

Wolf Store

# VaRRA News

Newsletter from the  
**Vail Ranch Restoration Association**

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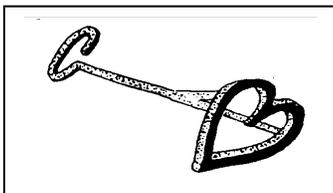
1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2009 – Volume 1, Issue 1

*“Dedicated to the preservation and restoration of the Historic Vail Ranch Headquarters.”*

**Little Temecula  
History Center is  
NOW Open –  
In Red Implement  
Barn next to Kohl’s  
At 79 South and  
Margarita**

**Sundays 12 – 5 pm**  
*Or by Appointment*

***Come see the results of  
Our efforts, and perhaps  
Volunteer to be a docent.***



## Vail Ranch Restoration Association

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### From the Ledger

## Louis Wolf, Postmaster and Early Storekeeper at Warner Springs

By Rebecca Marshall Farnbach

The Wolf Store Adobe carries the name of the burly, bearded Jewish proprietor who came to America from the Alsace-Lorraine region of Europe that was sometimes under German and at other times under French control. Perhaps Wolf, who arrived in San Francisco in 1851 at the age of twenty-one, had Gold Rush fever, as he worked as a miner for a short time before making his first appearance in Temecula in 1857.

Accounts say Wolf had a store on the south side of Temecula Creek, between the Apis adobe and Magee’s store in 1858. There are references to his hotel services and a lawsuit was filed in front of the Wolf and Prager Store in 1858. He is listed on the 1860 census in Temecula and was assessed \$800 in taxes.

In 1867, Wolf was postmaster in Warner Springs and was a partner with Thomas Brady in a general store there. We have copies of the ledger from the Wolf and Brady store dated December 1867 through July 1868, with many pages in Wolf’s handwriting. By looking at the accounts, we can imagine what the Wolf Store in Temecula may have been like.

Customers were not just shopping, but many stopped by to smoke, chew, drink alcohol, and gamble on card games. The store was open even on Christmas Day. The store was a social center, bank, and a place to sell their goods. It offered lodging to travelers. Lodging fees also included food for the traveler and provisions for their horses.

Some of the items sold to the store or traded for goods included: salt, goats, flour, chickens, potatoes and soap, corn, barley, pumpkins and olive oil.

The most common purchase was “sundries,” a term we no longer use, indicating a collection of small things not named. Items we no longer purchase included: rolls of candlewick, rope, buckskins, hickory shirts, suet, bear meat, gunpowder, and livery oil.

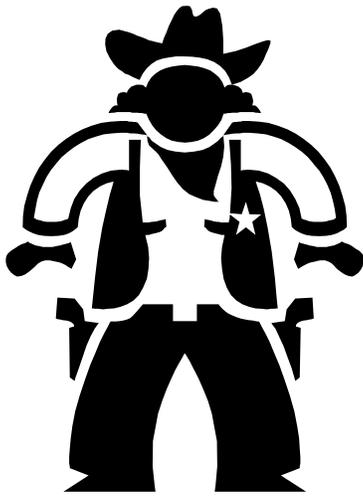
We no longer pay for items with gold dust. Other means of exchange were government vouchers, greenbacks and “legal tender.”

Anything manufactured cost more. A pencil cost \$.25, and a pocket knife \$1, when an entire beef cost only \$25.

Certain events can be speculated by the purchasing patterns. For example, February 17, 1868, was payday for Ramone Monreal. After

## Friends of VaARRA Associate Members

Audrey & Vince Cilurzo  
Eve Craig  
David Elliott & Anne Miller  
Walt & Jean Dixon  
Elaine Eshom  
Phil & Connie Harris  
Suzanne & Fred Legner  
Bonnie Martland  
Neil Miller  
John Moramarco  
Beth Paden, Discovery Works  
Duane & Judy Preimsberger  
Lyz Quinn  
Rosemary & Ray Smith  
Karen & David Strauss  
Mary Lu Taylor  
Lisa Woodward  
Roger Weber  
Dale Garcia



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receiving \$167.50 in cash from Tomlinson & Company, he bought a horse, a suit of clothes, an undershirt, drawers, 2 pairs of socks, a cravat, shirt and collar. Was it in preparation for a wedding?

That same day Monreal also bought a veil, skirt, yard goods, trim, and fancy dress buttons. And, on April 6<sup>th</sup>, he bought household goods and a looking glass.

On May 18<sup>th</sup>, eight men each paid \$1 toward “sundries for Smithe’s woman.” Because there were no more purchases to Joseph Smithe’s account, perhaps he died. I found another clue when I read that William Wolf bought cattle and oxen from the estate of Joseph Smithe and credited his debt \$70 on July 10<sup>th</sup>.

There are certain items that are unfamiliar today. People bought a product called *aguadiente* by the gallon. Breaking it into two words, I thought it was Spanish for “water for teeth,” or mouthwash. I wondered why they would be using so much mouthwash. Then I found out it was *aguardiente*, strong or ardent water, which was moonshine.

They also bought “shorts”, a byproduct of wheat flour that includes the germ, fine bran and some flour. “Manta”, a square piece of cloth used as a cloak, was sold by the yard. At first I thought “hive syrup” was honey, but learned it was a cough syrup made from a plant that had a blossom shaped like a bee hive. A quire of paper is one twentieth of a ream, or 24 sheets of paper.

At first glance, a person may think it is a dull old book. But, it is actually a very important time capsule of life in the past. From this careful account book, we learn about life near Temecula during that time. Many of the customers’ names are familiar to us.

What happened after the last entry of July 10, 1868? In 1868 Wolf purchased the Little Temecula Rancho and Wolf resided in Temecula until his death in 1887.

His obituary in the San Diego Union newspaper stated he began the trading business in a small adobe store with “only brawn, brain, and perseverance as capital, but amassed a snug fortune.”

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## Ranch Restoration Plans Proceed, Arteco Partners Close Escrow

In December, 2008 Arteco Partners of Pomona, closed escrow on the Vail Ranch Headquarters site comprised of 4+ acres. The purchase from Kimco Realty has been in the works for many months.

During the prolonged process Arteco has moved forward working with the John Ash Group of historic restoration architects to complete the design and detail construction plans for the renovation, and adaptive re-use restoration of the Wolf Store, Cookhouse, Bunkhouse, Water Building, Machinery Barn, and Foreman’s House.

In addition to their work on the existing buildings, they are also planning to construct a reproduction of the old Mule Barn, which was on the Vail Ranch Headquarters property until 1929 when it burned down.

Detail construction plans are currently going through the final ‘plan check’ process with the City of Temecula.

Jerry Tessier, President of Arteco Partners, indicates that in today’s economy and with the overall credit crunch being experienced, getting the financing completed is certainly a challenge. Everything is a go once the construction loan is in place.

## **First 2009 Event**

### **Mormon Battalion Re-enactors Greeted By Over 400 Locals**

Temecula greeted the Mormon Battalion Trek re-enactors in fine style on Saturday, January 24 when local history groups all shared in a quality event held at VaARRA's History Center,

Kevin Henson, his wife Denny, along with Peter Guilbert arrived in Temecula the afternoon of Friday, January 23 just 7 days from their goal of reaching San Diego.

Retracing the entire trek route took 3 years of research and planning to re-live the longest military march in U.S. history. They kept to the original trails as closely as possible, and continued their research and learning as they traversed the route.

They were greeted by over 350 visitors during the Open House and historic encampment set up in front of the Little Temecula History Center during the afternoon. Original style tents, clothing, and military style equipment was on display. Mrs. Henson with some helpers cooked a bean stew and cornbread in an open outdoor makeshift kitchen. Visiting children could also participate in washing clothes the old fashioned way in a tub using a scrub-board.

The program continued in the evening with over 70 attendees to hear a presentation shared by Dr. Anne Miller and Kevin Henson. Dr. Miller described the many aspects of life in Temecula during the period of 1846 and  
**(continued on next page)**

## **Butterfield Celebration and History Center Grand Opening Highlight 2008 Accomplishments**

2008 was a busy and successful year for VaARRA. In the spring we were busy finishing up the interior of the History Center preparing for a Grand Opening to coincide with the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Butterfield Stage first run through Temecula. Below in brief "bullet" format are some of the activities of the year:

- \* Received City Grant for costs of Butterfield Celebration
- \* Open House of History Center to show progress
- \* Reviewed plans for Monument at Historic Vail Ranch Headquarters
- \* Began to move large artifacts to History Center
- \* Hosted Riverside County Historical Commission visit
- \* Purchased digital photo frame
- \* Received new photos of Wolf Store
- \* Purchased 9 copies of "Temecula at the Crossroads of History" by Phil Brigandi
- \* Made vandalism and wind damage repairs at the Ranch
- \* Participated in design of benches proposed for restored Vail Ranch Headquarters
- \* Attended and supported Arteco Partners at Old Town Review Board, Planning Commission and City Council during their application process for approval
- \* Began Friends of VaARRA Membership drive
- \* Purchased Rope Making Machine
- \* Created Donor List for History Center
- \* Had a booth at Museum annual Flea Market
- \* Hosted 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Butterfield Stage
- \* Grand Opening of VaARRA History Center near Vail Ranch Hdqtrs.
- \* Old building materials and Temecula granite donated by City of Temecula
- \* Participated in Genealogy Fair at the Library
- \* Arrangement made with property owner for access to and use of balance of Implement Barn
- \* Received donation of 25 Vail Ranch photos from Temecula Valley Museum
- \* PEO Annual Fund Raiser event held at History Center
- \* Purchased new handles for farm implement restoration
- \* Begin preparation for Mormon Battalion Trek memorial Event to be held in January, 2009
- \* Work in "annex" area of building to make it useable for events, displays, and fundraisers.
- \* Moved Brougham Coach and Model T Ford Roadster to expanded area.

