



From the Archives
Bluebirds



When we received this photograph, it was labeled “Bluebirds.” The first thought was a group of ladies having a reunion of Campfire Girls Bluebird group. A relative of one of the ladies informs us that these charming women were all past presidents of the Rei Rebekah Lodge and it was a Christmas

party back in 1963. The Rebekahs are a service organization and a branch of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF) that was created in 1851. We don’t know if anyone is missing, but this is a great representative group of Galt’s finest citizens.

May 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

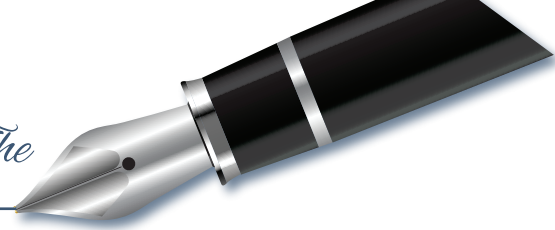
If you have received your annual dues invoice please remit payment. If not, let Liz know. She will gladly get you an invoice.

Consider gifting a membership!

We make it easy at

www.galthistory.com

A Message From The



President

It looks like Spring has sprung! It is wonderful to see the lush green fields and flowers beginning a new year of blossoming. We are looking forward to the roses showing their color at our annual Tea at the Rae in May. The heavy rains helped with the abundance of growth. Of course this requires the year's work at the McFarland and the Rae Museum to begin: Mowing, chopping, pruning and trimming. It is wonderful to see the renewal of life each year: The leaves drop in the fall, winter rains come to nourish the ground and the plants, spring brings the renewal of the plants, and summer is a time when we all can do our activities and wait until the cool weather comes again. It is difficult to imagine what the founding fathers of our area endured each year. They had no tractors, cars, trucks, electricity. They had horses and wagons and fire for warmth. I am sure they rejoiced each year when winter was gone and the renewal of life was upon them. What if we had to step back in time to the 1850s? I am not sure it would be possible for some. We are too used to having too many conveniences. On the other hand, what would our ancestors think of coming to the 21st Century? It would be unbelievable for them. I often

think as I drive around Galt and the area, what would my parents and grandparents think if they could come back in today's Galt? So much has changed in just the last 50-60 years. They would not recognize the town and the area, the technology, and the world as a whole. I realize we cannot keep our town like Mayberry, but it was nice when Galt was smaller. We knew almost everyone. The old historic buildings that we once had are gone for the most part. If that is what is called progress, it is also called the destruction of our history. It is interesting how money motivates some to destroy historic sites for personal gain. But I digress. We as the Galt Area Historical Society have done a tremendous job in preserving the history of our area. That is our mission. Sometimes our hands are tied and we cannot achieve our goal because of other forces. We can be proud of all we have done. Like the renewal of life each year, we have given many aspects of our history renewal so it can be appreciated by our present and future generations.

I hope you all enjoy this beautiful time of year, knowing that for sure, it will be back again.

- Janis Barsetti Gray

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



209.745.1925

www.GALTROCK.com

BARKS • DECORATIVE ROCK
SOILS • SAND & GRAVEL
U-TOW CONCRETE & READY MIX TRUCKS

LAW OFFICE OF LEN REIDREYNOSO

TRUSTS • WILLS • PROBATES
CONTRACTS • BANKRUPTCY • BUSINESS
WE ARE A DEBT RELIEF AGENCY

908 C STREET
GALT, CA

209-745-4411

IN GALT SINCE 2002



MEMBER OF
GALT BUSINESS BUILDERS
WWW.GALTBUSINESSBUILDERS.COM



Upcoming Dates

May 13:

Tea at the Rae

1pm to 3:30pm at the Rae Museum
204 Oak Avenue

May 22:

General Members Meeting

6pm in the garden at Rae Museum
204 Oak Avenue

June 12:

Executive Board Meeting

4pm at Barsetti Tasting Room
400 Fourth Street, Suite 150

June 26:

General Members Meeting

6pm in the garden at Rae Museum
204 Oak Avenue

August 26:

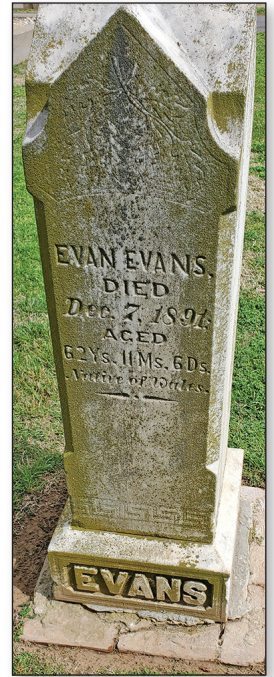
Car Show

McFarland Living History
Ranch

Trip Through the Cemetery

Last month's gravestone inscription had the name "Evan Evans, Died Dec 7, 1891, Aged 62yrs 11Ms 6Ds, Native of Wales."

