

TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

March 2010

Volume 10 – 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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The photo above of the Old Hyatt Schoolhouse was taken about 8 years ago.

An Obituary

Hyatt Schoolhouse Razed

Like old soldiers that don't die, but just fade away; the Hyatt Schoolhouse is now just a faded memory of our past. Like a valiant soldier that can't stand as tall, nor as straight as they age; the Hyatt Schoolhouse gradually deteriorated in plain view of the community, right off of Rancho California Road past East Benton Road on the way to Lake Skinner.

In 1997, the property where the old schoolhouse had sat since 1907, was purchased by Marcelo Doffo. Mr. Doffo planted vineyards and created a small winery; so the old one-room school spent its final years in and around those vineyards. Mr. Doffo even incorporated an image of the old school on the labels for his product.

Some weeks back Mr. Doffo was apparently doing some work trying to stabilize the building structurally, but for his efforts received a "stop" order from Riverside county code enforcement. Numerous people (including our own Darell Farnbach, Keith Herron, County Preservation Officer, and Supervisor Jeff Stone's office), got involved in an 11th-hour attempt to have the order

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Calendar Of Events

Monday, March 8 – Monthly Meeting Pujol Schoolhouse – 6 to 8 p.m. Teresa Lourden and Myra Masiel from Pechanga Cultural Dept. will provide a presentation.

Monday, April 12 – Monthly Meeting Pujol Schoolhouse – 6 to 8 p.m. "The Lewis and Clark Story." Jim Thomas will come dressed in period costume to relate stories of Lewis & Clark, and their amazing journey. Jim's 550 page book "Corps of Discovery" will be available For \$15.

Thurs., April 15 – 7:00 pm Gallery Talk at Temecula Valley Museum. "Perry Mason – The Case of the Murdered Miner", a true story from the life of Erle Stanley Gardner.

Saturday, April 24 – The Alamos / Hyatt Reunion at the Alamos Schoolhouse at Lake Skinner Park. Former students, family, & friends are welcome. Starts at 10:00 am, with a Potluck At 12:00 pm. Bring your favorite dish to serve 8 – 10 folks. Coffee, iced tea and water provided. If have questions call Mimi at 951-926-5080 or email Pennysue83@bak.rr.net

Monday, May 10 – Monthly Meeting – 6 to 8 p.m. Anne Miller will present "Mapping the Southern Emigrant Trail". This meeting will be held at the VaRRA Little Temecula History Center.

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modified (requiring only minimum drawings and small application fee) – all to allow Mr. Doffo time to proceed correctly. However for reasons known only to Mr. Doffo, he razed the building completely, and it is now just a memory.

The Hyatt Schoolhouse was named after Edward G. Hyatt (1858-1919) who came to Southern California while recovering from a bout of tuberculosis. He began teaching in San Jacinto. After a few years he was elected Superintendent of Schools for Riverside County, and later elected Superintendent of Schools for California. To learn more about Edward Hyatt and his impact on education methods, read the book his daughter Phyllis H. Gardiner wrote entitled The Hyatt Legacy.

Initially established in 1899, the building was moved in 1907 to its recent location. Bill McBurney wrote fondly about "Schooldays at Hyatt, 1938-1940" in the January 2005 issue of the TVHS Newsletter.

To have to report an "obituary" of any kind is always sad, but to see an historic and significant old building deteriorate in front of our eyes, and then to have to report its demise, is sad commentary indeed to a glorious past.



This photo was taken this past Thanksgiving Day, and shows the work Mr. Doffo had already begun towards stabilizing the building.

Old-Time Fiesta Held in Temecula 100 years ago

(Editor note: This item is reprinted from the Temecula Gossip Column as it appeared in the Lake Elsinore Valley Press 100 years ago.)

August 12, 1910 -- Mexican Fiesta at Temecula

"An old-time Indian and Mexican Fiesta in celebration of San Luis Rey is advertised to be held at Temecula, August 23rd to 26th. There will be Indian dances and games, feather, eagle, and fire dances, Pelota and Peon games, horse races, foot races, base ball games, cowboy and Mexican feats in horsemanship, including bronco busting, coin-lifting, etc. Dancing day and night. It is an attractive program throughout, and no doubt will draw a large attendance. It is probable the noon train south will be continued on to Temecula during the Fiesta."

Presidents Message

Many times history becomes confused with urban legends. *Brewer's Dictionary of Twentieth-Century Phrase and Fable* defines urban legends as "a body of largely apocryphal stories that constitutes a major component of modern folklore." In many cases the legend will be invented to embellish a fact that, in itself, may be pretty staid, but with the proper adornment of a fictitious touch becomes much more interesting. A good example of this type of embellishment is in the meaning of the name of our fair city of Temecula.

