

TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

July 2017
Volume 17 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
P.O. Box 157
Temecula, CA 92593

www.temeculahistoricalsociety.org



Changing with the times

Area Military Bases Also Early Aviation Pioneer Sites

(Compiled from Internet Sources)

March is one of the oldest airfields operated by the United States military, being established as Alessandro Flying Training Field in February 1918. It was one of thirty-two Air Service training camps established after the United States entry into World War I in April 1917. The airfield was renamed March Field the following month for 2d Lieutenant Peyton C. March, Jr. Lt. March was killed in an air crash in Texas just fifteen days after being commissioned, and was the son of then-Army Chief of Staff Peyton C. March.

By late April 1918, enough progress had been made in the construction of the new field to allow the arrival of the first troops. The commander of the 818th Aero Squadron detachment, Captain William Carruthers, took over as the field's first commander and for a time operated out of an office in the Mission Inn. Within a record 60 days, the grain stubble-covered plain of Moreno Valley had been partially transformed to include twelve hangars, six barracks equipped for 150 men each, mess halls, a machine shop, post exchange, hospital, a supply depot, an aero repair building, bachelor officer's quarters and a residence for the commanding officer. March Field eventually saw the construction of some 50 buildings. It covered over 700 acres and could accommodate up to 1,000 personnel. Dozens of wooden buildings served as headquarters, maintenance, and officers' quarters. Enlisted men had to bivouac in tents.

The signing of the armistice in November 1918 did not halt training at March Field. However, by 1921, the decision had been made to phase down all activities at the base in accordance with sharply reduced military budgets. By the spring of 1923, March Field was deactivated as an active duty airfield, how-

Early Military Aviation Pioneer Sites

ever, and a small caretaker unit was assigned to the facility for administrative reasons. It was used by the aerial forestry patrol. It also was used intermittently to support small military units.

March Field remained quiet for only a short time. In July 1926, Congress created the Army Air Corps and approved the Army's five-year plan which called for an expansion in pilot training and the activation of tactical units. Accordingly, funds were appropriated for the reopening of March Field in March 1927.

In the decade before World War II, March Field took on much of its current appearance and also began to gain prominence. Lieutenant Colonel Henry H. (Hap) Arnold, base commander from 1931 to 1936, began a series of well-publicized maneuvers to gain public attention. This resulted in a visit by Governor James Rolph in March 1932, numerous visits by Hollywood celebrities including Bebe Daniels, Wallace Beery, Rochelle Hudson and others, and visits by famous aviators including Amelia Earhart. Articles in Los Angeles newspapers also kept March Field in the news and brought to it considerable public attention. The completion of the first phase of permanent buildings in 1934 added to the scenic quality of the base.

The Attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 quickly brought March Field back into the business of training aircrews. Throughout World War II, many soon-to-be-famous bombardment groups performed their final training at March before embarking for duty in the Pacific.

And North Island . . .

The U.S. Navy's first aviator, Lieutenant Theodore Ellyson, and many of his colleagues were trained at North Island starting as early as 1911. This was just eight years after Orville and Wilbur Wright flew the first manned aircraft at Kitty Hawk. At that time, North Island was an uninhabited sand flat. It had been used in the late 19th century for horseback riding and hunting by guests of J. D. Spreckels resort hotel, the Hotel del Coronado.

North Island was commissioned a Naval Air Station in 1917, called Naval Air Station San Diego until 1955. On August 15, 1963, the station was granted official recognition as the "Birthplace of Naval Aviation" by resolution of the House Armed Services Committee.

North Island derived its name from the original geography. In the nineteenth century it was referred to as North Coronado Island, because it was separated from South Coronado (now the city of Coronado) by a shallow bay known as the Spanish Bight, which was later filled in during World War II.

In 1886, North Coronado Island and South Coronado were purchased by a developer to become a residential resort. South Coronado, which is not actually an island but the terminus of a peninsula known as the Silver Strand, became the city of Coronado.

Fortunately for the Navy, North Coronado was never developed. Instead, Glenn Curtiss opened a flying school and held a lease to the property until the beginning of World War I. Curtiss invited both the Army and Navy to use the site for aviation training, with the Navy being the first to open a station in 1912. However the Navy abandoned its camp and did not return for five years, while the Army established an aviation school in 1913 at the southern end of the island. In 1917, Congress appropriated the land and two airfields were commissioned on its sandy flats. The Navy started with a tent city known as "Camp Trouble". As its name suggests, things did not always go well in the early days. The Navy shared North Island with the United States Army's Signal Corps, Air Service and Air Corps Rockwell Field until 1937, when the Army left and the Navy expanded its operations to cover the whole of North Island.

Forefathers of today's "Blue Angels", the three-plane "Sea Hawks" from VF-6B, the "Felix the Cat" squadron, were thrilling audiences with flight demonstrations as early as 1928. They demonstrated the training skills of Navy fighter and bomber pilots and on many occasions, flew their aircraft in formation with the wings tethered together.



