



# TOWER VIEWS

Galt Area Historical Society, Inc.

Arno • Clay • Colony • Elliott • Galt • Herald • Hicksville • Liberty • Thornton

February 2023

*From the Archives*

## Galt Grammar School



The entire student body of Galt Grammar School poses with the principal for a photo on the front steps facing B Street. Galt Grammar School was the second school in Galt (Harvey Schoolhouse was the first) and was built in 1879 with money donated by Central Pacific Railroad tycoon Charles Crocker and Galt founder Dr. Obed Harvey.

It was located on the southeast corner of the 5th/6th Street Alley and B Street. Grades one through four were on the first floor, and grades five through eight were on the second floor. A more prominent Galt Grammar School was built on E Street, and the old Galt Grammar School was torn down in 1915.

February 2023  
Newsletter

## GAHS Membership

Please contact us for any address, phone or email changes. Dues invoices will be sent in January.

Contact

**Liz Haglund**

with any questions about membership.

**aguire@hotmail.com**

**or (209) 327-1098**

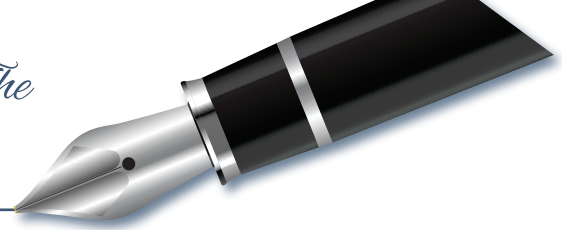
January is dues month. If you have received your invoice please remit payment. If not, let Liz know. She will gladly get you an invoice.

Consider gifting a membership!

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## A Message From The President



Dear Members,

January has certainly come in with a bang! It appears we still have some storms on the horizon with some relief here and there. I hope you all remain safe and have experienced little to no damage to your family, friends and properties. As a result of the recent storms I experienced no electricity for 3 days, with 6 trees downed in my yard. I started to reflect back to the time when our founders lived without electricity and all that we cannot seem to live without today. What would they think of our world today when we complain about no electricity, no internet, cannot cook on the stove, no water, no heat, etc. We have certainly come along way and progressed. I guess the saying, "you don't know what you have until it's gone," could apply here. The opposite could apply to our forefathers, "what you don't know, you don't miss."

Many of us do not seem to plan for times when we temporarily lose these necessities. It made me wonder what it could have been like in Galt in 1869. A well pit with a bucket to bring up water means they could get water and drink and bathe. But it would require multiple trips from the well to the house or to the barn to water the animals in good weather or bad. The fireplace for heat and wood stove for cooking means lots of wood to be chopped and carried into the house during all types of weather. There was no refrigeration. Many had cellars that could keep items cool but spoilage was a problem. Meals were cooked for that day and eaten with

no leftovers like we experience today. If the weather was as bad as we experienced or worse, it made chores outside very difficult. When we hop in the car to go to town, they had to either get on a horse or ride in a wagon in the elements. However, they survived because they did not know anything better could exist someday. They did the best they could with what they had. The family ate together, played games, told stories, laughed together, and read by candlelight.

We need to think about all that our ancestors endured: rain or shine. Maybe we need to prepare ourselves for times when we lose some our amenities for a short period. I know I appreciated the modern conveniences I am able to enjoy all the more as a result of doing without them for several days. I suppose the lesson here is to develop a plan if and when this happens again.

I have learned to appreciate the stories I have heard from generations before me. During my recent storm experience I actually found it a bit refreshing not to have the internet or television for a while. I caught up on things that I had put off in the house. I am not saying we regress back to the 1860's; I just believe we should appreciate what we have and what they had to endure. Progress is wonderful, but let's not forget all the additional labor our ancestors undertook as a part of their daily lives. It was those times that fathered all the ideas for better things that we have today. Stay safe and dry.

