

TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

June 2009

Volume 9 – Issue 6

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 Thomas Milholland Collection Photo

The Good Hope Mine

Gold Mining in Perris

Compiled from articles by Bill McBurney

The Good Hope Mine site is located southwest of Perris going towards Lake Elsinore. Gold was found in the Perris area, as early as the Mexican era. Shepherders stumbled on grains of gold that could be panned in the washes. In 1881 a five-stamp mill was constructed to crush the ore from the mine that was being dug. The large building at the right was probably the stamp mill. By 1894 the mine was equipped with a twenty-stamp mill that quadrupled their output.

The picture (above) was probably taken while it was still a five-stamp operation. The steam driven stamps made one heck of a racket such that it could be heard on a still evening in Hemet – twenty miles away! Before 1900 the mine had yielded more than \$2,000,000 at \$30.00 per ounce (\$60,000,000 at today's \$900 per ounce). In its 65 year life the mine produced \$6,000,000. The mine was seven layers deep before it flooded out and labor got too expensive for the return on the poorer grade ore that was being produced. The mine produced two hundred thousand tons of tailings which were scattered on the landscape. The site has now been long abandoned. Dry rot and termites have claimed the timbers and the buildings are all gone. The mine has been capped to keep people from falling in. All that remains are several small hills of tailings. When I was a

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Calendar

Of Events

Monday, June 8 –

Monthly Meeting at Pujol Schoolhouse – 6 to 8 p.m.
Annie Borel on "Growing Up in French Valley."

Saturday, June 13 –

Flea Market in the Park, at Sam Hicks Park to benefit Temecula Valley Museum.
From 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Saturday, June 13 –

"Out of the Box" Quilt Show a traveling quilt exhibit from the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles. Display will run through August at Temecula Valley Museum.

Monday, July 13 –

Monthly meeting at Pujol Schoolhouse -- 6 to 8 p.m.
"The Historic Highway 395"
Tom Casey and Cameron Kaiser.

Friday & Saturday, July

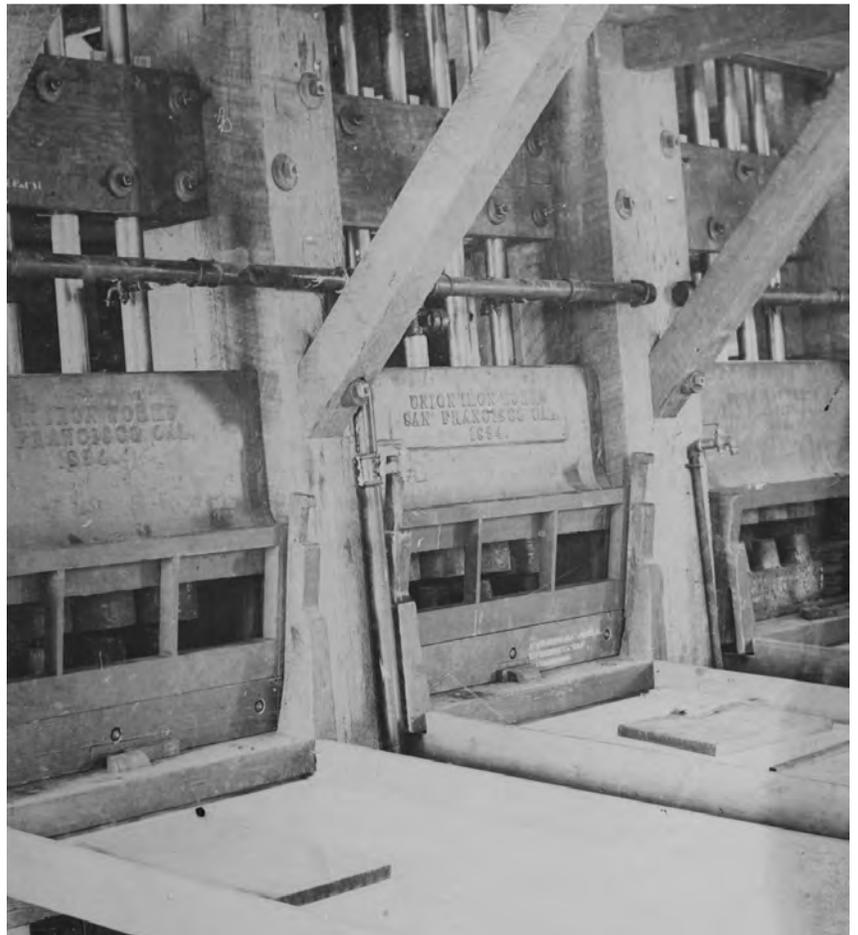
24 – 25 – The Third Annual "Cowboy Jubilee Music Festival". As a major fund raiser for the Santa Rosa Plateau Foundation this fun event will include a visit to the old adobe bunk house used by the Vail Cowboys on Friday, and a wonderful Western music and Cowboy Poetry event on Saturday evening. For more info see www.srpf.org

Monday, November 9 –

Monthly meeting Pujol Schoolhouse – 6 to 8 p.m.
"Reflections on the 20th Anniversary of Temecula's Cityhood" by Jimmy & Peg Moore.

student at Perris High School in 1942, several of my classmates were from Good Hope since the workers houses were still there. Now even they are gone.

