

From the Archives
Jennie Wriston



An early portrait of a local rancher and businesswoman Jennie Wriston adorned the Oddfellows Hall when the Rei Rebekah Lodge held their meetings there. She was the first Noble Grand and First District Deputy Grand Master of District #6. The Rebekahs, also known as the International Association of Rebekah Assemblies (IARA) and initially the Daughters of Rebekah, is an international service-oriented

organization and a branch of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. The Rebekah Lodges were founded on September 20, 1851, primarily due to the efforts of an Odd Fellow named Schuyler Colfax, U.S. Vice President, from 1869 to 1873. The name is taken from the Biblical character of Rebekah. Galt's Rei Rebekah Lodge No. 132 was founded in March 1888 with 48 charter members.

January 2023
Newsletter

GAHS Membership

Please contact us for any address, phone or email changes. Dues invoices will be sent in January.

Contact

Liz Haglund

with any questions about membership.

aguire@hotmail.com

or (209) 327-1098

January is dues month. If you have received your invoice please remit payment. If not, let Liz know. She will gladly get you an invoice.

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2023 Historical Society Executive Board

Janis Barsetti Gray ~ President

Lyle Lagge ~ 1st Vice President

Gale Webber ~ 2nd Vice President

Liz Haglund ~ Recording Secretary

Tom Haglund ~ Treasurer

A Message From The President



Dear Members,

I hope you all had a very special Christmas holiday with family and friends. Now we venture into another new year. What will 2023 hold for all of us? We know every year some of us make new year's resolutions for various reasons. I guess it seems like a good starting point for whatever we want to accomplish. I am not sure our forefathers waited until the beginning of the new year to come up with a plan for their future. They worked and planned their futures every day. Maybe picking a date gives us some psychological edge. However, it is the results in the end that count. We can plan all day, but if we do not accomplish anything, what was the purpose? Just like the Galt Area Historical Society: We make our plans, we have the help of our volunteers, we work diligently, and we see the project through to the end. If we did not, we would not have the success of the McFarland Living History Ranch or the Rae House Museum. If anything, we resolve to keep up our good work,

constantly improving and displaying the history of the Galt area. Hopefully, part of your 2023 resolution is to volunteer more, give what aid you can to the history of Galt, help our society, and our community.

On another note, I want to personally thank Len Reid Reynoso and Dan Tarnasky, who are leaving our board, for their service to our organization. Dan will remain as our Historian and Curator of the Rae Museum, but not in a board capacity. It has been an honor to work with both of you; and also those who remain on the board. We have accomplished much in these past years and look to 2023 to the fulfillment of some of our long term plans. To all you who volunteer tirelessly and to those who support our organization through whatever means you can, thank you all. You are very much appreciated.

I hope you all have a wonderful and prosperous New Year. We all look forward to bright future.

Janis Barsetti Gray



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Upcoming Dates

January 9:
Executive Board Meeting
4pm at Barsetti Tasting Room

January 23:
Winter Recess
No General Membership Meeting

February 13:
Executive Board Meeting
4pm at Barsetti Tasting Room

February 27:
Winter Recess
No General Membership Meeting

March 13:
Executive Board Meeting
4pm at Barsetti Tasting Room

March 27:
General Members Meeting
Time & Location TBD

April 1:
Kite Day /
Eggstravaganza
McFarland Ranch

Trip Through the Cemetery

Each month our historian will submit a members challenge seeking information about a Galtonian from the past and now residing at the Galt or other local cemetery.

The picture shown here is this inaugural column's first clue. Test your knowledge and research abilities. See caption below and send your answers to historian@galthistory.com.

"Who is John Hagel?"



McFarland for the Holidays

The pictures adjacent are but a glimpse of how the McFarland Ranch House was decorated for the holidays this year. Special thanks to Joan Werblun and her team including Samie Watson, Bernice Lee, Rita Martin and Darlene Alden who spent many hours working to create a Victorian Christmas inside and out that was in keeping with the decorating themes of the day when John McFarland lived at the ranch. Joan and her team put significant

thought into each room of the house drawing on history to guide their efforts the result of which caused the detail and splendor of the 1870's house to come alive with the spirit of the season. It is always a wonderful sight to behold.



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Christmas General Meeting

On Monday December 19th, we had great fun after our meeting, playing our annual Christmas Bingo. We had a good size group of members who joined in. Thanks to everyone for bringing some wonderful appetizers and desserts and to all those who brought prizes to be handed out to the bingo winners. We had over 30 prizes. Next year everyone needs to sit next to Earl and Pat Frey and Samie Watson. They were the big winners! A big thank you to Frank Bitondo for being our bingo caller and coordinating the games and to his assistants: Gale Webber and Tom Haglund. Also, a big thank you to the Galt Police Dept. for allowing us to have our meeting in their community room.

