



April 2019



From the Archives
Whitaker House

One of the great residences ever to be built in Galt was the Whitaker House. This home, located on McFarland Street, was Andrew and Hattie Whitaker's second home (their first less elaborate home was located on Second Street). Andrew Whitaker, together with business partner Don Ray, owned one of the first businesses in Galt located where Brewster's is now in 1869. Later the two built the Whitaker and Ray Block on Fourth Street south of C Street. Buyers and sellers in local wheat, Whitaker and Ray built a warehouse to store their bulk purchases in and, with the profits, were able to purchase eight thousand acres of land around Galt for development. In 1871, Andrew Whitaker married Hattie Prouty, daughter of Galt hotel owner Simon Prouty. Together the Whitakers raised two children, James and Gertrude. It is undetermined how the Whitaker House met its fate.



Tea at the Rae

SATURDAY
MAY 11, 2019
1:00 P.M. ~ 3:30 P.M.
RAE HOUSE MUSEUM
204 OAK AVENUE

\$30 Per Person

Tickets:
Joan Werblun
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Barsetti Vineyard
Tasting Room, 400 4th Street
www.galthistory.org (PayPal)
Table sponsorships
are available ~
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for more information.



MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

We would like to thank the following members who have recently joined or renewed their membership to the Historical Society -- Matt Barsetti, Margaret Brummer, Buchanan Auto Glass, Julie Clark, Papa Murphy's Pizza, Judy Shipley, Cale Traylor, Tiffany Manning, Linda Graham, Twila Aschieris, Linda Greer, Bruce Goldsmith, Mike & Lisa Haug, Ray & Janet Valine, Chuck & Sherry Wegner, Judie Baldwin, Marla Lee Borman, Myron Dause, EDGE & TA Branch, Peggy Hall Genasci, Barbara Guzman, Peter & Mary Hall, Bobbie Lewis, Bob & Rita Martin, Rev. Maurice O'Brien, Dennis Sartini, Julie Hughes, John Melhaff, Gioia Parrish, Otto & Kay Linberger, Ida & Mary Hoff, Debbie Martinez, Violet Whaley, Robert Scott, John Hanson, Lyle Lagge, and Joannie Ishizuka.

There are still many who have not renewed. Remember once several months have passed without payment, names will be dropped from our membership roster and you will no longer receive our newsletter. Please be kind and send in your renewal through our website or by mail ASAP. Individual dues are \$20, Family \$40, Business \$50, Student \$10, Individual Lifetime \$200 and Family Lifetime \$250. Dues are Tax Deductible!

Contact Rhonda Smith with any concerns about membership. rhonda@galtsmiths.com.



A Message From The President

I was trying to decide what topic I should write about this month. Wednesday I had lunch with one of my aunts, Lillian Barsetti Jenks, who was born in 1920, raised in Galt, and graduated from Galt High School. My other aunt, Lillian's sister, Emily Barsetti Cippa, also raised in Galt and Class of 1933 at Galt High will be 104 this May. I brought my notepad to lunch. I asked as many questions as I could without getting annoying. I had heard many of these stories from my father as I was growing up; but as a kid, people and places did not always mean a lot. Since getting older and active in the GAHS, names and places, and getting stories correct are a big deal. I asked her questions such as what it was like going to school in one room (she went to Elliott School and Telegraph School before Oak View), how many children in the room, what the desks looked like, where did the teacher sit, etc. The "method to my madness" was to picture in my mind what the Liberty School House must have looked like in the 1850's. As children, they had to walk quite a ways to school. She told me stories about dancing in the Spanish Ballroom (later to be called the Estrellita Ballroom). She said it was the best place in all the area to listen to great bands and dance. She remembers seeing Benny Goodman. We moved from one topic to the next as I was absorbing as much as I could. Lillian is a retired attorney. She actually tried a case before the US Supreme Court. When at Galt High she was the top women's athlete, as well as in the entire county. My Aunt Em joined the WAVES. I am very proud of her. She served our country when there were so few women who did. I tell you all this, not to talk about my family, but to impress upon all of you that if you have older family members,

talk to them now, interview them, write it down, or tape record them. If we do not, once that generation is gone, so will those stories and your past. I am just as negligent as the next person in telling my story. I know I have gotten on my soapbox before about this topic, but it really hits home when we are getting ready to celebrate Galt's 150th Birthday. We can read books and find stories, but one wonders if that is how it was or is it what someone thinks happened. When I meet an older person who has lived in our area for years, I tend to ask lots of questions about the Galt they remember. I also find people asking me about the Galt I remember. I love to share what I know. People love to tell their own story. It makes them remember times in their lives when things were much simpler, and it gives them a purpose to know they could be saving a piece of our history. As 150 years descends on Galt, take the time to talk to your family and friends who have lived here before you. I am going to make an outline of questions for my aunts. Sometimes when you just sit down and talk, you can go all over the place. It is best to make a list of what you want to talk about at that sitting. Our Historian, Dan Tarnasky, wants more family biographies for our archives, as you get stories from your family, start writing a biographical or genealogical story about them as far back as you can go. Not only will the Galt Area Historical Society appreciate it for our archives, but your future generations of your own families will know where they came from and the contributions their family made to our community.

