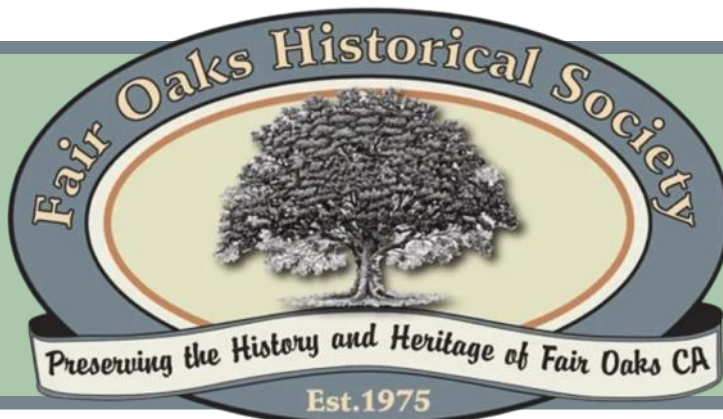




Something to Crow About



Summer 2025

Issue 153

QUARTERLY GENERAL MEETING

When: Tuesday, July 22nd Time: 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Where: Faith Lutheran Church - 4000 San Juan Blvd, Fair Oaks

Bring a salad, main dish or dessert to share

**We will see
you there!**

Our guest speaker will be **Andy Saunders**, who will give us a presentation on the History of the Lincoln Highway.

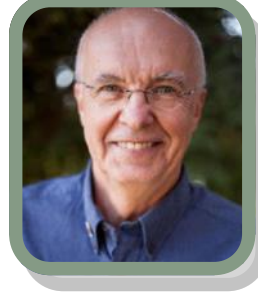
And yes, there is a connection to Fair Oaks.

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LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

By Claudia Thorn, President & Pete Schroeder, Vice President



We are so excited to celebrate two special events in the Village:

In the afternoon, we will celebrate 130 years of Fair Oaks' history and in the evening we will celebrate 50 years of the Fair Oaks Historical Society.

Saturday, September 27th Help us celebrate Fair Oaks' History

FREE event - At NOON in front of the Clubhouse:

Opening ceremonies with bagpipes and the raising of the flag .

1:00 - 4:00 - Family activities in the new park area, featuring a 12-piece band called "On Air". '

5:00 - Evening ceremonies will be in the *newly* refurbished Community Clubhouse.

Tickets for the evening event will go on sale in July for \$75.00 per guest.

This includes a sit-down dinner with tri tip , Hawaiian salmon or portabella mushroom with salad and delicious sides, plus a souvenir pint glass. We will also have some glasses for sale at the event if you wish to purchase more.

(You will choose your dinner and drink selection when purchasing tickets.)

Ticket sales will be managed by the Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce,
our Thanks to Kim Pitillo!

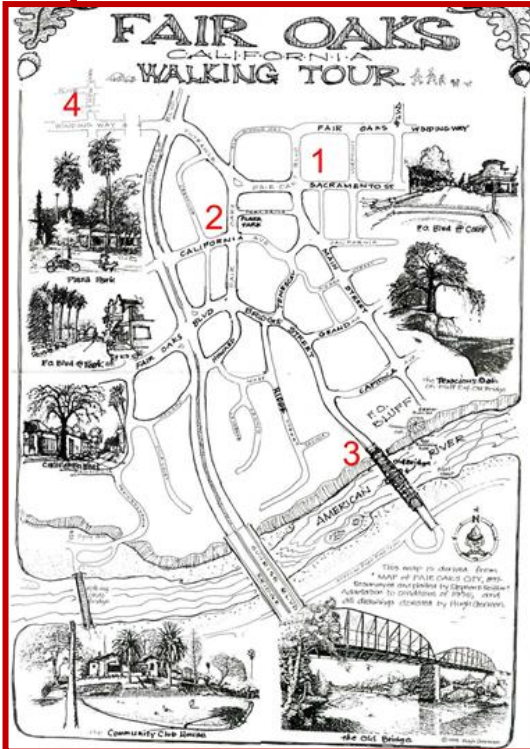


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Our next planning meeting is Tuesday, July 22nd at 10:00 a.m. in the Old Library (4200 Temescal Street) for anyone who wishes to join us. Many thanks to everyone serving on this committee. We hope to see you at the two events on September 27th!

