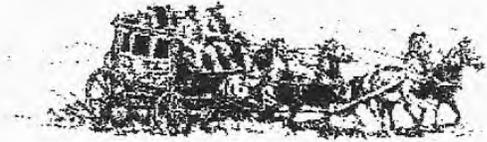


TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

October 2012

Volume 12 – Issue 10

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 Publication of the
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*A few of our guests, Murrieta Hot Springs, Cal.
The Administration Bldg, 1910, Photo courtesy of David Barnett*

Frederick "Fritz" Guenther

By Jeffery G. Harmon

"Adjacent to the town (Murrieta) are valuable hot springs, though little has been done to properly develop them or to exploit their virtues abroad." (December 21, 1902, Riverside Independent Enterprise)

Frederick "Fritz" Guenther checked into the Holyrood Hotel in Riverside on July 16, 1902. Guenther, an owner of three saloons, was a German immigrant who settled in Los Angeles in 1875. He traveled to Riverside County during the summer of 1902 in search of his next business adventure.

Traveling by rail, Guenther soon arrived at the Murrieta Train Depot. He then traveled east to tour the Murrieta Hot Springs tract. In October 1902, he purchased the 294 acre tract from Mrs. Jerusha Mills for \$10,000. Mills had owned the springs since 1895, but had little commercial success. Guenther found the property had been recently used for farming and cattle grazing, and there were remnants of an old steam laundry business.

Renovating the property and construction of guest accommodations had to begin immediately. Guenther sold half his interest in the springs to C. Edgar Smith for \$10,000 in December 1902. With startup capital, the land was cleared, cottages were built and the first mud bathhouse was erected. By April 1903, Guenther purchased Smith's interest and became sole owner of the springs.

(Continued on Page 2)

Calendar Of Events

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.

Monday, October 22 – 6 p.m.

TVHS monthly meeting at Little
Temecula History Center
Jeffery Harmon presents: *A
Night with Artist Roy Morrissey.*
An Autobiographical video taped
Interview produced in 2002

Temecula Valley Museum Exhibition

September 29~ January 6, 2013
"The Betty Burke Collection"
An exhibit of Erle Stanley
Gardner Memorabilia

Announcing:

The Temecula Valley Historical
Society's Annual Dinner

Special Guest Speaker
John Bianchi

At the Temecula Civic Center
Saturday, November 10th
5:00 p.m. ~ 9:00 p.m.

*"Images of America:
Old Town Temecula,"*
Books for Sale and Signing
5:00 pm ~ 6:00 pm

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

Welcome New Members:

Terry Bracci

Guenther (Continued from Page 1)

The Murrieta Hot Springs Resort grew quickly in popularity. In June 1903, Guenther's resort was full to capacity and some of his guests were sent to Murrieta's hotel, the Fountain House. In November, construction began on more guests cottages to meet the growing demand. When Guenther filed for a county liquor permit in April 1904, he reported that the resort had forty bedrooms.

On August 10, 1904, articles of incorporation were filed in Riverside County.

"The directors are Fritz, Hugo and Rudolph Guenther and John Wenner of Murrieta and John W. Mitchell of Los Angeles. The capital stock is \$150,000 of which \$83,000 has already been subscribed. Fritz Guenther, the largest stockholder, has subscribed for \$80,000 worth of stock." (August 10, 1904, Riverside Daily Press)

The Monterey Hotel was constructed during the summer of 1904, and opened in September. With more accommodations, Guenther petitioned the railroad to extend tri-weekly passenger service from Elsinore to Murrieta. In November, Guenther brought fifty people from Los Angeles to his resort. He provided an orchestra to accompany his guests during their journey to Murrieta. At Riverside, he presented to each of them a white carnation. When they arrived at the resort, dinner was served followed by a dance in the evening.

Telephone service was installed at the resort in 1905.

