

TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

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Volume 18 Issue 3

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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www.temeculahistoricalsociety.org



King of Guacamole?

Juan Murrieta Introduced Avocados to So. California

By Rebecca Farnbach

(Reprinted from TVHS Newsletter, July 2007)

You may know that Juan Murrieta was a shepherd and not a bandit. Many folks confuse him with the unrelated bandit Joaquin Murietta, who didn't come from the same country or even spell his name the same. You also may know that when Murrieta came from Spain, he invested in real estate in Northern and Central California before coming to the Temecula Valley. But did you know that he introduced avocados to Southern California?

While researching information for the book *Images of America: Murrieta*, I found the surprising story when I "Google-d" his name. Up popped the 1936 annual report of the Californian Avocado Association, an issue dedicated to him, shortly after his death.

Juan Murrieta came to the Temecula Valley in 1873, when he and his brother Ezequiel bought Ranchos Temecula and Pauba with two partners. By 1882, Ezequiel returned to Spain, and in 1884, Juan moved his family to Los Angeles. Juan became the first deputy sheriff in Los Angeles County. He and his wife Adele enjoyed horticulture and experimenting with plants.

Photographs of the Murrieta adobe show fruit trees in the foreground, proving their interest in horticulture while in the Temecula Valley.

Murrieta corresponded with a Senor Fuentes, a Wells Fargo station agent in Mexico, who sent him some avocados. From those seeds, his hybrids included the Murrieta Green, the Two-Pound Green, the Colorado, and others.

Dr. Thomas Murrieta of Whittier recalls the avocado trees at his grandparents' Los Angeles home. "One of the trees was two-stories tall. His avocados were delicious, buttery in taste and texture. Some of the fruit was so large, it took both hands to hold it."

This is consistent with the California Avocado Association's statement that Juan Murrieta was "one of the introducers and earliest growers of avocados in California".

Maybe we should set up an annual Guacamole Day celebration in honor of Juan Murrieta. How about on the Fourth of July? Red, white, blue and green... Or, maybe the Murrieta Firemen's Barbecue could start the tradition.



A Young Juan Murrieta

Presentation of Annie Mendenhall Bergman Played to Full House

There was a "packed house" at the Little Temecula History Center Sunday, February 4th, for NWOT Mindy Johnson's presentation of Annie Mendenhall Bergman. Many of Annie's descendants came from as far away as Montana. Annie was an influential woman who was born on Palomar Mountain and lived the remainder of her life in Aguanga. Annie along with her husband owned many acres in the area. Annie was a Mother, postmaster, rancher, astute business owner, and a world traveler who lived a remarkable life to age of 102. NOTE: Annie's son Ray, age 97, was unable to attend due to poor health. He was represented by his three children, Bev, Don and Susan.



Annie Bergman's son Arlie Bergman and his wife Coral



Annie Bergman's daughter Esther Trunel and husband Don



Annie Bergman's son Carl Bergman and wife Patricia



Annie's granddaughter Beverly Martinez & son Michael



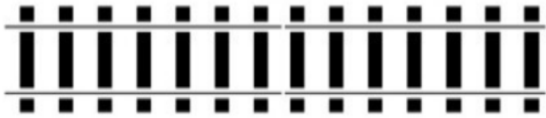
Annie's grandson Don Bergman and wife Josie



Annie's granddaughter Susan Mateel & friend Dave Simpson

**Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve
Is hosting a Special Event for the
Temecula Valley Historical Society**

*History of the California Southern
Railroad's Route through the
Temecula Gorge and Beyond*



**Friday, May 11th 2018
12:00 Noon**

This event will take place on the Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve at North Field Station facility which overlooks the beautiful Temecula Gorge.

AGENDA:

- 12:00 View Temecula Gorge
- 12:30 Lecture by Bob Kent
- 1:15 Lecture by Scott Atkins
- 1:45 Open Discussion. Light refreshments will be served.

Historical Society members must RSVP for this event by contacting Beth Cobb at (760) 419-5723 or smerdocenthikes@gmail.com

At the close of the event members have the option of hiking into the Temecula river gorge which is a steep 1/2 mile down and back to get a closer look at the Temecula Gorge and the railroad bed.

This event will be a fun way to visit this special place which is not open to the public. In addition to protecting local flora and fauna, the reserve provides environmental research opportunities for students and researchers worldwide.