According to Tom Hudson's *A Thousand Years In Temecula Valley*, retelling a story by Luisenos Indian Tony Ashman, the name Temecula in Luisenos language means "diffused sunshine." This definition has been transformed later to mean "Sun shining through the mist" or words to that effect. Most agree that *Temet* is the Indian word for sun. Others claim that the area was called *Temetku*, with the *la* added by the Spanish when they entered the territory. For the real definition of Temecula, attend the Temecula Valley Historical Society meeting at 6:00 P.M. on Monday, March 8th at the Pujol School House on Santiago Road in Temecula. See you then!

Jimmy Moore

Another Celebration of Cars

Temecula Rod Run Hits 25th Anniversary

By Dick Fox

From what I have been able to determine, it appears that this year is the 25th Annual Winter Rod Run in Temecula. The first annual event was held in February 1986 (back when Old Town had few curbs, fewer sidewalks and lots of dirt parking areas). The event appears to have been started by Early Times of Southern California, a Long Beach area car club, and was promoted as a "Mid-Winter Rod Run". In reading old promotion "flyers", interested parties would meet at 8:00 am at Ford Obsolete (a Ford parts company), near Willow at the Long Beach Freeway. From there they cruised south on the San Diego Freeway. Then off at the El Toro exit, where they would connect up with a contingent from Orange County at 9:00 am, to continue south to the San Juan Capistrano exit, then a scenic drive over the Ortega Hwy through Lake Elsinore. Once on Hwy. 15 they would continue the cruise to Temecula. They promoted "bringing your pre-48 car for a great cruise."

In 1989 the Old Town Temecula Merchants Association got involved, organizing a '50's theme, providing contests, a DJ, and decorations. Some of the contests listed were: Bubble Gum Blowing, Hula Hoop Contest, Nerd and Nerdette (whatever that is?), Elvis Impersonators & Entertainment; with Merchant Awards and Rod Run Awards following about 1:00 pm. Local organizations had fund-raising food booths set up along Front St., and several shop owners commented to newspaper reporters that it was their "biggest day ever for sales."

Having done a fair share of "cruising" during the mid-50's in my 1940 Ford Coupe, this all brings back some fond memories of days gone by, and my own younger times. As we all know the Rod Run is now held twice a year (Spring and Fall), and weather permitting draws great crowds. Rev those engines for the Temecula Rod Run, this year being held Fri./Sat., March 12 & 13, be there!

Empire Ranch in Arizona Where Vail Started Ranching

Long before Walter Vail came to Temecula, he and his brother Edward established ranching operations in and around Vail, Arizona. A small building stands along side one of the railroad tracks that pass through this small village area. Nearby is an area that today is known as the Empire Ranch, and is on land now owned by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

A number of years ago the BLM and a group of concerned area citizens partnered to save the old ranch buildings. The Empire Ranch Foundation has a web site, www.empireranchfoundation.org which is well worth perusing to see the kind of activities they are involved in to raise money for ranch building restoration and adaptive re-use. You might find a visit to their web site to be interesting, but also provide a glimpse at the history of the Vail Ranch operations before Temecula.



Temecula Valley Historical Society
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Membership Activity

Renewals

Community Little Book
Donald Coop
Eve Craig
Martin Disenbacher
Rhine & Sandy Helzer
Diane LaTulippe
Jim & Dorothy Meyler
Jimmy & Peg Moore
John Moramarco, Sr.
Gary & Sally Myers
Joan Roripaugh
Gerhard & Mia Thyzel

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.

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Other Area History Activities

Special Event at the Fallbrook Historical Society Museum.

On April 10th and 11th from 1 to 4 pm each day, the Fallbrook Historical Society & Museum will be displaying a collection of Edward S. Curtis native American Indian rotograveur prints that are part of their collection. The Museum is located at 260 Rocky Crest Road in Fallbrook. For additional information contact Judy Gillespie at 760-451-1572.

The Santa Rosa Plateau Ecological Reserve is looking for volunteers to interact with visitors at the historical adobes in the reserve. Volunteers will be trained, and will not be required to hike and/or stand for prolonged periods of time. They may sign up for coverage shifts as short as three hours. For questions or to volunteer call Nancy at 951-677-7341.

Vallecito Days, Experience Life on the 1850s Frontier. On Sat. March 6 from 10 am to 4 pm, and then again on Sunday March 7 from 10 am to 2 pm at the Vallecito County Regional Park located at 37349 County Route S-2 (mile marker 34-35), in Vallecito Valley. Multiple groups will conduct tours of the original Vallecito Stage Station the rest stop for travelers on the Southern Overland Trail. Attendees are encouraged to dress in 1850s attire.