



December 2020



From the Archives
Galt Railroad Station

The whole reason for the City of Galt's existence is this building pictured here: the Galt Railroad Station. Before the founding of Galt, local farmers Dr. Obed Harvey and John McFarland needed a more efficient way to get their products to market. Hauling it overland by wagon took too long, and wages had to be paid to a teamster. With his Sacramento connections, Harvey convinced the Central Pacific Railroad (Now Union Pacific) to build a line

through his property. A station and town were born. The station was located on the southeast corner of the now Union Pacific Railroad tracks and C Street. In the background is the 4th Street block between C and D Streets, which includes the Galt Hotel. A Teamster is pictured waiting for his next load, which could be the milk cans in the lower right corner. Could this be local drayer Ted May?

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

We welcome our new member: Susan Nelson. We look forward to meeting you in person and sharing our goals of the Historical Society!

If you are not a Lifetime Member of the Galt Area Historical Society, your membership fee is due January 1, 2021. I will be sending out invoices this month through mail or email, depending on the delivery option I have for your membership information. Please send your 2021 Membership fee in promptly.

If you have friends or family who want to join, you can direct them to our website: www.galthistory.org and look for the membership tab to join. Hint: This is a great Christmas gift for family or friends!

As a member of our Galt Area Historical Society you play an important role in protecting and preserving our historical records and also interpret the past to the public, especially our younger Galtonian. Each year that you renew your membership you join us in our mission of engaging and empowering each other to make history a meaningful part of our contemporary lives. Your membership helps preserve the legacy of our ancestors, commemorate local heroes and preserve our historic architecture. Our members in GAHS help answer the Who, What, Why, Where and When questions that make historical societies important. It puts those of us in the present in touch with the people of the past who shaped our landscape, named our landmarks, and made the decisions that ultimately affect us today.

Remember to please contact us for any address, phone or email changes that you have. We need to have updated addresses or it costs us each time a newsletter is returned for incorrect address. But more important is we want to keep everyone updated and informed of all our events and activities!

Please email any concerns to Rhonda Smith, rhonda@galtsmiths.com or call, 209-745-4504.

2020 Historical Society Executive Board

Janis Barsetti Gray ~ President

Lyle Lagge ~ 1st Vice President

Harry Souders ~ 2nd Vice President

Liz Haglund ~ Recording Secretary

Toni Gerling ~ Corresponding Secretary

Bobbi Lewis ~ Treasurer

Dan Tarnasky ~ Historian



I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday; and were able to spend the day with family and friends. Christmas is rapidly approaching. After almost a complete year of turmoil because of COVID-19 for citizens and businesses in our country, I hope we can find some peace in the Christmas holiday season. Christmas, like Thanksgiving, is a holiday filled with traditions. Christmas traditions honor our history and celebrate our past. Our most cherished traditions are within our family and friends. Going back in time to our own families, we remember the family gatherings, food, presents, perhaps going to church, and the good times and good feelings it brought to us. Children waited in anticipation for Santa to fulfill all their wishes with gifts under the tree. Much of today is commercialized in the stores and on the media. However, many people still hold on to those precious traditions we were raised with. Many of those traditions were passed down through many generations.

Christmas in 1869 was very different than today. If a family was lucky enough to have a Christmas tree, it was small and propped on a table top in most cases. The decorations were handmade and strings of popcorn circled the tree. Sometimes, if the home had a mantel, it was adorned with greenery with some ribbons and bows. There could have been lite candles on the tree for lighting. Stockings were hung waiting for Santa to put a present inside for each child. Presents were handmade such as dolls, socks, gloves, hats, ribbons. All useful items and were very appreciated. As children got older, young men may have gotten a knife to help with woodworking and young girls may have gotten sewing items so that she could make clothes, hats, etc. Fresh fruit, such as oranges, was a treat at Christmas. Unlike boxes and bags of candies today, the fresh fruit was enjoyed because the families may have only "splurged" at this time of year unless they had their own fruit trees. The dinner was special too. What was served was special because only once a year this feast with decorations occurred. Unlike Thanksgiving, it was a more festive day. Of course, many also attended a church on Christmas Day.

Each generation and each new marriage and families start their own traditions; but each person brings with them the traditions they grew up with. They may make some changes to those traditions, but the basis of who we are comes from those traditions. Preserving family traditions are like looking back at your life. Childhood memories or adult memories brings you back to another time in your life. It is almost like a life review especially on holidays like Christmas. Remembering people who are no longer with us or who cannot be with you today, is part of those traditions. Maybe when you go to Christmas dinner this year and you have the opportunity to talk to your parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, ask them what family traditions they remember. It could be that you are missing out on those traditions in your own life. Would it not be a great way to honor your family if you made sure those traditions lived on with your own family? Remember, the clearest path to your history is through your family.

I hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and a much brighter New Year in 2021.

Janis Barsetti Gray

Bits & Pieces

COVID-19 Guidelines

The State has put Sacramento County and most counties in California back to the Purple Tier or Widespread. For the Galt Area Historical Society that means that a museum can only be open outdoors with modifications such as social distancing of 6 feet apart and 25% capacity of the area. The current guidance also states that gatherings have to cease between 10 pm-5 am if it is a gathering of different households. We cannot have our meetings because it is of people from different households. Unfortunately, we cannot have our Christmas open houses at the McFarland Ranch or the Rae Museum this year. It is not clear when guidelines will open the state back up. It is difficult to book weddings and other fundraisers at this time because we do not have any answers for clients.

News and Announcements

Since we cannot gather and perhaps, have not seen much of each other, I am sure there are things happening in our members' lives that they would like to share with each other. I would appreciate it if you have personal announcements such as births, marriage, anniversaries, promotions, retirements, moving away, illness, death, etc.; if you would email me prior to the beginning of each month with this information at: ricjan@barsettivineyards.com, I can get it in the next newsletter.

Barn at McFarland Ranch

As we stated in the past, our hopes to build a large event center that looks like a barn, have diminished because of funding. The cost of such a facility would be \$1.5 million. We just do not have that kind of funds or the source to get them. Therefore, the board is going forward with the plan to convert the red Ag barn into a smaller community event center. We have the engineer working on the plans to submit to the county at this time. Since the building is already up, the cost will be significantly less. We have to add restrooms inside and a small work area for a caterer. There will be ac and heating system. However, since we are able to keep the number of people that can come inside under 300, we do not have to have a sprinkler system. With this facility we can rent it out during inclement weather. We will keep you posted on the progress.

Cameras at McFarland Ranch

The board is currently getting bids to put cameras at the McFarland Ranch. Not only is security at the Ranch important, but it would help for liability purposes. We must make sure we protect our interests and those of Sacramento County.

Photography at McFarland Ranch and Rae Museum

We get requests all the time from photographers or families to come to either venue to take family pictures, reunion and high school pictures. While we like to accommodate, I have found out that other venues charge for this to happen. Needless to say, we have lost much revenue this year due to the virus so we need to make sure that a donation is paid per client to us for use of these beautiful venues. We will also begin having the photographer and the clients sign Hold Harmless forms before coming out. The board will discuss this in more detail as to the price.

Rae Museum Christmas Decor

Florist and member, Joan Werblun, will be decorating the outside of the Rae Museum for Christmas. Unfortunately, nothing will be done inside since no one can tour the house. The museum will be beautiful, as always, when Joan is done. Thanks so much, Joan.

Congratulations

Member, Matt Barsetti, was sworn in as a San Joaquin County Sheriff Deputy November 20th. Matt will join his sister, Allison, as a SJ CO Deputy. Congratulations Matt and thank you for helping keep us safe.



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Looking for Photos

If anyone has photos of these businesses or know someone who might, please contact the Historian at blckrssn@hotmail.com.

Patton's Pharmacy – Had a soda fountain; closed 1940.

The Club – Jim Bradford and C. Tufts Bar and Café

Bank of Galt – W.C. Anderson, President

The Hardware Store – 305 4th Street

Galt Auto Supply – Lassiter and Shields / Hwy 99

Lifman's Department Store – Ben Lifman

John Paavola Shoe Repair

Koontz Place – "Boss" Koontz / On the Hwy

Wegat's Place – Fred Wegat / Lunch Counter, Restaurant, and Bar on C Street

Galt Bakery – Albert Clary / 217 4th Street

Pelisse Tailor – L. Pelisse / 108 5th Street

A.F. Bettreund Jewelry Repair – On the Highway

The Curve Service Station (1935) – Les Mendes / South of Galt / Highway 99

Colonial Beauty Shop – 213 4th Street / Harms Building

Galt Safeway Market

Slacks Economy Market

Pacific Telephone and Telegraph – 314 5th Street

Galt Electric Appliance Store – August Lauchert / Stefan Building

Matt's Tavern – Matt Lavey / Highway 99 / Twin Cities Corner

Patton's Barber Shop – Dexter Patton

Quenell's Garage – Angus Quenell / NW Corner 5th and C Streets

Tip Top Café – Mrs. A. Tardiff / 4th Street / 3 doors south of bank

Original Standard Service Station – Ted May before 1936

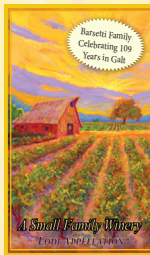
Galt Produce Co. – Fred Pitts / North of VanEvery's Service Station

Clover Made Jersey Cream Farm – O.C. Mays / North of Galt

Thornton Canning Co.

