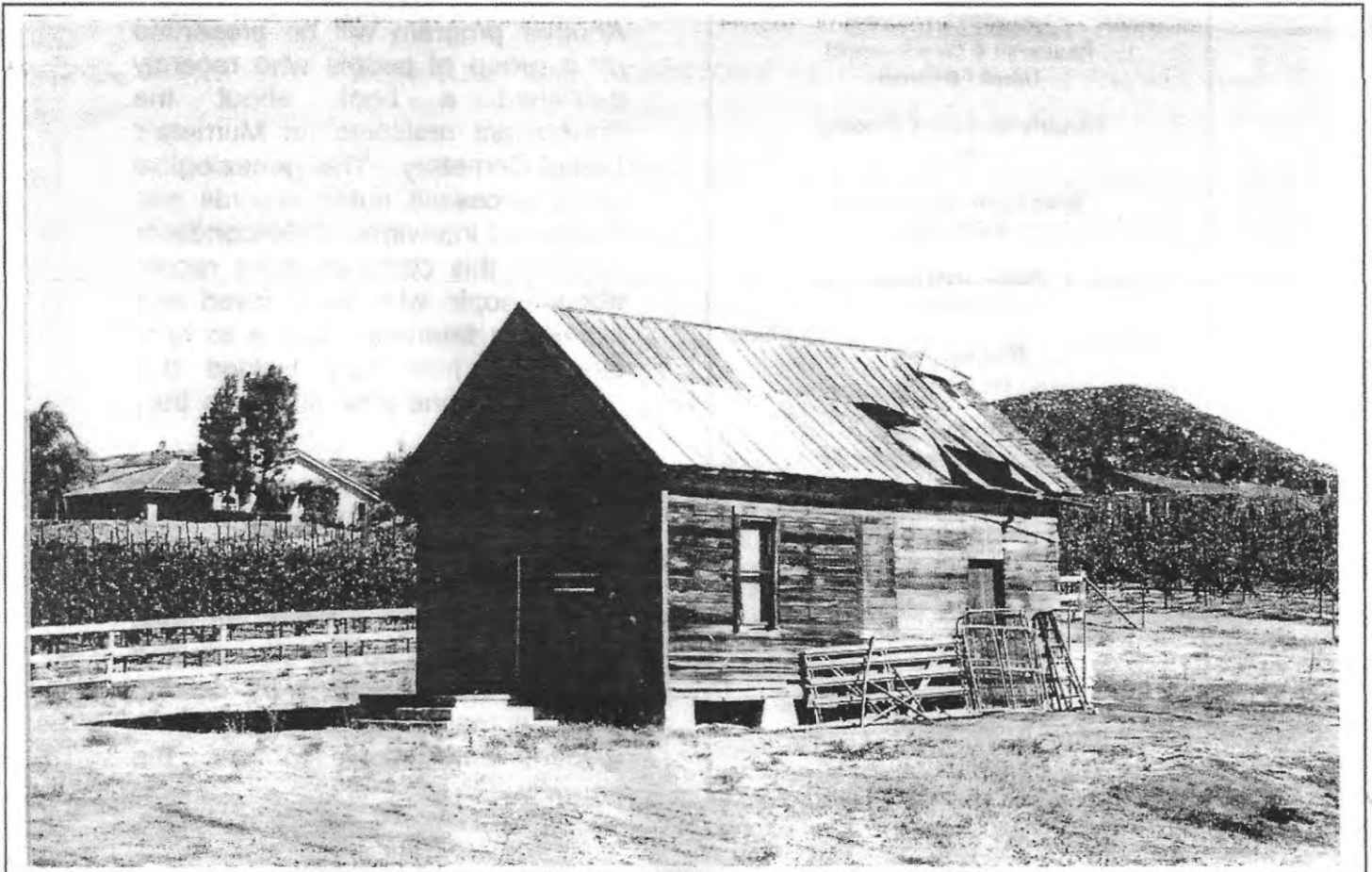
The Hyatt School and How It Was Named

The weathered little building sits on the right side of Warren Road, the extension of Rancho California Road, as we drive from our fair city into the countryside. Once a gathering place for community education, worship and fun, it is now deteriorating in summer suns and winter winds and rains.

This is not a new focus for the Society. In the January 2005 issue, we published Bill McBurney's memories of attending the Hyatt School from 1938 through 1940, and in the September 2005 issue we published a summary of Christine Trunnell Ford's oral history project about the Auld Valley and Hyatt Schools.

On the following page is the story of Edward Hyatt, the remarkable man for whom the school is named.

Photo by Darell Farnbach October 2001.



Edward Hyatt, a Visionary Educator

Riverside County's influence in the field of education not only spread throughout the State of California, but also, because of Edward Hyatt, it impacted the way public schools are run today.

Hyatt, who enjoyed only two years of public school education before enrolling in Ohio State University in 1876, was self-taught in the fields and woods of Ohio. His mother disliked schools and everything else that was important to Hyatt's late father, who was killed in a Civil War battle, leaving her with two boys to raise. Edward and his brother Harry learned about animals, plants, rocks and geology by studying them everyday as child's play.

A college education would have been out of financial reach for the boys, had a professor not helped sell their extensive collection of bones, arrowheads, fossils and rocks to museums around the world.

After graduating from college, Hyatt married and took a position with the U.S. Geological Survey in Washington State. He contracted tuberculosis and while recovering in Southern California, he started teaching in San Jacinto. Mrs. Hyatt was also a teacher, and for a time, she taught in Fallbrook, while he stayed in San Jacinto.

Hyatt's method of teaching involved understanding concepts behind the focus of the topic and hands-on experience. He made physical education mandatory, because it promoted wellness and stimulated the mind.

Students thrived with Hyatt's unconventional methods, including bringing tarantulas to class for the students to examine and taking hikes to

demonstrate alluvial fans and other geologic formations. Every day when students showed him specimens of insects, rocks, feathers, and shells they had found, he utilized the items for instruction.

He practiced his teaching methods on his growing family, too. During summer vacation in 1897, the Hyatt Family made a trip to Yosemite. Since their wagon would only carry seven people, Mrs. Hyatt rode with their younger children while Edward bicycled alongside with two of the older children. They arrived at their destination after traveling 600 miles in 30 days and spending \$63.

Students who made field trips with him to Idyllwild helped build a school tennis court. San Jacinto, parents refused to send their children to the new Hemet High School, in fierce loyalty to the popular teacher.

After making a name for himself locally, Hyatt was appointed Superintendent of Schools for Riverside County. This gave him an opportunity to visit each school district and to inspire students and teachers.

Eventually, he was elected Superintendent of Schools for the State of California and his fame and influence spread throughout the United States. He succeeded inspired teachers to enjoy teaching and to make instruction interesting to the students. He encouraged construction of athletic fields and beautification of school grounds.

It is no wonder that a local school would be named after the dedicated educator.

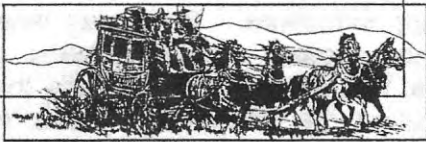
To learn more about Edward Hyatt, read the book The Hyatt Legacy, written by his daughter Phyllis H. Gardiner.

- Rebecca Marshall Farnbach

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