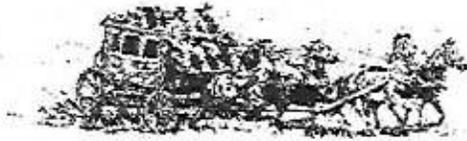


TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

February 2015

Volume 15 – Issue 2

It is our mission to identify, preserve and promote the historic legacy of the Temecula Valley and to educate the public about its historical significance.

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Happy Valentine's Day

By Duane Preimsberger

It was a nice day in Willowbrook, just south of Watts in South Central Los Angeles and I was happily working Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Car 15 days on Valentine's Day in 1964. It had been a relatively quiet morning so I'd taken the slack time to drive around the residential streets off of Wilmington Avenue just patrolling and mostly waving at little kids and others who happened to be out and enjoying the sunshine.

I waved at a mailman, with his bag of mail slung over his shoulder, and he surprised me when instead of waving back he motioned for me to stop as he walked over and stood by the curb. I turned my radio up full volume so I could hear it and stepped out of the car and approached him. After saying, "good morning," and shaking hands, I asked if there was something I could help him with; as I did he got a worried look on his face.

Mr. Mailman explained to me he'd been delivering mail on his route for several years and in that time he'd become personally acquainted with many of the residents on his path. He went on to describe an old lady who often waited for him to chat with as she sat in a rocking chair on her front porch. This lady lived alone and he suspected that he was one of a handful of people who had much contact with her. He began to tell me that was why he'd waved me down.

"It's not like her to be absent from her rocker on nice days like we've had lately and I've filled the mailbox on her porch to overflow, so I'm worried about her. Maybe she's too sick to come out or maybe worse, I just don't know and I'm hoping that y'all might look into what's going on. I've knocked on her door a bunch of times over the last few days but there ain't no answer and I can't hear no one moving around inside. If'n you like I'll stay around and help y'all!"

As the mailman walked a few houses back to a 1930's era wood frame house, I backed up my patrol car and joined the mailman on the front porch. I hammered on the front door with my closed and gloved fist but didn't get any results so the two of us began an inspection of the interior of the house from the outside windows. The old woman was a meticulous

(Continued on page 2)

housekeeper and as we looked inside at the living room, dining room and kitchen all we saw was evidence that Mrs. Neat lived in the well kept home. All of the Victorian style furniture was covered in clear plastic and the pictures on the wall were so straight and level they could have been hung by a draftsman. We yelled periodically, trying to raise some response but nobody called back. The rear portion of the house contained a small enclosed service porch a bathroom and two bedrooms.

We continued our search peering into the windows until we got to the bedroom that Mrs. Neat used for herself. Not surprisingly everything looked pristine except for the double bed that was unmade with the top sheet, blankets and pillows draped over the side nearest the wall. From one window on the west side of the house nothing looked awry but as we looked into the same room from the south bedroom window, we discovered a potentially deadly circumstance.

We could see a single human foot lying on the floor next to the west wall and we both swallowed hard at what that might mean. We ran to the rear door that led into a back porch and I used my Buck knife to pry open the simple locking device and repeated this action to a second door that opened into the kitchen. In a little over a minute we were in the house and headed into the bedroom with the foot in it.

Fortunately the rest of the body was attached to the visible foot but Mrs. Neat was sorely in need of help. Apparently at sometime during one of the previous 2 or 3 nights, she had rolled off the bed taking her pillows, sheet and blankets with her. The small narrow space and the tangle of bed clothes had literally trapped her where she had fallen and she didn't have either the strength or agility to free herself.

We slowly and carefully moved the old, heavy bed away from the wall, making sure we wouldn't injure the trapped lady through our efforts to free her and we managed to do it right. Soon, she was once again on top of the bed and although she was conscious and happy to be free she could hardly speak. She'd been yelling for help but no one had heard her and she was so thirsty and her throat and mouth were so dry she could barely speak. As I went to my patrol car to use the radio to order an ambulance, the mailman gave our freed victim small sips of water to begin to hydrate her once again.

When I came back into the bedroom both the mailman and our lady victim were wearing big grins on their faces and as I stepped closer to the bed, she reached a trembling hand out to me and grasped mine. "Oh God Bless you, Mr. Police, if you hadn't come to help me I might have died. You and the mailman done gone and saved my life." It was then that I noticed the tears running down her wrinkled face and I knew instantly they weren't tears of sorrow but tears of joy!

As soon as the ambulance arrived I had her sent to St. Francis Hospital in Lynwood where I knew the staff would take excellent care of her. I asked for the fire crew from Engine Company 41 to respond to the house and help me secure it. As I stood by waiting for them to arrive I thanked the mailman for waving me down. His response was unexpected.

"Deputy, this is one of our heavy mail days what with everyone sending Valentine cards to their sweethearts. But I've been thinking that doing what I did here today with your help; I got the best Valentine's Day gifts I could ever imagine. So like the lady say, God bless you. I've gotta get back to work."

As I watched him walk away, I couldn't help but agree that it had been a pretty good and Happy Valentine's Day!

March TVHS Newsletter

Anyone having items to be included in the March newsletter should submit them to me by February 26th.

Judy Preimsberger, editor
email: pberger30@verizon.net

TVHS UPCOMING EVENTS

February 20 - Walking Tour
of Old Town (see below)

February 23 - TVHS Monthly
Meeting Program, Robert
Larson presents, "Men's
Grandiose Schemes and Their
Downfall".