Meet the Members — Featuring — Bob Kent

Bob Kent was born in 1943 on a farm in east Texas. After graduating from Terrell High School, he served five years in the United States Air Force (1961-1966). He attended college on the G. I. Bill and in 1972, received a BS Degree in Geology from the University of Texas at Austin. After a 30-year career as a Hydrogeologist and Environmental Consultant, he retired and returned to college. In 2007, he received a Master's degree in History from Boise State University, Idaho. Bob has authored over 60 professional papers on groundwater and environmental issues and numerous other articles on the historical aspects of urban and infrastructure development in the western United States. Bob has published two books. The first book, *Growing Up in Alsa*, is a history of three generations on the farm. The second book, *A Rebel Lady In Harlem: The Transformation of Josephine Cogdell Schuyler* traces the life of a privileged white child from the segregated town of Granbury, Texas to Harlem and her marriage to George Schuyler a well-known black newspaper journalist. Their child, Philippa, who had an IQ of 185, was a world famous concert pianist. His current research interests include development in southern California during the late 1800s, especially in Riverside and San Diego Counties. Bob and his wife, Suzie moved to Menifee in 2014 to be near their grandchildren. He is a member of several local historical societies and is now on the Board of Directors & Vice-President of the Temecula Valley Historical Society.



Bob Kent



After Elaine Eshom completed a NWOT portrayal at the Senior Center as “Freda Knott” — she ran into none other than John Wayne as she was leaving.

July 4th Our Nation's Independence Day

The Fourth of July—also known as Independence Day or July 4th—has been an official federal paid holiday in the United States since 1941, but the tradition of Independence Day celebrations goes back to the 18th century and the American Revolution. On July 2nd, 1776, the Continental Congress voted in favor of independence, and two days later delegates from the 13 colonies adopted the Declaration of Independence, an historic document drafted by Thomas Jefferson.

From 1776 to the present day, July 4th has been celebrated as the birth of American independence, with festivities ranging from fireworks, parades and concerts to more casual family gatherings and barbecues.

Ironically, both John Adams and Thomas Jefferson died on July 4th, 1826 — 50 years to the day after the original independence day declaration.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



TVHS members Julie Gilbert, Claire Beamer, Andrea and Gerry Nicholas, Roger and Lynn Cudé, Diane LaTulippe, Phil and Charlene Washum, Cheryl Cady, Bonnie and John Martland, Dana Thoman, Becky Brown, Patricia Jennings were among the group touring the Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum in the Banning area.

TVHS Tours Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum

A group of 17 hardy souls braved the heat on Saturday June 24 to tour the Gilman Historic Ranch and Wagon Museum in the Banning area. Gilman Historic Ranch is registered as a National Historic Site and is owned and operated by the Riverside County Parks Department. In addition to the restored ranch buildings there is a significant wagon collection with 25 antique different wagons including an old stagecoach and a “prairie schooner”. Docent Herb Spencer led the tour which included the Gilman House, and visits to multiple out buildings. Another awesome field trip, under the able leadership of Phil Washum, capped off with a stop at the Farm House Restaurant for lunch.

(Photo courtesy of member Diane LaTulippe)

— Member News —

Welcome New Members

Jerry Stein & G’Angela Gerilyn
Kathy Turgeon
Betsy Domanski

Every Sunday — Sunday Funday at the Vail Headquarters — Summer hours are 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Rides, demonstrations & activities. Consider volunteering. Don’t forget the Tuesday’s Farmer’s Market from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Wednesday, July 19 — 8 p.m. Movie Night at Vail Headquarters. FREE outdoor movie, *Fantastic Mr. Fox*. Bring lawn chairs, blankets, etc. Movie night specials available at Vail Pizzeria, Cheflavor, and Juice It Up.

Thursday, July 20 — 4 p.m. Bonnie Martland will portray NOTABLE WOMAN Mary Jane Welty, who with her husband owned and operated the Temecula Hotel. This event will be held at the Harveston Chateau.

Monday, July 24 — Monthly TVHS program. 5:30 p.m. Meet & Greet with refreshments. Starting at 6:00 p.m. at the History Center, the speaker will be Robert Wells from Washington D.C. who returns for an update on his research about Chinese workers in America, and their efforts during the construction of the railroad through Temecula in the 1880’s.

Friday, July 28 — 6 p.m. Wilson Creek Winery will host the first installment of “History by the Glass”, with Steve Williamson from the Temecula Valley Museum to lead a discussion / presentation on the history of the Temecula wine country. Please RSVP at 951-694-6450.

Friday, July 28 — 6 to 10 p.m. *Starlight Bazaar* at Vail Headquarters. Under the stars live music, extraordinary Vendors, vintage cars, and performers — FREE. Horse and Carriage rides available for \$5. Shops open.

Saturday, July 29 — 4 to 9 p.m. *Rumble On At The Ranch*, Classic Car Show featuring pre-1978 custom cars, low riders and hot rods, with music.