In the other picture you can see that the cast lettering on each of the mills says "UNION IRON WORKS SAN FRANCISCO CAL. 1894". Under a magnifying glass I could determine that the stenciled lettering on the middle mill says "GOOD HOPE M.C. --- RIVERSIDE C. CAL. -----" The mills were quite new, for there is no buildup of grease and dust, so the picture must have been taken soon after their delivery in 1894. When I first wrote about the Good Hope mine, I did not realize that I had a picture of its stamp mills. In 1894 Good Hope installed a new twenty-stamp mill so this is probably part of that installation. The stamp mills used a steam engine to drive a camshaft that lifted the heavy stamps one at a time and dropped them onto the ore waiting to be powdered. When a batch was ready, the door would be raised, powdered ore was then pushed onto the sorting tables in the foreground where it was separated from the rock dust. The remainder was treated with mercury which formed an amalgam with the gold. The mercury was then boiled off in a retort to leave pure gold which was then cast into ingots for sale to the mint. The cams were arranged on a shaft so the weights were dropped in a pattern like the firing sequence in a gas engine so the power required from the steam engine was evened out. The picture (below) shows the heavy weights through the windows of each battery of stamps.



Presidents Message

Paul Price, one of our board members, has spent a great deal of time planning another bus trip for the Temecula Valley Historical Society, to be held on June 15th.

This trip will start at the Temecula Community Recreation Center at 8:00 a.m., travel to Lake Elsinore and visit a number of historic sites in that area, including the Machado Adobe, Aimee Semple McPherson Castle, Chimes Building and dozens of other worthy sites.

The bus, with a capacity of 55, is air conditioned and has a restroom. Lunch will be catered. In addition to Paul's narration, a volunteer from the Lake Elsinore Historical Society will also be aboard to explain some of the historical venues. The price is only \$45 per person and reservations may be made by calling Paul at (951) 244-5937. Please make your reservations early to ensure a seat on the bus.

Our Vice President, Bill McBurney, entered the hospital on May 27th to undergo a heart valve replacement. Please keep him in your prayers for a speedy recovery.

Hope to see more members at our next meeting at the Old Pujol Schoolhouse at 6:00 p.m. on June 8th.

Jimmy Moore



A Thomas Milholland Collection Photo

More Early Mining

Menifee Valley Named After Early Miner in Area

By Bill McBurney

In this Thomas Milholland Collection photo (above) are a couple of men standing in a rough unplowed field. My first reaction / attitude was "so what", but this one has some history attached which sparked my interest. On the back of the photo is the legend "Alice Mine 1894 - L. Menifee Wilson in the foreground Oscar Carson at the windlass."

Luther Menifee Wilson was born in Kentucky and came to this area about 1880 after the railroads connected California with the Eastern states. Mr. Wilson was a miner who wasn't very successful at mining, but he was successful in producing children, so many Wilsons claim him as their great grandfather as he had three wives. He is recognized as the guide who showed Helen Hunt Jackson around when she was gathering information about the local tribes for her Ramona story. His son Mike Wilson portrayed his dad in the first few Ramona plays in Hemet dressed as an explorer in buckskins. He was successful in finding paying mines a few times but his generosity with strangers and his proclivity for hard liquor kept him broke. He died in 1896 of alcoholism.

As a pioneer in the Hemet area, he explored nearly every rock pile around and filed dozens of claims. He discovered the Menifee Quartz Lode near the intersection of Murrieta and Holland Roads in Menifee Valley which was named for him. In this picture he is staking a claim for what he hoped was the mother lode. Staking a claim entailed stacking up several rocks into a monument at each corner of the claim and registering the claim with the county. Since Riverside County was less than a year old in 1894, finding the right official to register with must have been difficult. Getting the information to jibe with the survey of the official records probably proved problematical.

It is not clear who Oscar Carlson was, but he was doing hard work in cranking the windlass to bring ore (or just rock) up out of the pit. They were obviously camping in a waterless semi desert maybe Diamond Valley or Menifee Valley which both looked like this as late as the 1930s when my dad and uncles also prospected for a hobby.



Temecula Valley Historical Society
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Membership Activity

Renewals

Rosie Vanderhaak
Joan Roripaugh
Bill & Barbara Dosta
Lisa Woodward
Gene & Judy Knott
Eve Craig
Robert & Julie Ulrey

Visit the Great Oak?

People often ask how to see the Great Oak Tree. The Pechanga Cultural Department hosts tours on the third Friday of each month. Reservations for tours can be made by calling 951-308-9295.

Join Us MONDAY, JUNE 15, 2009

for A Bus Tour to . . .

"Behind the Scenes of Lake Elsinore"

*Sponsored by the Temecula Valley Historical Society in
Cooperation with the Lake Elsinore Historical Society*

MAJOR STOPS

- * Machado Adobe 1858 to 1861 – relay stop for Butterfield Stage
- * Methodist Episcopal Church 1922 / Museum
- * Chimes Building 1887
- * Aimee Semple McPherson 1890 – 1944 (Aimee's Castle)
- * Plus approximately 20 other interesting sites to see

INFORMATION

WHERE: Tour bus departs promptly at **8:00 am** from Temecula Community Recreation Center (CRC) Rancho Vista Way

COST: **\$45** per person – includes bus fare & catered lunch.
Make checks payable to Temecula Valley Historical Society
By June 10th

Send check or money order directly to:

Bill Harker, 31130-85 So. General Kearny Rd.,
Temecula, CA 92591-2033

BUS: Capacity 40-55 people. A/C w/restroom. 1st COME BASIS

RESERVATIONS / Board Member Paul Price at 951-244-5937 or
QUESTIONS: Board President Jimmy Moore at 951-302-9536