Evan Evan's inscription says he was born in Wales, but he was born in Ohio in 1827. His parents were natives of Wales. Evans came to California in 1849, like so many others. The trained mechanic/blacksmith eventually settled in the "Pocket" area five miles west of Galt in 1851. When the streets of Galt were laid out, Evans set up his blacksmith shop on C Street near Sixth. He was married in 1861 but was widowed two years later. Next to his blacksmith shop, Evans had a barley mill and Galt's first waterworks. Towards the end of his life, he sold his blacksmith shop to Alden Ames and the waterworks to Delia Wiser. Evan Evan's claim to fame in Galt was his never-ending quest to create the first perpetual motion machine, which he never did, and no one ever has.



*for next month's
newsletter...*

*"Who Were Henning
& Helene Botzbach?"*

SERVING HAPPILY FOR 110 YEARS!

Barsetti Vineyards®

WINE TASTING BOUTIQUE

JOIN OUR MONTHLY EVENTS:
Floral | Bunco | Painting
Live Music Twice Monthly
on Selected Fridays
- Follow us on Facebook for Event Information -

209.744.6062
Old Town Galt | 400 4th St. | Suite 150
OPEN FRIDAY - SUNDAY, NOON-5PM

Mention this ad and receive two complimentary tastings & five dollars off a bottle of wine!

f ricjan@barsettivineyards.com | www.barsettivineyards.com



FLORAL DESIGNS

Weddings • Quinceañeras
Corporate Events

209.745.0726

J.M. Enterprises

Joan Werblun
Owner



Bits & Pieces

Kite Day/Eggstravaganza Huge Success

We saw approximately 2,000-3,000 children, parents, grandparents, and other family members enjoy our annual Kite Day and, for the last two years, the addition of Eggstravaganza. Everyone enjoyed flying their own kites and also watching the large kite demonstration, hunting Easter eggs, shopping from the various vendors, and enjoying the historic McFarland house and grounds. A huge thank you is due our second vice-president, Gale Webber, for chairing this event. It would not have happened without her. Thanks to all of our Society volunteers who helped in all areas including docenting in the house, Rich and Pam Lozano and Ralph Cortez for controlling the parking lot, Old City Kites from Sacramento for bringing in some really beautiful, large kites, our sponsors FM Bank in Galt, Cal Waste, Walmart and the Teen Center for their contributions and, of

course, to Annette Kunze for being our Easter Bunny again. Galt Rotary hosted the pie eating contest that was tremendous fun. We get so many compliments about the Ranch. This event gives us the opportunity to show off all the work our volunteers have done at McFarland. It also gives us a chance to advertise the Ranch as a wedding and event venue which is our source of income for all the preservation activities we under take there.

Tea at the Rae

Our next event of the year is our annual Tea at the Rae on May 13th from 1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Joan Werblun is the Chair for this event. It is always a beautiful event in the rose gardens at the Rae, with ladies wearing wonderful hats for the occasion. Tickets can be purchased at L'Chyme and Barsetti Vineyards on 4th St in Galt or online at www.Eventbrite.com, just search for Tea at the Rae. Make sure you get your tickets soon before they sell out.

This is a fantastic event to share with your family including mother or grandmother for a Mothers' Day celebration or just having some quality time together. The Rae Museum will also be open during the event for tours. If you can help volunteer to make sandwiches, setup, serve or cleanup, please contact Joan at 209 251-9199.

The Car Show Is Coming...

Our annual car show, "A Drive Down Memory Lane" will take place at the McFarland Ranch August 26th, starting at 9:00 a.m. We have quite a few cars entered already. If you know anyone with a 1970 or older car, motorcycle, pickup or camper have them visit on our website at <https://www.galthistory.com/list-view> and print the application and get their fee in as soon as possible. Anyone wanting to volunteer or with a question can contact Janis at 209-747-3861. Additional information will come in next month's newsletter.

We Need Your Help

Opportunity Strikes...