~ Janis Barsetti Gray

Policy and Procedure Review

Docents Policy

Purpose

GAHS seeks to engage, entertain and educate visitors about the history of the Galt area through the collections held at the Rae House Museum and the McFarland Ranch House. A GAHS docent is a volunteer trained to facilitate learning at the two Society historic homes.

Policy

1. All docents must be members of the GAHS
2. All docents must attend at least one volunteer docent training session
3. Docent Committee Chair should:
 - a. Host at least one docent training session a year, more if needed
 - b. Recruit new docents through Society newsletter, website, social media and word of mouth
 - c. Schedule docents ahead of time for monthly tours at the Rae House Museum and as needed for special tours based on the Society events at the Rae House Museum and the McFarland Ranch House
 - i. When there are large groups of visitors like at the Sip N Snack, schedule some docents to work on the porch to limit how many visitors in the museum at a time
 - d. Maintain a list of current docents with contact information
 - e. Maintain a Docent Sign-In Sheet at each historic home with dates of tours where docents sign in/out and log their time in order to keep track of volunteer hours (see Docent Sign-In Sheet)
 - f. Regularly visit historic homes and schedule cleaning days especially before scheduled tour dates
 - g. Provide all docents with historical information that they can disseminate verbally to visitors (see handouts on Rae House Museum and McFarland Ranch House)
 - h. Provide ID tags/stickers/nametags for all docents to be worn when giving tours
 - i. Report all accidents to President or someone on the Board immediately to determine what action is needed and have visitor fill in information on accident report
 - j. Inform docents on how to secure the museums once the tours have ended
 - k. Inform docents how to use the lift at the McFarland Ranch House for those visitors with disabilities
 - l. Maintain a designated docent space (drawer or cabinet) at each historic home with docent badges/pins, Sign-in sheets, key to lift at McFarland Ranch House, Accident Report forms, docent handouts, etc.
 - m. Inform docents of the rules regarding tours including:
 - i. Photography is encouraged during tours
 - ii. No food, drinks, cigarettes permitted in historic homes
 - iii. Encourage large bags to be left on front porch
 - iv. No touching historic items
 - v. If tours include children:
 1. Inform them to not touch any items, no running or pushing, no food, drinks or gum/candy, and use inside voices
 2. Never touch a child on a tour, if behavioral issues, notify a teacher or parent adult in charge

Docents should

- a. Always work in groups of at least two
- b. Make sure door to stairs in Rae House Museum is closed during tours
- c. Arrive fifteen minutes early or earlier if need to prepare for the tour
- d. Make sure if cannot attend scheduled tour, notify Chair so they can secure a replacement
- e. Have professional attitude and conduct
- f. Encourage others to join and become a docent
- g. Have respect for other docents and volunteers
- h. Be encouraged to make recommendations to Docent Chair to strive to always improve the Society tours
- i. Welcome visitors as they enter and have some closing remarks encouraging visitors to return, visit the Society's other historic home and make a donation (donation box at entrance and exit of both historic houses)
- j. If have a problem with a visitor, ask them to leave or contact the Security Guard or Police, if necessary
- k. Lock up the premises and secure the alarm system
- l. Inform Docent Chair if see cleaning/maintenance issues
- m. In regards to the Rae House Museum, put out road signs on Lincoln Way and corner of Oak and A Streets on day of tour or first Sunday of the month; unlock gate for customers to drive in and unlock bathrooms
- n. Encourage people who may have photos or documents to make appointment with Historian/Archivist to scan; Dan Tarnasky's email address is blckrssn@hotmail.com

Calendar

April 7 | 9am - 3pm

Kite Day

McFarland Living History Ranch

April 7 | 1pm - 4pm

History for Kids at Rae Museum

April 11 | 2pm - 3pm

Executive Board Meeting

500 C Street

April 12

Civil War Days School Event

McFarland Living History Ranch

April 13 & 14

Saturday 9am - 8pm

Sunday 9am - 3pm

Civil War Reenactment

McFarland Living History Ranch

April 22 | 6pm

General Meeting

550 C Street

April 28 | Rain Out Day for Kite Day

May 4 | 8:30am

Work Day at Liberty Cemetery

May 5 | 1pm - 4pm

History for Kids at Rae Museum

May 5 | 1pm - 4pm

Rae House Museum Open

May 8 | All Day

Pioneer Days at McFarland Ranch

May 9 | 2pm - 3pm

Executive Board Meeting

500 C Street

Dates and Times are Subject to Change

2019 Historical Society Executive Board

Janis Barsetti Gray ~ President
Ida Denier ~ 1st Vice President
Ralph Cortez ~ 2nd Vice President
Liz Haglund ~ Recording Secretary
Louise Dowdell ~
Corresponding Secretary
Dan Tarnasky ~ Historian
Bobbi Lewis ~ Treasurer

Own a Piece of History

The Galt Chamber of Commerce will be selling commemorative tshirts, hats, lapel pins and a limited edition Challenge Coin among other items to commemorate Galt's 150th birthday.