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



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## Upcoming Dates

February 13:  
Executive Board Meeting  
4pm at Barsetti Tasting Room

February 27:  
Winter Recess  
No General Membership Meeting

March 13:  
Executive Board Meeting  
4pm at Barsetti Tasting Room

March 27:  
General Members Meeting  
Time & Location TBD

April 1:  
Kite Day /  
Eggstravaganza  
McFarland Ranch

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

April 24:  
General Members Meeting  
Time & Location TBD

## Trip Through the Cemetery

Last month, we introduced a newsletter feature called Trip Through the Cemetery. Hundreds of people are buried in our local cemeteries, and we have no idea who most of them are. This is a chance to add to our history by identifying as many as possible. Each week we will show you a photo of a gravestone with a name from the past. John Hagel was the first one.

John Hagel was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in 1842. His parents were German immigrants who came to this country in 1833. At 18, John became a carter (freight wagon driver). Enlisting in the Union Army in 1863, John Hagel was a member of the 8th Pennsylvania Cavalry. He participated in the Battle of Chancellorsville, was captured, and spent time in Libby Prison in Richmond. Sometime around 1870, Hagel came to California and settled in Benicia. Around 1880, he moved to

the Conley Station area (Herald) and purchased a farm. He married Susan Thomas in 1893. She was the daughter of Herald area pioneer John Thomas. In 1917, John Hagel was in negotiations with Sacramento County to purchase part of his property for a new route along the Southern Pacific Railroad tracks close to Herald. After his death, his wife Susan sold the property, and the road became Twin Cities Road/ Highway 104. As noted on his gravestone, John Hagel was a member of the Galt Masonic Lodge #267. The marker in front of his gravestone is in honor of his son John Eugene Hagel (not a junior). The younger Hagel is buried in Lodi.



*for next month's newsletter...*

*"Who was Silas T. Merrill?"*

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# Bits & Pieces



## Updates on the Rae Museum

We reported at our last general meeting that the Rae Museum had been broken into through the basement. Our Curator Dan Tarnasky reported this to the Galt PD. He has secured the basement with a better lock and has the basement armed along with the house rather than with the garage. He has placed signage showing that there is a security system. With the help of Gale Webber, there is a new lock on the walking gate from the street that was broken. Dan is putting more lighting around the house and the yard. This will help with security.

Also at the Rae, Dan reports that his brother, a contractor, will be helping restore the Liberty School house beginning soon. It will certainly be great to have the school house as part of our monthly tours. Gale will be looking for volunteer help once Dan gives her the needs.

Dan has had the Rae Museum grounds, basement, and garage sprayed for bugs and black widows. Our gardener continues to do an excellent job in the yard and with the roses.

Lyle will be taking a look at the front steps at the Rae and begin some work to effect repairs as necessary.

The large orange tree has fallen at the Rae and will be taken out at some point. Dan's plan is to put some roses in that area.

## Volunteer Reminder

As stated in the last newsletter, Gale Webber (209-471-1525) is in charge of getting volunteers for all projects and events that we hold. If you are interested in being a docent, working at the MAC with Lyle's crew, helping on the school house at the Rae, working at events, working the Farmers' Market, gardening, Pioneer Days or Pumpkin Patch just to name a few, please let Gale know your interests so she knows who to call for various activities. Everyone will get a chance to volunteer. I will post the Chair Persons for all our Committees.

Those chairpersons can call Gale for any volunteers they may need.

## Galt Market Begins

The Galt Market will start up again in March. It will be held the first Saturday of each month in the Promenade on 4th St. If you are interested in working our table, please let Gale know. It would require setting up our canopy and tables/chairs, selling our various books and memberships, and giving information about our society, the McFarland Ranch, the Rae Museum and information about the weddings and events at the MAC. This is our opportunity to get information out to the community. You would be surprised how many people have no idea we have the Rae House Museum or McFarland Ranch.

## Cemetery Damage

The Liberty Cemetery received some damage with a large fallen tree that was planted many years ago by the Hickey Family. There are some large limbs from a couple of oak trees. Once we can get into the cemetery, these trees will have to be removed and we can survey any damage to headstones. Eric Schneider, Our Cemetery Chairman, is aware and will work on these removals. He is working with the Clampers for help.

