



January 2020



From the Archives **August Pahl**

A Galt personality from the past set up shop on the corner of 5th and C Streets. August Pahl wore many hats. He was Assistant Fire Chief in the Galt Fire Department, drove a school bus for the Galt Elementary School District, Director of the Galt Sanitary District, and City Council member. Born in Forbes North Dakota in 1905, Pahl learned the cobbler trade from his father who had a shoe/harness shop in Forbes. Coming to California in 1925 for the weather, he first settled in Elk Grove and worked on local ranches. It was there that Pahl met Erna Forsch and the two married in 1930. The Great Depression made finding ranch work difficult, and the Pahls decided to move to Galt in 1936 and open a shoe shop. It was here that August Pahl made a name for himself by getting involved in his community. After 30 plus years as the local cobbler, Pahl retired to enjoy time with his family and friends.

Liberty School House Move

December 19th, Scott Heavy Load Movers moved the Liberty Schoolhouse, donated to us by the Henke Family Trust, to the Rae House Museum grounds. This will be its permanent home. Once the foundation is completed, renovations will begin. If you missed the school house going down the road, here are some pictures. (See more photos inside.)



MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

We would like to welcome our new members to the Historical Society that joined recently: Robert & Janet Fawcett. We look forward to meeting you in person!

We are now 100% paid for the 2019 year. But remember, dues are due once again in January 2020. We have a total of 295 Members. 230 Life Members and 66 Dues Members.

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



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



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I hope you all had a wonderful Christmas with family and friends. A new year brings so many possibilities for our organization. There have been many changes in the world: Some good and some not as we would hope for. All we can do is try to change things for the better. Along with that, changing history is not what we are about. Changing people's attitude about destroying history or not preserving it, is what we do best.

Reflecting back to 2019, it was an exciting year for Galt as we celebrated our 150th anniversary of our founding. Our society and many of our members participated in bringing this event to fruition, along with the Galt Chamber of Commerce and the City of Galt, and many local citizens. We also witnessed the reenactment of Dwight Eisenhower's trip of 1919 across the United States on what is now the Lincoln Highway. We saw many military vehicles make their way into Galt, stop for lunch, and visit with our locals. In 2019, we also saw the completion of the new restrooms at the McFarland Ranch. This is such a huge addition for events. There were some snags along the way, but Ron and Lyle and the crew finished the project. The McFarland Ranch hosted two large events: The Civil War reenactment and the Galt Chamber's Hot Air Balloon Festival. We also hosted our annual fundraisers, Sip & Snack at the MAC and our annual car show: A Drive Down Memory Lane. The Rae Museum hosted our annual Ladies' Tea chaired by Joan Werblun. The Rae also had some repair work done and hopefully, with

additional funds, we can complete some of the major needs at the museum. As usual, LaVonne Riddlespurger headed a most successful yard sale in October.

One of the most significant occurrences this year was the donation of the Liberty School House by the Henke Family Trust to the Galt Area Historical Society. We are so grateful for their kindness and concern about the preservation of Galt's history. The school house was moved to the Rae Museum grounds waiting for renovation.

We also had two beautifully decorated historic homes: The McFarland House and the Rae House, for Christmas. Thanks to all who took the time and effort to make these places something the visitors will remember.

In 2020, we have much to look forward to. We have seen many more people getting involved and a more active membership. We look for more of that this year. We have seen a renewed interest and devotion to our mission. It takes many people to realize and achieve great things. We have just those people.

I wish you all a new year of happiness and health. For the GAHS, I wish another year of greatness and accomplishments and prosperity; and my wish is that we continue to save more history and give more knowledge to our citizens about where Galt came from.

Janis Barsetti Gray

Policy and Procedure Review Membership Committee

I. Purpose:

The GAHS Membership Committee assists in ensuring a viable body of members is sustained who support the Mission of the GAHS. It does this by assisting in recruiting and renewing new and existing members; maintaining an accurate list of pertinent information regarding each member; and engaging members in the shared mission of "Preserving the Irreplaceable" by keeping members informed regarding volunteering opportunities and membership events.

II. Related Documentation:

- Membership Applications; Excel Membership Master List; Membership Packet

III. Procedure:

- Membership dues are due during the month of January of the following year, unless a member has paid close to the end of the calendar year (on or after October 1). If that is the case, renewal is due a year later. It is not the policy of the GAHS to prorate dues.
- Dues are as follows:
 - Individual (I) - \$20 yearly
 - Family (F) - \$40 yearly
 - Student (S) - \$10 yearly
 - Individual Lifetime (IF) - \$200 one time
 - Family Lifetime (FL) - \$250 one time
 - Small Business (SB) - \$50 yearly
 - Honorary Life (HL) - free (must be approved by GAHS Board - see Bylaws Article 3, Section 6)
- Most new membership applications are mailed to the Society address and then forwarded to the Membership Chairperson. Others may come through the website and PayPal. These should also be forwarded to the Membership Chairperson. Address changes or any other pertinent information regarding members should be forwarded to the "Tower Views" newsletter editor in order to keep an up-to-date mailing list.
- Membership Chairperson shall forward dues (checks, cash, PayPal documentation) to the Treasurer with a list detailing the name of the member, check number, amount, and type of membership. Membership Chairperson will provide the member a receipt upon request.
- Membership Chairperson shall update the Excel Membership Master List from the applications. The updated Membership Master List should be printed and given to the President on a quarterly basis.
- Membership Chairperson shall ensure that new members are mailed/emailed a Membership Packet which can include: Membership Card, "Thank You" letter, "Welcome" letter, Release of Liability form, and a Member Interest Survey.
- Completed applications and Release of Liability forms should be properly stored and available to the GAHS Board. Lifetime and Honorary Life applications should be kept permanently. All other "yearly" membership applications should be kept for three years and then can be shred.

Calendar

Monday | January 27 | 6pm
General Membership Meeting
550 C Street

Thursday | February 13 | 2pm
Executive Board Meeting
550 C Street

Monday | February 24 | 6pm
General Membership Meeting
550 C Street

Dates and Times are Subject to Change

Gossip from the Galt Gazette January 1885

The hoss meal can be obtained
at the Galt Restaurant,
and don't you forget it.



The roads in this part of the county
are badly cut up and almost
impossible to travel over.



G.W. Noble's new bakery will soon
be ready for business. His large
brick oven is nearly completed.



E.U. Story, on Front Street, has a
splendid stock of cigars and
tobacco especially selected
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Liberty School House Move



Old John

Over the 150 years of Galt's history, there have been those people that are remembered for their contributions to the community, infamous deeds, the content of their character, or for an odd quirk in their personality. One of those people in the latter category was a man named John McHolden or, as most called him at the time, "Old John." He stood out in the Galt community for obvious reasons, and one reason that wasn't so obvious.

Not much was known about Old John's past at the time. No one knew his birthdate, but they did know he came from Vermont. He served in one of the volunteer infantry regiments from that state during the Civil War and came to California, and Galt, in particular, in the early 1870s. John became one of the first members of the Franklin Post of the Grand Army of the Republic (a Union Army fraternity organization) that began in Galt in 1889. What people knew most about John came from the fact that he staffed the front desk at the Harvey Hotel (Harvey House).

John McHolden had above-average intelligence, was honorable, and his word was unquestioned. When passengers got off the train and walked east on C Street to the Harvey Hotel, Old John was the one who would offer them a room and guide them to different places around town according to their needs. For the better part of twenty years, Old John was a familiar, friendly face, not only at the Harvey but around town as well. Why did people call him "Old John?" Maybe because the life expectancy at the time was forty and he surpassed that number by one third. John McHolden was a model citizen and a friend to just about everyone who knew him. So, what one little quirk set him apart from everyone else?