Directions:

1. Take the I-15 freeway and exit at Rancho California Rd.
2. Go west on Rancho California Rd.
3. Go 2.3 miles into the foothills of Santa Ana Mountains
4. Turn LEFT onto Via Santa Rosa (the first left you can make after ascending into the foothills).
5. Go 1.5 miles and turn RIGHT onto Via Tornado.
6. Go 0.8 mile to the entrance gate.
7. The trailhead is just inside the gate. Docent will assist with parking.



**Mindy Johnson Presented
Annie Mendenhall Bergman
To a Packed House**

In preparation, Mindy Johnson who presented Notable Woman Annie Bergman, spent many hours personally interviewing Annie's grown children, Esther Trunnell and Arlie Bergman; both of whom still live in Aguanga. Her presentation was attended by quite a large number of Annie's descendants, some who came from as far away as Montana, and many other local "history buffs" as well. See picture page of the event and attendees on Page 2.

President's Message

When we formed our Society in 2000 it was to watch over the Temecula Valley historical sites in a broader scope than the existing Vail Ranch Restoration Association. We stated our mission was *to identify, preserve and promote the historic legacy of Temecula Valley and to educate the public about its historical significance.*

During 2017 we faced several threats of historical losses and we answered them with funds and with a public voice. We funded the \$7,500 repair of five historic grave monuments in our local cemetery that would have been dismantled if they hadn't been repaired. We paid the back taxes on the Wolf Tomb property that was slated for auction if it had not been paid. We have completed paperwork for the Wolf Tomb property to declare it a cemetery and to make it exempt from property taxes. We strongly challenged the demolition of Butterfield Square and the construction of a six-story modern hotel that will dominate Old Town. Although the demolition did occur, we negotiated for some of the salvage materials and the right to rebuild Butterfield Square components on another property in Old Town. We watched the sale of several historical properties throughout the Temecula Valley, including Casa Loma, and have advocated for them in communication with sellers, realtors and buyers.

In November we hosted an event to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the filming of the pilot episode of *The Invaders* TV series. Rick Reiss did extensive research and gave an excellent narrative during the outdoor showing of that episode that featured many of our still-existing buildings in Old Town.

Through the years we have kept true to our mission and have added other aspects of service to the community that we never envisioned. For example, each year we give \$4,000 in scholarships to local students entering history related careers.

We have an outstanding newsletter produced monthly by our immediate Past President Dick Fox and with input from many, including Lynn Cudé. We have an excellent website, thanks to Roger Cudé and his committee. On the website are digitized newsletters and publications of historic interest with searchable data.

We utilize our Facebook page to communicate events and programs. We post interesting tidbits that reach people, even those who do not come to our meetings.

Our name is visible to our community through our free Old Town Walking Tour brochures distributed by Cheryl Cady and others. Bonnie Martland writes an informative and often humorous historical article for us each month that is published in the Valley News. Lynn Cudé and the other Notable Women of Temecula offer first person dramatization of historic women to groups in the Temecula area, entertaining the audiences and awakening their awareness of local history. It is heartening to watch as our Notable Men of Temecula programs develop with Rick Reiss at the helm. Our plaques throughout Old Town distinguish the history of old structures to passersby. In 2017 our plaque committee chairperson Bob Kent placed a marker at

The Bank restaurant to commemorate the Livery Stable that once stood there.

Lynn Cudé has taken her responsibilities as Membership Chair to a new level by initiating a social time with refreshments prior to each meeting that she or members of her team provide. Who wouldn't want to join our society? We have informative and entertaining presentations at our monthly meetings. In 2017 some highlights included Dick Fox talking about the history of newspapers in the Old West, and Bob Kent presenting the history of the building of the Southern California Railroad. Bob invited Dr. Sue Castell to present her research on Ah Quin who was the Chinese work contractor and had a very interesting life.

Phil Washum is our tour director. He arranges historic tours nearly every month to places we are all curious about. In the past year some of the tours went to The Great Oak, San Luis Rey Mission and the Mission Inn in Riverside.

Because meeting together only once a month doesn't seem enough for some of us, during warm months we meet on a designated Wednesday evening for a no-host dinner at the picnic tables at Vail HQ. Besides giving us some social time, Darell Farnbach prepares an informal program based on artifacts that he shows. Besides being a social time focused on history, we buy our dinners to support the Vail HQ businesses that keep the historic site open to the public.

Our Annual Dinners are scheduled to meet our state requirements as a 501c3 to give end of year committee reports and to announce changes in the officers and board of directors. Since our formation it has evolved into an important fundraiser event for our scholarship fund and a fun evening looked forward to all year. Special thanks to Cheryl Cady and Shari Crall, the donors of gift items and the others on the team who made our 2017 Annual Dinner a great success and a lot of fun.

