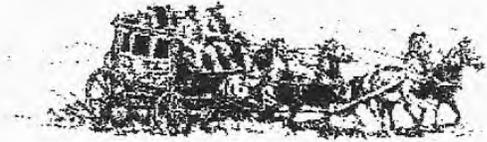


TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

September 2012

Volume 12 – 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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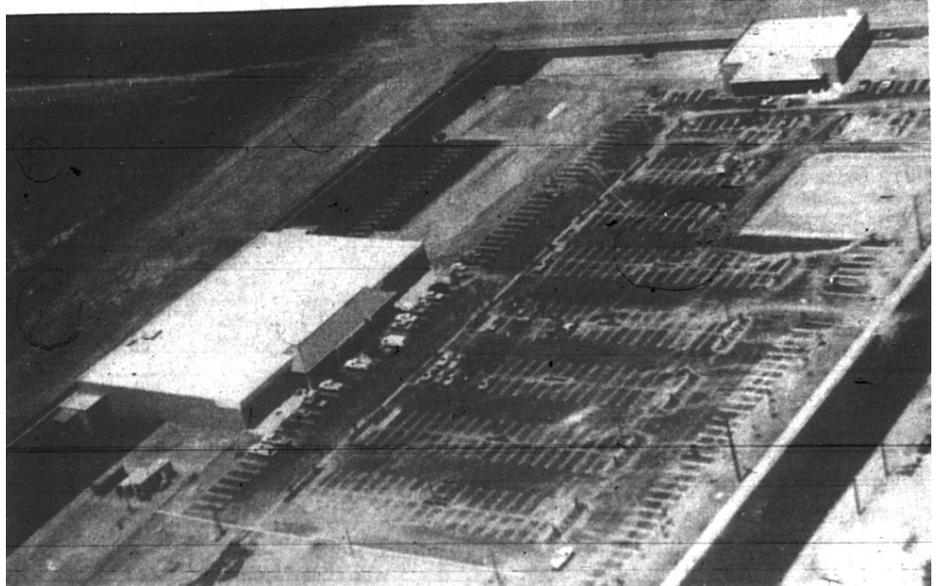
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Aerial photo shows the 30,000 square foot Stater Brothers supermarket on Opening Day. Winchester Square Theater is in the upper right corner. Naugles will be built on the vacant pad in the parking lot fronting Jefferson Avenue.

Source: July 23, 1981, Rancho News

The Winchester Square Shopping Center

By Jeffery G. Harmon

The Winchester Square Shopping Center, which opened in 1981, is one of the current focal points for the Jefferson Corridor Study begun by the City of Temecula last year. Today the center is viewed as a defunct shopping center, with vacant storefronts, and meager patronage. However, during the 1980s, it was a thriving shopping center that brought competition to the Rancho California Plaza, and provided a lifeline to Murrieta residents.

The 11-acre shopping center was once part of the Temecula Rancho owned by Juan Murrieta. He sold the land to E. E. Barnett, an early Temecula pioneer, a farmer and a cattle rancher. Barnett built a beautiful two-story home on the property, which was razed when grading began for the shopping center in the fall of 1980.

After four months of construction, the grand opening event for Stater Brothers' 91st store took place on July 23, 1981. The 30,000 square foot building was the first major grocery chain to open in the Rancho California community. Safeway, another grocery chain, opened on December 5, 1981 in the Rancho California Plaza.

(Continued on Page 2)

Calendar **Of Events**

Monday, September 24 – 6 p.m.

TVHS monthly meeting at Little Temecula History Center
Reena Deutsch, PhD, presents:
"San Diego & Arizona Railway:
The Impossible Railroad."
Book signing after program

Saturday, October 20 –

8:30 a.m. ~ 3:00 p.m.
Temecula Valley Museum
Hosts, "Bazaar in the Park"
Fundraiser in Sam Hicks
Monument Park.

**Temecula Valley Museum
Exhibition**

June 30 ~ September 16, 2012
"The Old West"
Take a look back at daily wear in
The Old West during the late
1800's.
September 29 ~ January 6, 2013
"The Betty Burke Collection"
An exhibit of Erle Stanley
Gardner Memorabilia

Saturday, September 29 –

10a.m. San Diego Presidio Tour
For more information contact
Lisa Woodward at
(951) 514-7406 or email at
LLWoodward@verizon.net

Announcing:

The Temecula Valley Historical
Society's Annual Dinner

"Celebrating Old Town"

At the Temecula Civic Center
Saturday, November 10th

5:00 p.m. ~ 9:00 p.m.

Presentation by

Authors/Historians:

Rebecca Farnbach

Loretta Barnett, Jeffery Harmon
& Lisa Woodward

Books for Sale and Signing

"Images of America:

Old Town Temecula,"

Tickets Available Soon

**Donations for Raffle items are
requested**

For more information contact

Lisa Woodward at

(951) 514-7406 or email at
LLWoodward@verizon.net

Center (Continued from Page 1)

Murrieta residents did not have a large grocery store chain in their area. Most residents would commute down Jefferson Avenue to shop at Stater Brothers. The grocery store also offered a job market for local high school students in Temecula and Murrieta.