Tshirts (available in tan, gray or blue) and hats are available now and can be purchased Chamber office, 604 N. Lincoln Way, Galt. Commemorative lapel pins and Challenge Coins coming soon.

All proceeds from the sale of Sesquicentennial merchandise will go towards the September 14th celebration in Old Town Galt.



Save THE Date

Mark your calendars for August 10th & 11th, 2019 for the 2nd Annual Galt Balloon Festival to be held at McFarland Living History Ranch. Tickets will go on sale May 1st. For more information click on our website: www.GaltBalloonFestival.com and follow us on Facebook.

To volunteer at the festival go to our website and click on "volunteers" to fill out an application.

Louise's Walk Down Memory Lane

Country Fairs used to be held in farming areas. Alta Mesa was one of them. A number of people raised chickens and could sell them as fryers to shops in Sacramento.

Each summer, usually in August, they held a fair with chicken dinners as part of it. They served the salad with a homemade dressing. It was mayonnaise with a sprinkle of paprika; everyone thought it was so classic. Dessert was always a small piece of home baked cake. Around the side of the hall ladies handiwork was displayed. There was entertainment and home grown vegetables, as well.

One old fellow was special with his song about pigs. I believe there were eight little pigs asleep in the straw with their tails curled high. He made sounds like piglets sniffing and oinking while the ladies washed the dishes and cleaned up.

When the dinner was over, those who stayed danced till 2 in the morning. Music was provided by Clara and Helen Stamp. They played concertinas, which took real skill. Good Night Ladies and Gent time to go home. No place like home.



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Galt's Oldest Homes

Contained within the Galt Area Historical Society's Digital Photo Library are about 150 images of Galt homes from the past. Some of those homes you know about like the Rae House, McFarland House, and the Brewster House but are you familiar with others from the past and those that still exist?

Unfortunately, there were some great houses from the past that met their demise for the sake of progress. Those homes that should have been preserved like Andrew Whitaker's house that was on McFarland Street or local rancher Joseph Angrave's home on 6th and C Street. Local merchant William

Conklin and his wife Lulu owned a two-story home at 5th and A Street. James Larrick was an express agent in town and owned a Victorian home on Oak Avenue. Swiss-born Peter Planalp owned a farm on the outskirts of Galt and a two-story Victorian on A Street. You can't turn back the clock to save these residential gems, but you can save the ones that still exist.

A list of historic Galt homes is being written to help preserve Galt's Heritage. Plaques will be installed to recognize these fine examples of residential architecture for future generations and to keep them from meeting the fate of those from the past.

Some of those homes include Thomas Still's house on A Street, long time Galt real estate agent Oscar Wiles home on McFarland Street, and Amadeo Lippi's house on 3rd Street. Dr. James Tilden Christian's built a California Craftsman on Lincoln Way in 1912 and has been restored. James Ferguson built two houses on 3rd Street that are still in great shape. There are several others that need to be identified and will find their way on the list.

If you know of homes in the Galt area that need to be saved, contact the Historian, and he will research the site and recommend it for a plaque.

Historian



Liberty Cemetery Clean-Up Day

We had a Liberty Cemetery cleanup on March 30, headed by Shawn Farmer. Shawn brought out the new weed eaters that were donated by Cal Waste for our use in the cemeteries. We had members and some of the Clampers helping get the cemetery cleaned up. We appreciate all that Cal-Waste has done for our society. They are willing to help not just us, but the entire community.

Gossip from the Galt Gazette April 1886

Charlie Quiggle had his horse and buggy stolen.



Sheet and Pillow Case Ball a rousing success.



Fine supper at Patton Hotel.



First services held at Galt Catholic Church.



Case of battery came up in Justice Stringfield's court.



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Volunteers Clean Up at the Ranch

Bear Creek High School sent about 10 students to help out at the McFarland Living History Ranch. They weeded, trimmed around trees, cleaned brush, worked around the house, and cleaned the garden area. We so appreciated this help. Not only did they help us, but they learned from this experience too. Thanks to Lyle Lagge and Ron Jacobson for coordinating this.



