



Fair Oaks Historical Society

Newsletter - October 15, 2015 # 115

MEETING, Tuesday October 27 6:00

At the Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse 7997 California Avenue

POTLUCK MEETING Dinner line forms at 6:30

SOUP NIGHT: The event on November 6th is sold out. Another success.

Volunteers: We are still in need of a few volunteers. If you are willing to work for a portion of the evening please call Claudia Thorn at 962-8291 or on her cell 747-1535 or email her at cjthorn17@gmail.com.

Raffle Prices are needed for the sop night. If you work with or visit a business often take the time to ask if they would be willing to donate a raffle prize. A donation letter explaining the use of the funds raised is available. Contact Trude Vasquez at 966-5499 or trude@pacbell.net with any raffle prizes you solicit.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Joe Dobrowolski

The Society needs members to step up and take on some responsibilities. A few members have been holding most positions for many years. If you are willing to serve on the Board or as a committee chair please email me at joedobro@pacbell.net.

MEMBERSHIP DUES: There are still many members who have not paid this year's dues. Please check with the membership chair about the status of your membership when you pick up your tag at the October meeting.

TRADER JOES is selecting a series of photos to be framed and hung at the Sunrise store.

Nominating Committee: The nominating has been working to get members to volunteer to serve as the Board's Officers for next year. Thanks to those who have stepped up!

President -will taken nominations from the floor **Vice President** - Ron Lingren

Secretary-will taken nominations from the floor **Treasurer** -Bob Vogel

WEBSITE

The website is a great place to find about the history of Fair Oaks. A speech about the old families of Fair Oaks was posted recently. The web site also contains the newsletters and pictures. The recently added map showing the old homes is a great visual showing locations, pictures of the homes and articles of the old homes

WHAT'S NEW AT THE HISTORY CENTER

Work On The History Center: The beam team removed and replaced the last of the decrepit beams on the front patio. We hired a painter who cleaned and painted the front and sides of the History Center. The sign for the front of the building is the next item to be put up. By the way the average age of the beam team is 76.5. Just old guys good with tools. The outside of the center has looked great, thanks to those who have volunteered for one month to care for the landscaping.



Newspaper Archiving: Jim Pearce and Ashton Smith have been working on the Society's collection of old Fair Oaks newspapers. They've been entering the newspapers into the digital inventory by year and publication and then slipping them into archival quality folders. **Chicken Festival:** A group of Society members, in costume, sat on the front patio of the History Center, during the chicken festival, inviting people into the Center. Nice Job!

Donations Requested: The work on the front of the History Center will take over \$1,500.00. We would appreciate any donation to help defray the expense.

The History Center continues to be open Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 10:00AM to 4:00PM. Ashton Smith, our most capable attendant provides greetings and informational tours for all visitors. Ashton is expected to move to Redding with his Family soon. If you know of anyone who is interested in taking on the job please contact me at joedobro@pacbell.net.

There is a **video monitor** which contains our picture library and interviews with members from years ago

Stop by at the History Center and enjoy the displays. Bring friends.

QUARTERLY MEETING PROGRAM Trude Vasquez

At our **July meeting** we had a presentation about the Donner party. This was a last minute substitution, because our scheduled presenter had a family emergency that arose the day of the meeting. Richard Kaufman the author of "Saving the Donner Party-Forlorn Hope" stepped in. It was a wonderful presentation on the effort by members of the party that left the Donner Summit and tried to reach help in the Valley.

This month we will have a presentation by Dr LaPierre, who is affiliated with the Medical History Museum of Sacramento, on **Gold Rush Medicine**.

OLD FAIR OAKS HOMES By Sally Dunbar - October, 2015 **The Homes of Early Settler Ralph (William Rolf) Gore**

This month's Old Homes Article covers 3 homes - those owned by early Fair Oaks Pioneer, Ralph Gore (William Rolf Gore). Gore's story points out how the best laid plans don't always turn out as one would hope.



Gore arrived in Fair Oaks on one of the first excursion trains in 1895/96; bought land; then returned to Illinois to sell off his assets. He returned in 1898 to arrange construction of his first home, with his nest egg from years as a Pharmacist and farmer. He built his first home at 4849 Pennsylvania, North of Sunset, on a hill with grand sweeping views of town, overlooking "the beautiful valley" which is now busy Sunrise Blvd. Gore's home on

Pennsylvania still stands, and is still beautiful. An original palm tree seen in early photos, is now towering over the home.