If one walked into the Harvey Hotel on John's off hours, you would find him sleeping in a chair. Sure, a lot of people do it, but for eight hours every night? He would sit in his chair, tilt it back against the wall with the front legs off the floor and fall asleep in the sitting position. The only time he laid in a bed was when he became

extremely ill. It was assumed the chair had arms for some semblance of comfort. No one could persuade him to sleep in the best beds of the day. He was most comfortable and rested in his chair. In his later years, Old John became more and more hunchbacked for obvious reasons.

"Old John" McHolden passed away in 1891 and was "laid" to rest in the Liberty Cemetery by the members of the GAR post in Galt. The Harvey Hotel has been gone for decades, not surviving the many fires in downtown Galt. The story of "Old John" still exists in the pages of the Galt Gazette.

No known photo of the Harvey Hotel exists. Photo courtesy of Mount Clemens Public Library Local History Collection.

Historian



Local History Books Available

Images of America: Galt

Contains vintage photos of Galt's past and a little history to go with it. The timeframe is 1869 to 1969. The Galt Area Historical Society is the source for the photos and historical information. Other Galtonians shared their photos, information, and memories.

Past and Present: Galt

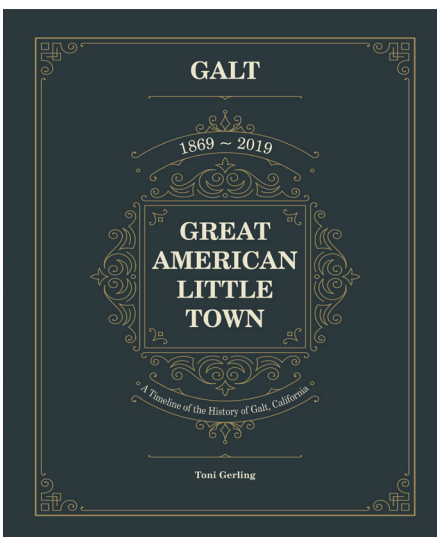
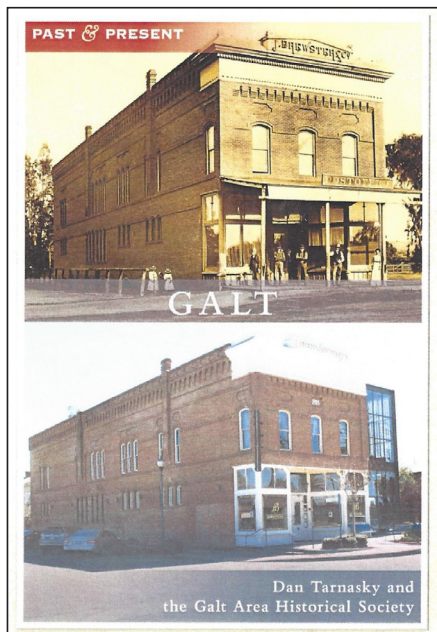
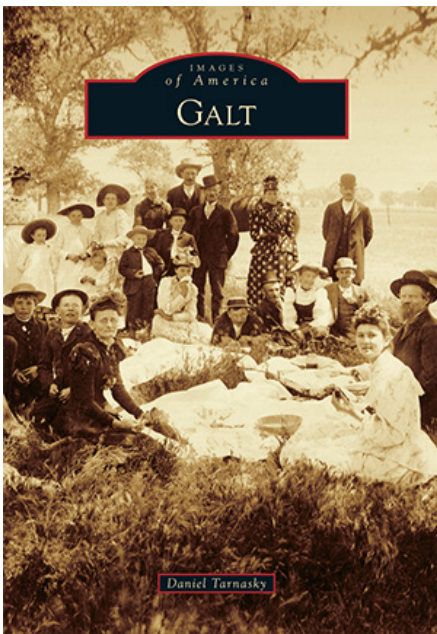
Contains vintage photos of buildings from Galt's past and what the building looks like now. Some places are unchanged while others have completely disappeared. All are still contained in the memories of those who grew up in their small town.

Books can be purchased at Barsetti's Tasting Room, 400 4th Street, Galt, through the GAHS website (www.galthistory.org), or by contacting the author, Dan Tarnasky at blckrssn@hotmail.com.

Great American Little Town, A Timeline of the History of Galt, California

Wrapping up a year of celebrations, the Galt District Chamber of Commerce has published a book commemorating Galt's sesquicentennial year. Only offered through the chamber and select businesses throughout Galt, the 100-page book is the 'labor of love' of long-time resident Toni Gerling of Express Type & Graphics. The book features a timeline of this area and includes photos and news clippings covering important milestones in local history. The book can be purchased at the following locations for \$25, which includes a commemorative pin.

- Galt Chamber office, 604 N. Lincoln Way
- Express Type & Graphics, 740 Spaans Drive #2
- The Coffee Shop Bakery, 411 C Street



McFarland Ranch Update

Fencing around the main house is still under repair. The fence has 80 sections and 37 sections are need of repair due to rot and termite damage. Six sections have been replaced with 31 sections remaining. Fortunately we have room in our woodshop to build the sections. We setup a template and can work on the fence on rainy days. Unfortunately our resources are diminishing and will need to be replenished. When the original fence was built, donations were provided. When resources were donated, a name plate was put on the sections of fence and if anyone is interested, we still have about ten sections without name plates. It is my understanding that the donation for a section, approximately 8 feet, was \$100 per section, but all donations are welcome.

We are continuing work on the new ticket booth. It still needs paint and we would like to get feedback as to what color to paint, red or white, red with white trim or vice versa.

The tree trimming is moving along and by spring we hope to have the 100 plus trees pruned.

We have really good volunteers! Earl, Roger and Kirk have been helping with beautification efforts at the ranch. Volunteer work days at the ranch are every Monday from 9:00 am until 2:00 pm. Occasionally we will be out there many other days depending on weather conditions. If you would like to volunteer, please contact Lyle or just come to the ranch on Monday. We could always use more help.

Lyle Lagge

Bits & Pieces

Rae Closed for Maintenance

The Rae Museum will be closed January and February for cleaning and maintenance. We are also looking for people to help clean out the basement and the attic; and organize and store items. Some things need to go to LaVonne's yard sale shed and some things need to be tossed. It will be a lot of work. Please let me know if you can help within the next couple of weeks so we can get times to come over.

Annual Appeal Letter

You will be receiving shortly, our annual appeal letter for donations. Our Corresponding Secretary, Toni Gerling, will be sending these out. Some may come by email and others by postal. Please be generous. This donation helps us with our smaller projects.

Membership Invoices

As you know, those of you who are not Life Members, your membership is due in January. Again, we rely on these funds to help pay our bills and for small projects. This year you will receive an invoice from our chairperson, Rhonda Smith. If you have already paid, disregard the invoice. We hope this reminder will help members in getting their dues in on time.

Activity Director for Rae

If anyone is interested in chairing the activities at the Rae for children, please let me know. It is very important to capture the children early about our history. This

would include the Halloween activities and any other fun family ideas we can generate at the Rae.

Authors Among Us

Did you know that we have three authors among our members? We know that our Historian, Dan Tarnasky wrote one book on Galt's history; but did you know he has written a second one. He has those for sale now. Mike Greer, whose mother, Margaret, was one of our founders, has written a book on the railroad in Galt. Durlyn Anema, not only has a column in the Lodi News Sentinel each week, but she has written a book on saving your memories for your families and friends. She has written a new book that will be debuting soon. Good luck to all of you. If you want to know where to buy the books, along with the authors, they are sold at Barsetti Vineyards Tasting Room.

Liberty Cemetery

The Clampers are planning some work days at the Liberty, weather permitting. They want to keep the cemetery under control for weeds and branches. That will make spring work much easier. We appreciate all the Clampers do for us.

Event Date Changes

As stated before, Sip & Snack will be held Saturday, September 26th this year. This should take care of the heat of July. We still have not decided on the date for our annual car show. Next month we should have our calendar of events posted.

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