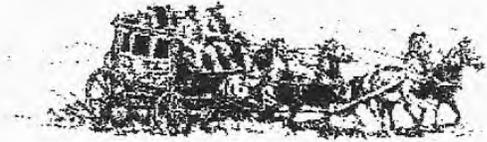


TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

November 2012

Volume 12 – Issue 11

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.

2011 Officers

President Bonnie Martland
Vice President Dick Fox
Secretary Elaine Culverhouse
Treasurer Lynn Cude
Past President Jimmy Moore

Directors

Bill Harker Elaine Eshom
Bonnie Reed Darell Farnbach
Lisa Woodward Thomas Long
Pat Lallou
Myra Masiel-Zamora

Committee Chairs

Research & Preservation

Darell Farnbach

Public Relations

Dick Fox

Membership

Bill Harker

Program Speakers

Rebecca Farnbach

Projects

Jimmy Moore

Events/Education

Lisa Woodward

Historian

Thomas Long

A Publication of the
Temecula Valley Historical Society
P.O. Box 157
Temecula, CA 92593
951-303-6860
www.temeculahistoricalsociety.org



Sam Hicks working on Monument

(Source: Rancho News, September 6, 1979)

Sam Hicks Monument Park

By Jeffery G. Harmon

The Rancho California Sports Park may have been immortalized by President Ronald Reagan during a speech in 1983, but it was not the first park built by the Rancho California/Temecula community - that honor belongs to the Sam Hicks Monument Park.

Located at the intersection of Moreno Drive and Mercedes Street, the park began as a schoolyard for the Pujol schoolhouse in 1889. The school was moved off the property by 1915, for the construction of the Temecula Union School. The school closed in June 1968, and the building was destroyed by fire in 1971. However, the Temecula Union School District continued to use the property for local sports and community events.

Sam Hicks and his family moved from Jackson Hole, Wyoming to Temecula in 1947. Hicks managed Erle Stanley Gardner's ranch and became a civil servant in the community. In 1967, he was one of the founders of the High Country Magazine. He also was one of the designers of the "They Passed This Way" monument that was dedicated at the school property on October 3, 1969. Sam Hicks envisioned that the property would one day become a park and an educational center, interpreting Temecula's rich history.

Through the 1970s, the school district continued to watch over the property, but it never developed the property into a public park. Bill Harker, a long time Temecula resident, recalled, "Before any grass

(Continued on Page 2)

Calendar Of Events

Monday, January 28 – 6 p.m.
TVHS monthly meeting at Little Temecula History Center
Steve Lech presents:
The Riverside Mission Inn

Temecula Valley Museum Exhibition

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

Now Available:

*"The Southern Emigrant Trail
Through Riverside County"*

By Anne Miller PhD.

Books available for
sale and for signing.

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.

Books for Sale and Signing
5:00 pm ~ 6:00 pm

*"Images of America:
Old Town Temecula,"*
&

*"The Southern Emigrant Trail
Through Riverside County"*

For tickets or more information
contact

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

Welcome New Members:

Tracy Frick

Park (Continued from Page 1)

or trees were planted, the area was just a dirt lot, and was used for Little League baseball and Pop Warner football games." Annual 4th of July celebrations were also held on the site. By June 1979, the Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce (TVCC) and the Temecula Union School District reached an agreement to develop the property into a park.

Irrigation and a pipe system were installed by three men from the Temecula Plumbing and Electric Company, Bob Prysock, Bob Dietz and Duane Balfanz. Sam Hicks, who was head of the Monument Park Committee, also worked on the watering system and installed two flag poles. It was estimated that the four men contributed over a hundred hours of labor to prepare the property for its dedication day.

Monument Park was dedicated on July 4, 1979 at 4:00 p.m. The ceremony was broadcast live on Valley Public Radio, 88.9 FM KRTM. The community had its first public park. Sam's vision was beginning to be realized.

Sadly, on August 24, the community was shocked to learn of Sam Hick's sudden and tragic death. The Sam Hicks Monument Park Memorial fund was established by his family. His daughter, Nancy Carmichael and his wife, Kelly Hicks, were named trustees. In September, the Temecula Valley Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, including Bill Harker, Executive Director, voted to change the park's name in honor of Sam Hicks.