Wednesday, August 16 — 8 p.m. Movie Night at Vail Headquarters. FREE outdoor movie, *Willy Wonka and The Chocolate Factory*. Bring lawn chairs, blankets, etc. Movie night specials available at Vail Pizzeria, Juice It Up, and Cheflavor.

Thursday, August 17 — 2:00 p.m. at Harveston Chateau, Pam Grender portrays NOTABLE WOMAN, Helen Hunt Jackson, the well known writer whose life is interwoven with Temecula’s history.

Friday, August 25 — 6 -10 p.m. *Starlight Bazaar* at Vail Headquarters. Under the stars live music, extraordinary Vendors, vintage cars, and performers — FREE. Horse and Carriage rides available for \$5. Shops open.

100 Years Ago . . .

(From the Lake Elsinore Valley Press, Temecula Gossip Column, July 1917)

Issue of July 6, 1917

Sunday, July 1, the Temecula Braves crossed bats with the Riverside Giants. The game was exciting from the beginning to end and both teams were in fine trim, but the Braves got the better of the Giants by a score of 14 to 11 before a crowd of 350 people. The proceeds amounting to the sum of \$60 were donated to the Red Cross.

Waldo Swanguen of Riverside was in town Friday visiting friends and relatives, returning to Riverside the same day.

Miss Zoe Carr of Los Angeles arrived the first of the week and will spend about three weeks of her vacation visiting her mother and father and uncle and aunt Mr. and Mrs. John B. Kelly.

Mr. and Mrs. White of Los Angeles arrived in town Monday evening and will visit with Mr. and Mrs. Frank H. Hall and family. They will leave for their home in a few days.

Mrs. Curtis Stevenson and son Harwood left for Los Angeles the first of the week by auto stage, where they will visit relatives and friends. They expect to remain in Los Angeles two or three weeks before returning home.

The dump that is built for the beet wagons to dump the beets into the cars is finished and will be used very soon.

Ramon Manzaneda of Dry Creek was in town Tuesday after a load of honey cases.

Issue of July 13, 1917

Most of the town people spent the Fourth at Elsinore.

Ventura Arviso is building a four-room cottage on his lot that he purchased recently.

The Temecula Braves met and defeated the Elsinore Stars at a one-sided baseball game at the Hot Springs ball-park. The Braves played their usual good game. Last Sunday was the second that Elsinore lost to Temecula. The Braves are playing better ball this season. They have six games to their credit and they expect to add more to their list before the season is over. The score last Sunday was 4 to 7 in favor of Temecula.

Mrs. George Kolb of Rainbow was a business caller in town Monday.

James O. Freeman and his crew are busy getting the hay press ready to go to the Pauba Ranch, where they have two or three months' work.

The dance given at the bank hall Saturday night by some of the ladies was well attended, many coming from Murrieta and the hot springs.

Mrs. John B. Kelly and Miss Zoe Carr left by auto stage for Oceanside where they will spend about two weeks before returning home.

Issue of July 20, 1917

This year the produce around here exceeded that of last year. About \$30,000 worth of hay has already been shipped out and there is more to be shipped yet: \$50,000 worth of spuds has been shipped and there will be about \$100,000 worth of sugar beets from the Pauba Ranch alone. Adrian B. Barnett and Charles Clogston have also some beets that will amount to a good figure. Temecula is surely doing well on the crops this year. Other years, farmers have not been so successful as this year.

Paul E. Clark has been planting beets for the past three years and James E. Crew potatoes. The potato bugs started only last year; and so did Wong Gar, another spud bug. Mr. Gar has also about 25 acres of onions which are the best ever raised. The Pauba Ranch has 3000 acres of hay, which is being baled for market by three bailing crews.

James Thomas, cattle buyer of Pomona, was at the Pauba Ranch to buy cattle.

The Vail Brothers sold and shipped five carloads of fine steers last Saturday. Three cars went to San Bernardino, two went to Pomona, and about the first of the week there will be another lot shipped.

For the third time the Temecula baseball team met and defeated the Colored Giants of Riverside by the score of 4 to 3 in favor of the Temecula Braves at the Hot Springs baseball park. The game from start to finish was very interesting. Up to the tenth inning the score stood 3 to 3. In the eleventh inning Temecula scored the winning run. Both teams played fine ball and there was some excitement all over the grounds. The Braves have added another scalp to their list. There were some plays made that were equal to the league plays. Next Sunday July 22, the Braves will cross bats with the Ontario Hot Points at the Murrieta Hot Springs baseball park.

Issue of July 27, 1917

These hot days the majority of the people spend Sunday at the Oceanside bath bathing and fishing.

Mr. and Mrs. Cranston, a Santa Fe employee, have moved into Alfred Knott's house for a short time or until they find a house to live in.

Saturday afternoon at the hay press of James O. Freeman, George Calac met with an accident, but not serious, his foot got caught by the sweep but the horses were stopped and his foot pulled out.

Amos W. Kolb came very near meeting a serious accident last week when he was going home on his machine. Just as he made the turn to his place another auto met him, struck the front wheel, and stopped. Nothing was broken and nobody was hurt.