With not a little bit of luck, the Society was fortunate to obtain a fire works booth this year as a fundraiser. Each year the city of Galt conducts a process for local non-profits to sell fireworks as a means of raising funds to support participating non-profits good works. Because several local organizations declined, the Society was able to secure a booth for the second year in a row. This is an important way we can raise the funding necessary to support the Rae House Museum, the Liberty Schoolhouse restoration and the work of preserving and displaying the historical items the Society has acquired.

Shift Work...

But, to make this fundraiser a success we need your help for a short period of time. The fireworks sale will only last for 7 days beginning at noon on June 28 and ending on July 4. Each day is divided into shifts with three shifts per day. Shift 1 is 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.; Shift 2 is 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Shift 3 is 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. We schedule multiple people per shift, with as many as five working the evening shifts as we near July 4.

Meet the People...

Selling fireworks is fun and of course you will meet interesting people. The sales process is well defined and the booth well laid out. Volunteers are paired up with others that have experience with the fireworks sales process so it is easy to get acclimated.

History in the Making...

We have prepared a sign-up list and your chance to make history is here! Call Liz Haglund 209-327-1098 to sign-up today. Volunteers for the Society's fireworks booth do not have to be members. Anyone 18 years or older can volunteer to help in the fireworks booth. So sign up your spouse too, or an adult child or friend and we can pair everyone with Society members to make our sales booth a success. Call and sign up today.

Liberty Schoolhouse

Dan Tarnasky indicates that work will begin within the next two weeks on a new phase of restoration activities at the Liberty Schoolhouse. He has his contractor/volunteers ready to go. We are really looking forward to the completion of the Liberty School House renovations and some needed repairs at the Rae.

Pioneer Days

We have a committee that will be revising and updating how our Pioneer Days program operates and how we can enhance the experience for participants from the schools we serve. We used to see 2,000-3,000 children annually but after the COVID-19 shutdown school districts were reluctant to engage in field trips, but are now ready to re-engage. Once we have reviewed and modified the program offering we will work with the school districts to promote the Ranch and Pioneer Day program on a regional basis for the upcoming school year so we can recapture the number of students we previously served. If you are interested in volunteering for Pioneer Days, please contact Gale Webber at 209-471-1525.

Liberty - The Town - Part 2

Along Dry Creek is a deserted cabin. The land lies fallow, waiting for a farmer to till it. And a stage coach route now runs between Stockton and Sacramento with a stop at Davis Crossing on Dry Creek. The year is 1850 as the story of Liberty continues.

A man named Sarshel C. Fugitt occupied the Rhoads cabin on Dry Creek and supervised the stage stop. He homesteaded the five buildings on the land surrounding the area and planned to erect a white two story building to provide food and rooms for travelers.

Davis Crossing had an interesting reputation. The creek couldn't be crossed during the rainy season (we understand that). Passengers either had to wait for the water to recede or find another route. All this land was part of Elliot township which went several miles to the east of the crossing.

Sarshel C. Fugitt had a nephew who originally had planned to travel with his uncle to California. The Fugitt family lived in Clay County, Missouri with the chief town named Liberty. However, the

nephew became ill so couldn't go until 1852. In that year Chism Cooper Fugitt (called C. C. Fugitt by his contemporaries) with his wife Elizabeth and daughter headed to California. They probably went by wagon train because scores of those trains went west monthly due to the Gold Rush.

Uncle Sarshel Fugitt greeted his nephew and family when they arrived. Then he gave C. C. Fugitt the Elders' vacated cabin situated on a knoll to the east. C.C. Fugitt took one look at the vast scenery that stretched before him and dreamed of establishing a town.

There was no recorded deed of the homesteaded land but that was not unusual. The history books comment that "all land titles were chaotic in 1848 especially the Mexican grant titles." When Charles Weber bought huge acreage in this region from the widow connected with the Chabolla Grantee for \$5,000, he assumed it was his alone. However, as the years passed the widow also sold it to two other men so no one knew to whom it really belonged. It was in litigation for twenty-

three years.

As part of his dream C. C. Fugitt laid out a plat of what eventually would become Liberty. At this earlier time the "town" was called Fugitt and he envisioned selling lots for homes to potential buyers. According to the History of San Joaquin County (Liberty actually is in that county) "The small village dates from the fall of 1852 when Fugitt and family arrived. It was never a very lively place, having many natural disadvantages it had to contend with. . . . Up to the time it was moved in 1868 it did not exceed seventy-five inhabitants in the place at any one time." These comments concluded with "It owed its location to the fact that the road crossed Dry Creek running from Stockton to Sacramento," which was a continuously busy route.

