

TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

September 2009

Volume 9 – Issue 9

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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Timeless Temecula – Part 2 of 2

Recent Memories Shared By Others

*(Editors Note: We appreciate and acknowledge the **Country Review Magazine** for its permission to reprint the article below, originally done as part of a History Series that **Country Review** published to celebrate its 20th Anniversary. As Rebecca Farnbach said in the introduction of her original piece . . . "To celebrate the twentieth anniversary of The Country Review, we also celebrate Temecula, the audience of the publication, and take a look back, much farther back than twenty years. We will see the changing Temecula through the eyes of people of different origins, times and destinations." This is the second of a 2 part series.)*

By Rebecca Marshall Farnbach

The Harkers Came to Town

In the early 1920s, a young boy named Bill Harker accompanied his father on cattle drives from the Barnett Ranch in Murrieta down dirt streets in Old Town Temecula to the slaughterhouse at the south end of Pujol Street. They stayed in the Welty Hotel on Main Street, where all the guests shared a bathroom at the end of a long hallway. Bill played with a little girl about his age, the late and longtime resident of Temecula, Margaret Roripaugh Ramsey. Bill always liked Temecula. The adventuresome child visited Temecula several times before he eventually moved here with his wife and seven children to start an earthworm business in 1974. The Harkers came to town right when everything was changing from a small cattle town to an urban center.

It was, in fact, called Rancho California, when they arrived. The Historic Vail Ranch had just been sold in 1965 to developers to build a planned community. Tract homes were available in Starlight Ridge and La Serena, some for as little as \$30,000. Butterfield Country, where Vail Lake Resort is now, had camping and waterslides and a lot of family fun in the clean-air countryside. Promoters wooed potential homebuyers with special offers and free hotdogs and passes to Butterfield Country.

Evelyn, co-founder of the Temecula Balloon and Wine Festival in 1983, was involved with Soroptimists, Womens Club, Rotary, and almost every other cause cropping up in town. Bill busily volunteered with her, serving the Temecula Town

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Calendar Of Events

Sunday, September 6 –

Temecula Old-Timer's Reunion & Picnic, 1 – 5 p.m. At the CRC on Rancho Vista Road. For those who have lived in the area before Cityhood in 1989. Contact Sandy Neal @ 694-9461

Monday, September 14 –

Monthly meeting Pujol Schoolhouse – 6 to 8 p.m. Sue Tatosian from Western Center for Archaeology & Paleontology.

Saturday, September 19 –

Paleontology, History & Water Tour – 9 .m. meet at West Guard Gate Diamond Valley Lake (off Hwy 79 No.) Caravan tour to many sites In & around the lake.

Monday, October 12 –

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

Sunday, November 1 – "Barbecue at Vail Ranch"

This will be the final event of year-long celebration 150th Anniversary of the 1st Post Office in Temecula. With the Wolf Store at the center, will have music, gunfighters, stagecoach. Western attire is best. TVHS will jointly participate as part of its annual heritage event. Ticket & cost info to come.

Association, the Tractor Race, Pro Rodeo, Rod Run and Fourth of July Parade. He was the manager, and later was board member and treasurer for the Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Evelyn ran a travel business and Bill was editor of Rancho News. She was on the school board and Bill spent time with Sam Hicks, Tony Tobin and others promoting the Temecula Museum. The Harkers were emphatic supporters of Temecula city hood and for changing the name back to Temecula, from Rancho California. After selling Rancho News, Bill continued publishing articles in the High Country Magazine, Press Enterprise, Valley News, and co-editing the Temecula Valley Historical Society newsletter.

Bill and Evelyn watched as Temecula grew and some of the old buildings went down, including the old slaughterhouse, the Vail feedlot, and the dairy between Margarita and Ynez Roads near Solana. They celebrated with Temecula when the Promenade Mall was built and when the Temecula Theater was constructed, using the Old Mercantile Building as an entrance.

When they came to town, the nearest high school was in Elsinore. They had to drive to Hemet, Fallbrook, or Lake Elsinore to buy groceries and had to go to Riverside to buy shoes. They watched the population grow from 400 to over 100,000 people, with neighboring Murrieta doing the same.

Although Evelyn has joined the others in the Temecula Cemetery, Bill is still active. He celebrated his 90th birthday a year ago by jumping out of a plane and serves as a director on the Old Town Review Board, the Temecula Valley Historical Society and the Vail Ranch Restoration Association. This October he will perform as Cowboy Bill, a storyteller at the Corona Farms Corn Maze event, regaling audiences with tales of bygone days in Temecula and Rancho California.

Remnants Of The Past

If we step lightly and listen carefully, we can find traces of the past in and around Temecula. Some say ground along the Butterfield trail in Aguanga still holds scars of wagon ruts from the Butterfield stages. And, a person can still visit the Dripping Springs watering hole at Vail Lake Resort. Sometimes an arrowhead, grinding rock or potshard turns up after a fire or heavy rain. We have few reminders of the ancient past in Temecula, but many from the era of Bessie's lifetime.

The historic treasures of Temecula are the buildings of the Historic Vail Ranch Site and Old Town, which are lovingly undergoing protection and conservation so future generations may enjoy them.

The Historic Vail Ranch and Wolf Store, once the centers of activity in the Temecula Valley, are slated for renovation and development into a park-like area between retail and restaurant spaces. The Vail Ranch Restoration Association is setting up a History Center to interpret local history, near the corner of Redhawk Parkway and Highway 79 South.

Old Town Temecula is morphing into a new historical town today with imposing three and four story buildings dwarfing the shanties that faced the sober old-time streets. As tourist flock to the area, they find enjoyment in the few vestiges of the truly old edifices and take pleasure in the make-believe ones.

Vail windmills stand as sentinels near the Meadowview Clubhouse and the Maurice Car'rie Winery. A stone building sits

(Continued on next page)

Presidents Message

Please mark your calendars for November 1st to celebrate our Annual Heritage Luncheon. It will be held in association with the Team Temecula 150 group that is celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Temecula Post Office and the Vail Ranch Restoration Association at a barbeque at the old Vail Ranch Headquarters the afternoon of Sunday, November 1st. Detailed information will be in next month's Newsletter.

While you are marking your calendar, please make plans to attend the book signing at the VaRRA History Center 7:00 P.M. on September 12th. The *Images of America* series, authored by members of the Temecula Valley Historical Society, on *French Valley* and *Temecula Wine Country* will be debuted and for sale.

At our August meeting, I appointed Diane LaTulippe to fill the vacancy created by the death of Bill McBurney. Diane is employed by the U.S. Department of Justice as a Project Manager. The Board decided not to appoint anyone to fill Bill's Vice President office as our election will be held in October.

Jimmy Moore

Timeless Temecula (continued from Page 2)

alone on a golf course near Temecula Creek. The Palomar Hotel, the Temecula Hotel (now a private residence) and the old Ramona Inn and Welty Buildings grace the streets of Old Town. They help us remember some of the events and people known by the Gonzalez', Barnetts, Parkers and Harkers.

There are twenty-nine schools in the Temecula Valley Unified School District, with one named Ysabel Barnett School. The Pujol school that Ysabel once attended has been lovingly restored as a community meeting hall by a team headed by Ysabel's grandson Malcolm Barnett and his wife Loretta.

Temecula has changed in the last twenty years. Although the train no longer comes to Temecula, the town is a popular destination for travelers to spend an afternoon of wine tasting or antiques, and is still a great place to spend a lifetime.

Horace Parker wrote something true about Temecula today, "Seventy-five years in many countries and states is a mere tick of time in the history of the area. Not so in Southern California, here it is nearly the equivalent of 150 years on the East Coast.... A resident of 10 years is an old timer and anyone living here longer is looked on with awe as being part of the living history of our section of the state."

Grandma's

"Washing Clothes Recipe"

(Years ago an Alabama grandmother gave a new bride in the family the following recipe: Below is an exact copy as written and found in an old scrapbook, with spelling errors and all.)

Build fire in backyard to heat kettle of rain water. Set tubs so smoke wont blow in eyes if wind is pert. Shave one hole cake of lie soap in boilin water. Sort things, make 3 piles, 1 pile white, 1 pile colored, 1 pile work britches and rags.

To make starch, stir flour in cool water to smooth, then thin down with boilin water. Take white things, rub dirty spots on board, scrub hard, and boil, then rub colored don't boil just wrench and starch.

Take things out of kettle with broom stick handle, then wrench, and starch. Hang old rags on fence. Spread tea towels on grass.

Pore wrench water in flower bed. Scrub porch with hot soapy water. Turn tubs upside down.

Go put on clean dress, smooth hair with hair combs. Brew cup of tea, sit and rock a spell.



*Temecula Valley Historical Society
P.O. Box 157
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Membership Activity Renewals

Wes & Teri Reeder
Rod & Dee Reynolds
Roger & Helen Cude
Naomi Woods
Rita Pappenfus
George & Suzanne Rombach
Elaine Eshom
Walt & Jean Dixon
Julie Gilbert
Dale & Ann Silimperi

New

Gene & Mary Kluter

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.

PALEONTOLOGY, HISTORY and WATER TOUR

Saturday, September 19, 2009

Sponsored by the Temecula Valley Historical Society and
The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

To Visit:

- * **Diamond Valley Lake Viewpoint**
- * **Western Center of Archaeology and Paleontology**
- * **The Center for Water Education**
- * **East Marina**
- * **3 Dams, San Diego Canal Inlet, Forebay**
- * **Wildlife / Multi-Species Reserve**
- * **The lost Indian sites beneath the Lake**
- * **Domenigoni Historical Site**
- * **Lunch at the Museum**

Caravan will assemble promptly at 9:00 a.m. on shoulder of road before the West Guard Gate. Construction Road off of Winchester Road (State Route 79) near West Dam.

Cost \$30. MUST be prepaid, due by Sept. 18. Price includes lunch & Museum fees. Bring own wheelchairs if needed.

Send check payable to **Temecula Valley Historical Society** to Bill Harker, 31130-85 S. Gen. Kearny Rd. Temecula, 92591-2033

Call President Jimmy Moore at 951-302-9536 or
Paul Price at 951-244-5937 for any questions.