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### **2008 History Center Attendance**

#### **Private Group Events**

Historical Society	20
Riverside Country Historical Commission	20
Drifters Car Club	30
PEO Dinner and Annual Fund Raiser	65
Murrieta Library Staff	10
Museum Summer Camp Explorers	22

#### **Public Events**

History Center Grand Opening and Butterfield 150 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Weekend	1000
Weekly Attendance since June 2008	573

**Total** **1740**

## **Mormon Battaion (cont.)....**

1847, and specifically pointed out a series of events that took place in the days before the Mormon Battalion arrived in January of 1847, near the end of the Mexican-American War.

Kevin Henson followed with a detailed description of his research, planning and preparation for the re-enactment. Of course his computer was a big help during his research, and he was able to give the audience a glimpse of the original trail still visible using *Google Earth*. Kevin shared some of the pictures he has taken along the way, and shared some of the little stories of their journey.

This event was co-sponsored by the Temecula Valley Historical Society, Vail Ranch Restoration Association, Temecula Valley Genealogical Society, Pechanga Cultural Department, Southern Emigrant Trail Association, and the Murrieta Public Library. All organizations had a display area to share with visitors, as well as enable the Historical Society to sell some DVD's.

There is no doubt the Mormon Battalion Trek re-enactors will remember the warm welcome and words of encouragement they received during their stop in Temecula.

Thanks ...

**For Your Support  
At Barnes & Noble  
Book Signing  
Event.**

## **2007 Activities & Accomplishments**

The most significant event of 2007 was finally receiving the keys to the space we now call the Little Temecula History Center. Following that we had a very busy year just to do the "build out" of the interior. From raw space in 2007 we got close by the end of the year to seeing a major goal realized. Also during the year we:

- \* Updated and printed brochures
- \* Acquired the 1927 Model T Ford Roadster
- \* Purchased insurance
- \* Purchased a short-term CD
- \* Worked on National Register of Historic Places application
- \* Hosted the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Jackass Mail
- \* Renovated a Stage Coach
- \* Participated in Santa Rosa Plateau Foundation event
- \* Received artifacts and documents from Whitney Wilkinson
- \* Received Grant from Roripaugh Foundation
- \* Sold and traded some artifacts
- \* Installed Security System at the History Center
- \* Updated Web Site
- \* Installed outside water line plumbing at History Center
- \* Received Grant from City for 2008 Butterfield Event
- \* Sold many Arcadia books
- \* Hosted a day for Summer Explorers from Museum
- \* Participated in landscape design report for Artec
- \* Did presentation to City on Jackass Mail event
- \* Received great press coverage of Jackass Mail event
- \* Built out interior of History Center
- \* Participated in Corn Maze event at Big Horse
- \* Supported Genealogy Fair
- \* Supported Riverside County History Symposium
- \* Sent letter supporting of historic group in Vail, Arizona
- \* Hosted Robert Roripaugh's memorial gathering
- \* Made presentation to Lawndale Historical Society
- \* Supported De Luz Women's Club event
- \* Met with Pechanga Cultural Center & Riverside County Historic Preservation Officer
- \* Participated in July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade in Old Town
- \* On many occasions spent time watering trees at ranch
- \* Spent many hours mending break-ins and vandalism
- \* Removed graffiti and mended fences
- \* Participated in efforts to map Southern Emigrant Trail

### **Artifact Donations 2007 & 2008**

- **Picnic basket, bonnets, apron, basket** – donated by Virginia Oliver.
- **Slant-top desk w/vertical storage back** – donated by John Moramarco.
- **Mahlon Vail's chaps, Mexican poncho, saddle blanket, rocks, payroll records, photos, collared shirts** – donated by Whitney Wilkinson.
- **Saddle owned by Joe Gomez on Vail Ranch** – donated by Bob Crane.
- **Bear trap** – donated by Gene Knott.
- **Small forge, anvil, blacksmith tongs, branding iron, hay rake, hay hoist, & pair of granite tongs** – donated by Jack & Leslie Roripaugh.
- **Cast iron "caboose" wood burning stove** – donated by Lorene Miller.
- **Mahlon Vail's Rocking chair** – donated by Noble & Joan Roripaugh.
- **53 issues La Laguna Review magazine** – donated by Bob Rasband.
- **Pitchfork, and hand hewn yoke** – donated by Rodger & Gleam Engel.
- **Framed antique embroidery pattern --** donated by Otto Baron.
- **4 antique oak chairs** – donated by Duane & Judy Preimsberger.
- **Antique flat irons, muffin pan, insulator, small soap basket** – donated by Mike & Midge Ray.
- **Tack, & small portable forge** – donated by Patrick & Annette Jennings