## Events for 2023

As a reminder, the events that we have set for 2023 are as follows: Kite Day/Eggstravaganza Saturday, April 1 at the McFarland Ranch; Saturday, May 13, Tea at the Rae, and Saturday, August 26 is our annual car show, "A Drive Down Memory Lane." If anyone wants to help on these, please let Gale Webber (209-471-1525) know now.

## Membership Drive

We had many new members in 2022, but continue to strive for more. If you know anyone who grew up in Galt, still lives here or has family here, has any connection, please let them know about or organization. On our website, they can find a membership application. Membership is also a great gift for family and friends.

## In Memory

We recently lost another one of our members, Jacquelyn Shellenbarger Hanson. Jacquelyn's brother Ed Shellenbarger reported her passing. She had been ill for some time. Jackie was the author of the well know book, Matilda's Story, which she gave to the Galt Area Historical Society to sell and to keep the proceeds. Our sincere condolences to Ed and his family.

### 2023 GAHS Committee Chairpersons

Committee	Chairperson	Event Date
Rae Museum Curator/Archives/Rae Displays	Dan Tarnasky	
MAC Reservation Specialist	Joan Werblun	
Bylaws	Shaun Farrell	
Christmas Decorating Rae and MAC	Joan Werblun	
Drive Down Memory Lane	Gale Webber/Janis Gray	26-Aug
Elliott and Liberty Cemeteries	Eric Schneider	
Finance	Tom Haglund	
Kite Day/Eggstravaganza	Gale Webber/Lyle Lagge	1-Apr
Tea at the Rae	Joan Werblun	13-May
Membership and Membership Drive	Liz Haglund	
Newsletter	Liz Haglund/Tom Haglund	
Nominating	Shaun Farrell	
Pioneer Days	Board/John Durand	
Policy and Procedures	Maria Spannuth	
Safety	Lyle Lagge	

# From the Treasury...

December 31, 2022, marked the end of the Society's fiscal year which operates from January 1 to December 31 annually. As we have discussed in previous articles the Society accounts for its income and expenditures across three main "funds" or pots of money set aside for specific purposes. The General Fund is used for Society revenues and expenses not associated with the McFarland Living History Ranch or Barn remodel. Each of those latter two purposes (McFarland and Barn) have their own funds to account for their specific revenues and expenditures.

## General Fund Wrap-Up

In 2022, the General Fund had a surprise year due to the offer to sell fireworks at one of the city's four approved fireworks booths from June 28 to July 4, 2022. This effort raised approximately \$15,875 for the Society. Unfortunately, the ability to participate in fireworks sales is not available every year. Largely because of this opportunity and prudent practices with expenditures the General Fund was able to post a surplus of \$14,041 to the fund's bottom line by December 31. While unexpected, this was a welcome reprieve from the typical year in which the Society struggles to obtain the financing necessary in the General Fund to carry out its operations at the Rae House Museum, Liberty and Elliott Cemeteries and offer various programming. In contrast, the adopted budget for the new 2023 fiscal year is budgeted to achieve a much smaller surplus of \$1,130. Why budget a surplus? We budget a surplus to constrain expenses against anticipated revenues so that we don't overspend and create a deficit. Essentially, the budget is set to ensure that the Society lives within its means.

<b>Galt Area Historical Society Fiscal Year 2022 Year-End Report-in-Brief</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>General Fund</b>	<b>McFarland Ranch Fund</b>	<b>Barn Fund</b>
Revenue	\$ 80,324	\$ 101,224	\$ 10,132
Personnel Expense	\$ -	\$ 15,411	\$ -
M&O Expense	\$ 57,861	\$ 42,150	\$ -
Capital Expense	\$ 8,423	\$ 29,530	\$ 7,721
<i>Total Expenses</i>	\$ 66,283	\$ 87,091	\$ 7,721
Surplus / (Deficit)	\$ 14,041	\$ 14,133	\$ 2,410

## McFarland Ranch Fund Wrap-Up

In 2022, the McFarland Ranch Fund also enjoyed an overall surplus. This is largely due to the conduct of a rate study for the rental of the Ranch for special events that demonstrated the need to adjust rates upwards. The previous rate structure for the Ranch was insufficient to meet expenses. In 2022, the McFarland Ranch Fund posted a surplus of \$14,133. This contrasts with the budgeted surplus of \$767 in the new fiscal year, 2023. As was highlighted in last month's newsletter, the McFarland Ranch Fund receives 77% of its revenue from venue rentals which in turn pays for the significant expenses associated with upkeep and preservation of the Ranch, including the Ranch House.

