

TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

April 2013

Volume 13 – Issue 4

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.

2011 Officers

President Bonnie Martland
Vice President Dick Fox
Secretary Elaine Culverhouse
Treasurer Roger Cude
Past President Jimmy Moore

Directors

Bill Harker Lynn Cude
Bonnie Reed Darell Farnbach
Lisa Woodward Thomas Long
Jeffery Harmon
Myra Masiel-Zamora

Committee Chairs

Research & Preservation

Darell Farnbach

Public Relations

Dick Fox

Membership

Lynn Cude

Program Speakers

Rebecca Farnbach

Projects

Jimmy Moore

Events/Education

Lisa Woodward

Historian

Thomas Long

A Publication of the
Temecula Valley Historical Society
P.O. Box 157
Temecula, CA 92593
951-303-6860
www.temeculahistoricalsociety.org



In Remembrance of Bill Harker

William Allen Harker was born September 23, 1916 to Harry Harker and Edith Bahn in Long Beach, California. In 1940 he married Virginia Bosch and they had three children: Rich, Harriet and Jim. They were married 33 years when Virginia passed away. He married Evelyn Moyer in 1973 and became the father of Jean, Georgia, Bob, Don, Sandy, Patty, Jimmy and John. He raised three of Evelyn's children as his own. As a father, he made each of the 11 children feel special and unique.

He was dedicated in his commitment to the community and its growth. He always went above and beyond and often did not take credit, but gave it to others.

Bill had a way of encouraging everyone around him. He listened and inspired us to realize what we could accomplish. He was confident with his ideas and found solutions for us to consider. He was an engineer, cattle driver, city mayor and councilman, yachtsman, aviator, storyteller, musician, poet, cartoonist, photographer, worm farmer, editor, civil servant, event planner, volunteer, skydiver and friend. His sense of humor and the numerous stories he told kept us in laughter. He touched everyone's heart.

(Excerpts from Bill's eulogy written by his children)

(Continued on Page 2)

Calendar Of Events

Monday, April 22 – 6 p.m.

TVHS monthly meeting at Little Temecula History Center
Anne Miller will present
"Unexpected Findings about Temecula's History." She will explain the new information she found while researching the Southern Emigrant Trail; some of which corrects old misperceptions about local history

Monday, May 20 – 6 p.m.

TVHS monthly meeting at Little Temecula History Center
Steve Williamson will present
"Erle Stanley Gardner and the Harry Oaks Trial"

Temecula Valley Museum Exhibition

March 8 – April 28
"Make it Hot (rod)
Automotive Hollywood: A Tribute to Harley J. Earl

THANKS FOR RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP:

Corona Family

S. Crall

D. & S. Dechert

D. Garcia

I. Hotchkiss

P. Lallou

M. Lavezzari

L. & H. Lovaas

G. & M. Thyzel

Harker (Continued from Page 1)

Darell and I would add that he gave of his energies and enthusiasm up until his last days. During one of the conversations we had with him in his last week of life, he expressed the sadness that he would not live to see the Vail Ranch restoration.

He was an example to us in how he lived and in how he died. Before coming to Temecula, he was a city council member and served as mayor in Temple City. He served for many years as the treasurer of the Temecula Valley Historical Society and as a director on the Vail Ranch Restoration Association board. He performed his duties in the roles diligently and attended functions of the organizations until the last few months of his life when he became less mobile.

It was always fun to be around Bill. His keen mind was always at work on something, whether to solve a problem for one of the organizations, or to put together a model jenny airplane. He never lost a childish sense of wonder about the world around him and a sense of humor about people and events. Bill embraced non-conventional ideas, including the request that he be able to attend his own funeral so he could hear what people said about him.

As we review Bill's long list of accomplishments and reflect on his enjoyment of life and the people around him, we realize what a privilege it was to know him and to spend time with him.

We will miss Bill and will savor memories of him for the rest of our lives.

~Darell and Rebecca Farnbach~



Cowboy Bill and Rebecca
Photo submitted by Rebecca Farnbach

Temecula Union School

Class of 1953

June 4, 1953

Lake Elsinore Valley Sun

The auditorium was decorated with a variety of colorful cut flowers for the graduation exercises held Monday night at the grammar school. Phillip Barnett opened the program with greetings from the school. The third, fourth and fifth grades sang several numbers and the upper grades sang a medley of popular songs accompanied by Mrs. Annie Knott.