Suzanne Dechert coordinates student volunteers who come to the History Center and Vail Headquarters to help with sweeping, painting, window washing and other tasks at hand. Several of our members also assist with third-grade tours of the Vail HQ and Little Temecula History Center. Mike and Shelley Leddy teach one of the favorites, the laundry station where students have the experience of washing clothes with a bar of soap on a scrub board, passing the clothing through a wringer and hanging with clothespins to dry.

I personally wish to thank all of our officers, directors and committee chairpersons, and members. Thank you for devoting your time and resources to serve the community and to secure today's history as a legacy forever.

Going into 2018 we will continue to encourage the City of Temecula to enact the Mills Act to reduce tax liability for historic property owners. We will continue to identify and preserve historic properties and we will continue to present information about local history in print and as we meet together monthly.

— Rebecca Farnbach

Notable Women of Temecula Outreach



On Tuesday February 20th, Lynn Cudé opened the program at the Murrieta Public Library by talking about the Historical Society and the many interesting speakers who bring history to life at our monthly meetings. Then Bonnie Martland portrayed Mary Jane Welty, owner of the Welty Hotel in Temecula, followed by Mindy Johnson who presented the life of Maria Apis, an area Native American woman who inherited the Little Temecula Rancho from her Father.

Dear Lynn, Bonnie and Mindy—

What a wonderfully presented, entertaining and fascinating look at some of our local history at the Friends of the Murrieta Library today! We so appreciate your sharing your research and talents with us. Everyone agreed it was an extremely interesting program—we heard nothing but praise!

Your Notable Women—and now Men—program is a great service to the community. It makes the history of the area come to life, and does a lot to create interest in the events of the really not so distant past.

We are truly grateful for all the time and effort you put into this program, and I know our members would love to hear more—perhaps next year—we will stay in touch!

Maggie Pilotte & Judy Call

Program Co-Chairs, Friends of the Murrieta Library

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Sunday, March 4** — 2:30 p.m. at the Little Temecula History Center (Red Barn), **PROGRAM CHANGE** Bonnie Martland will present Mary Jane Welty a long time resident of Temecula who lived to be 96.
- Tuesday, March 13** — 11:00 a.m. at the Ronald Roberts Public Library on Pauba Rd. Mindy Johnson will be presenting Notable Woman Annie Bergman.
- Wednesday, March 14** — 8:45 a.m. meet at Red Barn to carpool. Tour of Cabot house and museum. See article on this page below for more details.
- Monday, March 26** — 6:00 p.m. monthly program at the Little Temecula History Center (Red Barn), Bonnie Martland will make a presentation about Gettysburg.
- Monday, April 23** — 6:00 p.m. monthly program at the Little Temecula History Center (Red Barn), Terry & Jill Finch on *Who Came to California?*
- Friday, May 11** — 12:00 Noon. Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve lecture and opportunity to view and hike the Temecula Gorge. Special for Historical Society members who make reservations. See article Page 3 this issue for details. Mark your calendar!
- Monday, May 21** — 6:00 p.m. at the Little Temecula History Center (Red Barn), Steve Lech will present the *1893 Debate for Riverside County*.
- Monday, June 25** — 6:00 p.m. at the Little Temecula History Center (Red Barn). Michelle Lorimer will present “*Resurrecting the Past: The California Mission Myth*”.

Special Tour Available of Cabot's House & Museum **Wednesday, March 14th**

A TVHS tour will be held on Wednesday, March 14th, to the Cabot House & Museum in Desert Hot Springs. We will meet at the Red Barn by 8:45 a.m. to carpool and leave at 9:00 a.m. The Cabot house is built from every conceivable recyclable item imaginable. The tour begins at 11 a.m. and lasts approximately an hour. The address is 67616 Desert View Avenue, Desert Hot Springs, CA. 92240. The Docent led tour costs \$10/person. Phil will locate some restaurants for lunch. Please call Phil at (951) 201-0020 if you wish to attend.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Thank you for renewing your membership:

Lisa Woodward

Spotlight on Members – Featuring – **Darell Farnbach**

Darell Farnbach is a fourth generation Californian who has lived in the mountains, in the desert and in the city in this state. He has experienced life in California from as far south as Temecula and to near the northern border in Alturas.