## Barn Fund Wrap-Up

The Barn Fund is a static fund holding restricted and non-restricted revenues earmarked for the remodel of the Red Barn to be used for general assembly purposes to host educational forms, Society programming and events. At the conclusion of the 2022 fiscal year the Barn Fund held \$472,595. The Fund received \$10,132 in interest income and expended \$7,721 for permit related expenses during the fiscal year. The Society will continue with coordinating efforts for the remodel in 2023.

In sum, fiscal year 2022 wrapped up well for the Society with the ability to save some money in the General, McFarland Ranch, and Barn funds. This is especially important for those inevitable large expenses related to the physical maintenance of the Rae House Museum and McFarland Ranch House and structures on the land. Over the long term, year by year, it is important for the Society to save some money for repairs and maintenance like new roofs, exterior painting and other repairs necessary to physical and long term preservation of those structures.

# Rachel Ann Haskins, Galt's Water Boss

In the June 2019 edition of our newsletter, we told the story of Hiram and Delia Wisner moving their family from Illinois to a farm south of Dry Creek and two and a half miles from Galt in 1863. Helen, the oldest child, married and moved to the Las Vegas Valley in Nevada. She became an early Las Vegas pioneer. Another Wisner offspring, Rachel, also made a name for herself in Galt.

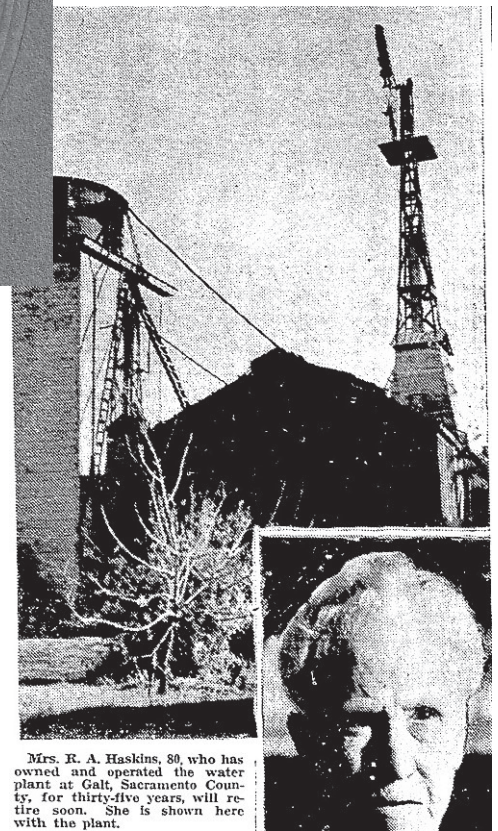
Rachel Ann Wisner was born in Pilot Grove, Illinois, in 1855. After the move to California, she attended Liberty School. Wisner later told of when she and the other schoolchildren watched the railroad under construction and the first train passing through Galt. When she was around 18 years old, Rachel Wisner moved to Virginia City, Nevada. It was here that she married Andrew Shellard. In 1893, she taught school in Muddy Valley, Nevada.

While living in Nevada, Rachel's mother, Delia, purchased the Galt Water Plant from local blacksmith Evan Evans in 1884. The original plant was built by Evans in 1872 and was located close to the water tower on C Street. The plant serviced those homes and businesses that didn't have a water well. There was a 12,000-gallon water tank on top of a three-story building. The water pump was powered by a treadmill (who worked the treadmill is uncertain), but Evans replaced it with a windmill. An old gristmill from Woodbridge became an office and maintenance building. Evans had just replaced the windmill with a steam engine before the purchase by Delia Wisner. For whatever reason, Hiram Wisner left the family and moved to Downey, California, in 1896. Rachel and her husband Andrew returned to Galt and helped her mother run the water plant, then purchased it in 1900.