By 1902 Gore is teamed up with Charles Slocum in a lumberyard. Their partnership then builds the Slocum-Gore General Store, on California Street, which was later sold to John Holst (Now the Fair Oaks Brew Pub and Regent Salon). In 1909, Slocum and Gore open Fair Oaks Bank next to the General Store, with capital of \$25,000. From 1909 through the

early 1920's Slocum and Gore, as officers of the bank, recorded many loans to the homeowners and orchardists in Fair Oaks, as reflected by our current county records. With his business activities in central Fair Oaks, it appears that early on Gore found the distance from his home on Pennsylvania over winter muddy roads and knee deep summer dust to be problematic. By 1900 he built his second home at 4348 Central Avenue, selling the Pennsylvania home in 1908 to the Wrangham family.

Gore lived on Central, close to his business interests, with his wife and only daughter Hortense, until around 1915 when he built his third home up on the bluffs of the American River, at 3935 Ridge Street. It is presumed that in the 1910s, Gore was doing quite well financially, as a banker and lumberyard owner. By 1920 Gore lists his occupation as Postmaster, a position he held until 1931. In February of 1929, with the Great Depression looming, Ralph and his wife deeded the Ridge Street home and property to daughter Hortense, who by then was married to Don



Slocum - son of his business partner, Charles Slocum. By October of 1929, the Great Depression is in full swing. By the 1930 census we find Ralph renting the Pennsylvania home, and working as an operator (telephone) at the Rock Crushing plant on the river. We understand from the memories of Bob Brugger's father that Gore lost everything in the depression. In the late 1930's the Gore's left Fair Oaks

for Clakamas County Oregon, to live by his daughter and son-in-law, where Ralph died 14 years later.

The three Gore homes are still standing, looking substantially the same. The grounds of Ridge Street, however, have been transformed from a 5 acre bluff estate, to one of many homes tucked onto half acres lots across the street from the newer bluff homes built in the late 1970s.

The Founding of the Woman's Thursday Club - Ashton Smith, Jim

Pearce and I have been working on archiving the society's collection of old Fair Oaks newspapers. There are many illuminating articles such as the articles. One from an old Fair Oaks publication called "The Fair Oaks Citizen; Progress Edition" dated November 2nd 1911 has many articles of historic significance including articles on notable people, like the Bramhall, Buffum and King families, their homes, businesses and the development of the colony. A portion of an article titled: "The Social Side of the Colony" revealed the following about the early days of the Woman's Thursday Club:



"...While clubs and social functions have risen, flourished and decayed, one at least has stood well the test of time - The Woman's Thursday Club. In the spring of 1902 Mrs. Francis Murphy and Mrs. George P. Robinson called at the homes of several of the ladies of the colony with the idea of organizing a club for women. The thought was a happy one and met with a ready response. In April 1902, in the Parlor of Mrs. Murphy's home, the club was

organized with about 15 fifteen charter members, among whom were: Mesdames Francis Murphy, George P. Robinson, S.E. Keiffer, Charles Caulfeild, A.M. Buffum, E.L. Cosby, H.E. Cozzens, G.W. Rothe, U.B. Watkins, A.T. Hodge, I.B. Crafts, T.W. Ward, T.C. Fitch, Sydney Craig, C.H. Siddall and A.L. Burchard. The first president, A. M. Buffum is still one of the active members. From its organization until the present the club has been a success. Its meetings, held first in the different homes, where instrumental music could be secured, and now on the second floor of the Murphy Block, occur the second and fourth Thursday afternoons of the winter months. The literary and musical afternoons by local or outside talent, the addresses by noted persons along their special lines of work, and the discussions regarding the questions of the day are all thoroughly enjoyed; while each program invariably closes with a cozy cup of tea or a glass of fruit punch”

Early resident Iva Langness recalled growing up around the Woman’s Thursday Club and often spoke about the interesting lectures or programs of the time. In a 1991 interview Langness explained” They had lectures and poetry readings and all kinds of things”. She also noted:”if you didn’t have any culture, you didn’t belong.they vetoed your membership” . This bit of history allows us to see how the residents, especially the women of Fair Oaks, put a great deal of effort toward creating a “cultured society” in an otherwise rural, undeveloped environment.

REMEMBRANCES: In July and August two of our members passed away.



MYRTLE SHERMAN Myrtle May Sherman passed away on August 11. Myrtle was a long time resident of Fair Oaks, moving here in 1945, and graduating from San Juan High School. She was very active in the Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church, and a retired educator. Myrtle was a retired Early Childhood professor from American River College. She was the sister of Warren McWilliams and sister-in-law of Nancy Sherman.

JUDY BOYD

Judith Karen Boyd died on July 30, 2015. Judy was a life long time resident of Sacramento County, graduated from La Sierra High School and retired from McClellan AFB. She will be missed by her family and husband - Bob.



By-Law Change: Your Board proposes the FOHS By-Laws Section 8.2-4 be modified to:

8.2-4 To be a nominee for the office of president or vice president, a candidate ~~shall~~ **should** have served as a voting member of the executive board for at least one year or ~~shall~~ **should** have been an active member of the society for at least three (3) years.