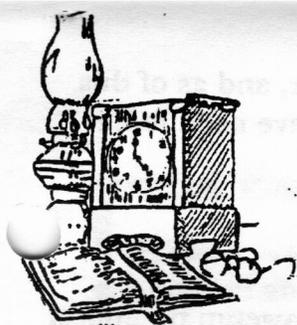


# FAIR OAKS HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER VOLUME 43 -- JANUARY, 1998

Editor: Nancy Sherman



**QUARTERLY POTLUCK - GENERAL MEETING**

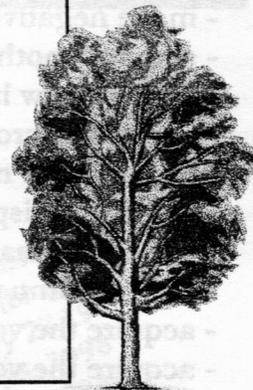
**JANUARY 27, 1998 -- 6:00pm**

**Speaker : TOM TOMICH**

**Subject : "Earl Fruit Company and ORANGEVALE"**

**Location: Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse (UPSTAIRS)  
7997 California Avenue.**

*Please bring a casserole, salad, or dessert to share with members.*



## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: STEVE ABBOTT**

This new year brings some new challenges to our society, but before delving into them, I would like to thank those of you who have helped meet the challenges of the past few years, especially those whose contributions have kept us financially afloat, communicating with each other, and steered in the right direction. Roseann Crandell deserves thanks for the thankless job of running our raffle, an important source of income. Bonnie Drago deserves our thanks for keeping our records and handling our correspondence. Nancy Sherman deserves thanks for our fine newsletter. Lois Frazier deserves thank for keeping the museum staffed and open. Warren McWilliams deserves thanks for all the enumerable tasks he does with such finesse. Darlene Aylward deserves thanks for keeping all of our membership straight. Then we should thank Ralph Carhart, Bob Erbacher, Bob Massey, June Melvin, Lee Scott, and host of others for their contributions. But the one who has kept us pointed in the right direction, kept us in a good mood, inspired us actually to do some history, and who has been our direct link to the history of Fair Oaks is IVA LANGNESS. Thank you for a wonderful two years, Madam President.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** If you have received a red address label on your newsletter, please make a note to bring your dues up-to-date with Darlene Aylward.... Thank you.... Dues paid in a timely manner makes it much easier for Darlene to keep her records straight. Besides, allows you to be one of the distinguished when the new name badges appear.

Much has been done, but much remains to be done. It all cannot be done in a year, and as of this writing there is no consensus as to priority. But let me mention a few things I believe need to be addressed:

- Explore long term exhibit and storage space;
- solve an immediate storage problem;
- establish a system to catalog museum holdings consistent with standard museum practices;
- plan for both permanent displays and rotating displays;
- part with materials which have no relevance to our history and which take up storage space;
- re-frame and conserve more of our photograph and printed material collection;
- make negatives, slides, and copies of some of our most important pictures;
- acquire another antique display case;
- acquire new holdings for the museum;
- acquire microfilm of the FAIR OAKS PROGRESS and SAN JUAN RECORD;
- insure these newspapers are available for local use;
- provide a display at Fair Oaks Fiesta and other appropriate events;
- provide at least one display per year at the Fair Oaks Library;
- provide dinner placemats made from photos in our collection;
- acquire the volunteer aid of a photographer who is able to reproduce historic photographs;
- acquire the volunteer computer expert who can establish or help us establish a computer program to record various aspects of our history - photograph and historical information cataloging;
- increase our membership by a minimum of ten percent .

There are probably many other worthy goals, and these are only the ones which I have envisioned for this year especially, but continuing into succeeding years. It looks like a lot of work, and it is. But should be fun.

### TREASURER'S REPORT: LEE SCOTT

BALANCE AS OF 9-23-97 \$8399.02

INCOME:	membership	:	\$181.50
	Books and tapes	:	30.00
	raffles and wine	:	299.00
	Lifetime Membership	:	100.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$602.50</b>

EXPENSES:	Office	:	\$187.18
	False Alarm fee	:	67.00
	Cabinet Supplies		33.13
	<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$287.31</b>

BALANCE AS OF 1-6-98 \$8714.21

## DOCENTS' REPORT: Lois Frazier

Thank you to docents for 1997: DARLENE AND MIKE AYLWARD, BONNIE DRAGO, DOTTIE DYKEMAN, ED EUBANKS, ALICE GALLAHER, MARILYN AND CHUCK KENDRICK, LEIGH LANDIS, IVA LANGNESS, JUNE MELVIN, IONE RADONICH, PEG AND LARRY SMART, LYNN AND KENNETH STEEN.

On November 18, 1997, we hosted a tour for 60 students from two fourth grade classes from the John Holst School. Kelly Baker, their teacher and several parents were given a Museum tour by Iva Langness, Ethel and George Young. I conducted a Cemetery tour pointing out the oldest and prominent resident tombstones. Ms. Baker expressed her appreciation for the opportunity to experience a look into our local history.

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### GUEST SPEAKER: TOM TOMICH

( I am taking the liberty of adding a letter I received from the Tomich family giving a background of our distinguished speaker for this month's meeting....Nancy Sherman, Editor.)

*"1997 — THE CENTENNIAL OF THE TOM AND LILLIAN TOMICH FAMILY ORCHARDS  
6331 FILBERT AVENUE, ORANGEVALE*

The farm properties were purchased in 1897 by Tom' maternal grandparents, Albert and Hannah Wickstrom. The large family, including Tom's mother, Eleanor, arrived soon after from Crookston, Minnesota.

Tom was born in 1925, the youngest of seven children born in Orangevale to Prosper and Eleanor Wickstrom Tomich. Lillian was born in 1930 in Detroit, Michigan, the daughter of Albino and Eugenia Ragogna Marson. The Marson family moved to Los Gatos in 1945.

Tom and Lillian married in Los Gatos July 12, 1952. Their four children, Thomas, Victoria, Elizabeth and Patricia attended the local Orangevale schools and contributed their share of work to the orchards. They have all finished college in various fields. Thomas and his wife, Nancy Allen, have a seven-year-old daughter, Alannah, and another on the way. Victoria and her husband, Dan Allen (not related to Nancy), have a three-year-old daughter, Erin and a two-month-old son, Erik.

Orangevale (as Orange Vale) was founded in 1889 by the Orange Vale Colonization Co. The scope of the original development was something over

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2000 acres. The company was organized by such men as Harris Weinstock and George Katzenstein. Katzenstein was Vice President of Earl Fruit Company, which was interested in furthering development of sources of fruit for the company's shipping business. The company offered parcels for sale as planted orchards or open land. Their advertisements attracted many families from the colder eastern states in search of a more hospitable climate. Some of the very early fruit-growing families included Owens, Landis, Wahrhaftig, Moncur, Greenhalgh, Wickstrom, Patterson, Hogaboom and Calder. The Orange Vale Water Co. Was formed in 1896, providing irrigation and domestic water for the new community. The water supply ditch systems formerly served nearby mining operations.

Most of the local farming activity consisted of tree and vine cultivation, although some forage and livestock were produced. Although Orangevale was named for the citrus groves within the area, grape vineyards predominated. Much of the locally produced oranges, grapes, plums, pears, cherries and peaches was shipped through Earl Fruit Co. in Folsom. Earl Fruit Co. Also produced olives and pears in their own orchards. Fruit was generally shipped out in iced refrigerator cars to East Coast markets. All fruit was packed in wooden boxes, which virtually unheard of today. Early planting was done by Chinese laborers who had formerly been employed in railroad and mining activities. Much of the field labor came from nearby Folsom. Oxen were used to clear the land, and horses and mules did the heavy cultivation.

Fruit culture has changed a great deal since those early days. Most of the fruit varieties produced at that time have been replaced by improved ones, and population shifts have substantially changed marketing patterns.

Thirty varieties of peaches, 25 varieties of plums, and 10 varieties of nectarines, as well as apricots, cherries, and Asian pears are now grown here on the 20 acres currently held by Tom and Lillian. Many recently added varieties are coming into production. In season, the fruit is picked daily and much of it is sold directly off this acreage. The remainder of the year is spent preparing the orchards for the harvest.

Although many changes and improvements have been made in fruit culture, it still takes a lot of hard work to produce quality market fruit. Tom, Lillian, and family wish to extend their sincere gratitude to all of their friends, neighbors, and employees who, throughout the years, have contributed greatly to the success of the farm."

*With these footsteps and shadows, one has to keep their ears peeled.....*



Please meet Gordon and Joan Heidt, residents of Orangevale, their daughter and son-in-law, Karen and Ray Helzerman and guests visiting the displays in the History Center, Fair Oaks Cemetery for the Historical Society's Christmas Open House. (By the way, Iva Langness and Gordon have the same cousin, Wayne Rice.) As an on-looker, this writer overheard and was able to photograph some marvelous conversationalists..... between Warren McWilliams, who is so adept at spotting an address and remembering the identification of the resident within, and Janet McWilliams, Peter White, and Lowell Sherman who were all raised in families who lived on the bluffs on the southwest side of Fair Oaks and who can yet remember when.....



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to Bonnie Drago, who shared that at the conclusion of her nurse's training, she entered the Army in 1943 and spent 1 ½ years in the Philippines where she met her infantry guard husband at the 37<sup>th</sup> Field Hospital and returning to reside in Fair Oaks after the War.....or hearing Lois Frazier, Iva, Steve Abbott, and Nancy White sharing memories.....some recalling the Beachum, Cunningham, and Van Vleck families.....some trying to recall the Buffum mansion and orchards.....some trying to spot their old roof tops.



Please welcome the following new members at our next meeting and step right up and introduce yourself to JOYCE BAUER, EDWARD WEST, NELL JOHNSON, AND ELISE MATTISON, all residents of Fair Oaks.

Please welcome the Life Membership of BOB ERBACHER as well.

## FAIR OAKS HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS

President	:	Steve Abbott.....961-7174
Vice President	:	Peter White.....967-2661
Secretary	:	Ralph Carhart..... 961-6301
Treasurer/Budget	:	Lee Scott.....966-4040
Past President	:	Iva Langness..... 967-5054
Parliamentarian	:	June Melvin..... 967-5605

For your convenience-  
meeting dates for 1998  
January 27, 1998  
April 28, 1998  
July 28, 1998  
October 27, 1998



### STANDING COMMITTEES:

Amenities	:	Warren McWilliams...961-9012
Historical	:	Bob Massey..... 967-6197
Ways and Means	:	Roseanne Crandell... 967-2102
Membership & Registration	:	Darlene Aylward..... 965-8707

### GENERAL COMMITTEES:

Auditor	:	Dorothy Dykeman.....967-6713
Docents	:	Lois Frazier..... 967-2967
History Center	:	Gayle Anita..... 961-6912
News Editor	:	Nancy Sherman..... 967-1539
Publicity	:	Bob Erbacher..... 966-2524

IN MEMORIUM: It is with sadness that members extend their sympathy to the families of the following long time Fair Oaks Historical Society Members -- Leigh Landis, who passed away November 9, 1997 and Al McKenzie, who passed away the week of December 7, 1997.



# FAIR OAKS HISTORICAL SOCIETY APPLICATION

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ NEW / RENEWAL DATE \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

membership fees for the fiscal year include:

Individual.....	\$ 8.00
Family.....	12.00
Supporting.....	25.00
Single Life Memder.....	100.00
Family Life Member.....	150.00

*Dues are payable on January 1 and shall become delinquent May 1 of each year. Membership shall be terminated after June 1 for non-payment of such dues.*

amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ number of persons

Mail with check made out to **Fair Oaks Historical Society**  
to **Darlene Aylward**, 4205 Bannister Road, Fair Oaks, CA95628

from

FAIR OAKS HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
POST OFFICE BOX 2044  
FAIR OAKS CA 95628

TO

BONNIE DRAGO, #122  
12633 FAIR OAKS BLVD  
CITRUS HEIGHTS CA 95610