New Executive Board

Your 2023 Executive Board was sworn in at this meeting by Councilman and member, Rich Lozano. Thank you so much for doing the honors this year, Rich. Your new Executive Board is: Janis Barsetti Gray, President; Lyle Lagge, First Vice President; Gale Webber 2nd Vice President; Liz Haglund, Recording Secretary; and Tom Haglund, Treasurer. We are looking forward to a very optimistic and fruitful year.

Thank You For Your Service

We would like to thank Len Reid Reynoso and Dan Tarnasky for their service on our 2022 Board. We appreciate all that you have done for the Galt Area Historical Society. Although Dan will no longer be on the Board, he is still our Historian and Curator of the Rae House Museum. He will still be doing all he has in the past, just not in the capacity of a board member. Thank you both again.

Email Addresses

I know we have asked in the past, but we do not have email addresses for many of you. I realize some do not use email; but for those who do, please drop Liz an email at: aguire@hotmail.com and let her know so she can update our roster. There are times when we want to send out a notice regarding something coming up soon and there is no time to mail a letter. Without emails some will not be notified. Please alert Liz of your email.

Rae Museum Break In

A couple of weeks ago, the Rae Museum was broken into by someone cutting the lock on the basement door. Nothing was taken, but it was unsettling that someone was able to enter our property. To gain access they also cut the lock on the small walk-in gate. Unfortunately, the alarm system had not been armed for just a very short time; but they took advantage. Dan called the Galt PD to make a report and has replaced all the locks. We have been very fortunate that the house has not been targeted in the past. However, we always have to be vigilant. Dan is also having more outside lighting installed so it is not dark at night.

Christmas Open Houses

Thanks to Joan Werblun and her crew of the MAC Girls, Bernice Lee, Rita Martin, Darlene Alden, and Samie Watson for decorating the McFarland and the Rae for the Christmas open houses. Thanks to all the docents who helped people tour both houses. Also, on December 11th, Joan and her crew opened the McFarland House in the evening so people could come and see the Christmas lights. An excellent crowd attended. Thanks so much to everyone.

January and February

As a reminder, we will not hold general meetings in January and February; and will resume on March 27th. We will let you know in the February newsletter the location of the March meeting.

Refurbishing the Bunk House

Lyle's crew and the MAC Girls have been refurbishing the bunk house. It will be more functional for Pioneer Days and Pumpkin Patch days and be more educational. It will also sub as a groom's room for weddings. It is exciting that the children will have more opportunities to learn about the early California days with all they are doing in the bunk house.

Kite Day/Eggstravaganza

As a reminder, Kite Day combined with Eggstravaganza will be held at the McFarland Ranch on April 1. I know it is early but wanted to remind everyone. Please start telling your family and friends. Last year we saw 2,000 people at the ranch. We will be needing volunteers. Gale will be calling for help soon.



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Board Adopts 2023 Budget

One of the important activities of the GAHS Executive Board is the preparation, adoption and ongoing management of the Society's annual budget. At its December meeting the executive board discussed and adopted the Society budget for 2023.

The Society's budget is developed consistent with its mission to "Preserve the Irreplaceable." Every dollar donated, earned through special events or facility rentals is directed toward the Society's mission. To help inform members a Budget-in-Brief has been developed for this article that sets forth the revenues and expenditures for each of the Society's three funds (program areas).

The Society has three funds from which it conducts its activities. The General Fund, the McFarland Ranch (MAC) Fund and the Barn Fund. Each of these funds is operated for a specific purpose and the revenues and expenses of each fund pay the bills associated with that fund's programs and projects.

| GAHS 2023 BUDGET-IN-BRIEF | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Category | General Fund | McFarland Ranch Fund | Barn Fund |
| Revenue | \$35,608 | \$98,520 | \$6,280 |
| Personnel Expense | \$- | \$27,933 | \$- |
| M&O Expense | \$25,879 | \$62,320 | \$- |
| Capital Expense | \$8,600 | \$7,500 | \$400,000 |
| Total Expenses | \$34,479 | \$97,753 | \$400,000 |
| Surplus / (Deficit) | \$1,130 | \$767 | \$(393,720) |

General Fund

The General Fund is used for Society revenues and expenses not associated with the McFarland Living History Ranch or Barn Fund. The General Fund also tracks Trust Account revenues and expenditures assigned to the General Fund. The General Fund holds Trust Account monies for the Marian O. Lawrence Children's Fund, Rae House Museum and Liberty Cemetery donations. Revenues to the General Fund consist of membership dues, donations, grants, and miscellaneous income. In 2023, donations comprise the single largest category of General Fund revenue \$11,526, followed by grants at \$10,200 and special event income of \$7,335. Membership dues contribute approximately \$2,444 in revenue with miscellaneous revenue of \$2,011 which is made up of refunds, or other infrequently received monies.