WHAT'S NEW AT THE HISTORY CENTER

Have you visited our Website? Over a year ago, the Board asked if the Front Page of our website could be simplified and made Mobile Friendly. Well, the initial work has been completed. Upcoming events are highlighted on the front page with details on those events found via a simple click. The dropdown menus point you back to various sections of the original historical looking pages.



What makes our website unique to us is the content of our back pages! There is a wealth of information there that you typically won't see on other historical websites. A big thanks to **Jim Pearce** who probably put in well over a thousand hours of research and coding to make this information available on our website. Thank you, Jim!

A good example is our Fair Oaks Walking tour. There are four loops that you can follow on your phone and listen to the information at each of the stops on the tour.

Here is the direct link to the Walking Tours:
<https://www.fairoakshistory.org/fohswalk/>

Or on your phone, go to:

<https://www.fairoakshistory.org>

Click on the Menu icon, then click on Documents and then click on Walking Tour.

Another BIG project at the History Center is the renovation of our historical artifacts database. **Chris Highsmith, David Navarro** and **Bud Beebe** have spent months researching and attending workshops to determine the best software option for our museum. They've settled on a program called CatalogIt. And we have some experienced community members who have volunteered to help with the data migration process.

Many thanks to **Anmarie Medin, John Thomas, Susan McIntyre** and **Amanda Laaw.**



CatalogIt

CatalogIt is cloud-based software used for managing and sharing collections. Established in 2015 as a collections' management system, CatalogIt was designed for museums, organizations, and repositories as a curation and digital preservation tool.



THE DOCENT CORNER

By Bob Sours, Retired Docent



Hello Everyone,

Declaration Day for Independence is a day to be proud; proud for Democracy, our Constitution, and our Rule of Law. July 4th is a

day to celebrate the country we Love and Cherish. It is a country like no other!

A couple of months ago I decided I needed some time away from my regular routine, to bring back visits to extended family and to attend to some medical issues. The time away offered me much more. It was also a time with a lot of confusion going on in the world and country. Listening to the news and reading a variety of newspapers plus talking to family gave me a truer picture of who should be handling our Governmental affairs.

All of the above applies to everyone, such as Fair Oaks. We, too, have an obligation to follow the rules set out by our elected few. I mention Fair Oaks as it is truly an example of an American Town-ship. And now is a time in the year to fly our American Flag - seeing the Red, White, and Blue cover the Village.

Indeed, a time to listen and pay attention to the Free Life we all enjoy and the Peace that follows

Me, I am very happy to continue working with the Historical Society, even if it's only virtual assignments. I never really imagined volunteering being such a rewarding activity. So, I would be the first to encourage others to look in that direction if time for you can open those doors.

Well, how is Gus. You remember I introduced Gus in my last issue. He passed away many years ago while we lived in the house we built in Fair Oaks. Those were fun days and Gus is a reminder and memory of those

days. Gus is watching over all of us. He was that kind of dog; one to remember.

Certainly I've said this many times over this last year. But certainly it must be said again. In my estimation, this board, overall, is the most professional and experienced as can possibly be for a Society this size. The events of this past year represent examples of their time and interest in our Society. *However, we need to now sustain that level with individuals that will follow* - a true reason why we need others of talent and interest to give thought to joining our Society. If interested, please stop by the History Center and talk to one of our Docents.

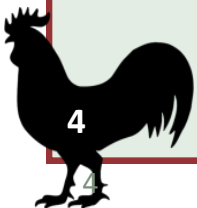
Finally the exciting part of this year. Soon the final touches go on to finish the updating of our Theater, Clubhouse, new buildings, and parks. I hope everyone is taking their walks around the Village watching the final parts of the picture go together. But I'll bet you will find that the builders have melded the old with the new adding to the Village the ever lasting words: Gosh I'm glad I live HERE.



Certainly, our *Docents* have their hands full and are considered the backbone of the History Center. Taking turns each week to monitor the three days that the History Center is open for

visitors, our Docents are friendly and look forward to telling visitors about the History of Fair Oaks. Tours of the Village are also available, along with an opportunity to join the membership of our Society. I have had the pleasure of working with the Society for nearly nine years and still look forward to filling one or another of the jobs that are available. Learn more at the History Center.

It is time for Gus and I to wish you all a safe and sane 4th of July. Our Country is in our hands.
PEACE TO US ALL.



Volunteers Needed!