Merle Harback, principal of the school, made the address to the graduating class, using as his theme "Keep in your soul some degree of magnificence."

Stanley Hilton, valedictorian of the class, addressed the parents and friends. The class will was read by Albert Mora and Sally Evans gave a tap dance.

Among the awards announced by Principal Harback was the Curtis Publishing Company certificate to Ralph Friedemann for obtaining the largest number of subscriptions from the school during the year. For the citizenship quizzes from the weekly scholastic paper, Stanley Hilton received the highest award with a rate of 99.3; Johnny Snideman had a rate of 98.2; Susie Salas with 86.9 and George Snideman with 80.9.

(Continued on Page 4)

Harker (Continued from Page 2)

A Bill Harker Story recalled by Keith Johnson

At the end of the work week, there was a group of us that would meet on Friday evenings in Old Town on a patio behind an old bar. We would drink whiskey or some other hard beverage sharing stories of the past week while overlooking the often dry riverbed.

As the group grew in number, we gave it a name...The Temecula Yacht Club. We enjoyed many Friday evenings together. The club continued to grow and soon we were wearing T-shirts and hats that bore the club's name.

Over time, the name of the club changed to the "Temecula Whale Watching Club". Again, we had club T-shirts and hats made. People use to ask me how we came up with the name. The answer was simple. We would be sitting on the patio overlooking the river with a small ray of daylight left and after four or five drinks; you'd swear you saw a whale swimming down the river."

My Last Visit with Bill – by Dick Fox

Bill indicated he had always wondered what the "great beyond" would be like, but that he didn't want to give the other alternative much thought.

I told Bill the story about the man who had requested that he be buried with a fork in his hand, and when asked why, the man said, "when I was a kid at home and Mom cleared the table preparing for dessert – she always told everyone to keep their fork because the best was yet to come." Bill chuckled and repeated "Yes, the best is yet to come."

I told him we all loved him, and he responded with a firm voice and solid hand shake -- "I love you too."

Words expressed by Maryann Edwards, Mayor Pro Tem

"Perhaps it was that his 96 years had simply allowed him the time necessary to join, advise, found, and help to orchestrate just about every good thing that has taken place in Temecula. But I suspect it was more his business acumen, management skills, generosity, sense of adventure, love of people, and his very big heart that made Bill Harker a local legend and friend to almost everyone he met. I'm very glad he was mine, and I will miss him terribly."

(Continued from Page 3)

Stanley Hilton presented the upper grade teacher, Kenneth Robinson, with a gift on behalf of the class, while the Parent-Teachers organization presented each graduate with a gift. A reception honoring the graduates followed the program.

Walter Kitch, president of the Board of Trustees, presented diplomas of graduation to Stanley Hilton, Jesse Corn, John C. Fisher, Joseph A. Gruner, Albert Mora and Louie R. Mora.

Join us
at the History Center
at 5:30 p.m. prior to the
monthly meeting for a
“Meet & Greet”.
Enjoy cake and coffee
with us.
We’d like to get to know
you!



*May your powder be dry
May your horse stay true*

Happy Trails Wild Bill

President's Message by Bonnie Martland

With Bill Harker's passing, many of us lost a most remarkable personal friend; and TVHS lost a founder, a supporter and an inspiration. He loved history, his community, his family, his friends and living life to the fullest, and that he certainly did until his very last day! He lived life with a sense of adventure and curiosity, wit and wonder, and with concern for others. The best tribute I can give to Bill is to share with you his own words, this letter I received from him only a few months ago.

BILL HARKER

November 15, 2012
Temecula Valley
Historical Society

Dear President Bonnie
and Fellow Board Members:

As I near the end of my twelve year journey as a member of your board I wish to take this opportunity to thank you for the many honors, recognitions and gifts you have bestowed on me along the way.

It has been a wonderful trip, bumpy at times, but we always seemed to reach our destinations. The passengers have changed over the years as we dropped some off and picked up new ones at various stops along the trail.

The frosting on the cake, for me, was this year's annual dinner. I appreciate and am humbled by the things you have done for me and shall be ever grateful for the friendships I developed along the way.

I hope, my physical condition permitting, to continue attending your board meetings as a non-voting member emeritus. That beautiful model stagecoach will be a constant reminder, to the day of my last breath, of the trip I was so fortunate to share with you.

I love you all and wish you a Happy Thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

Bill

Bill will always be an inspiration to me.
Sincerely, Bonnie