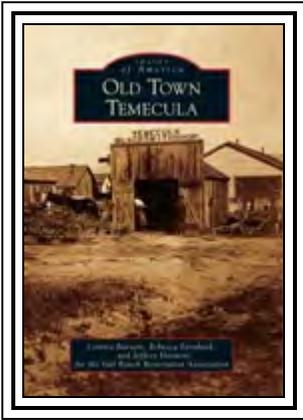
Up until his death, the community had been planning a surprise birthday party for Sam, the area's last constable. Instead, on November 21, 1979, Sam Hicks Monument Park was officially dedicated on what would have been Hicks' 60th birthday. His desire had been to start a tree planting program at the park. Rancho News donated five trees for the park. At the dedication, Supervisor Walt Abraham turned over the first spades of dirt for the newly planted trees.

During the dedication, Nancy Carmichael presented plans for a 1,200 square foot visitor's center that would be built next to the monument. The center, designed by Dick Gibbo and John Bianchi, was submitted to the Temecula School board for approval. Due to either legal complications or funding, the visitor's center was never built.

Virginia Hanson, whose penmanship graced the monument, carved the park's name on a 3' x 5' redwood sign and donated two railroad ties to install it on. The sign was placed in April 1980.

The Rancho California Lions Club wanted to begin building a children's playground at the south end of the property, but construction was delayed until the TVCC could determine liability insurance. By September 1980, playground construction began under the supervision of Bob Prysock. KACOR delivered several truck loads of fill dirt for the property. On Labor Day, Mike Monteleone donated his time and heavy equipment for grading the park. Mike Flaherty donated installation of electrical wiring in the park for lighting and accessory outlets.

(Continued on Page 3)



Now Available

IMAGES OF AMERICA: OLD TOWN TEMECULA

By authors

Rebecca Farnbach,
Loretta Barnett &
Jeffery Harmon

Book Signing Events:

November 3

1 - 3 pm: Barnes & Noble
40570 Winchester Rd
Temecula

6 - 8 pm: Robin's Nest
Desserts & Catering
41911 5th Street Suite 100
Temecula

Also: Anne Miller, PhD. will
be signing her new book:
*The Southern Emigrant Trail
through Riverside County*

November 10 5-6 pm
Society's Annual Dinner
At the Temecula Civic Center

If you would like to host a book
signing event, please contact:
Rebecca Farnbach at
(951) 699-5148

Park (Continued from Page 2)

Nine more trees were planted by the TVCC in March 1981. Local residents donated each tree in memory of a loved one with a plaque placed next to the tree. Kelly Hicks purchased a tree in honor of Tom Hudson's 81st birthday.

The Sam Hicks Monument Park Foundation, a non-profit group, filed Articles of Incorporation in November 1982. Bill Harker was one of the members of the Foundation's Board of Trustees. The TVCC agreed to fund park maintenance and the school district continued to pay the water bill until June 1983. Afterwards, the park would be funded and operated by the Foundation.

The Lions Club held a special work day on March 5, 1983. Members constructed a protective Western style barricade fence along the access road between the playground and the fire station next door, to provide safety for children visiting the park. Ralph Navarro, Lions president and a GTE employee, donated \$200 for playground equipment. GTE also donated ten 30-foot telephone poles for the barricade, which were cut down and used for the fence construction. GTE employees joined with Lions members in the building project. Also Lions member Bill Harker served as chairman of the club's playground improvement project.

Thirty-five trees were donated to the park by Dale Perkins of Murrieta in January 1984. Seven 15-foot Monterrey Pines were planted. The Butterfield Tree Express donated the labor and the equipment for the project. For \$50, a person would donate a tree to be planted in the park in memory of someone.

Then in February 1984, the park's water was turned off. The Foundation was in debt \$2,000 and in need of funding. Average monthly maintenance was estimated at \$300, but there were no new funds available nor was there any tax money to pay for the cost. Once again the Rancho California/Temecula community rallied to the cause and began fundraising.

The Soroptimist International of Rancho California/Temecula held a "Pancakes for our Park" fundraiser. Bert Hornsveld donated surplus Army boxes used as donation collectors that were placed on many business counters. The park's water bill was paid by the Rancho California/Temecula Little League and the water service was restored.

