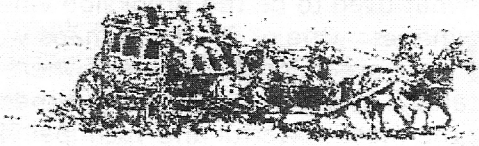


TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

February 2009

Volume 9 – 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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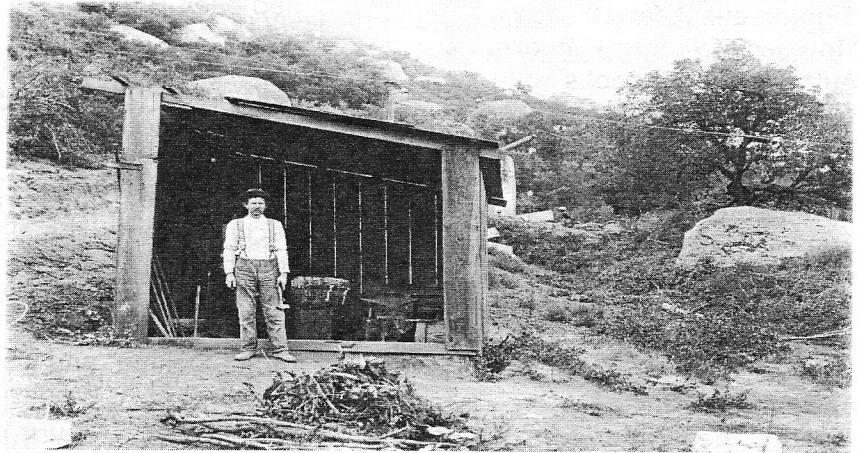
Temecula Valley Historical Society

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Charles McVicker, Blacksmith at Temecula Quarry, Circa 1900
-- Photo Courtesy Vi Carlson

We Almost Had the Airport in Wine Country

By Audrey Cilurzo

Few people are around to remember but when Rancho California originally started. The airstrip was along Diaz road. Kaiser had put it there in their master plan because it would be near the proposed industrial area. This was done without studying the prevailing wind patterns. Almost immediately it was very apparent this was probably the worst place for an airport. The cross winds were horrific and only very experienced pilots were advised to land or take off. Unfortunately there was a terrible accident. A plane slammed into a hanger killing 2 or 3 people and the son of the airport manager was in the building. He was burned and badly disfigured. It was very sad.

The county airport committee decided to move the airport to a safer location. A study was made. Kaiser, the developer of the Vail ranch, wanted the airport to be on the Vail ranch, as it would be financially advantageous to them. Land around airports became industrial, and worth more financially. A hearing date was set and all residents were invited. The population was small and there were several hundred acres of vineyard but few wineries. We all went to the hearing. We had been told there were 4 or 5 sites being considered for the airport.

The minute we looked at the maps of the proposed new airport

Continued on Page 2

Calendar Of Events

Saturday, February 7 –

11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Barnes & Noble, book Signing event for 10 area "Images of America" books. Authors (11) of books covering the history of Anza thru Fallbrook, Temecula, Murrieta, Murrieta Hot Springs, Menifee, San Jacinto, Hemet and others will be available to sign copies. Fund raiser event for VaARRA.

Monday, February 9 –

Monthly meeting at Pujol Schoolhouse -- 6 to 8 p.m. 3 great-grandchildren of Fritz Guenther will share with us "Growing Up at the Hot Springs."

Monday, March 9 –

Monthly meeting at Pujol Schoolhouse – 6 to 8 p.m. Audrey Cilurzo will speak on "How Prohibition Changed the Palate of America."

Monday, April 13 –

Monthly meeting at Pujol Schoolhouse – 6 to 8 p.m. Bill McBurney and Mimi Milholland "The History of French Valley."

Monday, May 11 –

Monthly meeting at Pujol Schoolhouse – 6 to 8 p.m. Bill Irwin who lived at Murrieta Hot Springs when Alive Polarity owned the Property, will talk about that era of "springs" history.

those of us who lived in what is now wine country knew we were in "Big Trouble". There were 3 small maps of proposed airport sites and a great big one of what used to be the Brookside vineyard, now Ponte and Wiens wineries. One of the small maps was in "VALLE LOS CABALLOS", the area along De Portola where all the horse ranches were located. In the early to late 70's these horse owners were politically the most powerful and vocal people in Rancho California. The second site was in Las Ranchitos, along Ynez road, an area of expensive 2 1/2 acres estates. I can't remember where the third suggested site was, but we all knew we had been HAD!

A hearing was held to meet the letter of the law and we all let the committee know that we did not want the airport in the area that was becoming Wine Country. We tried to make the committee realize the future potential of the area for vineyards. Committee members remained unmoved and we knew they were going to decide to move the airport to Rancho California Road east of Anza. Up until that point the group from Brookside who owned the land had testified, but not vehemently. The winemakers name was Bill and I can't remember his last name. He was tall broad shouldered, tough looking, and was an excellent speaker. He said, "If you decide to take Brookside vineyard for your airport we cannot stop you. However before you make that decision there are several facts you need to understand." Bill went on for almost half an hour and explained in great detail.

1. How much the land cost, and the cost of preparing it to plant grape vines.
2. The cost of vines, & cost to bring the vines to production.
3. How many tons per acre that mature healthy vines produce.
4. Cost of making and aging the wine.
5. Number of cases of wine produced from every acre of grapes.
6. Finally the amount of money Brookside expected to make from every acre.

As he went along he kept a running account of not only how much Brookside had invested in the land but also how much money they received from the sale of grapes. The total figure was in the millions! Finally Bill finished by saying, "These are the figures you will need to pay us for the land and vineyards and don't for one minute think we will not fight you for every dollar". Then he sat down.

The airport committee looked shaken. Then Alex Borel got up and said "The only reason you wanted the airport along Rancho California Road is because that is what Kaiser wants. Our family has hundreds of acres along Winchester Road. It is a county road, everyone knows where it is, it's more accessible and we would like to have the airport on our property so we could zone some of our land commercial."

Kaiser did not get the airport on their land, however most people will agree it is better along Winchester Road, thanks to Alex Borel. A few years later Brookside was sold and the business dismantled. The vineyards were also sold. We heard Bill took a wine making job in Napa.

I'm sure as soon as this is printed I will remember Bill's last name or someone reading this will remember.

Thanks Bill----- WE owe you a lot!!!

Presidents Message

want to thank Anne Miller for the wonderful presentation she put on at our January meeting, about the 1847 Mormon Battalion's march through Temecula. Her research disclosed new facts about their route and activities.

February will be the month for goal setting for the Temecula Valley Historical Society for 2009. At our meeting on Monday, February 9th at 6:00 p.m. at the old Pujol School House on Santiago Road in Temecula, following the presentation by members of the Guenther Family on their life as they were raised at Murrieta Hot Springs, we will spend time discussing goals for the year. If you can attend, please be ready to suggest something that we might do to improve our membership, and spread the word about the history of the Temecula Valley.

If you cannot attend please send me an e-mail at jandp.moore@roadrunner.com or call me at (951) 302-9536 with your suggestions.

Jimmy Moore

Perfect Marriage

Adam and Eve had the most perfect marriage in history: Eve never talked about her old boyfriends, and Adam never bragged about his mother's cooking.

Mormon Battalion Trek

Over 350 Greet Re-enactors During Special History Event

By Rebecca Marshall Farnbach

Our local history community pulled together to host a remarkable event on Saturday, January 24, when we hosted Kevin and Denny Henson and Peter Guilbert, who reenacted the Mormon Battalion. The story of their research, planning and retracing one of the longest American military marches of history, keeping to the original trails as closely as possible is a fascinating story, one that they willingly shared with us.

The re-enactors greeted over 350 visitors in their historic encampment near the Little Temecula History Center, where Kevin and Peter showed camping gear and military equipment from the time period. Denny, meanwhile, stirred up cornbread and beans over an open fire and demonstrated washing clothes in a nearby tub. Sponsoring organizations set up informative displays inside the new addition to the history center. After dark, visitors enjoyed presentations about the Mormon Battalion given by Anne Miller and Kevin Henson.

The Historical Society sold DVDs at a table staffed by Norm Taylor and others.

Everyone enjoyed themselves and learned a lot, but stepping aside to look at the big picture, something else remarkable was the congeniality of the sponsoring organizations. Those participating were: the Vail Ranch Restoration Association, Temecula Valley Historical Society, the Temecula Valley Genealogical Society, the Temecula Valley Museum, Pechanga Cultural Department, Southern Emigrant Trail Association, and the Murrieta Public Library.

7th Annual Children's Matsuri Planned

On Saturday, June 6 the Temecula Sister City Association will host its 7th Annual Children's Matsuri Festival. The festival is primarily to bring Japanese culture and fun to Southern California kids, but also is to educate about the history, culture, foods and games while promoting international friendship. Temecula's Japanese Sister City is Daisen-Nakayama.

The event planned for Old Town will include craft activities, games, exhibits, demonstrations and entertainment performances all geared to teach attendees about the Japanese culture and international friendship.

For more info check: www.TemeculaSisterCityAssociation.org

Help TVHS to Go Green . . . Save a Tree
Sign up to get your TVHS Newsletter
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To Sign Up, call or e-mail
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Temecula Valley Historical Society
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Membership Activity

New Memberships

Hidden Market Realty
William Culver

Renewals

Doug & Sally Hasserot

Remember !
Beginning in
February 2009
TVHS Meetings
Will be Held
2nd Monday
Each Month
6 to 8 p.m.
Pujol Schoolhouse

TVHS Newsletter, Volume 9 – Issue 2
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Page 4 – February 2009

“Share Your Stories”

The Murrieta Public Library and TVHS have partnered as part of the California Storytelling Project. Individuals can video record their stories for local archiving. It would be wonderful for each member of the Society to tell at least one story about their history and/or family.

To find out more about the project and to volunteer your story, please call
Joshua Fox, Historian and Archivist
At the Murrieta Library
951-461-6143