The **History Center**
is looking for volunteers
for the following
positions:

Videographer

What: Document Fair Oaks history as it happens by recording events and possibly other projects

When: as needed

Collection Cataloger Assistant

What: Immerse yourself in Fair Oaks history by providing assistance with cataloging our collection of historical documents and artifacts.

When: Tuesdays or Thursdays
10 .a.m. - 2 p.m.
for a couple of hours

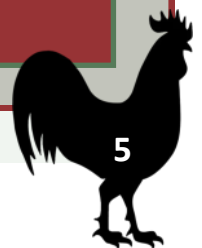
Museum Docents

What: Greet visitors and converse about Fair Oaks history

When: Saturdays
Noon – 2:00pm

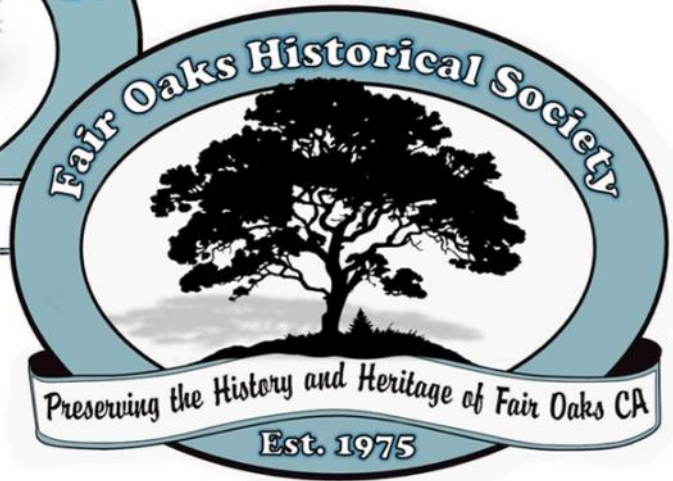
For more information, call **Chris Highsmith** at the History Center at **(916) 844-7103** on **Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays 10am - 2:00pm,** or send him an email at:

**Fairoakshistorycenter
@gmail.com**





Fair Oaks
Historical Society's
50th Anniversary



130th Anniversary of
Fair Oaks Colony

Mark Your Calendars & Save the Date!
SEPTEMBER 27TH
2025

❖ **AFTERNOON EVENTS & ENTERTAINMENT**

Plaza Park & Village Park, Noon to 4. Free activities for the whole family celebrating Fair Oaks then and now!

❖ **SPECIAL COMMEMORATIVE BANQUET**

Community Clubhouse catered dinner and musical program that promises to be an evening to remember! Limited seating. Tickets on sale July 2025.



Would you like to be a part of this event? For more information or to join our team of volunteers, email fairoakshistorycenter@gmail.com or call the Fair Oaks History Center at 916-844-7103.

Membership News

Welcome New Members

Buzz & Bonnie McClain
Susan McIntire (Supporting)

2025 Renewals at the Patron Level (\$100 - \$149)

Bud & Kathryn Beebe
Jonathon & Quinlan Brown
Terry & Sherry Clifton
Lisa & Larry Rigby \ Godwin
Dale Herd
Sandra & David Navarro
John & Beth O'Farrell

2025 Renewals at the Supporting Level (\$50 - \$99)

Bob's Cycle Center	Howard Papworth
John Herrmann	Barbara & Jerry Roper
Max Jones	Richard & Claudia Thorn
Lucinda Luttgen	Woman's Thursday Club
Karen Miles	Pete & Sharon Sarellana
Ronnie & Shelia Mitchell	Bob & Maria Sours/Melendey
	Merl & Lori Susmilch



FROM THE ARCHIVES

By Chris Highsmith, History Center Operation Manager

The Birth and the Early Years of the Park District



Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse sometime between 1946 and 1948

Our last article ended with Fair Oaks Elementary School District owning both the Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse with its surrounding property including Fair Oaks Plaza. In May 1944 with World War II still in progress, back at the home front in Fair Oaks, a battle over the Fair Oaks Plaza started brewing. There was a need for a larger Post Office since the existing one was a little cramped and the office was considered second-class based on sales receipts. There was a suggestion that the Plaza Park could be used for such a building. Another suggestion was that the Post Office could be built on the property of the Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse. A group of Fair Oaks citizens, including the Justice of the Peace Toll G. Narramore, had been conferring with John Holst of the Fair Oaks School Board regarding the possibility of erecting a new Post Office building in the Plaza Park. There was also some talk about a theater building being built in the park, but this idea seemed to meet with strong opposition.

A mass meeting was called by the trustees of the school district on Tuesday July 25, 1944. This drew approximately 50 people to discuss possible use of the Fair Oaks Plaza as the site for a proposed new post office in Fair Oaks. The meeting was called to order by Wade L. Mayberry who explained that the board wished to get a definite expression from a group of people so that the board could take appropriate action, should any move be made to determine the availability of that site. John E. Holst, clerk of the Fair Oaks School Board, told how the property was acquired by the school district; he pointed out that the deed was unrestricted. He used a chart showing how the rear of the Plaza could be arranged to accommodate a building 31 by 70 feet in size, the length of the building to run north and south and the entrance to be in the middle, facing Howard Street (now Fair Oaks Blvd.), leaving a considerable area of park for public use. Numerous former members of the original Fair Oaks



Civic Club were on hand to protest the Plaza being used as the location for any building whatsoever. If the plaza site was chosen, it would cause a traffic problem. Parking spaces were at a premium even with the gas rationing resulting from the war. It was finally decided to not build the post office on the plaza park.

A year later an offer of \$7,500 for the purchase of the Fair Oaks Plaza by Justice of the Peace Toll G. Narramore, had once again brought things to a boil in Fair Oaks. Narramore, also a real estate broker, made an offer on behalf of the First National Bank of Fair Oaks. However, the school board which owned the property did not take any action on the offer and they decided to go with another suggestion which was to establish a district park in the Fair Oaks area and that the Plaza and the Community Clubhouse and its surrounding property should be turned over to this new agency for administration and development. It was argued that the park district would see to it that the plaza would blossom as a rose, that rubbish and fallen leaves would no longer be allowed to accumulate, and that steps would be taken to give it a general facelift.

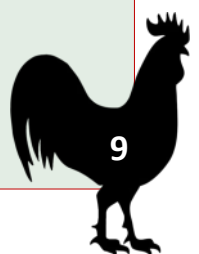
There was a special election on Tuesday, November 6, 1945. By a vote of better than two to one, voters in the Fair Oaks area voted to have a district park. This move was sponsored by the Fair Oaks Civic Club and the general impression was that the new district would take over the operation, management and financing of the Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse and the Fair Oaks Plaza. The principal parcels of land to be included in the proposed recreational park were the auditorium building and grounds, and the Plaza. All of these lands would be subject to taxation for water assessment and always would be liable to confiscation and sale for any non-payment of taxes. The plan was that with the new district some improvements could be made first on the grounds of the clubhouse to provide a small recreation area. In the long run, maintenance of all properties of the park district would be a direct charge against local property and would be reflected in county taxes, as are expenses of the fire, mosquito abatement, cemetery and school districts. Floyd Hall, H. Dana Bowers, Eugene G. Prowell, Harry J. Voth and William E. Spangle were endorsed by the Civic Club as the first park district board and were appointed by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors.

The new district to be known as the Fair Oaks Park, Parkway and Recreation District held their first meeting on December 2, 1945, at the home of Mr. Spangle. Now there was a matter of acquiring a lease of the Fair Oaks Plaza and the Community Clubhouse and grounds. They proposed to the school district, owner of the two properties, to lease them to the park district for a 10-year period at a rental of \$1 per year. The school board agreed to the suggestion and the resolution authorizing a lease for 20 years at 50 cents per year was adopted by the school district.

On May 17, 1946, a town hall meeting was called by the park district. Approximately 30 speakers from all the various organizations in the district shared their views on what they wanted to see from the park district such as having things for youth to do and places for the public to gather.

In early 1949, steps were taken by the park board to acquire title to the property, where the Community Clubhouse stands, from the school district. The action resulted from the inability of the park board to get insurance on the clubhouse building without making the school district a joint beneficiary and the school district would not be able, under existing regulations, to be able to replace the building should it burn down. Furthermore, the administration of the civic center was believed to be more a function of the park board than of the school board. Members of the park board met with school authorities on January 20 and found them agreeable to a transfer of title. Meanwhile, pending the sale of the building, temporary insurance arrangements were made to protect the community's interest.

The board of the trustees of the Fair Oaks Elementary School accepted the bid of Fair Oaks Park, Parkway and Recreation District Board for the purchase of the Community Clubhouse and surrounding grounds for \$500. The park boards bid was the only one submitted. Virgil Allread, school district superintendent, said the next step in the transfer of the title to the park board would be the signing of the deed.



