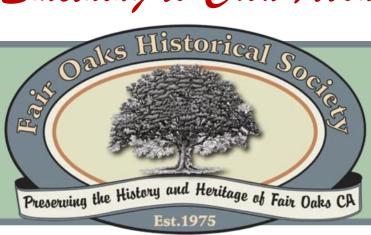


# Smething to Crow About





**Fall 2025** Issue 154

# Quarterly General Meeting —

### HAS BEEN REPLACED WITH:

# **50TH ANNIVERSARY BANQUET**

When: Saturday, October 25<sup>th</sup>

Time: 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. (See Page2 & 6 for details)

Where: Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse -

7997 California Ave, Fair Oaks

50th Anniversary ..... 6

### **INSIDE THIS ISSUE**

		Journaline	Ŭ
Leadership Message	2	50th Sponsor Info	7
Events	3	From the Archives	8-12
The Slocum House	4	Membership Form	13
Memberhsip Report	5	2025 Calendar	14

# LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

By Claudia Thorn, President & Pete Schroeder, Vice President









# Hold these Dates: 50th Anniversary Banquet—October 25th Soup Supper—February 7th

Have you purchased your reservation for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration yet? As the evening event will only accommodate 120 individuals, we encourage you to get your reservation in as soon as possible. Reservations will be sold individually or as a table...Cost:\$75.00. Reservations can be made at the History Center from 10-2:00, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday or Online or via Mail anytime.

Included in this newsletter is the flyer for the events as well as sponsorships. The day is divided into sections:

**12-4** PM is family time with lots of activities for everyone in the Village Park.

**5-8** PM we'll be in our newly renovated Clubhouse for an elegant catered meal which will include music and presentations.

Call the History Center for more information at 916-844-7103.

### **Soup Night is Coming**

Don Yost has agreed to donate bowls again for Soup Night. Some of our guests had suggested they would re-gift bowls from previous soup nights. If you are looking to make this donation, he would appreciate that you bring your bowls to the history center by November 1<sup>st</sup>.

It's also time to start asking for donations. Donation slips will be available at the History Center. Volunteers are always needed. We plan to have our first meeting the beginning of November. I will be sending out invites to our first meeting. Please call or email me if you like to participate on the committee. I know we have many returning members, but the more the merrier as we are getting a late start due to our 50th and 130th celebrations.

On September 30<sup>th,</sup> we acknowledged Janet and Warren McWilliams for their lifetime commitment and service to our beloved community of Fair Oaks. We've included some pictures from that night as it was so memorable. We think about 145 people attended. