

Wolf Stone

VaRRA News

Newsletter from the
Vail Ranch Restoration Association

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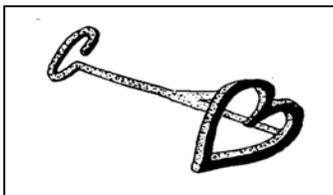
4th Quarter 2017 – Volume 8, Issue 4

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

Little Temecula History Center is Open on Sunday – In Red Implement Barn next to Kohl’s At Margarita and Temecula Pkwy.

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 Desk of Helene Seay

Temecula Has Heart

(Editor’s Note: Helene Seay a resident of the Temecula area, and one-time secretary in Erle Stanley Gardner’s “fiction factory”, later wrote a social column for the Fallbrook Free Press weekly newspaper. Among some recent materials that VaRRA inherited from Seay family members was this brief piece which was written circa 1966 as an insert for Chapter Two of a book she was writing entitled “Ramona’s People”. Struck by her well stated love and appreciation for Temecula, its people and culture -- Temecula cares indeed, and we have reproduced Helene’s work as it was drafted.)

By Helene Seay

Statistically, that is Temecula – a town which neither grew nor died through all the years of expansion and change in Southern California since it was founded. It has seen “better” days, or busier ones, depending on the way you look at it, and to all intents and purposes when the Santa Fe Branch line finally was discontinued in 1935, its importance to the outside world slipped another notch – and another when the highway (395) by-passed it about fifteen years ago. Fifty years ago Temecula’s official population was 200. Today it is 207.

But none of this describes Temecula, because Temecula is one of those rare places left in our sophisticated world – a town with a heart. Temecula is not the handful of people who live in the town, though they are the beat of the heart; it embraces a surrounding area of many miles, and people linked through years of family history, marriages between descendants of early settlers, and the adopting of newcomers; Temecula is just as willing to adopt a new family and draw it into its affectionate regard and interest as it is to keep a friendly concern for those of its people who move away to follow careers not open to them here. Once a part of Temecula, you never sever your roots entirely. That is apparent from the news in letters received, pictures of people in far-away places, passed from hand to hand and discussed over a cup of coffee in the restaurant next to the post office, in the market, or at another restaurant down the street. Let anyone for miles around get married, and the whole town attends a shower in the community hall; let a baby be born to any member of any family no matter where, if they once received their mail at the post office in Temecula, there is someone left to receive the news in town, pass on the vital statistics, and another little one becomes dear to the heart of Temecula and of interest to people “back home.

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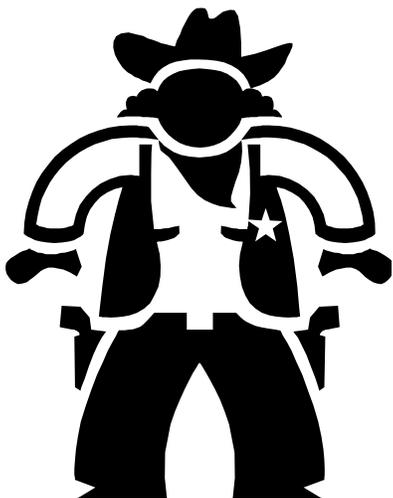


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Temecula Has Heart . . .

Temecula is not the narrow, nose “small town” of modern fiction – the only kind of small town which seems to exist in the imagination of writers of books and scripts which abound in gossipy characters and morbidly curious loungers around town who regard every stranger with suspicion and mistrust. Anyway, small towns like Temecula were supposed to have disappeared years ago and the kind of village depicting every little Western town you ever heard of deserves to go down into limbo. Temecula may never grow, for all we know, but it will never die either. It has heart – and the beat of it will never be stilled as long as there is a soul left anywhere for it to be interested in, concerned about or reminisced over.

< (A young Helene Seay is in portrait photo to the left)



VaARRA

Board of Directors

Darell Farnbach, President
Rhine Helzer, Vice President
Rebecca Farnbach, Secretary
Sandy Helzer, Treasurer
Dick Fox, Newsletter
Charolette Fox
Loretta Barnett
Dave Wilson
Toni Benson
Leslee & Mike McNeff



New Display Case at History Center With Seay Family Loans & Donations

The family of Helene Seay has placed on display at the History Center a number of items including baskets, antique toys, miniature furniture pieces and written materials collected by Helene and her son Joel over a number of years. Some of the items are on loan only, others have been donated to VaARRA for permanent care and safekeeping.

Thanks to Many Who Have Given Help in 2017

Special thanks go to Rick Deemy for his service to VaARRA as a member of our Board of Directors and faithful service at the History Center on Sundays for the last few years. Rick has decided to devote his time on the ministerial staff at his church, and we wish him well in his renewed devotion.