After its creation, the first thing the park district did was to prepare plans for the renovating of the Community Clubhouse building to provide an adequate dining room in the basement, make the heating plant conform to state safety specifications, improve the electric wiring (that was considered to be a fire hazard), to provide landscaping for both the clubhouse property and the plaza, and in general make the clubhouse much more adequate for full use by the public. Some of what the board was hoping to accomplish took a while to complete as noted later in this article.

In May of 1946, some work was started on the Plaza in the way of renovating the sprinkler system. In July, Broadley, Eddie Faist, Jack Dave, Len Jacobson, Ed Halverson, Farkis Martin, Pete Kirby, and Bud Fulton all donated a little time and effort to clean up the Plaza. First, they raked up all the sticks, stones, beer cans, bottles, broken glass and leaves. Afterward, they brought their own hoses and gave the grass and trees a good dousing.



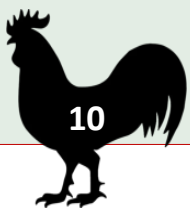
Looking at the Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse from the west sometime between 1946 and 1948.

A little over a year later in October 1947, the placing of curbs around the Fair Oaks Plaza was under way, with the actual concrete poured by Steve Lasick of Roseville, a subcontractor. The plaza would then be filled in to curb level, and when the new grass came up, aided by an adequate sprinkler system, the Plaza Park, the park board believed, would continue to be an attraction to visitors, not to be found in other communities.

A bus stop was also built into the new curb around the Fair Oaks Plaza to provide a safe area for passengers to get on and off vehicles and at the same time prevent the

buses from impeding traffic. The stop was located on the California Ave side of the plaza and steps would lead down to the plaza level, while the street side of the curb would be filled to grade. New poles were placed on the northwest corner of the plaza by the telephone company to provide for the new cables to be run from the new company office in the Faist building. A power pole located near the northeast corner of the Plaza was moved to improve the clearance there for traffic. In 1948, the Park Board considered but decided not to move or remove the four palm trees in the parking area along Howard Street. The county road workers paved the streets around Plaza Park including the parking space between the Plaza palm trees. Norman Langness, who supervised the job, said that the painting of white stripes marking off vertical parking spaces on the south and west sides of the Plaza would soon supply the finishing touches to the job.

At the same time the park district started planning to improve the Plaza Park. The board was approached about leasing the clubhouse upstairs for a temporary movie house. The board approved the idea partly because the money could help to maintain the clubhouse. When the theatre in 1948 moved to its new quarters, the board decided on a plan to put in an unobstructed stairway to the upstairs auditorium, eliminating the gate now at the head of the stairs. The existing kitchen was removed to make more dining space and the materials would be salvaged and what was usable would go into the new kitchen and service bar in space now unused. The many posts which now obstructed the basement dining space would eventually be taken out and steel beams put in their place to support the upstairs floor. It became a long-term project and was not completed in the 1940s.





Another view of the fireproof projector room on the outside of Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse sometime between 1946 and 1948.

Upstairs, where the theatre had been located, the local San Juan chapter of the Order of Eastern Star provided the paint used in decorating the walls of the large ballroom and made monk's cloth curtains for the windows in the fireplace room. Ladies of the Civic Club designed and made the curtains for the ballroom from materials obtained at wholesale through Callaghan's Department Store. A cooling system was installed before the summer heat.

Also, in the late 40s, the Fair Oaks Park Board began the development of a children's playground in the area surrounding the Civic Center which was not set aside earlier for the construction of a swimming pool. H. Dana Bowers was chosen to be the landscape architect consultant over the Clubhouse grounds. Soren Pedersen plowed ground and a few months later the plowed-up earth around the clubhouse was wetted down to settle the ground, so that weeds were eliminated before the centennial fiesta in May, 1949. The work on the playground, like the clubhouse basement remodel, was not finished by the end of the 1940s.

Even though the park board members were in favor of building a pool only if funds could be obtained, they agreed that the pool would pay for itself, once built. But they questioned whether there was enough room for a pool and other play facilities at the civic center. Directors of the Fair Oaks Irrigation District said that it would be impossible for the irrigation district to guarantee water for the proposed Fair Oaks swimming pool. The plan for the pool was moving right along with wide support. The area youth already had commitments for free labor and machinery for improving the grounds and starting work on the pool. There was a fund started for the Fair Oaks War Memorial Swimming Pool; the profits from the centennial fiesta would go to funds. However, the large fiesta event lost money. The pool was not built in the 40s and was in fact never ever built.