Andrew Shellard died in 1904. Two years later, Rachel Wisner Shellard married Lathrop dairyman Ralph Haskins. While Ralph operated the dairy in Lathrop, Rachel ran the waterworks in Galt. Around



Rachel Ann Haskins



## Retirement Announcement

Mrs. R. A. Haskins, 80, who has owned and operated the water plant at Galt, Sacramento County, for thirty-five years, will retire soon. She is shown here with the plant.

1908, Ralph Haskins sold the dairy and opened a feedlot in Galt. Rachel ran the waterworks, and Ralph ran the feedlot. When Ralph passed away in 1915, Rachel Haskins sold the feedlot but continued to operate the waterworks. During her 35 years at Galt's water system, Rachel Haskins read meters, collected payments, and directed repairs and extensions.

With all the day-to-day operations of the Galt Water Plant, Rachel Haskins still found time to be involved in local civic groups. She was an active member of the Galt Methodist Church, the Ladies Aid

Society, the Rebekah Lodge, the Galt Red Cross, the Galt Primary School Parent Teacher Association, the Galt Women's Civic Improvement Club, and the Valley Oaks Grange in Galt.

In 1935, the newly formed Galt Water District acquired the plant and replaced the water tank and all equipment in 1936. By this time, Rachel Haskins was 80 years old and ready to retire. She left for the San Francisco Bay Area for two months to relax and enjoy life, something she hadn't done in 40 years. She passed away in 1938 at the age of 83.



**Galt Area Historical Society**  
**Eggstravaganza & Kite Day**

**Saturday, April 1, 2023**

**9 AM—2 PM**

**McFarland Living History Ranch 8899 Orr Road**

**Food \* Vendors**  
**Pie Eating Contest**  
**Egg Hunt \* Crafts \* Egg Drop**  
**Easter Bunny Pictures**

**Games & Activities**

**9 AM - 2 PM**

**Egg Hunt starts at 9:00 AM**

**Eggs are hidden all over the Ranch**

**Pie Eating Contest - NOON**

**Egg Drop ~ 1:00 PM**



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## McFarland Ranch Update

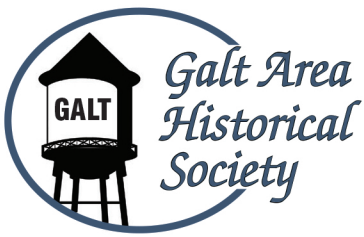
First Vice-President Lyle Lagge and his crew have been attending to a slew of issues at McFarland Ranch.

The storms occurring in January caused damage at McFarland Ranch. Lyle reports that with the able assistance of volunteers, Earl, Jim, Ernie and Eliud, several of the damage issues have been addressed. Damage at the peak of the roof on the red restrooms has been patched but will need more comprehensive repair. The door on the tractor shed is off the track. The south end of the bunkhouse is leaking at the exterior siding and will have to be evaluated to determine a way to resolve this issue. A bit of tree work will need to be undertaken as the big oak tree at the north side of the bunkhouse is rotted inside and is now leaning. The big oak tree next to the ticket booth adjacent to the parking lot area is also leaning. As can be expected with the size of the storms we experienced, there is a tremendous amount of standing water and muddy areas on most of the property that make those locations inaccessible at present.

Lyle reports that future projects on the docket include adding a hitching post in the front and back of the bunkhouse; refurbish the privy in the backyard of the Ranch House; paint the display boards in front of the ticket booth; patch woodpecker holes around the woodshop; relocate all of the lumber from its current location to a more accessible location on the property and remove old unusable material including wood and metal debris.

Volunteers are always welcome to come and help at the Ranch. Interested individuals can contact Gale Webber (209-471-1525) or Lyle Lagge (916-834-6321).

Thanks to all of the volunteers that presently help keep the Ranch organized. Including Rita, Joan, Samie, Bernice, and Darlene who keep the main house clean and organized.



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