Regular Sunday volunteers to “thank” include Gary Georgi, Gerry and Andrea Nichols, and Director Toni Benson who greet visitors to the History Center.

Suzanne Dechert helps VaARRA by placing high school volunteers to help us sweep, wash windows and sell ride tickets at Vail Headquarters, and we thank Suzanne.

Directors Loretta Barnett, Toni Benson & Leslee McNeff, and members Bill & Lori Catlett along with Terry Craig who help VaARRA with the antique store and other functions at the Vail Headquarters as needed.

VaARRA invites others to join our efforts by joining us with a membership. Applications are available on the back of the VaARRA brochure available at the History Center.

VaARRA Hosts Small Delegation from Sister City

VaARRA hosted a small delegation of visitors from our Sister City Daisen, Japan on November 30th, including their 35-year-old mayor who enjoyed learning about our cowboy and ranch history.



Christmas at the Ranch HQ

Cowboy Santa (Scott Culbertson and wife Cathy) at Vail HQ. You Can get free photos with Cowboy Santa with children and pets. But be sure to your own camera. Cowboy Santa will be at Vail HQ on Saturday, Dec. 23 from 4 to 9 p.m. Also there will be a car show that day.

VaARRA Hosts 120 Students From Pauba Elementary in December

On two separate dates during December, VaARRA hosted 60+ students each day for 2 hours plus of experiences at 10 different learning locations. Stations were set up at the Vail HQ, and the History Center – staffed by Directors Dick Fox, Dave Wilson, Rhine & Sandy Helzer, Darell & Rebecca Farnbach, Toni Benson, Mike & Leslee McNeff. Also by volunteers Cheryl Cady, Bill Catlett, Gary Georgi, Eve Cannella, Mike McKim, Terry Craig, Mike and Shelley Leddy and Winchester Western Saddlery. Seventh-grader Noah Roberts, who is homeschooled came with the Leddys and did a lot of the presentation at the old-fashioned Laundry Station at the History Center where students experienced the labor of scrubbing clothing on a scrub board with homemade soap, passing it through a wringer, hanging clothes on a line with clothespins, and ironing.

We had ten-minute sessions for the students at ten stations, five at Vail Headquarters and five at the Little Temecula History Center. Others included learning about old transportation vehicles, chuck wagons, kitchens, the Wolf Store history, Southern Immigrant Trail, cookhouse, bunkhouse and more. One of their favorites was getting a fast and bumpy ride around Vail Headquarters in Darell Farnbach's 1929 Model A pickup, as about 2,000 students have done now for over 17 years.

Vail HQ Antique Store and History Center Will Close on Sundays December 24th & 31st

Bits & Pieces From the Headquarters

* On the evening of Sunday, December 10th Vail HQ hosted several hundred people at a City of Temecula holiday event “Chilled”, with Santa, sleigh rides, carolers, and free treats from most of the merchants. It was a busy and festive evening.

* Did you know that everywhere you see an old wagon wheel and a slab of granite there is an informative plaque. Take a walk around the property and you will learn a lot from the plaques. We are sometimes asked why we don't have informative brochures. The plaques are a way to eliminate paper waste.

* If you haven't been to the Headquarters recently and walked around be sure to check out a recent addition. There is an antique gas pump that is now near the old Foreman's office, where one can be seen in an old 1943 photo. Check it out.

* Al Knotts 1927 Dodge Brothers coupe has received more restoration work, and now displays his business name “Knotts Garage” on both doors, along with a Crown Gasoline insignia that marked his business.



VaARRA Will Now Operate The Train at the HQ

Member Russell Cook who for many months has operated the little train at Vail HQ recently was gracious and willing to sell the train to VaARRA. The sale was made possible by virtue of a generous donation from members Bill & Lori Catlett. VaARRA now owns and operates the train at the Vail Headquarters. VaARRA wishes to thank both Bill & Lori and Mr. Cook for making this purchase possible.

In the coming weeks you'll see different train conductors, perhaps a different starting point, and at some point a change in location of ticket sales. Our little visitors love the train ride, and we hope to soon have our tractor back in operation to provide stage coach ride experiences.

VaARRA's Years of Advocating for Vail Headquarters Nets Fulfillment

It has been a fulfilling year to see how VaARRA's efforts have finally come to fruition after 19 years of advocating for the Historic Vail Headquarters and the special history of the site.

Many families in Temecula and the nearby area have found it to be a unique place to visit, where they can step away from the realities of life and escape to a happy and safe place for kids young and old.

We thank Jerry Tessier and Artec Partners for the masterful renovation and ongoing commitment to the project, and to the retail merchants who have placed their businesses in the historic district.

During 2018 we will continue our efforts to complete the forms and paperwork that is required to continue strive toward our goal of receiving a National Historic District Registry designation for the property.