

# TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## NEWSLETTER

July 2016  
Volume 16 Issue 7

*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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A Publication of the

**Temecula Valley Historical Society**  
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Temecula, CA 92593

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The 2016 High School Scholarship recipients who were able to attend the June 27 monthly meeting are: Brendan Lenhart to the far left, Bonnie Martland Scholarship Committee Chair, and Julia Monterosso to far right. Brendan graduated from Great Oak High School and Julia graduated from Murrieta Mesa High School.

## Temecula Valley Historical Society Meets Recipients of 2016 Scholarships

The Temecula Valley Historical Society Scholarship Committee awarded four one thousand dollar scholarships this year. Two one thousand dollar scholarships were awarded to graduating seniors in Temecula and two to graduating seniors in Murrieta. One of the criteria for the scholarships is that they go to students interested in studying history or a history related field. At our June meeting we were lucky enough to have two of our scholarship recipients in attendance, Julia Monterosso and Brendan Lenhart.

Julia Monterosso, a graduate of Murrieta Mesa High School, is interested in studying political science with an emphasis on politics and law. A cheerleader, she was also a member of the CSF honor club, drama club and a participant in the cheerleading championships. Julia will be pursuing her studies at Colorado State University beginning in August.

Brendan Lenhart is a graduate of Temecula's Great Oak High School. Brendan plans to attend Vanguard College in Costa Mesa beginning this fall. Brendan was a member of the Great Oak varsity football team and will major in history, planning to teach. He will be joining

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## Scholarship Recipients Hosted . . .

his older brother who is also attending Vanguard with plans to be a lawyer.

Sarah Lavin, a graduate of Temecula Valley High School also received a scholarship. She was unable to attend the meeting as she had a former commitment that required her being out of the country. Sarah will be heading to northern California to attend college and will major in English with a minor in history. At TVHS Sarah was a member of the band and the National Honor Society. An excellent writer, she also formed a cancer cure funding organization called "Support the Kids."

Spencer Carillo is the second scholarship recipient from Murrieta. Spencer attended Murrieta Valley High School. His preferred field of study is economics and statistics. He was a co-founder of the UN program at his high school using the Model United Nations program. He was in the Scholar Bowl, the debate decathlon Olympiad and the Key Club. Spencer was accepted at Williamstown University in Massachusetts.

Bonnie Martland, Chairman of the Scholarship Committee, would like to thank the Board of Directors for their support, the membership for their generous donations to the scholarship fund and thank everyone who attended the scholarship fund-raising events such as the spaghetti dinner at Casa Loma, the Presidential music event at the Merc and the annual meeting and dinner. She extends a special thank you to members of the scholarship committee for all their help and support and time spent reading applications and selecting our scholarship recipients.

## Membership

**Thank You for renewing your membership**

*Lisa Woodward*

## Volunteers Needed

**By Sue Blanch**

We are embarking on new territory this year with the opening of the Vail Ranch Headquarters business site. With that in mind, we have plenty of opportunities for volunteers to have lots of fun on us!

Right now we are looking for people interested in manning the Little Temecula History Center on Sundays. The center is open from noon to 5:00 pm so we would need help from 11:45 am to 5:15 pm to cover opening and closing the site. We will need at least two volunteers each Sunday. This will involve keeping a watchful eye on the center; talking with visitors about the artifacts and local historical facts; and handling minor sales. If you feel uncomfortable talking about our local history, don't worry...we have some fact sheets and guidelines to get you through until it becomes second nature.

Also, in July on Saturday the 16th is the Ribbon Cutting Event at the Vail Headquarters Business Site and on Sunday the 17th will be a Family Fun Day. It would be great to have as many volunteers as possible those two days. Docents will be needed on Saturday between the hours of 10:00 am and 5:00 pm and Sunday from 11:00 am to 5:00 pm. We would like to have each volunteer for two to three hour shifts, depending on how many people sign up.

Docents will function as greeters; guides to inform patrons where things are located on site; and historical resources for questions asked by patrons. We will have a training package for these docents so you can relax and enjoy the experience. We will also need individuals to back up the volunteers in the Little Temecula History Center those days. Dress can be in either period costume or modern clothing.