"There is a lot of telephone wire and other material in the Santa Fe depot and it is said there is to be a telephone line constructed to the Murrieta Hot Springs." (January 27, 1905, Riverside Daily Press)

The telephone line was completed by March and the resort was no longer isolated from the outside world. In August 1905, Frank Hiner was hired as the resort's barber. Also a billiard table and bowling alley was added to the resort's recreational activities. By September, Guenther began petitioning the railroad for a daily passenger train service to Murrieta. The year ended when another large bathhouse was completed in October.

The growing popularity of the hot springs was due to the multitude of testimonies of the waters' healing abilities. However, not all guests were cured of their afflictions. On January 20, 1906, while visiting the resort, Fred Wells, editor of the Hueneme Herald of Ventura, died of Bright's Disease, a chronic and painful kidney disease. In June 1908, Mr. Joy Pollard, died of undisclosed causes. Finally, on January 20, 1912, John Franzell, aged 40, died from heart disease while taking a morning mud bath.

A few resort guests were also led away in handcuffs. On August 17, 1908, Herman Smith was arrested on a warrant for embezzlement charges. Samuel Leonard was arrested on October 1, 1912 on a warrant for forgery charges. A few crimes were also committed at the resort. In September 1907, former resort pianist Walter A. Quinck was arrested in Los Angeles. He was accused of stealing \$55 in gold and \$43.75 from the resort's cash drawer.

(Continued on Page 3)

100 Years Ago This Month

October 8, 1912, Riverside

Daily Press

Indians to Go to Public School

The Pechanga reservation school near Temecula has been abandoned and the government has ordered the children to attend the Pujol School at Temecula.

Winchester Square Shopping Center correction:

“The article stated that the E.E. Barnett home was built on the property. The house that was built on this property was the one story Ben Barnett home, which was razed in 1980. The two story house that E.E. Barnett built was just north of Santa Gertrudis Creek. Jack Roripaugh said that it was razed in the late 1930's. A bank sits on the property today. Leo Roripaugh, Jack's father, was born in the two-story E.E. Barnett home.” Loretta Barnett

**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 benefiting VaARRA.

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

Guenther (Continued from Page 2)

Lumber, cement and other building supplies were delivered at the Murrieta depot in March 1908. The California Hotel built next to the Monterey Hotel was completed later that year. In May 1908, Guenther filed for another liquor permit, which was becoming more difficult as the Prohibition movement was gaining momentum in Riverside County.

From 1902 to 1908, guests arriving at the Murrieta Depot were escorted to the resort by horse and buggy. In July 1908, Guenther purchased a large touring car in Los Angeles. He was then able to transport more guests per trip between the train and the resort.

Fritz Guenther's oldest son, Hugo married Rosa Markenwalder in February 1909. Soon two grandchildren were born at the Murrieta Hot Springs Resort. Evelyn was born May 10, 1910 and Frederick "Bud" Hugo Guenther was born September 4, 1911.

Construction continued through the years. In May 1909, additional lumber was received to build more cottages. In October 1910, construction began on a new hotel, which was completed in January 1911.

“The Murrieta Hot Springs Company opened its new hotel last week. Numerous guests are arriving on all trains overtaking the bus accommodations between the depot and springs.” (January 26, 1911, Riverside Daily Press)

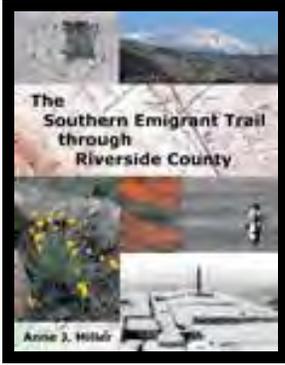
By June 1911, the hotel office, and the dining room were enlarged and another bathhouse was erected to accommodate the increased traffic. In July, new fresh water wells were drilled, and additional pipes were laid. A large reservoir was constructed on the hill in September.