General Fund maintenance and operation (M&O) expenses include a variety of expenditures including liability and property insurance, electricity, water, sewer and refuse expense, professional services, newsletter, special event expense, and limited miscellaneous expenses. Total M&O expenses will be \$25,879. In 2023, the General fund will also expend capital funds (\$6,100) on the Liberty Schoolhouse renovation and Rae House window reconstruction (\$2,500). Total General Fund expenditures will be approximately \$34,479. The budget projects a small surplus of \$1,130 in revenue over expense that, if produced, will be saved for future one-time expenses.

McFarland Ranch Fund

The McFarland Ranch (MAC) Fund is used for Society revenues and expenses associated with McFarland Living History Ranch. The MAC Fund also tracks Trust Account revenues and expenditures associated with McFarland Ranch. The McFarland Ranch Fund holds Trust Account monies for the Ranch House interior. In 2023, the MAC Fund is budgeted to receive approximately \$98,520 in revenue. Of this total revenue, 77%, or \$75,776, comes from rental of the MAC as an outdoor venue. This limited impact program allows the Society to afford the cost associated with annual maintenance and operation of McFarland Ranch, including the Ranch House, wood-shop, maintenance shop, carriage house, bunkhouse, granary and out buildings. There is no other single source of revenue available to the Society to meet the ongoing costs of restoring, maintaining and preserving the Ranch and its environs. Other MAC revenue categories include special events \$4,986, donations \$258, other income \$15,000 which represents some reimbursements from Sacramento County and an Interfund transfer from the General Fund of \$2,500 as final repayment of monies loaned in 2019 for the moving of the Liberty Schoolhouse to the Rae House Museum site.

In 2023, the Society will spend approximately \$27,933 in personnel related expenses on the Ranch caretaker and intermittent facility hosts associated with rental events. In addition, ongoing maintenance and operation (M&O) expenses will total an additional \$63,320 and includes expenditures such as liability and property insurance, fuel, power equipment maintenance, electricity, professional services, newsletter, special event expense, supplies and materials, and limited miscellaneous expenses. The order of magnitude of MAC expenses are much greater than the General Fund. In 2023, the MAC Fund will expend \$7,500 in preservation related capital projects. The budget projects a small surplus of revenue (\$767) over expense that, if produced, will be saved for future one-time expenses.

Barn Fund

The Barn Fund is used for restricted and non-restricted Society revenues and expenses associated with the establishment of a Barn facility that will be used for general assembly purposes to host educational forums, Society programming, and events. The Barn Fund holds Trust Account monies from a County of Sacramento grant associated with the Barn development project. Additional monies are held for the remodel of the Barn for the purposes outlined above. The Barn fund primarily consists of previous Barn donations, and annual revenue tends to be interest on those monies. The fund currently has approximately \$472,595 for the Barn remodel project. The Society has largely completed the permitting process and anticipates undertaking large portions of the project in 2023. The expenditure assigned to 2023 is \$400,000.

Homes on Oak Avenue

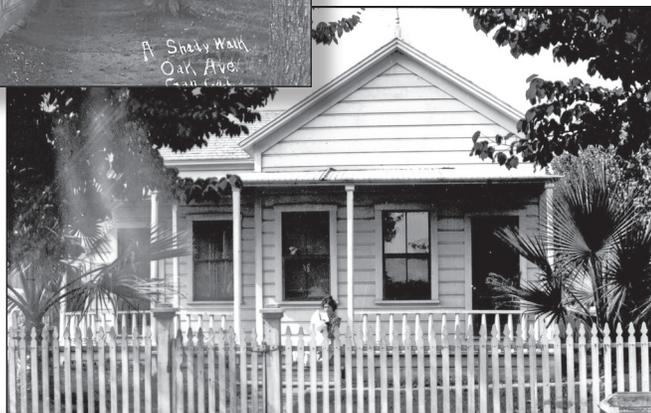
This essay was found in our archives and depicts a typical Galt street in 1886.

