

From the Archives
Midway Saloon



Over the first fifty years of Galt's history, there have been many an establishment where one could "wet their whistle." Whether you called them saloons, bars, or taverns, they outnumbered churches two to one. One such "watering hole" was the Midway Saloon. No one knows who built it, but Volaski "Lac" Quiggle owned it around

1910. Fred Rothenbush, Galt's first fire chief, ran the saloon in 1921. O'Hara Realty now occupies the site of the Midway Saloon. The unique architecture allows the customer to stop for a drink without getting wet in a rainstorm. Looking through the building, the road that would become Lincoln Way is visible.

April 2023
Newsletter

GAHS Membership

Please contact us for any address, phone or email changes.

Contact

Liz Haglund

with any questions about membership.

aguire@hotmail.com

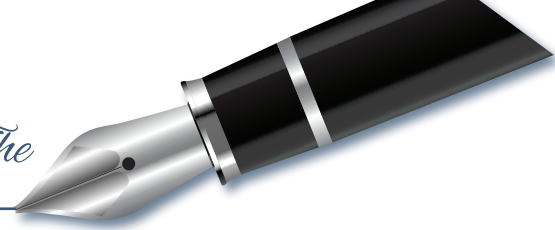
or (209) 327-1098

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

Consider gifting a membership!
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A Message From The



President

Spring is here as of March 20th. We are still receiving some rain and wind. It appears there will be a little wet weather in April also. However, we can look forward to summer. Of course when it is 108 degrees, we will wish for some Feb-Mar weather.

This month I will try to keep my column short, as we have many topics in this newsletter and we have a guest writer contributing. For several months, Durlynn Anema will tell you the story of Liberty City and the Liberty Township. She has discovered topics we did not know. I know I am always schooling you about writing down your memories and recollections about your life growing up or living in Galt and the area. I really need to take my own advice. For example, I was pondering what to write today as I looked out my kitchen window from a house that I was raised in. I looked out into what is now a vineyard; but growing up, it was a pasture field where our dairy cows grazed. From this memory, I bounced to a little pond near

these fields where I recalled another memory of the time my brothers and I walked to this little pond which we were "forbidden" to go to without our dad. Since I was the oldest, I talked them into walking to the pond to look for frogs. Needless to say, our father caught us. My brothers tell the story how they got punished and I somehow got out of the punishment. It is all about who cries the loudest I guess. My point is that one memory leads to another and another. How do you contain them? You don't. Just let them flow. Sometimes it is all about just getting started. Get yourself a recorder and as you get a thought make a note to yourself so you can come back later and write it down. I could probably write a lot of short stories about growing up on the farm and all the shenanigans that went on. It just takes time to start somewhere. I will let you know how it goes in future newsletters.

Happy Spring and Good Writing

- Janis Barsetti Gray

2023 Historical Society Executive Board

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Upcoming Dates

April 10:
Executive Board Meeting
4pm at Barsetti Tasting Room

April 24:
General Members Meeting
6pm at Galt Park & Rec Bldg

May 7:
Open House Rae Museum
& McFarland House
1pm to 4pm

May 8:
Executive Board Meeting
4pm at Barsetti Tasting Room

May 13:
Tea at the Rae
1p to 3:30pm at the Rae Museum

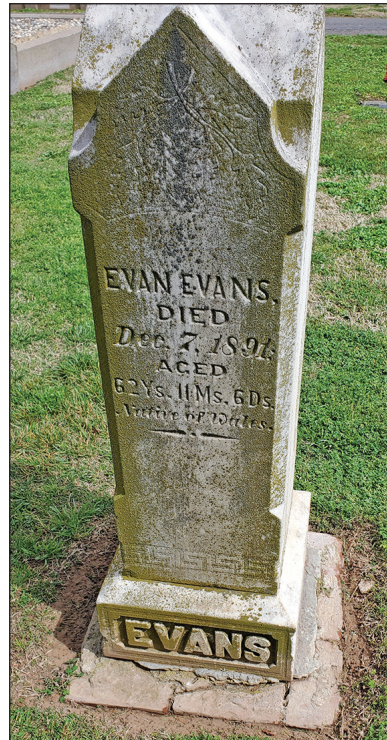
May 22:
General Members Meeting
6pm in the garden at Rae Museum

August 26:
Car Show
McFarland Living History
Ranch

Trip Through the Cemetery

Last month's gravestone inscription had the name Jane Armstrong A Native of Ireland Died Jan 10, 1897, Aged 82 Yrs.