It was officially named Liberty in 1861, named by the Fugitts in memory of their hometown area in Missouri. Liberty Township also was created, taking land in the east from Elliot and Union Townships.

...Continued on page 7

8th Annual Galt Drive Down Memory Lane Car Show Saturday, August 26, 2023



Stop By Our Booth
Enter to Win Prizes
GRAND PRIZE Set of Tires*
***UP TO \$500**
vehicle exhibitors only



9 AM - 3 PM
(Set up 7 AM)
McFarland Living
History Ranch
8899 Orr Road Galt



1970 Vehicles & Older
Pickups * Muscle Cars
Custom * Special Interest Street
Rods * Motorcycles
Vintage Campers * Trailers

A Shortened Life

Because this newsletter is for May, we thought it appropriate to profile a local serviceman who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Walter and Katherine Erich's son Milton was a 1939 graduate of Galt High School. For some reason, his friends called him "Gus." He was a student council member, on the yearbook staff, and the student newspaper. Erich excelled in football, basketball, and baseball. It was time for a change after working on the family farm for a few years.

In August 1942, Milton Erich enlisted in the US Army, was sent to Fort Knox, Kentucky, and trained in tank warfare. In April 1943, he was transferred to the Air Training Group at Shepard Field, Texas. From there, he was sent to Fort Myers, Florida, and received "Flexible gunnery training. He was assigned to a B17 bomber as a top turret gunner, and his aircrew was assigned to the 544th bomb squadron, 384th bomb group in Kettering, England (north of London).

Here are excerpts from Milton Erich's flight log. A copy is kept in our archives.



July 14, 1944

Arrival at Operations Base.

We arrived in Kettering this afternoon, a large town near our base.

Our intelligence officer said our first mission will compare to "a woman having childbirth."

July 23, 1944

Sleepless Night Before Flight

We were given our heated suits and flying equipment today, so we're operational from here on out.

July 24, 1944

First Mission

Flown in the "Devil's Brat" #617

St. Lo, France

When we came to the flak area, the pilot said, "There's the flak men. You can start praying anytime."

August 16, 1944

Mission 5

Flown in Fickle Witch # 705

Leipzig, Germany

The first sign of combat was flashes of light in our wing formation to the right, much like the reflections of light from a mirror. Nazi Bandits were attacking them. While it wasn't probably more than a few moments, it seemed like an eternity.

September 9, 1944

Mission 10

Flown in the Fighting Hiebe # 000

Ludwigshafen, Germany

After landing, we counted at least ten nice big flak holes in the ship.

September 27, 1944

Mission 16

Flown in New Ship # 062

Cologne, Germany

Our Target today was an industrial plant in Cologne, Germany. We were briefed as not intense but unbearable flak. My sixteenth journey into battle promised to be nothing if not lively.

October 6, 1944

Mission 20

Flown in "Fickle Witch" #705

Stettin, Germany

About 30 minutes before the SP time, the pilot heard that bandits (nazi fighters) were in the target area over VHF. That is when everyone is tense and scanning the skies because if they hit brother, you've had it, and I don't mean maybe.

November 26, 1944

Mission 31

Flown in "Little Kenny" #459

Bielefeld, Germany

With plenty of little friends swooping around us, we continued on our way and turned on to the SP and then on to the bomb run. Our withdrawal proved uneventful, but we were all still sweating it out.

That was the last entry in his flight log. On his 32nd mission over Zeitz, Germany, his plane received significant damage from anti-aircraft fire and went down nearby. The crew survived and split into two groups. The group Erich was in was captured by local citizens and summarily executed. They were buried in a nearby forest. After the war, his body was exhumed and sent home. He is buried in Lodi.

Thank you for your service, Milton Erich.

Continued from page 5

Its northern boundary was Dry Creek, southern boundary Moklemune River and west boundary the juncture of Dry Creek and Moklemune River. Two roads from the south connected it: Woodbridge to Liberty and Lockeford to Liberty. This meant that goods and supplies could easily be transported from the Mokelumne River to the town and its surrounding areas. According to Baxter Sperry, "Locke and Fugitt had chosen their locations wisely." Good transportation existed in the dry months from April to November. In the winter, some sources say Dry Creek also was navigable so could bring in goods and supplies. This is not verified by all sources.

The mail to this area was brought in by coach with the first post office being "Fugitt's ranch." On July 3, 1860 the name officially was changed to Liberty with C. C. Fugitt as Postmaster. It remained so until discontinuation on May 3, 1874.