Galt Café – 4th Street between C and D Streets

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Peaceful Protest ~ 1950

With all the news about “peaceful protests” inundating network newscasts, the internet, and newspapers in recent years, few people remember one such event in Galt back in 1950. It made the Sacramento newspapers and the Galt Herald and involved two well-known figures at the time, Laurence Littleton and Willis Wolcott.

Galt citizens voted for incorporation in 1946 and at the same time, voted in the first five members of the city council including Laurence Littleton. He had been the music director at Galt High School for twelve years and brought the program to local prominence winning awards and participating in several competitions. The same year he became a city council member, citizens voted him on to the Sanitary Board. A decline in music students reduced Littleton’s job status to part-time which cause him to teach music at Sacramento Junior College and New Hope and Oakview Schools. Remember the old saying about “too many irons in the fire?” In April of 1949, Littleton resigned from the city council but in September, he accepted a commission as a warrant officer in the California Army National Guard began to direct the 59th Army Band. It became apparent to the Galt High

School Board of Trustees that Littleton was not devoting enough time to his high school duties. On Monday May 15, 1950, the Galt High School Board of Trustees, decided not to renew the contracts of Littleton and the acting principal who defended him Willis Wolcott.

By Wednesday, students had heard of the decision and decided to walk out of class. An assembly called for by Littleton and Wolcott ended the “strike” after about forty minutes. The students went back to class and held impromptu rallies for the two faculty members. Words of protest were written on the blackboards. After school, student s drove their cars in a parade up and down city streets for hours. At the Wednesday night Senior Play, Littleton received a thunderous applause when he entered to direct the band. The following day, most of the students, including the band, held a parade on their lunch hour voicing their displeasure. A delegation of Galt citizens met with Deputy District Attorney John Heinrich regarding the legality of the Board’s actions. A twenty-four hour notice had not been given to Trustee Robert Angele who missed the meeting. He was a supporter of Littleton and Wolcott.

After a petition began circulating for the recall of the Trustees, details began surfacing regarding Littleton and Wolcott’s ouster. The Board of Trustees did not like Littleton’s involvement in politics and his teaching grade school music (he was reduced to part-time, what else was he supposed to do?). Wolcott got heat from backing Littleton, so his time was up. On a related story, Wolcott became acting principal when Floyd Taylor left to take a job with the State Board of Education. He was getting heat from school trustees about his involvement in public affairs and was about to be fired. See the pattern?

By Friday of the same week, it was all over. With pressure from students, parents, and local business leaders, the trustees reinstated Littleton and Wolcott and life at the high school went back to normal. Laurence Littleton would go on teaching music at Galt High School until 1968, when he became the full-time principal (such irony). Willis Wolcott wanted to become the full-time principal in 1950, but after the events of May and the hiring of Wendell Forney, that was not to be. He continued to be vice-principal and taught PE and math until 1956, when he went to Livermore to continue teaching.

Historian



Willis Wolcott



Robert Angele



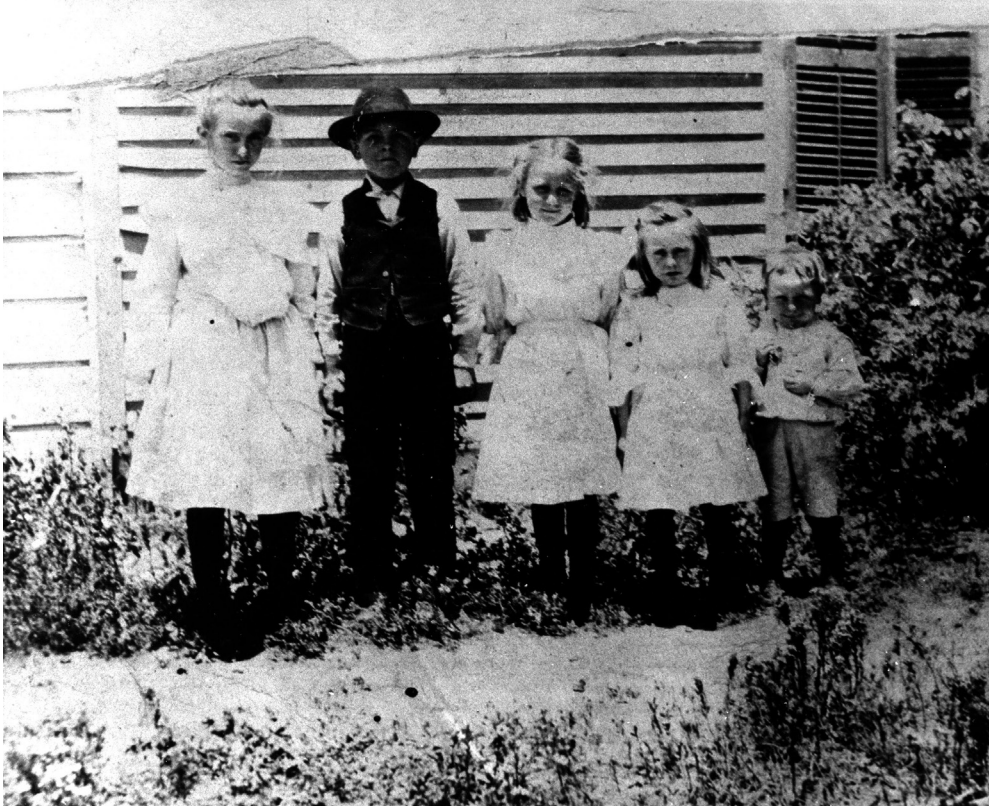
Laurence Littleton

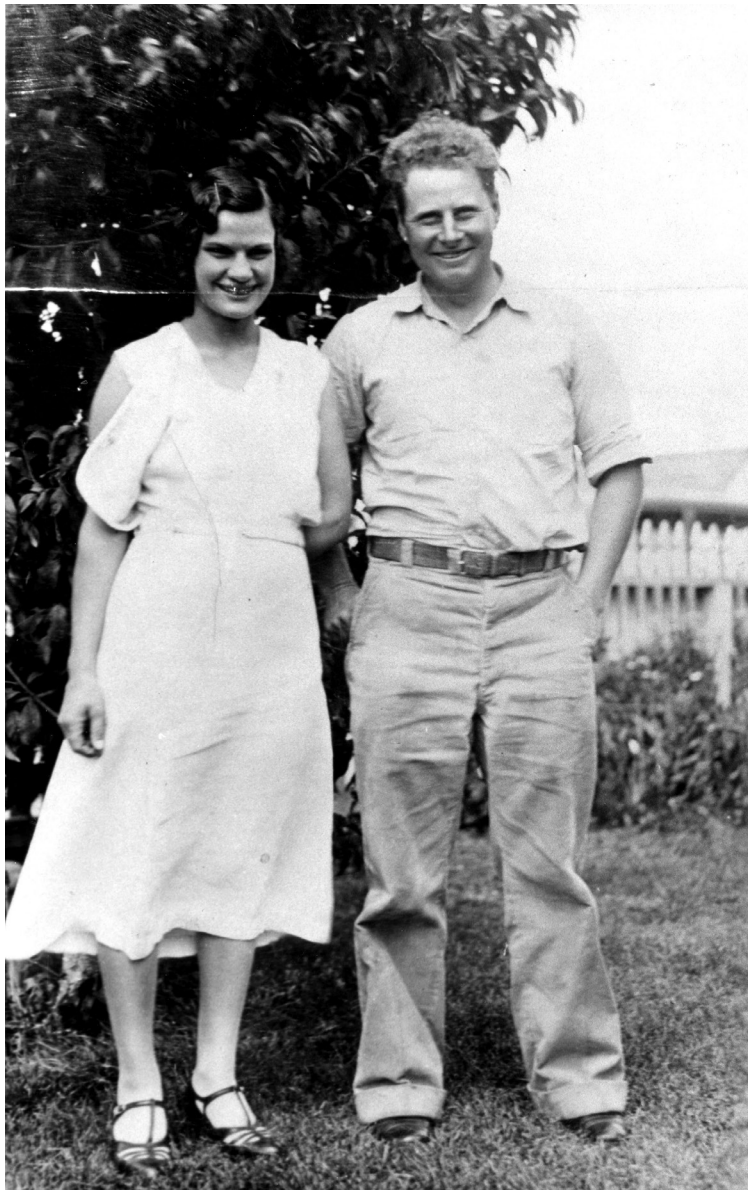
Can you help us identify these Galt area citizens?

We have several photos that are unidentified. If you know who one of these people are, contact:

Dan Tarnasky - GAHS Historian

Email: blckrssn@hotmail.com | Phone: (916) 952-2368







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