March 9th - The Notable
Women of Temecula
performance at the Temecula
Library, 1:30 P.M.

March 23 - TVHS Monthly
Meeting Program, Karl Weiler
shares his view of "What
Really Happened at Ellis
Island".

**Monthly Meetings are held
at 6:00 P.M. at The Little
Temecula History Center -
The Red Barn (next to
Kohl's Department Store)
on Temecula
Pkwy/Redhawk Pkwy.**

WELCOME NEW 2015 MEMBERS

Mark & Sharon Giordani
Dana Thoman
John & Susan Unwin

**Thank you for renewing
your TVHS membership**

Jack Bauer
Sara Hostetler
Lashman & Dusty Soriya
Anthony & Myra Zamora

President 's Message

What a nice way to kick off the New Year -- 45+ attended the January meeting on the 26th. Members and guests were able to get a glimpse of our new EZ-UP with the Societies name on the front edge – enjoy some wonderful refreshments during our “Meet and Greet” – then be informed by Steve Clugston with his in depth presentation about the Mexican-American War and So. California’s role in all this, including the well known Mormon Battalion.

Our fund-raising activities this past fall (Spaghetti dinner at Casa Loma, and our Annual Dinner meeting) – netted a total of \$2900 towards our Scholarship Fund. In late November the Board approved plans to provide four scholarships at \$1000 each for graduating seniors who have plans to go to college and study in a history-related field. This will be the second year for TVHS to participate with the “Dollars for Scholars” effort in both Temecula and Murrieta, and what an uplifting experience it has been. We have received some very nice letters / notes / cards from last year’s four recipients.

Be sure to mark your calendar for February’s meeting presentation, when Robert Larson will tell us about "Men's Grandiose Schemes and Their Downfall". We look forward to seeing all next month.

Dick Fox

NEW MEMBERS WALKING TOUR

A 1-1/2 hour docent-led, easy walking tour of Old Town Temecula will be held on Friday, February 20th at 10 AM. Please meet at 9:45 AM in the Rotunda of the Temecula Museum at 28314 Mercedes Street in Old Town. Join us for lunch (on your own) at the Swing Inn. Please RSVP by Feb. 17th to Phil Washum at pcwashum@verizon.net or call (951) 506-2562.

**Thank You Letter from a 2014
TVHS Scholarship Recipient:
Fernando Alejandre**

"I'm just checking in and saying hi. Please extend my regards to everyone whenever possible.

I'm doing great here at San Diego State University and I love all of my classes. I'm taking bio-anthropology, world religions, public speaking, comparative politics, and philosophy. They are all very interesting courses.

I've only taken three exams so far and I've done really well on all of them.

Sincerely, Fernando Alejandre"

**NOTABLE WOMEN OF
TEMECULA
PERFORMANCE**

The Notable Women of Temecula, sponsored by TVHS, will be performing in the Community Room at the Temecula Library on Pauba Road on Monday, March 9th, at 1:30 PM. The show is open to the public & free of charge. Bring a guest and come to learn firsthand about Temecula's history.

Montana

By Wen Orrell, Saddle Cowboy

WHEN THUNDER ROCKS MONTANA
CLOUDS GROW TALL AND BLACK
RAINS COME DOWN LIKE A RUNAWAY RIVER
STORMS CUT A COWBOY NO SLACK

HERDS OF WHITE FACED CATTLE
ARE ON THE EDGE OF A FEAR STAMPEDE
STIRRING, SHOIVING AND MOANING
ANXIOUS FOR THEIR LEADERS TO LEAD

WINDS STIR THE DUST OF ABANDONED MINES
WHERE MINERS AND DREAMS HAVE DIED
PINE TREES BEND IN THE FURY
BIRDS ARE HIDDEN FROM THE EYE

TEMPERATURES SLIDE BELOW FREEZING
RAIN IS CONVERTED TO SNOW
PASTURES BECOME AN ARTIST'S DREAM
AGAINST THE HEIGHT OF VOLCANIC PLATEAUS

FOR NOW, IN BIG SKY COUNTRY
THERE IS NARY A GLIMPSE OF SKY
HORSES BRACE, WITH BUTTS TO THE WIND
WAITING FOR THE FRONT TO MOVE BY

WINDS RELAX AND SETTLE DOWN
AS THEY EXHAUST THEMSELVES OUT OF AIR
ELK PAW THE SNOW FOR TOPS OF GRASS
COYOTES CREEP OUT OF THEIR LAIR

IT'S A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT WITH THE NORTHERN LIGHTS
OR RAINBOWS WITH MULTIPLE HUES
STARS REACH DOWN TO TOUCH YOUR HAND
AS ANOTHER STORM PASSES THRU

IT HAPPENS

WHEN THUNDER ROCKS MONTANA

Editor's Note: Wen Orrell was a resident of the La Cresta/Tenaja area of Murrieta for many years. He loved the history of the area and loved the area. His widow and other family members still live in the Temecula Valley area.

On Jan. 27th, Roger and Lynn Cudé attended a seminar in Pasadena sponsored by the California Council of Historical Society's. There were 45 members from various Society's in attendance. At the TVHS February 23rd meeting, Lynn will share some interesting program ideas such as "History in a Suitcase" and "Voices from the Past".

Meet and Greet

Please join us for a Meet and Greet time at 5:30 pm on Monday, February 23rd, prior to the meeting at 6:00 pm at the Little Temecula History Center. REFRESHMENTS will be served. We'd like to get to know you.