Some of Darell's first memories are as a small child living in Wrightwood, California on land his two sets of grandparents homesteaded together. Grandfather Cash was a motorman on the Los Angeles streetcar line and Grandpa Farnbach was a conductor. During their off time the two worked together to "prove up" the Wrightwood homestead. Their families lived at the ranch each summer.

Darell's parents were married by Evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson in Angeles Temple in Los Angeles. They eventually made their home at the Wrightwood Lazy B-J-F Ranch where things were fairly rustic. Darell had a pet burro named Brown Burr.

Things changed in the family and Darell went with his mother to Lockhart Ranch near Barstow where his mother was a cook. Darell observed the cowboys working with cattle and doing upkeep on the ranch. As a child Darell wanted to be productive with his time and he collected bottles from the roadside and constructed toys from castoffs.

He started driving when he was about six years old. He drove the Model A to the end of their long country lane where his brother and sister and he caught the school bus.

Darell's first job was washing cars for an auto sales agency. He remembers the thrill of driving the cars that he washed. Anyone who knows Darell now knows that he loves cars. In his personal collection he has a Model A pickup, and Model T roadster, a 1938 Cadillac LaSalle, and 1970 and 1972 Ford Mustang convertibles. He has owned over 60 cars in his lifetime.

Darell is a member of the Drifters Car Club and volunteers for the local Rod Runs and Mecum Auto Auctions.

Darell started hairstyling in the 1960s and owned two salons during his career. His salon in Temecula "The Pink Caddy" featured the front clip of a 1969 Fleetwood Cadillac as the reception desk. Darell retired in 2016. He has a son, Todd, who lives with his family in Medford, Oregon and a daughter, Darya, who lives with her husband in Fairhaven, Vermont.

Darell serves on the Riverside County Historic Commission and was a founding member of the Vail Ranch Restoration Association (VaARRA) and the Temecula Valley Historical Society. The successful preservation of Vail HQ is largely due to Darell's persistent commitment to making it happen.



Darell in one of his many shops working on a solution to problem.

Notable Women of Temecula

Mary Jane Welty

Bonnie Martland often portrays Temecula Notable Woman Mary Jane Welty, most recently on February 20 at the Murrieta Library. Mary Jane Welty, a tiny wisp of a woman, as her husband called her, was born in Indiana in 1840, but moved with her family to the frontier of Iowa as a toddler. Her playmates were local Indians and the family pets. At 18 she married Johnson Welty. Johnson was a man who always thought life would be better over the next hill. So, for most of their married life she and Johnson moved from one place to another. They tried, unsuccessfully, to homestead in Dakota Territory and in 1864 traveled by wagon train to California. Mary Jane and Johnson would have 11 children...all girls. Johnson's choice of occupations, primarily as a bee keeper, required days and weeks away from home selling his honey and combs; leaving Mary Jane and the girls to fend for themselves.

On their trek west and during the times Johnson was away Mary Jane encountered numerous hardships and some quite harrowing experiences. All the while, being continually uprooted as Johnson got the urge to move to "the new place." By necessity Mary Jane became quite self-reliant. She and Johnson lost an infant daughter in Iowa and three others in California. On the way west there were storms, illnesses, Indian troubles, and delays due to taking a "short cut" that proved to be just the opposite. They would have to layover for the winter in the mountains. In California, while Johnson was away, Mary Jane weathered encounters with bears, having to outrun a wind-swept fire, being washed down a swollen river trying to rescue the family milk cow, and encounters with "drunken Spaniards from Temecula"!

However, after an attack by a bobcat and the life-threatening infection that followed Johnson finally was convinced to change his occupation and settle down. With the coming of the railroad to Temecula in the 1880s, Johnson saw opportunity and built the Welty Hotel on Main Street, later known as the Temecula Hotel or Hotel Temecula. In January of 1891 the hotel burned down, but with the help of neighbors was quickly rebuilt. Johnson did get the urge to sell the hotel at one point, and buy a ranch, but Mary Jane and the girls refused to make another move. The Weltys would run the hotel for thirty years, a center of community activity in Temecula. Johnson died in 1922 at 84. Mary Jane lived to be 96. A true pioneer who lived an extraordinary life, she never thought of herself as anything but ordinary.



Bonnie Martland as Mary Jane Welty

This Month in History

Selected historical events that happened during the Month of March.

March 1, 1781 - Formal ratification of the Articles of Confederation was announced by Congress. Under the Articles, Congress was the sole governing body of the new American national government, consisting of the 13 original states. The Articles remained in effect through the Revolutionary War until 1789, when the current U.S. Constitution was adopted.