We are setting a tentative get together date of Sunday, July 10th at 1:00 pm at the Little Temecula History Center for all docents. On that day you will all be able to get familiar with the site; get your training material; and we can iron out any scheduling difficulties.

This is an exciting time for us and it will be fun being involved on opening weekend. Once the site is open, we might want to have docents on hand for a few hours each Saturday and Sunday for a few weeks until the site becomes more familiar to the community.

Please contact Sue Blanch at [snb4me@hotmail.com](mailto:snb4me@hotmail.com) if you are interested. I guarantee you will have a great time and will touch the hearts of our local community. In the fall, look for more opportunities to volunteer. We will have plenty of new ways for everyone to participate. For now, thanks for your time and efforts!

*Time to Celebrate, So Let's Party . . .*

## **Historic Route 395 Segment Dedicated**

**By Jeffery G. Harmon**

On May 26, 2016, the city of Moreno Valley installed four Historic Route 395 signs on a two mile stretch of the former highway. They also stenciled several 395 Highway shields on the street's asphalt. After the installation, what did they do? They threw a party on Memorial Day!

Highway 395 traveled south from Riverside up the Box Springs Grade following the railroad tracks to Perris. It traveled on the west side of the town of Edgemont towards March Air Field. With America entering into World War II, traffic increased between Riverside and March. The traffic jam slowed efforts to move troops and materials to the battlefield. A ten mile stretch was widened to a four-lane divided highway in 1942. This stretch would continue to serve the area up until it was bypassed in the 1990s.

Today, the former Highway 395 is known as Old 215 Frontage Road, a sad misnomer. It stretches from Eucalyptus Avenue to Cactus Avenue. Edgemont was absorbed into the city of Moreno Valley in 1984. The former bustling highway is now a faded memory.

In 2015, the city of Riverside installed thirty Historic Route 395 signs. Bob Miles, Keith Mullins and other residents of Moreno Valley saw the signs and began a movement to install signs in their area. The City immediately bought four signs, but it was decided to wait and have an official ribbon cutting ceremony. The dedication ceremony would take place at the American Legion Post 574.

Melissa Martinez, a resident of the Edgemont area, called for a community cleanup in preparation for the event. First, the American Legion Post needed to be spruced up. Melissa, several children, and a few adults spent thirty days giving the Post a facelift and painting a beautiful American flag mural on the south side of the building. Next, Melissa organized a group to collect trash and large debris around the area for two days before the event. The civic pride in the community was evident.

As the sun slowly rose, classic cars rumbled down the former highway and drove into the Post's parking lot. March Air Field Museum brought a jeep to show. The Moreno Valley Historical Society was the host of the event. The Temecula Valley Historical Society had a booth featuring the Historic Route 395 Association. The Gilman Ranch, Lake Perris State Park, and the Moreno Valley Genealogical Society set up interesting booths as well.

Speeches were made, certificates of recognition were passed out and soon the ribbon was cut dedicating the historic highway. Afterwards, veterans fired up the grill to serve lunch. Attendees, who purchased a \$5 lunch from the bartender, loaded up their plates with beans, chips and either a hamburger or a Polish sausage.

By 2:00 p.m., the classic cars had driven on down the highway, the booths were packed up, and the attendees began to leave. Event planners began talks on how to improve the next year's event. It was truly an honor to be a part of this event.

This is what the 395 program is all about, celebrating the highway, getting the community together, taking pride in its historic heritage, and reviving the area. Congratulations Moreno Valley! Thank you for joining the 395 family!

### **HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT OUR LOCAL HISTORY?**

*Some questions not specifically related to Temecula this month . . .*

1. There has been recent mention of using drones to find old wagon roads and trails. Is this likely to be successful?
2. Some have asked how they might find their ancestor's homestead or land they purchased from the government many years ago.

**Answers on page 5**

## 50 years ago:

*Temecula Topics by Evelyn Kilgore*

*February 2, 1966 Lake Elsinore Valley Sun*

All of Temecula is saddened by the death of one of the old timers, Ole Larsen. Mr. Larsen passed away at the St. Bernadine's Hospital in San Bernardino, Thursday, January 20<sup>th</sup> at the age of 79.

He was born in Rainbow Valley, Feb. 22, 1886 and at the age of 20 went to work for Hugh McConville at the livery stable in Temecula where his duties included taking care of the switchboard 24 hours a day connecting calls to Vail Ranch, Murrieta, and three rock Quarries just outside of town.

Ole left the livery stable in 1909 and on and off for a good many years worked for the U.S. government inspecting the surveying and sectioning of various Indian Reservations, among them Pechanga, Pala, Rincon, and Cahuilla.

About 1914, Ole started a little barbershop in the small building on Main St. next to the old bank building, which Carl and Edna Swanguen now use as a storage place. From 1927 until 1930,

Ole's barbershop was in Fallbrook just across the street from Whitey's. On Jan. 13, 1930 Naomi Lee of Fallbrook and Ole were married and returned to Temecula where he again opened a barber shop where the post office now. In 1944, Ole went to work barbering at the Murrieta Hot Springs where he remained until his death.

Ole was town constable where he succeeded the late Robert Beauchamp and was elected to a new term in 1964.

Masonic services were held Sat. morning, Jan. 19th at 10:30 at Berry-Bell Mortuary in Fallbrook and graveside services were held in the Temecula Cemetery at 11:30. Ole leaves a host of friends besides his wife Naomi of Temecula and a daughter, Barbara Lee Nelson and three grandsons of Fallbrook.

My thanks to Mrs. Helene Seay for the above history on some of Mr. Larson's life.

## Hold the Presses!

*(Temecula history is filled with stories of strong women)*

Mrs. Naomi Larsen, Constable of Temecula and Murrieta districts and wife of our late constable Ole Larsen, attended the Riverside County Academy for Marshals and Constables at Banning last Saturday, May 7.

Naomi has attended nearly every school meeting since she was appointed Deputy Constable in January 1962. Naomi is a well known resident of Temecula and a real young "old timer". (Source: May 18, 1966 Lake Elsinore Valley Sun)

## Field Trip Announcement

On Tuesday July 12<sup>th</sup> the Historical Society is having a field trip to Myrtle Botanical Gardens in Fallbrook. We are meeting in the parking lot across from the Red Barn at 9:15 and leaving at 9:30. The drive is only 12 miles. We will have a docent leading us for the one and a half hour tour. That's including any questions you may have. The cost is two dollars for the walking tour.

Then we will be led to a very large plantation house that is still owned today by the General Sherman family. It is not inhabited today but is open for tours for five dollars. The total cost for both the walking tour and plantation house then will be seven dollars. On the grounds are a lot of very large oak trees so we won't be affected by direct sunlight.

After the tour you can have lunch at the Bloom Restaurant serving sandwiches and salads at a very reasonable price. Sandwiches include turkey club, salads include strawberry macadamia salad, and also mandarin chicken salad. They have Myrtle lemonade to drink. Desserts include Myrtle berry pie, peach, lemon and creamy chocolate peanut butter pies.

Directions are -- 15 frwy. to 395 turnoff go right to 395 turn left to Reche road turn right and address is 2940 Reche Rd. Fallbrook 92028. Any questions or to sign up please call Phil Washum at 951-201-0020.

## Recent Event Participation

On Saturday, June 4 the Temecula Valley Museum held an inaugural version of a new event known as Western Cultural Heritage Day. A variety of music was available during the event hours. Unfortunately it ended up being the hottest day of the year, and coupled with a local fire near the I-15 freeway which caused an enormous traffic nightmare – the visitor traffic to the event was below expectations. Thanks to Shari Crall, Suzanne Dechert, and Bob Kent for toughing it out and staffing the TVHS booth, where folks could have their face appear in an opening of an old west scene. The picture board was on loan from the Temecula Valley Museum.

The following Saturday, June 11 was the Museum's 14<sup>th</sup> annual spring Bazaar. Once again the Temecula Valley Historical Society shared a booth with the Temecula Valley Genealogical Society. Bonnie Martland and Cheryl Cady helped out, and sold 3 of our Historic Route 395 signs, and a DVD. Bonnie created some interesting photo art that demonstrated what she has learned with a new computer program. She sold some of her creations.