Jane Armstrong was born in Lisbon, County Antrim, Northern Ireland in 1812. She came to this country around 1830 and settled in New York. She married John McKinstry and had a son James. John had a daughter Margaret from a previous marriage. The McKinstry family moved to Illinois where John died in 1842. Jane married Marcus Howard in 1843. Marcus and Jane added Mark and Charles to the family. The Howard family traveled to California by wagon train in 1850, arriving in Sacramento that August where Benjamin



was born. Marcus was involved in a mining accident in 1854. Jane

then married Thomas Armstrong in 1955 and the couple added Jennie to the family. Armstrong was a renown engraver in various California publications. The couple purchased property northwest of Liberty that is now occupied by the Galt Cemetery. When Thomas died in 1860, he was buried on the Armstrong property. When Jane sold that portion of the Armstrong property to the cemetery, Thomas's gravesite became the oldest gravesite in the Galt Cemetery. Jane Armstrong died in 1897 and is buried next to Thomas.



for next month's newsletter...

"Who was Evan Evans?"

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Bits & Pieces

Repairs at Liberty Schoolhouse and Rae Museum

Last year we received a grant for \$10k for repairs to the Rae and for the schoolhouse. Our Historian, Dan Tarnasky, is working on getting these projects completed. Anyone who wants to give a hand, please contact Dan Tarnasky at historian@galthistory.com or 916-952-2368.

Tea at the Rae

Our annual Tea at the Rae will be hosted by the GAHS for the benefit of the Rae House Museum on Saturday, May 13th. Our returning chairperson is Joan Werblun. Please contact Joan, 209-251-9199 if you want to help with the preparations and serving. We hope to attract, not only ladies, but entire families who will come to enjoy the experience of a tea. Tickets can be purchased at L'Chayim or Barsetti Vineyards on 4th St in Galt; or on Eventbrite.com.

Drive Down Memory Lane Car Show

Our annual car show is set for August 26th at the McFarland Living History Ranch. We have already received quite a few entries. It should be a great turnout.

Liberty & Elliott Cemetery Cleanup

Thanks to cemetery chairman, Eric Schneider and the Tuleburg Clampers for cutting up the downed trees at the Liberty and Elliott cemeteries. Eric and his crew also worked on the fences and some of the gravesites. We have some pictures posted in the newsletter. The Tuleburg Clampers are great friends of the Society and they contribute mightily with hard work and dedication to the upkeep and preservation of our historic cemeteries. Thank you so much for all you do for the Galt Area Historical Society. New U.S. flags will be flying at both cemeteries soon.



If you have a car, truck, motorcycle, or camper/travel trailer 1970 or older, please enter. We are also looking for volunteers to help park the cars, help at gate for the public, car entrance or other tasks. Contact Janis 209-747-3861 or Gale 209-471-1525, if you want to help.

Fireworks Booth

We, again, were awarded a spot to have a fireworks booth this year. We are very excited to have the opportunity to again make much needed funds to help with expenses. Dan Tarnasky 916-952-2368 is our fireworks chairperson and Liz Haglund 209-327-1098 is assisting with a shift assignment schedule. Please call Dan or Liz and volunteer for a shift. We really hope that we will have these shifts filled by the end of April. Shifts begin June 28th at noon thru July 4th. There are three shifts per day 9AM-1PM; 1PM-5PM and 5PM-9PM. Shifts are 4 hours and you do not work alone. The more people we have working, the lighter the load and the more successful we will be in earning much needed funds to advance the Society's mission. Please volunteer for a shift or two to make this fundraiser a success!

Repairs at the McFarland

Recently our insurance company who insures the McFarland property, did a complete audit and found items that must be repaired before renewing our policy. If you will remember we talked about unexpected expenses. This is one of those times. All the roof repairs will cost approximately \$30k; and electrical will cost about \$7,600.

