

Fair Oaks Historical Society

Newsletter – July 2017

Issue Number 122

Ralph Carhart, Editor



www.fairoakshistory.org

QUARTERLY POTLUCK & GENERAL MEETING

6 p.m., Tuesday, July 25, 2017

Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse

7997 California Avenue

Please bring a main dish, casserole, salad, or dessert to share.

“The Dewey’s Oaklawn Farm”

John Thomas, California Office of Historic Preservation

President’s Message

Frank Wolfe

We have another great meeting coming up this month. Our Vice-president, Ron Lingren has lined up the following program that I know you will enjoy. See you all on the 25th for a great night of good food and great company.

John Thomas, an historian at the California Office of Historic Preservation, will present a brief history of the Dewey’s Oaklawn Farm as it relates to farming in California and the Fair Oaks area.

John is a third generation Californian who grew up listening to stories of his mother’s family in the early days of Shasta County. Those stories sparked an interest in history. He majored in History at Sonoma State and later returned to Sac State for a Master’s degree in Labor History. John met Eileen Dewey in 1989 and they were married in 1991. As part of his Master’s program, John researched the history of the Dewey home on Winding Way.

Highlights from our April General Meeting:

In a “History Moment” Jim Pearce described the combination of carbide rocks and water that produced the gas once piped into homes for lighting. The same technique was used by miners to light the tunnels. Later the pipes used for the gas were repurposed to thread wire into the homes for electric lighting.

Guest Speaker Cindy Baker of the Murer House Foundation in Folsom presented history of the builder/owner Joe Murer. Murer arrived in the USA from Italy at the age of 21 to help in the rebuilding of San Francisco after the quake. His services were not needed so he came to Folsom where he became a builder. Cindy shared the history of his home, the Murer House, built in 1926, and spoke of the activities that are available there to the public. Murer’s home town of Crespano Italy has, because of the work done by the Foundation, become a ‘Sister City’ of Folsom



World War 1 Remembered at Memorial Day Service

Lois Frazier

Memorial Day was celebrated on May 29th at the **19th Annual Fair Oaks Cemetery Memorial Day Service**. The event honored those who fought and died in World War 1. The theme reflected 2017 as the 100th anniversary of the “War to End All Wars”. Approximately 400 people enjoyed music and listened to a number of speakers, including many state and local political representatives.

Thank you to Barbara Roper and her helpers who served cookies and lemonade to the participants. And many thanks to all from the Fair Oaks Historical Society and the Fair Oaks/Orangevale Grange for baking all the delicious cookies.

Memorial Book – Don’t forget we have a Memorial Book that is a special way to remember those who have passed away or to honor someone for a special event or tribute. Names and event (but not donation amount) are recognized in the newsletter and printed in the Memorial Book which is on permanent display at the History Center.



Download the contribution form from our website or contact Jim Pearce at 916-961-8415

What’s happening...

Jim Pearce, History Center Ops & Membership Chair

What’s new at the History Center...

We have a new docent, Bob Sours, a long time FOHS member who saw our recruitment e-mail and thought it might be a fun thing to do. Some of you know Bob from his participation in the Save the Bluffs project and the Fair Oaks Foundation for Leisure and the Arts.



Bob retired from claims management at State Farm, and started an olive oil distribution business which lasted about 15 years. He’s lived in Fair Oaks, Gold River and recently, Carmichael.

We’re delighted to have him on board. Stop by the History Center and say hello.



Pat Vogel visited the History Center and suggested to Bob Sours that our little OPEN/CLOSED sign wasn't very apparent. Particularly when it is hot or cold and the door is closed, people really don't know that we're open. Bob passed the suggestion on to Jim, and he found this faux-neon sign on the Internet. Good suggestion Pat!

Jim Pearce recently did a basic Fair Oaks history presentation for the Fair Oaks Park District's PASA group (Program for Active Senior Adults).



And, we opened the History Center for the Fair Oaks Fiesta on May 7th. Marilyn Pearce sat out front and invited passersby to take a look inside, and try one of Jim's famous oatmeal cookies.

A number of number dignitaries dropped by.

And a good time was had by all. We were very careful to have all visitors sign in, and the total for the day was 53 individuals.



An Aside...

The most often question we get asked at the History Center, aside from "where did all the chickens come from", has to be "how come there are so many beauty parlors in Fair Oaks?" I really hadn't given it much thought, but I was doing some research in the old business directories and was somewhat dumbfounded. In 1992 there were 45 listed beauty salons in the Fair Oaks directory, with 18 in or within a quarter mile of the Village. We must have the best quaffed ladies in the Sacramento area.

Do you Recognize this Scene?



Yes, it's the FOHS History Center, then the Fair Oaks Irrigation District office.

This is from the Sacramento Bee newspaper in 1937.

The building on the left is the Water District warehouse where Sunflower Drive-in now stands.

The building was occupied by the office staff until about 1950 when they moved into the bank building (now Feingold's). When the Pearce's moved to Fair Oaks in 1970, the building was the Buckhorn Barber Shop where Jim got his hair cut. Buckhorn lasted until about 1974 and the Buddies boutique started in about 1988, so we have a period of about 10 years from 1950 to 1970, and another 15 years from 1974 to 1988 that we don't know about. In 2011 the Historical Society moved in.

If anyone remembers other occupants of this building, please let Jim Pearce know (webhost@fair oakshistory.org) so we can add to our file on the building. Thanks.

Gore home for sale ...

We've just been notified by the owner that the first William Ralph Gore home (1898) at 4849 Pennsylvania Ave. is for sale.

There is announcement and slide show on Zillow.com (just enter the address on Zillow's home page). Asking price is \$749,000. Realtor is Valarie Trudeau, Coldwell Banker, 916-606-5689.



Tickets for 2017 Soup Night on Sale

Claudia Thorn, Chair

TICKETS ON SALE JULY 25th— AT 5:30— BEFORE JULY MEETING

Tickets go on sale at 5:30 on Tuesday, July 25th in the Community Center. Tickets will be sold individually or by table. Tables seat 9 individuals, and are still only \$30.00 per ticket.

Dianda's has once again agreed to provide clam chowder, and this year Serritella's Italian Restaurant will be providing Minestrone soup. Lynn Steen, our Soup Chair, is still rounding out the other choices.

Val Hart, our Auction Chair, will be accepting donations at the July meeting. If you have a donation, please be sure you submit it with a donation slip.

For those of you who purchase a table, please provide the names of those who will fill your seats. Be sure to confirm their attendance as we do not want and cannot afford to have empty seats. Although your tickets are non-refundable, we will help you identify buyers for any unused tickets.

Remember How Good Soup Night 2016 Was?



Board Meeting Highlights* June 28, 2017

Pat Neufeld, Board Secretary

In attendance: Frank Wolfe, Ken and Lynn Steen, Bob Vogel, Jim Pearce, Joe Dobrowolski, Lois Frazier, Bob Sours and Pat Neufeld— a quorum.

Minutes of the March board meeting and April general meeting were approved.

Treasurer Bob Vogel reported total assets of \$37,687.

Soup Night— Tickets will be \$30.00. Beverage tickets will be \$4 each. Wine will be 1 ticket per glass, 4 tickets per bottle. Dianda's and Serritella's will provide two of the soups. Women's Thursday Club will make table center pieces. They and our members will be asked to decorate.

Liaison Representative Ken Steen— We participate in the History Consortium, consisting of representatives from various historical groups, whereby we exchange information on our various activities. We will renew current dues of \$25.00 for 2 years.

FOR&P liaison, Lynn Steen, reported on successful participation in "It's My Park Day". Our crew painted and spread bark.

History Center Operations— Jim Pearce introduced our newly hired docent, Bob Sours. We have purchased a neon "OPEN" sign. Two of the story boards are faded and it was moved by Joe, seconded by Claudia, and approved that we have them redone. Jim will handle.

Joe Dobrowolski reported that the History Center roof had been cleaned. Gutters still need to be cleaned and sidewalk needs repair where tree roots have damaged the asphalt. Bamboo encroaching from neighbor needs control.

Jim Pearce reported that membership is stable.

Bob Sours and Jim Pearce will discuss possible changes in hours and number of days for History Center operation. Joe Dobrowolski suggested posters advertising our hours be placed in the local store windows. He would also like to present about our Society at SIRS. Jim Pearce has slide presentations and offered his assistance.

** Summary of draft minutes only. Contact Secretary for full, official, approved minutes.*

Officer Nomination Committee

This is the month to begin planning for next year's officers. President Frank will be seeking volunteers for the **Officer Nomination Committee** to select and line up people for election to the Society offices (Prez, VP, Secretary and Treasurer) later this year. Please step up and offer your help to Frank. Our success is in each of your hands.

Old Homes of Fair Oaks

Sally Dunbar

Hauser/Lemmon home, 7772 Magnolia Ave, Fair Oaks



Since the early 1900s, anyone traveling up Magnolia Ave near New York Avenue has marveled at the sweet farmhouse on the hill, under the massive magnolia tree. The home was built prior to 1902, and from the street it remains much as it must have looked back then. It most likely was built by the land's carpenter/owner E. S. Smith. Smith was one of the original investors in the Fair Oaks Colony in 1895, having left his job as postmaster in South Haven Michigan, and with his wife and two children came to seek fortune in the land of opportunity. Already in their seventies when they arrived, the Smiths stayed until June of 1908, when they sold the home on 5 acres to Allen B. Lemmon, and returned to South Haven.

Lemmon was a comptroller and chief accountant for the Fair Oaks Water District. Upon Lemmon's move to Santa Rosa in October 1919, the home was sold to William and Myra Fehr, who owned the Fehr Products Company, makers of mayonnaise, sauces and dressings. During Fehr's ownership the property, which encompassed 13.5 acres of land, produced olives. In 1922, Fehr contracted to deliver all olives produced from 1922 through 1928 to the California Olive Growers Corp, per documents recorded with the County. However sometime before 1927, Fehr sold his 13.5 acres to the Swiss-born Caspar Hauser family, that maintained ownership at least through the 1950s.



Caspar was an acclaimed apiarist— raiser of honey bees— which he raised all over Sacramento, Yolo, Colusa and Tehama counties. He took top prizes at the CA State Fair for his honey, maintaining 1700 separate colonies. He held posts at the State Bee Keepers Association, as well. An interesting side note is that Caspar's son, George, and wife Lucy bought the 5 acres on Magnolia to the West, in 1927. While Caspar maintained the business end, George worked to maintain the hives. George and Lucy worked to fix up their own home, and improved their own orange production from 8 tons per year to 40 tons. Four years later, in January of 1931, Lucy came home from a doctor's appointment to find their home had burned to the ground. All they owned was transformed to charred rubble in their basement. They rebuilt, and by April had a new

home. The following January, however, disaster struck again with the notorious hard freeze of 1932, killing nearly all their beloved orange trees. After many tears, but with a drive to press on, they replanted with grapes, persimmons, and 5 acres of peaches.

By the 1980's the original 13.5 acres had been whittled down to a smaller 2.37 acres with homes along New York Ave sprouting up on the former farm. The John and Janice Speth family owned the home for many years, eventually selling to the current owners in 2006—the Applegate family. Through the years, the various owners have lovingly maintained the charm and character of the early 1900s home. While a newer family room and remodeled kitchen have modernized the rear of the home, the original home remains substantially as it was when new. The front porch and railings exude the original charm of the farmhouse on the hill that has captured passerbys for more than a century.

The Historical Society's recent contact from a firm conducting a cultural resources study for the current owners, indicates an interest in developing the acreage. We can only hope the historic home will remain.



Mr. and Mrs. George Hauser, Sr., with their first two grandchildren, George III and Harold (baby). The faithful red dog was known as "Morey Amsterdam."



Michael Aho Appointed New Park District Administrator

The Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District has appointed Mike Aho as its new District Administrator. The Board of Directors selected Aho after a lengthy national search and approved his employment agreement on June 27, 2017. He will begin July 24.

Mike comes to Fair Oaks with more than 30 years of experience in parks and recreation, most recently as the Parks and Recreation Director of the city of Eagle, Idaho. There, with a \$4.3 million budget, he managed 24 miles of trails, a 189-acre mountain bike park, 40 acres of parks a library, museum, city hall, and senior center.

Mike has a BA in Recreation from Eastern Washington University, He is married with two adult children and enjoys wide array of water and mountain sports, including biking, fishing, skiing and kayaking. He should find Fair Oaks a great place to live!

Treasurer's Report*

Bob Vogel

As of April 1, 2017, our total bank account balance was \$37,686.84. That includes \$1,850.01 in checking, \$2,520.12 in savings and \$33,316.71 in Certificates of Deposit.

**A detailed Treasurer's Report is available on request.*

FAIR OAKS HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 2044
FAIR OAKS CA 95628

TO:

Dues are for the Calendar Year, Jan. 1 to Dec. 31. Dues are payable on Jan. 1, and become delinquent Feb. 1.
New members joining after Oct. 1 shall be considered paid for the following year.

Please check one: NEW MEMBER APPLICATION DUES PAYMENT

Name _____ Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Email _____

Membership level requested:

Individual \$20 Family (2 Persons) \$25 Supporting (Business) \$50
 Single Life Member \$150 Family Life Member \$225

I am adding \$5 and request a printed newsletter by USPS \$ _____

I am including the following donation to support the History Center:

Contributor \$100 Supporter \$250 Patron \$500

Amount enclosed \$ _____ Check number _____ Date of check ___/___/___

Please mail this form and check payable to:

“Fair Oaks Historical Society, Inc.” P.O. BOX 2044, Fair Oaks, CA 95628.

For more information, please call Jim Pearce, 961-8415 (jpearce4104@gmail.com)