## Announcing: 25-year Time Capsule Event

When: **Tuesday, July 12, 2016**

Time: **9:30 a.m.**

Where: Fire Station #1  
41825 Juniper Street  
Murrieta, California

Presented by: *Murrieta Valley Historical Society*

In celebration of Murrieta's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of cityhood, the public is invited to join the Murrieta Valley Historical Society as we unearth a city time capsule. Murrieta became a city on July 1, 1991. To celebrate, the first city council buried the time capsule at Fire Station #1 to be opened in July 2016.

Past city council members and civic leaders have been invited to join the community celebration. Light refreshments will be provided by the Historical Society.

After the ceremony, the items discovered in the time capsule will be put on display in the Heritage Room at the Murrieta Public Library.

Please direct all questions and inquiries to the Murrieta Valley Historical Society, 951-397-4862 or [murrietahistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:murrietahistoricalsociety@gmail.com)

## July Meeting Announcement

On Monday, July 25<sup>th</sup>, the Temecula Valley Museum and the Temecula Valley Historical Society will co-host a presentation about a disaster that took place in the South China Sea in 1874. Robert S. Wells will give the program at the Temecula Civic Center Conference room at 6 pm.

Captain Wells retired from a distinguished 30-year career with the US Navy, during which time he commanded a warship that sailed the South China Sea. He also served in presidential administrations. While in the White House in 2006, he discovered the story he will tell.

Set in the era of the 1870's when Chinese emigrants were coming to America by ship to work on railroads, mines, and as farm laborers, the midnight outbreak of a coal fire caused the tragic loss of life of 400 passengers returning to China aboard the *SS Japan*, just hours before their scheduled arrival in Hong Kong.

After study of lost documents and survivors' accounts, he compiled a book "*Voices from the Bottom of the South China Sea: The Untold Story of America's Largest Chinese Emigrant Disaster*", which will be available at his presentation. The public is invited to attend at no charge. There will be a social time with refreshments beginning at 5:30 pm.

## Local History Answers:

1. Drones are good for many tasks, but they rarely, if ever, will find any previously unidentified old wagon roads and trails. First of all, during the past 100 years, aerial photographs have provided detailed images of virtually all of the country. And we also have excellent satellite images. So if a drone photo shows a "newly found old trail or road," it is probably not old. Starting in the mid-1800s, surveyors documented most of the section lines in the U.S., including the rivers, roads, and trails they crossed. Sections are usually a mile square so they would not have missed much. We also have many other surveys done for land sales and large land grants. "Newly found trails or roads" are almost always roads and trails created in more recent years by people on foot, vehicles, livestock and/or wild animals.
2. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management, General Land Office Records' free website at [www.glorerecords.blm.gov](http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov) is a good place to find property your ancestor may have homesteaded or purchased from the Federal Government. You can search for the person's name and state as well just by the legal description of the property. In many cases, the image of the actual final document is available online. This website does not include land in the eastern part of the U.S. and on early large land grants such as the old ranchos in the Temecula area.

To submit questions or for more information, contact Anne Miller at [DMEAJM@earthlink.net](mailto:DMEAJM@earthlink.net)

## Old Temecula Movie pieces . . .

(*Lake Elsinore Valley Press Newspaper*, Miss Elizabeth Nienke reporting)

**September 23, 1921** -- A group of movie people under Director Clemments, took a few wild west scenes at the Temecula depot just as the afternoon train came in Monday.

**October 21, 1921** -- It will be of interest to people of this section to know that the picture being shown at Grauman's Theatre in Los Angeles, "The Three Word Brand," is the one taken in Temecula this last February, when a special train brought in Bill Hart, Jane Novak and their many players.

Mrs. Houseman and son have secured the old pool hall of Mrs. Louie Escallier in which to show their motion pictures every Tuesday evening. "In Old Kentucky," featuring Anita Stewart was shown to a full house Tuesday. "The Thunderbolt" will be shown next week.