Weddings and Events at the MAC

Our bookings have been moving along fairly well for 2023. This is good news since we rely on this income for routine day-to-day expenses at McFarland Ranch. Thanks to Joan Werblun, our reservation specialist, for tours and booking the events.

Volunteer Authors

We are very excited to have member and author, Durlynn Anema, writing stories for our newsletter. I know you will enjoy what she has been working on and will eagerly await the next newsletter to continue reading where she left off. We have also talked to other members who will be writing some of their recollections of growing up in the Galt Area. So look for those in future newsletters.

Old Galt Festival

September 23, 2023, will kick off a new community event celebrating our Great American Little Town. A festival committee is busy planning a one day and evening event full of history, entertainment, and fun for all. The event will transport its participants back in time, celebrating time periods in Galt History from the early days of our town in the late 1800's all the way to the 1950's. The free festivities will include live old-time music, re-enactors, exhibits, antique vehicles, old time activities, games, and food.

The Festival planning committee currently meets once a month at The Coffee Shop Bakery, in Old Town. Volunteers are always welcome. Please contact: shawnfarmer47@gmail.com or by phone at 209-327-2904.

8th Annual Galt Drive Down Memory Lane

Car Show

Saturday, August 26, 2023



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McFarland Ranch Projects Update

Electrical upgrades have been undertaken to correct some issues related to age and operability. The repairs will ensure integrity of our electric circuits and equipment over the long term.

The wood shake roofs on a number of the McFarland buildings need to be upgraded to fire resistant material. Years ago roofing was cedar shake shingles which is now considered a fire hazard and is expensive to maintain. Bids have been received and work will get underway as weather improves.

Painting of a number of buildings will be undertaken to preserve the integrity of the wood structures. We are looking for volunteers to help paint the privy, the storage sheds (3), Woodshop, the restrooms and some parts of the fencing around the ranch house. Our caretaker is working/prepping the caretaker house for painting. Anyone that would like to participate with the painting can call Lyle Lagge at (916) 834-6321. Any volunteer assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Tea at the Rae

Saturday, May 13, 2023

1:00 pm ~ 3:30 pm

Rae House Museum 204 Oak Avenue

\$40 Per Person

Tickets

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Please call Joan Werblun for more information



Galt Area Stagecoaches

When I first got involved in the Historical Society, there was a story about the Ben Salas Funeral Home building's past. It was said that back in Galt's early days, that building had been a Wells Fargo Express office and the narrow vertical windows on the front were gun ports. That got me thinking. Was that a Wells Fargo building? With a town built on the railroad, why would Galt be a stage stop? It was time to learn about stagecoach history in the area.

What is an express company? It is a business developed in the United States which provides for the speedy transmission of parcels or merchandise of any kind and their safe delivery in good condition. In 1850, American Express was started as an express mail business in Buffalo, New York. It was founded by the merger of the express companies owned by Henry Wells (Wells & Company), William G. Fargo (Livingston, Fargo & Company), and John Butterfield (Wells, Butterfield & Company). Wells and Fargo started Wells Fargo & Co. in 1852 when Butterfield and the other directors objected to American Express extending its operations to California. Once established on the West Coast, Wells Fargo's competition was Adams and Company's California Express (Est 1849).

What is a stagecoach? It was a large, closed horse-drawn vehicle formerly used to carry passengers and often mail along a regular route between two places. At the start of the Gold Rush, it was any wagon available. James Burch is credited with creating the first stage line in California (Sept. 1849). Instead of mining for gold, people like Burch hauled supplies for merchants from Sacramento up to the northern mines of the Mother Lode. He would pick people up who were walking to the mines. Burch, along with other entrepreneurs, got the idea to charge passengers a fee for the trip. Burch and other independent stage lines in Sacramento then established a larger company, the California Stage Line, in 1853. In Stockton, the stage lines of John Smith and Alonzo McCloud were some of the first in the area to make runs to the southern mines beginning around 1850.