Instead of using traditional ribbon, film was stretched from reel to reel and then cut for the Winchester Square Theater's opening ceremony on December 18, 1981. The theater had three screens each with 200 seats for a total capacity of 600. The first movies shown were Raiders of the Lost Ark, Time Bandits, and Arthur.

Building E, attached to Stater Brother's north wall, was completed on May 1, 1982. Businesses included a Hallmark Card & Gift Shop, Gourmet Gadgets, Graziano's Italian restaurant, and Red Carpet Real Estate.

Next door to the theater a 3,000 square foot building was constructed. The D.J. Video Store opened at this location in February 1983. The Video Store building was demolished in the 1990s and Rocky Cola Café was built on the site. Today, Mo's Egg House Restaurant claims the location.

Another business in the center was Naugles, a fast food Mexican restaurant chain built on a 2,300-square foot freestanding pad. Naugles was founded in 1970 by a former Del Taco employee, Dick Naugle in Riverside.

When Naugles opened in February 1983, it was the first 24 hour fast food restaurant in the area. Like the carhops of old, Naugles became the local hangout spot where Temecula and Murrieta youth would congregate. Music would play from the car radios as they ate tacos and discussed the movies they saw at the Winchester Square Theater. After Naugles merged with Del Taco in 1988, the Naugles social hangout began to fade away.

Another 6,000 square foot building was added to the center in 1984. Maurice Printers and Win King Restaurants were two of the new tenants in the center.

In 1985, Rancho Consultants Co., Inc. (Rancon) sold the shopping center to Crisell Properties, an Escondido firm, for \$4.956 million. The new owners announced the construction of a 45,000 square foot addition to the center with Payless Drugstore as an anchor tenant. Shortly after construction was completed, the shopping center was sold to Savemost Development on December 23, 1986 for \$7.45 million. The sale did not include Stater Brothers or Payless Drugstore.

On February 1, 1988, a fresh narrow strip of cement was poured in the parking lot in front of the Winchester Square Theater for water drainage. Theater employees placed their hands in the wet cement and signed their names, just like Hollywood movie stars at the Chinese Mann Theater.

(Continued on Page 3)

100 Years Ago

Riverside Daily Press
September 13, 1912

Great Plans for Feast of St. Michael

Not to be out-done in celebrating by their pale face brothers, the Indians of the Pechanga agency will open a four-day celebration on Sunday morning, September 29, with mass, conducted by Father George Doyle. These festivities are an annual affair with the Indians of this agency and they plan great features for this year. The grounds for the sporting events and large gatherings will be on the outskirts of Temecula, where some of the younger members of the tribes are to be engaged during the next week in arranging the track and field. The program for the Feast of St. Michael, as the annual fiesta will be known, is as follows:

Sunday, September 29

Mass, 9 o'clock, Rev. Father George Doyle officiating
Horse race, 300 yards, \$1 entrance fee; prize \$7.50

Sunday Afternoon

Pelota game, 2 o'clock; price \$7; greased pole, prize \$1.50; boys' pelota, prize, \$3.50

Monday Forenoon

Peon game (old men) 9 o'clock, prize \$5; slow horse race, prize \$2

Monday Afternoon

Cracker eating contest, prize \$1; horse race, 250 yards, \$1.50 entrance fee, prize \$15; novelty horse race, prize \$2.50; old ladies' peon game, prize \$4

(Continued on Page 4)

Center (Continued from Page 2)

Also in front of the theater, a line of tiny painted footprints can be found on the sidewalk. In the summer of 1989, the movie, Batman played at Winchester Square Theater. The blockbuster movie drew record attendance. Crowd control at the theater became very difficult. To remedy the problem, employees painted a line of footprints to the ticket window so patrons knew where to line up.

Sadly, the theater closed in the early 1990s. Edwards Cinema had opened in the Target Town Center Shopping Center, and Temeku Theaters opened in the Mervyn's Palm Plaza Shopping Center. Winchester Square Theater could not compete and soon closed its doors.

Today, the Winchester Square Theater is home to two businesses. In Screen 1, where Batman played to sold out crowds, is now a bar, E.T.'s Sports Lounge. Screen 2 and 3 are now Temecula Tire & Auto Repair.

In 1994, Thrifty Drugstore Co. acquired the Payless Drugstore Co, which forced Payless to close in the shopping center. Afterwards the unit was divided into two spaces. The Salvation Army Thrift Store and the Century 21 Real Estate offices occupied the two spaces for over ten years. Recently, Century 21 vacated the unit and the Salvation Army now completely occupies the former Payless Drugstore site.

The final blow to the center came in 2006 when Stater Brothers closed its doors. The Winchester Shopping Center became a "ghost town" overnight. Then in April 2012, plans were announced to convert the former grocery store space into a bowling alley. Family entertainment would once again return to the shopping center, bringing new life to the area.

A futuristic vision for the Winchester Square shopping center was recently revealed during the Jefferson Corridor Study. The vision showed the entire complex being bulldozed over and rebuilt. The parking lot would be divided into four sections with two roads bisecting it. Large multi-use, multi-story developments could replace the empty store fronts, revitalizing the area. If this happens, all that would be left would be the memories of one of the great shopping centers of the Rancho California community.

75 Years Ago This Month

Elsinore Leader Press

September 9, 1937: Temecula Union Grammar School starts September 13th, with Mrs. Grace Duarte as principal, Mrs. Ruth Hill, 5th and 6th grades, Miss Pauline Carr, 3rd and 4th grades, Miss Rose Solomon 1st and 2nd grades, Al Otto, janitor, and Vernon Knott bus driver. Be sure to bring your lunches.

September 16, 1937: Mrs. Grace Duarte is residing at the Palomar Hotel and Miss Pauline Carr, Miss Rose Solomon, and Mrs. Ruth Hill at the Temecula Hotel.

100 Years Ago

(Continued from Page 3)

Tuesday Forenoon

Old men's foot race, 100 yards, prize, \$2

Tuesday Afternoon

Horse race, 350 yards, \$2.50 entrance fee, prize \$20; bronco riding, prize \$5; boys' peon game. Pechanga vs. Pala, prize \$2

Old-time Indian dances every night. A first class orchestra will furnish the music at the pavilion, where dancing will be the program every night. Games and amusements to please all. All are cordially invited.

The committee in charge is composed of Benito Pajinam and Alejandro Cushman.

Welcome New Members:

Dennis & Teresa Chiniaeff
Karl & Jan Weiler

VaARRA SPECIAL EVENT:

Artist Roy Morrissey Gallery Show

VaARRA will host an exclusive gallery showing of 80 original paintings from the estate of local artist Roy Morrissey on Friday and Saturday October 12 & 13 from 6 - 9 pm and on Sunday, October 14 from noon to 5 pm. Wine and cheese will be served at the evening showings. Paintings will be available for purchase for \$140 to \$450, with a portion of each sale benefitting VaARRA.

For any questions, please call Darell Farnbach at 951-552-3516.

President's Message by Bonnie Martland

Spicy words and mellow sounds put a blush on some cheeks and a sway in the seats. Gordon Johnson delivered a wonderful evening of poetry and song as the presenter at our August general meeting. Cuttingly acerbic, Gordon's words shaved thin, sharp, precise slices of his cultural world and presented them to us as on the point of a knife. Balanced by the mellow sounds of his voice and guitar; and reminiscent of earlier days in the valley, he presented the Society with a very special evening. It was especially nice to see the Red Barn full; with some faces we hadn't seen in awhile.

Gordon's words plopped us into a seat at the Longbranch Saloon, into the backseat of an old Chevy on the *Rez*, and to Temecula before the land boom. However, such images were not the only scenes that captured the imagination of the audience's that evening.

Sponsored by VaARRA, an exhibit of over 75 Roy Morrissey paintings was on display, and will continue to be displayed, at the Little Temecula History Center, our "Red Barn" for about three more weeks.

Morrissey, one of Temecula's early, and most prominent, artists, recently passed away. A master of a different medium, Mr. Morrissey's paintings transports us to an earlier Temecula and returns to us scenes no longer here. The current exhibit is the largest display of Morrissey paintings ever assembled and the paintings are for sale at affordable prices. If interested, you may contact TVHS Board Member Darell Farnbach at 951-552-3516. Also, the history center is open Sunday afternoons until 5PM.

One of Mr. Morrissey's favorite subjects was the railroad which will be the subject of this month's presenter Dr. Reena Deutsch. The following month Jeffery Harmon will present a videotaped interview with Roy Morrissey. I hope you will join us.

25 Years Ago This Month

September 9, 1987, Rancho News

Thomas Longfellow Jr.

Private funeral services were held for Thomas Longfellow Jr., 61, of Colville, Wash., who died Aug. 18, 1987.

Longfellow was born August 3, 1926. He was the former owner and builder of The (Main Street) Emporium and owner for 10 years of Longfellow House Antiques, both on Main Street, Temecula, before he moved to Washington approximately seven years ago.

Longfellow is survived by his wife, Kathryn Longfellow of Colville, Wash.; his mother, Mary Longfellow, of Irvine; a son, Thomas Longfellow III of Lake Elsinore, a daughter, Jan-Ellen King of Colville, Wash.; and two grandchildren.

August Speaker, Gordon Johnson's books:

Rez Dogs Eat Beans www.authorhouse.com

Fast Cars and Frybread: Reports from the Rez <http://heydaybooks.com/>