On the one year anniversary of Temecula's Sizzler Restaurant a large pancake fundraiser was held. It was a sold out event, with seventy volunteers from 15 civic groups serving the attendees. Nancy Carmichael accepted a check for \$3,000 on behalf of the Foundation.

The Rancho California/Temecula community continued to donate labor and finances for the park until cityhood in 1989. Then Temecula's Parks and Receptions Department, took over the park's operations and funding. In 1999, the Temecula Valley Museum opened at the park. Also, the historic St. Catherine's Catholic Church was relocated to the park. Renamed the Chapel of Memories, it became a wedding chapel.

(Continued on Page 4)

25 Years Ago This Month

November 12, 1987
The Californian

Carl's Jr. Opens doors to hungry Temeculans

The new Carl's Jr. that has been under construction during the summer opened to the public on November 11, announced Bernard Karcher, head of Bernard Karcher Investments, owner/operator. "We are happy to be part of the Rancho California/Temecula community and look forward to serving its families and visitors." He says.

The large 3,500 square foot restaurant has a 90-person dining room, a drive-thru and plenty of parking. It is conveniently located on Winchester Road at I-15. Hours are from 6:00 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily.

A pre-opening benefit party for The H.E.A.R.T. Foundation was hosted by Karcher on Nov. 10 with guests that included business and civic leaders. Martha Minkler, foundation president, accepted Karcher's donation for the organization's programs.

Editor's Note:

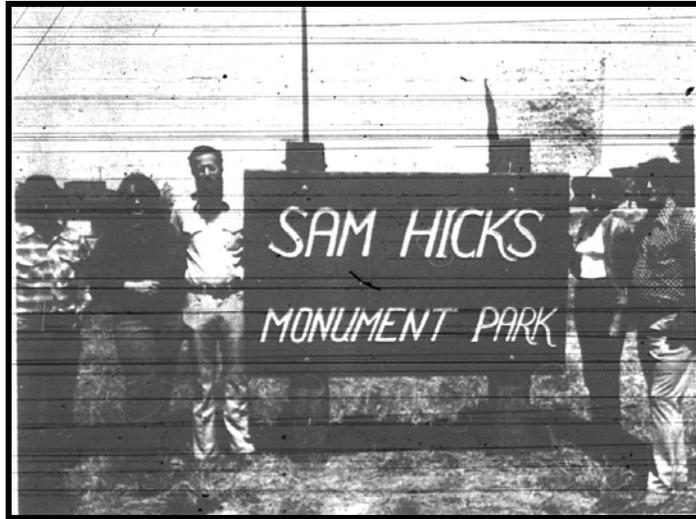
I was a member of the original opening crew. A few weeks after we opened, Carl Karcher visited his brother's new store and shook hands with the crew!

Today there are five Carl's Jr. locations in Temecula.

Park (Continued from Page 3)

Though the park is not mentioned in any presidential speech, the park still has a lasting legacy of a community's generous, civic and can-do-spirit. As thousands of schoolchildren and visitors pass this way through the park, learning about Temecula's colorful history, we are reminded of one man's monumental vision, a man named Sam Hicks.

Researcher's Note: Due to limited space, not all names and organizations who donated time, money and resources for the Sam Hicks Monument Park could be mentioned. If you have a story related to the park, please send it in so that we can share it with our readers.



Pictured (L to R) Dick Gibbo, Virginia Hansen, Charlie Gilford, Nancy and Jim Carmichael
Source: Rancho News, April 10, 1980

President's Message by Bonnie Martland

It is difficult to believe how quickly the time passes. With our annual meeting and dinner event this month and our annual monthly hiatus in December, we will have concluded another TVHS year. November is the start of the holiday season with a day set aside to contemplate and give thanks for all our blessings. It is also a time when we vote.

This year voting includes participating in a national Presidential election. With all its incumbent trappings, seemingly endless political ads, and barbed rhetoric, national elections may not warrant placement at the top of your list of blessings! But perhaps, it deserves to be elevated. As one of my grandsons said in referring to kindergarten homework he didn't want to do, "It makes my face red." Elections can do the same, but to participate is a privilege and it is important, and it is our future.

To all of you who took the time to do your homework and vote, even if it does make your face red, thank you!