Up until 1855, the Wells Fargo Express Company contracted with local stage lines to ship documents, gold, and cash between the Mother Lode, San Francisco, and destinations east. Around 1856, Wells Fargo purchased several independent lines and established their own stage line. They would dominate the stage business for the next 10 years with their now famous red Concord stagecoaches (why were



Tom Coyle



Stagecoaches



Ben Salas
Funeral Home

they called Concord Stagecoaches? They were made in Concord, New Hampshire).

Sacramento and Stockton were first connected by stagecoach starting in 1851, James Burch and the California Stage Line out of Sacramento and the John Smith Stage line out of Stockton (Wells Fargo joined later). The western route (then called Lower Sacramento Road because it was on lower ground) skirted the swampland of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The stages stopped in Hicksville, Liberty, and Wood's Ferry on the Mokelumne River (Woodbridge) on their way to Stockton. The best stage driver of that route was "Peg Leg" John Smith. The eastern route (called Upper Sacramento Road) stopped at Hicksville and then went east to higher ground to Dr. George Elliott's Ranch/stage stop on the north bank of Dry Creek. It then continued to Staple's Ferry on the Mokelumne River and south to Stockton. If you traveled these routes today, the western route would be Hwy 99 to Galt and then Lincoln Way to Lower Sacramento Road into Stockton. The eastern route would be Hwy 99 to Twin Cities Road, Clay Station Road/

Elliott Road, then connect to Hwy 88 toward Stockton.

In 1868, the Transcontinental Railroad was halfway to completion and several of the stage lines could see the handwriting on the wall. Wells Fargo sold all their rolling stock and contracted with the railroads for express services. Some of the independent stage lines continued to operate where there was no rail line. After Galt's founding in 1869, Hamilton's Forest Stage Line made a run from Galt to Carbondale (northwest of Ione) even after Southern Pacific built the Amador Branch. They made a run when SP didn't. One of the last stage drivers of the era was a Galtonian named Tom Coyle and we think he drove a Forest Stage.

What about the Wells Fargo Express office you ask? There was an office somewhere on 4th Street between A and C Streets but it wasn't the building now occupied by the Ben Salas Funeral Home. That wasn't built until 1930 and Wells Fargo was long gone

Sources: History of Sacramento County 1980, History of San Joaquin County 1879, The Stagecoach in Northern California, The Sacramento Bee (Aug. 1858)

- *Historian*

Liberty - The Town that Disappeared

Every time you travel south along Highway 99 you come upon the word Liberty -- Liberty Road, Liberty Cemetery. What comes to mind? Our Constitutional Rights? That you live in a free country? Or that once upon a time in the mid-eighteen hundreds a town named Liberty was at this location?

Old timers know the entire story of Liberty but newcomers may not, hence this account of the town of Liberty that flourished for almost twenty years, then disappeared except for the cemetery and its name.

Let's travel back to the time from the 1840's to the 1870's (and maybe even further back!) to imagine what once was here.

The first human inhabitants of this area were Native American with the local tribes called Mi Woks.

Members of the four tribes of MiWoks in the Sacramento area had two homes -- one for summer in the Great Valley and one for winter in the foothills. Each home was cone-shaped with the winter one lined with incense-cedar bark to cover the cracks. The summer home was made of a thatching of brush and grass with tule or grass flooring.

One tribe chose to build their "Great Valley" home in the Dry Creek area. During the summer and fall they would hunt and gather provisions for the winter season. This was a lovely location with the river for bathing, the rolling hills for exploring, and abundant wildlife and plants for nourishment.

In the late seventeen hundreds and into the eighteen hundreds the Spanish and the Mexican governments encouraged immigration by giving land grants in California to their populations. When these owners arrived, the MiWoks shared the large spaces and for the most part had few problems.

Then new pioneers started entering the land in the late 1840's and took over the Mi Wok land, not understanding these people had been here for centuries.

Actually, as far back as the 1820's the area had been explored. In 1826-27 Jedediah Smith and his exploration party came. One member of the party became ill, Louis Andreas, a Frenchman who worked for the Hudson Bay Company. He was surveying places in the West for trading and new hunting areas for his company.

Andreas, who was accompanied by a Black slave, was so ill he died. His Black slave

buried him on a knoll near Dry Creek (an area that later became Liberty Cemetery). In Andreas' belongings were packed several rose bush cuttings which he intended to give to friends in the Northwest before he returned to the East. His slave marked his grave with a wooden cross and planted one of these cuttings.

The rose cutting became a large bush with a tree-like trunk. Year after year it bore pink roses although it was never cared for. Later, the Liberty Cemetery grew up around it. In June 1954 Highway 99 was constructed and on-off ramp from Liberty Road was necessary. Unfortunately, a part of the cemetery including Andreas' grave was needed. Those graves were moved to an upper part of the cemetery along with Andreas' marker and the rose bush. In 2005 the Clampers placed a large marker at the site of the grave.

When the mid- 1840's arrived pioneers coming to California increased. John Sutter earlier had arrived in the Sacramento area, liked what he saw and built a fort to keep the MiWoks out. He began trade with the Mexicans on their vast Spanish and Mexican land grants. Soon other pioneers followed, usually as a group of wagon trains.

Two small settlements with cabins far apart were established near the Old Spanish trail between Sacramento and San Jose. This trail crossed Dry Creek. When Indian tribes seemed likely to attack the homestead of these early settlers, the settlers moved away including a man named Charles Weber who moved south west to found a town called Stockton.

Then came two families who planned to stay. Turner Elder, Thomas Rhoades and their families were part of this influx going West, joining a wagon train from Salt Lake City. They were Mormons who were looking for other places to settle. They were told not to divulge their religion because many of the wagon train members disliked Mormons. As they continued to travel west with the group they were told the train members even had threatened to kill any Mormon they came across.

Elder and Rhoades decided to leave this rather "unfriendly group" to go faster to their destination. Quickly, they left the rest of the train behind which was fortunate because this was early November and the weather suddenly became much colder. They entered Placerville two weeks sooner than planned, then traveled

to Sacramento. The wagon train party they left was not so fortunate -- their name being Donner.

When the Elder and Rhoades families reached Sutter's Fort they met an old friend from Germany. He told them about land in the Dry Creek area. Sutter would allow them to live on this land at Dry Creek until they could find land on which to permanently settle.

In November 1846 Elder erected a cabin on 160 acres of land on Dry Creek that eventually would be Liberty township. Elder had a wife and three children. His father-in-law Rhoades and his wife built further down on another 160 acres on Dry Creek.

In spring 1847 Elizabeth Rhoades and Polly Elder went down to the creek to wash their clothes. To their surprise they found nuggets of shiny gold. Thomas Rhoades and Elder Turner immediately rode to Sutter's Fort to inform Sutter of the find. They told Sutter that it looked like there was more gold. Sutter didn't want this known so told them to quietly mine as much gold as possible and take it to San Francisco or Monterey to sell without disclosing its source. Sutter would keep a large share and they could then share the rest.

In late summer 1847 Elizabeth Rhoades died. Thomas Rhoades decided to go back to Salt Lake City where it is rumored he donated \$17,000 in gold to the Mormon church upon arrival.

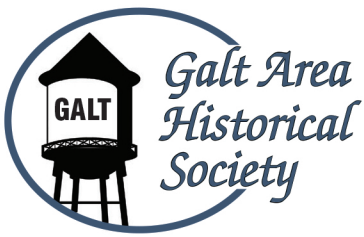
The Elder family also left their property and claim in fall of 1847 with no record of where they next settled.

Rhoades left his log cabin and claim to his aunt, Mrs. Christena Patterson, who moved into it. Her husband had died of mountain fever while crossing into California in 1846. Later she remarried (said to be the first marriage ceremony in San Joaquin County) and then she and her husband abandoned the cabin in 1848 when gold was discovered.

The discovery of gold in Coloma in January 1848 was the beginning of thousands of people about to descend on California.

Interesting Note: The Elder and Rhoades families and Mrs. Patterson were Mormons. Patterson's daughter Susannah was married to William (called Uncle Billy Hicks) who was the founder of Hicksville.

Now the Elder and Rhoades cabins had no resident. What next?



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