The Los Angeles Angels, a Pacific Coast League baseball team, held their spring training camp at the resort in March 1911. However, the team had several misfortunes befall them during their visit. For example, Bill Tozer, their star pitcher, was injured during a late night accidental shooting. Most witnesses later claimed that alcohol was not a factor in the incident.

On June 29, 1911, Fritz Guenther and James Underwood were arrested at the resort in violation of the county prohibition ordinance. On July 1st they pleaded guilty to illegally selling liquor and paid a \$100 fine for their first offense. It is unknown if Guenther, the former saloon owner, continued pouring his guests drinks after his arrest.

A large boiler was delivered by train in April 1912 to provide heating for the hotel. Construction also began on a brick and concrete steam laundry plant. In July, machinery was delivered to the resort as the plant neared completion. As construction projects continued at the resort, Fritz Guenther's health began to decline.

Family and friends requested that Fritz seek medical attention, but he refused, and continued working. Finally, Fritz relented and traveled to Los Angeles to seek a physician's care. His illness,



NOW AVAILABLE

**The Southern Emigrant Trail
through Riverside County**
By Anne J. Miller, Ph.D

This unique story of the Southern Emigrant Trail through Riverside County, based almost entirely on historic records, documents the location of the trail and tells the stories of those who traveled along the route or lived in the area during the mid-1800s. Surveyors' field notes, diaries, journals, newspaper reports, military records, census records, and many other records give the reader the opportunity to "experience" an important era in Southern California. Detailed maps with the route and other information are included along with many historic and current photographs.

In Temecula, signed copies may be purchased from:

The Little Temecula History Center and the Temecula Valley Museum

Also available online from:

AuthorHouse.com,
Amazon.com and BarnesandNoble.com

Guenther (Continued from Page 3)

Bright's Disease, had advanced too far for preventive treatment. Fritz Guenther died in Los Angeles on October 27, 1912.

At the time of his death, Guenther's estate was valued at \$400,000. It was divided between his widow, Louisa, and his three children, Hugo, Rudy, and Annie. Hugo continued to manage the family business and Rudy continued his father's building projects, becoming the leading resort architect. Louisa moved to the springs and lived out the rest of her days at the resort until she died in 1939.

From the time Fritz Guenther first arrived at the hot springs till his death ten years later, he built a world class resort that would continue to attract people from all over the country and the world. The Guenther family name would continue to be a part of the legacy of the Murrieta Hot Springs Resort.

Further Reading: *Images of America: Murrieta Hot Springs*

President's Message by Bonnie Martland

I heard on the news that summer is over. I think the cooler weather the past few days confirms it. It is taking a little longer to ease into the backyard pool, and the air at the beach is a bit more brisk. Grapevine leaves are turning and stores are stock full of autumn related items. It really struck me, however, when our youngest son returned my phone call last evening.

He was calling from a San Diego restaurant and said that he and his wife and son were attending their first PTA event. They recently moved to San Diego and their son just started kindergarten a few weeks ago and he is so excited about school.

Autumn is a wonderful kid-time of year. The school year begins with enthusiasm, with fresh possibilities and new adventures. Columbus Day, Halloween and Thanksgiving, are what I call "history holidays". It is an excellent time to spend with your kids, grandkids or neighborhood kids.

San Diego offers wonderful opportunities for kids such as the museums at Balboa Park and the zoo, the Maritime Museum, home of the Star of India, the USS Midway Museum, Old Town San Diego State Park and the Mormon Battalion Museum.

Temecula also offers exciting places for kids to visit. The Temecula Valley Museum, the Temecula Children's Museum, and the Community Services Department offer many activities for kids. Other places to visit are the Santa Rosa Plateau, and The Little Temecula History Center next to Kohl's, which is open from noon to five on Sundays. TVHS member Dale Garcia conducts tours of Old Town Temecula. Also, don't forget to check out the "Merc" and the Temecula Community Theater's calendar for upcoming shows and events.

So remember there is no one better than you to pass on history, and an enthusiasm for history, to young people and autumn is a perfect time to begin.