“Comfortable homes indicate prosperity and happiness, and in this respect, our town is especially fortunate. Among the pleasant and comfortable homes in Galt, Oak Avenue has a godly share. The beautiful and well-kept grounds of John Rae, Frank Ritter, and others are the pride of the Avenue and attract general attention. On their grounds, fruits and flowers of most every variety are cultivated, and the amount of fruit produced on these two places would astonish the natives. Further up the street is the home of George Brewster, which shows evidence of thrift and a wealth of fruit and flowers. But for big apples and luscious peaches, the orchard of our good friend, George Barnhart, is especially noted. Last year, Mr. Barnhart raised the largest apples in town, and Wesley long the largest peaches and, like sensible citizens, brought them to the Gazette office. Mr. Barnhart has a variety of fruit trees planted, and his good wife deserves the reputation of having one of the prettiest flower gardens in town, posies of every hue and scent. Willis and Albert Wright, father and son, each have very stylish residences on the Avenue, and the premises are models of elegance and luxury. The houses are new, and the fruit trees are yet too young to make a showing. One good friend Charles Harvey has a large lot on several acres in this vicinity which is devoted to the culture of figs. The trees are yet young but promises much. On the corner of Simons Street and the Avenue, John Gage owns an extensive lot, which in time, will be valuable. J.P. does not believe in paying taxes on unproductive real estate, hence has a very promising crops of iris lemons of the Early Rose variety growing thereon. A place that is growing in beauty and productiveness every year is that of Fred Phelps at the extreme end of the Avenue. Mr. Phelps has spent a good deal of time and money in making improvements and has a great variety of fruit and nut trees planted, which are all thriving nicely. Charles Simons and ex-Supervisor Ignatius Smith each have comfortable homes on the east side of the Avenue, and both places are surrounded by fine orchards that produce an abundance of fruit. Charles Cogswell has a pleasant home

Charles Simons



Oak Avenue



Phelps House

on the west side of the Avenue and has made great improvements to the property within the past two years.”

Let's add a little background on Oak Avenue and its residents at the time. Oak Avenue was one of the first streets added to the Town of Galt. Before that time, it could have been the road to John Rae's house. The Rae House existed before Galt was founded, and A Street had been a county road. Some residents, like Rae, Barnhart, and Willis Wright, were farmers. It was not uncommon for farmers to live in town. Charles Simons was a Justice of the Peace, and Fred Phelps was a jeweler. Cogswell and Smith were carpenters. Ignatius

Smith was also a former Sacramento County Supervisor. The properties must have been an acre or larger to have orchards, and the homes were some of the best in Galt.

The essay was printed in the Weekly Galt Gazette in 1886. Galt's first newspaper began publication in June of 1881. John Joseph Campbell and William Henry Meacham founded the Weekly Galt Gazette in a two-story commercial building on C Street. Their publication contained mostly stories and essays from other publications. The local news was reserved to a single column on page three. The Gazette was the sole news source for the Town of Galt for the next twenty-five years.

- Historian

Consider Volunteering to “Volunteer” in 2023... Your Society Needs You!

Our country was founded by volunteers. The minute men were volunteers who took on a heavy responsibility. We have come a long way since those heady days in 1775, but volunteering has marched right along with us every step of the way. Fortunately, today we associate volunteering with happier, but equally worthwhile pursuits, and can look back and appreciate all who have volunteered throughout our history. By volunteering we build country and community in very valuable ways.

To paraphrase an old adage, “all volunteering is local.” For the Society, volunteering is a cornerstone of our success as an organization. The Rae House Museum, McFarland Living History Ranch, Liberty Schoolhouse, Barn project, special events and even this newsletter are made possible by volunteers. And, all this volunteering happens right here within the limited sphere of the Society’s local community boundaries of Arno, Clay, Colony, Elliott, Galt, Herald, Hicksville, Liberty, and Thornton.

The Society has a story to tell and we need you to help tell it. We have so many opportunities for volunteering that we are on a mission to convince you to help! Accordingly, at its November Board Meeting the executive board assigned Gale Webber, our 2nd vice-president, with the role of coordinating volunteers, including docents, for our various activities throughout the year. We routinely need docents to help us tell the story of the Rae House Museum including answering questions and interpreting the wonderful displays prepared by Society Historian Dan Tarnasky. We also need docents at the McFarland Living History Ranch to assist in showing the Ranch



House and helping with Pioneer Days when schoolchildren show up to learn about life on the ranch in the 1800’s. These can be magical experiences as we transport both kids and adults back in time to bygone eras that the Society works to preserve through the programs of the Rae House and McFarland Ranch.

We also need volunteers to help with our special events that we periodically operate to promote the Society and its programs to the community and raise the funding necessary to continue our mission. Being a part of the volunteer team is so very rewarding and as our successes mount through the operation of well planned events each volunteer can see the tangible results of their efforts.

As noted, 2nd Vice-President Gale Webber (209-471-1525) is the point person for coordinating, scheduling and training docents and volunteers for all Society sites and activities. Give Gale a call and let her know of your interest in volunteering. You will be so happy with your decision that you will wonder where the Society has been all your life!

Need a little more encouragement? Consider establishing volunteering for the Society as a stretch goal for 2023 and make doing so a New Year’s resolution. You’ll be happier for it. Welcome aboard!





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