On October 26, 1861 the first official deed to property in the village was executed. Then a plat of the town was made on March 13, 1862 by C. C. and Elizabeth Fugitt and several lots were sold. This plat had streets, alleys and lots laid out. For example one lot sold to William Allport for \$200, described as north half of lot No. 9 in west side of Main Street in Liberty.

The productivity of the land surrounding the town is indicated in these comments from the History: "The bottom lands along Dry Creek as well as Mokelumne River for productiveness are exceptionally good yielding every year for twenty years a crop of grain. . . Upland area known as clay soil lying south of Dry Creek produced in summer eighteen bushels to the acre. . . In years since settlement there has never been a year when it hasn't produced enough for home consumption. . . South and west part of the Township the land sometimes produces excessive yields."

C. C. Fugitt was an unforgettable figure at six feet, seven inches (remarkable at that time). When the town of Fugitt was renamed Liberty it had three stores, two saloons, two blacksmith and wagon shops, a hotel known as Liberty house, two churches and a school. (Full description of Liberty School will be next month.)

As the town grew it is believed that many of the buildings had pre-fabricated frames made in Boston and New York.

This seemed reasonable because houses seemed to spring up in the town within two years. These were called "knockdown houses" shipped around the Horn during the 1850's to 1870's. (Modular houses of today aren't as remarkable as we thought). Historians comment that ships from the East Coast brought "large numbers of building units completely made to a certain point and ready to be set in place. . . Many of the frame houses imported into California during the Gold Rush were consigned for ultimate shipping to inland communities and isolated mountain hamlets."

Baxter Sperry notes that "it is interesting that two buildings -- the old hotel on Fourth Street and the Schoolhouse -- were examples of heavy

frame construction. The Schoolhouse has the studs mortised into the joists."

Liberty experienced its setbacks, one of which was a fire that destroyed a blacksmith and wagon shop owned by a Ireland Turnace. There was no insurance for the loss of \$1,500.

In 1869, "during the zenith of development" (Sperry) there were three merchandise stores, a shoemaker, a dentist, a livery stable, two blacksmiths, a wagon maker and C. C. Fugitt's Hotel. The Christian church was organized in 1855. Members of this body dedicated the site of the early burials of 1846, 1851 and 1852 to be known as Liberty Cemetery.

And then Liberty disappeared...

Story by Durlynn Anema



Tea at the Rae

Saturday, May 13, 2023

1:00 pm ~ 3:30 pm

Rae House Museum 204 Oak Avenue

\$40 Per Person

Tickets

Joan Werblun 209-745-0726

Barsetti Vineyard Tasting Room L'Chayim of Galt

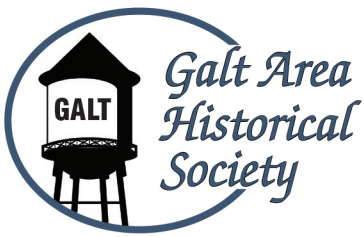
Online tickets at Eventbrite or **scan QR Code**

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/tea-at-the-rae-tickets-520964848887>

Table sponsorships available

Please call Joan Werblun for more information





P.O. Box 782
Galt, California 95632

Non Profit PRST
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 17
Galt, CA 95632

First Last
Address
City State Zip

GALT 515 N. Lincoln Way
Galt, CA 95632
SMOG 209-745-5001
& REGISTRATION Se Habla Español

- Locally Owned & Operated
- Two smog machines for faster service
- We perform most smog tests
 - Biennial Smog
 - Diesel
 - Change of ownership
 - Out of state
- Vehicle Renewal/Registration Issue Plates and Stickers
- Title Transfer / Change of Ownership

ASE
SMOG REC
Test Only

Super Premium Ice Cream Made Every Day

Breakfast • Lunch • Dinner

VELVET & GRILL
CREAMERY

400 4th Street • Galt
209-744-1413

ANN ULLRICH
REALTOR®
DRE Lic. # 01706199

PARKER REALTY
UNLOCK THE POTENTIAL

- 📞 209.481.5489
- ✉ Ann@ParkerRealtyGalt.com
- 🌐 www.ParkerRealtyGalt.com
- 🏠 545 Industrial Drive #105
Galt, California 95632

MLS

Missing Your Local Craft Show?

*Come to L'Chayim
for handmade items & crafts.*

Sidewalk Sale Every Tuesday & Thursday

Visit us online at
www.LChayimofGalt.net

209-744-1143
440 D Street #160
Galt, CA 95632
*Located on 4th Street
(between D & E Streets)*