March 1, 1932 - The 20-month-old son of aviation pioneer Charles A. Lindbergh was kidnapped from his home in Hopewell, New Jersey. The Lindberghs then paid a \$50,000 ransom. However, on May 12, the boy's body was found in a wooded area a few miles from the house.

March 2, 1974 - American soldier and politician Sam Houston (1793-1863) was born in Rockbridge County, Virginia. As a teenager he ran away and joined the Cherokee Indians who accepted him as a member of their tribe. He later served as a Congressman and Governor of Tennessee. In 1832, he became commander of the Texan army in the War for Texan Independence, defeating the larger Mexican army in 1836 at the Battle of San Jacinto. He then served as Senator and Governor of the new state of Texas but was removed in 1861 after refusing to swear allegiance to the Confederacy.

March 3, 1913 - A women's suffrage march in Washington D.C. was attacked by angry onlookers while police stood by. The march occurred the day before Woodrow Wilson's inauguration. Many of the 5,000 women participating were spat upon and struck in the face as a near riot ensued. Secretary of War Henry Stimson then ordered soldiers from Fort Myer to restore order.

March 4, 1933 - Newly elected President Franklin D. Roosevelt took office and delivered his first inaugural address attempting to restore public confidence during the Great Depression, stating, "Let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself..." His cabinet appointments included the first woman to a Cabinet post, Secretary of Labor, Frances Perkins.

March 5, 1770 - The Boston Massacre occurred as a group of rowdy Americans harassed British soldiers who then opened fire, killing five and injuring six. The first man killed was Crispus Attucks, an African American. British Captain Thomas Preston and eight of his men were arrested and charged with murder. Their trial took place in October, with colonial lawyer John Adams defending the British. Captain Preston and six of his men were acquitted. Two others were found guilty of manslaughter, branded, then released.

March 6, 1836 - Fort Alamo fell to Mexican troops led by General Santa Anna. The Mexicans had begun the siege of the Texas fort on February 23rd, ending it with the killing of the last defender. "Remember the Alamo" became a rallying cry for Texans who went on to defeat Santa Anna in the Battle of San Jacinto in April.

March 10, 1880 - The Salvation Army was founded in the United States. The social service organization was first founded in England by William Booth and operates today in 90 countries.

Birthday - Politician and playwright Claire Boothe Luce (1903-1987) was born in New York City. She served in the House of Representatives from 1943 to 1947 and then became the first woman appointed as U.S. ambassador to a major country (Italy).

March 11, 1918 - The 'Spanish' influenza first reached America as 107 soldiers become sick at Fort Riley, Kansas. One quarter of the U.S. population eventually became ill from the deadly virus, resulting in 500,000 deaths. The death toll worldwide approached 22 million by the end of 1920.

March 15, 44 B.C. - Julius Caesar was assassinated in the Senate chamber in Rome by Brutus and fellow conspirators. After first trying to defend himself against the murderous onslaught, Caesar saw Brutus with a knife and asked "Et tu, Brute?" (You too, Brutus?) Caesar then gave up the struggle and was stabbed to death.

March 15, 1848 - Wyatt Earp (1848-1929) was born in Monmouth, Illinois. He became a legendary figure in the Wild West as a lawman and gunfighter, best known for the shootout at the O.K. Corral in 1881, in which the Earp brothers (Wyatt, Virgil and Morgan) fought and defeated the Ike Clanton gang.

March 23, 1775 - Patrick Henry ignited the American Revolution with a speech before the Virginia convention in Richmond, stating, "I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!"

March 25, 1911 - A raging fire erupted inside a garment factory in New York City killing 123 young women employed as low-paid seamstresses, along with 23 men. The fast-spreading flames engulfed the 8th and 9th floors of the Triangle Shirtwaist Company in lower Manhattan in just a few minutes. About 50 of the victims had jumped to their deaths rather than perish from the flames. The sensational tragedy spurred national interest concerning the rights of mostly-immigrant women workers of the New York garment industry who labored long hours six or seven days a week in cramped, dangerous conditions for about \$5 weekly pay.

March 30, 1981 - Newly elected President Ronald Reagan was shot in the chest while walking toward his limousine in Washington, D.C., following a speech inside a hotel. The president was then rushed into surgery to remove a 22-caliber bullet from his left lung. "I should have ducked," Reagan joked. Three others were also hit including Reagan's Press Secretary, James Brady, who was shot in the forehead but survived. The president soon recovered from the surgery and returned to his duties.