History for Kids at the Rae
201 Oak Avenue 95632
Saturday, April 13, 2019
2pm-4pm
Letters, postcards, and Stamps

Learn about the history of writing, the importance of letters and postcards in history, and practice writing using quill and ink.



Learn about postage stamps and create a keepsake using antique postage stamps.



Please arrive at 2pm
There is no fee to participate in the event.
Parents are encouraged to attend.
We ask that small children be supervised during the event.

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Bits & Pieces

Congratulations

Congratulations to one of our members, Tom Haglund, who was appointed Interim City Manager for Galt. Our city could not have found a more qualified person. Tom's wife, Liz, is our Recording Secretary on our Executive Board.

Baxter Sperry Exhibit

If we went to the Rae Museum open house this last Sunday, you were able to see an exhibit of Baxter Sperry's books that she wrote (many about historic Galt and Liberty), her stamps from her printer, cards of historic pictures she made with the stamps, and some of her paintings and drawings. We received all these items years ago when she passed away. They are truly a treasure. The exhibit will be there for a couple of months.

Civil War Reenactment

The Civil War Reenactment is almost upon us. If you have not bought your tickets, you should do so soon for the April 13 and 14 event. You can buy the tickets at Barsetti Vineyards Tasting Room, The Coffee Shop and Bakery, and Express Type and Graphics. Tickets are \$8 in advance or \$10 at the gate. Seating will be on hay bales so you might want to bring a blanket to sit on. This is the first reenactment that we have had at the McFarland Living History Ranch. The school event on April 12 is completely full of children coming from many surrounding schools and districts.

Ladies' Tea at the Rae

Ladies' Tea at the Rae will be held May 11th. Tickets are now being sold for \$30 each. It will be a great Mother's Day outing. If you want to volunteer to help in setup, serving, or tear down, contact Joan Werblun at 209 745-0726.

Sip & Snack Tickets

Sip & Snack at the MAC tickets are ready to sell also. Our annual Wine, Beer and Food event will be held at

the McFarland Living History Ranch on July 27th. Tickets are \$35 and all funds raised are used for the continued preservation of the McFarland Ranch.

Hot Air Balloon Event

Other events to be aware of are the Galt Chamber of Commerce's Hot Air Balloon event in August, our annual Car Show September 28th, the visit by the Lincoln Highway Association's Reenactment of Eisenhower's military convoy trip in 1919 on September 13, and the City's huge celebration for our 150th Birthday on September 14.

Volunteers Needed

We still could use more volunteers to join our group of Galt Chamber members, Historical Society members, city, and private individuals to help plan the 150th. Our next meeting is Apr 10th at our hall on C St. at 6 pm.

Schoolhouse Donation

We are extremely excited and thankful to the Henke family for donating to us, the Liberty Schoolhouse that sits on 4th St. Once it is moved to the Rae Museum grounds, it will be renovated to a school house of 1800's. More about this as it develops.

McFarland Restrooms

The restrooms at the McFarland Ranch are almost completed. Waiting final inspection from the county. Before people will be allowed to use the restrooms or the bride's room, the ADA parking must be put in. The Board is taking more bids for the cement and stripping and will be reviewing the bids in a few weeks to choose a contractor.

Fundraising Ideas

If any of you have ideas for new fundraising events, please come to a meeting and tell us about it. We ask that you have it outlined and have a plan as to how it would make money for our organization. Many of you have good ideas.

Rae House Repairs

We are still getting bids for the repairs at the Rae Museum. The repairs are very necessary and will be costly. The Board will review these bids and award the job to the contractor this month.

Final Meeting in June

June is our final membership meeting for the summer. Our general meetings resume in September when we have nominations for the Board. We usually have a dinner but since we are unable to prepare foods ourselves, we would like to have a potluck. If each member coming would bring a dish, we would appreciate it. It can be appetizers, salad, main dish, desserts. We will cook hotdogs. The general meeting and potluck will be in the yard at the Rae Museum beginning at 6 pm, meeting to follow.

Docents Needed

We are really in need of docents for both the McFarland House and the Rae Museum. If you are interested in being trained for both places, please contact a member of the board.

Thank's Rita & Bob Martin

Thanks to Rita and Bob Martin for all their hard work in the yard at the McFarland House. The fountain area really looks beautiful. They have worked to keep the yard special for the weddings.

Looking for Relatives

We are looking for anyone who may have relatives buried in the Liberty or Elliott cemeteries or know people who have relatives buried. It would be a good way to help us get information about the person who is buried there and also get them involved in helping us preserve these cemeteries. Contact Janis if you know of anyone.

Elliott Cemetery

Eric Schneider is getting ready to do a cleanup at the Elliott Cemetery soon. If you want to help him, please give him a call at 209 747-1053.



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