Some activities in the early 1940s were covered in the last article. The first event here was on April 14, 1944, when Fair Oaks joined with a sorrowing nation to pay tribute to the memory of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The services were held in the Fair Oaks Plaza.

In the summer of 1945, there were weekly movies for young and old, at a moderate price for admission, being shown each Tuesday evening at the Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse under sponsorship of the governing board of the Fair Oaks Elementary School District. Then in July, motion pictures each Tuesday evening were now being shown free of charge; the cost of the project had been underwritten by local grocer Ralph R. Hinsey. There was a suggestion that the shows be held in the plaza, but it was ruled out because of the work involved in setting up the equipment, including the screen, power lines, and taking them down again.

In March 1947, Fair Oaks revived one of the traditional activities of Fair Oaks: the annual Easter Egg Hunt which was abandoned during the war. Then in 1949, Fair Oaks started putting up Christmas lighting with 900 feet of special wiring, carrying a Christmas light every four feet, to be strung completely around the Plaza and across Howard Street at two places. The big Christmas tree in the Plaza was decorated with the help of the Civic Club. A loudspeaker system was installed, and the Rotary Chorus and various school classes were invited to sing Christmas carols in the plaza each afternoon as Christmas approached. Of course, the biggest event in Fair Oaks in 1949 was Fair Oaks Centennial Fiesta celebrating the coming California statehood centennial. 40,000 people attended the event that was set up to raise funds for the pool. The fiesta raised \$5,558 but the cost was \$5,536 meaning it left a profit of \$22 for the pool fund. This started a long run of Fiestas in Fair Oaks.

In the next newsletter the Fair Oaks Park District's projects to update the Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse and Fair Oaks Plaza during the years of growth of the 1950s will be the topic.

We always enjoy receiving stories about and photos pertaining to the history of the Fair Oaks area.

Attn: Chris Highsmith
Fair Oaks History Center
10340 Fair Oaks Blvd.
Fair Oaks, CA 95628

Next door to the Sunflower Drive-in

fairoakshistorycenter@gmail.com

Phone – **(916) 844-7103**

**The sources that were
used were the
Sacramento Bee,
San Juan Record,
and Fair Oaks Park,
Parkway and Recreation
District board minutes**



Regular Hours

Tuesdays 10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Thursdays 10:00 am - 2:00 pm
Saturdays 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Admission is FREE



2025 Membership Renewals are NOW Past due

We make it easy for you to renew.

Use the form below and mail with your check or Pay Online.

Or just bring a check or credit card to the History Center.

Or bring a check or credit card to the next General Meeting.



Fair Oaks Historical Society 2025 Membership Renewal

Name:	Phone - Cell:
Address:	Phone - Home:
Email Address:	
Emergency Contact:	Phone – Home or Cell:

Dues are collected on an annual basis in January. New members joining at the 2024 Chicken Festival or after October 1st shall be considered paid for 2025. Membership dues are: (circle one)

Individual \$20, Family (2 persons) \$25, Supporting \$50,
Patron \$100, Benefactor \$150, Life Membership \$275
Add \$10 to receive a printed copy of our newsletter via Mail.

Signature: X	Date:
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Send this renewal form with your check to:

Fair Oaks Historical Society
10340 Fair Oaks Blvd.
Fair Oaks, CA 95628-7114



You may also use our secure PayPal system: <https://fairoakshistory.org/join/join.htm>

Thank you for your support!

Memberships at or above the Supporting level will be recognized in our quarterly Newsletter.

For questions, please contact Terry Clifton at (916) 501-4045 or FOHistory1@gmail.com.

Membership Coordinator use only:

Amount paid: \$
Check # or PayPal Date:
Date received:



2025 HISTORICAL SOCIETY CALENDAR

Executive Board Meeting	July 15
50th Anniversary Planning Mtg	July 22
Quarterly General Meeting	July 22
Executive Board Meeting	August 19
50th Anniversary Planning Mtg	August 26
Executive Board Meeting	September 16
Fair Oaks Chicken Festival	September 20
50th Anniversary Planning Mtg	September 23
50th Anniversary Celebration	September 27



Fair Oaks Historical Society
P.O. Box 2044
Fair Oaks, CA 95628

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

To: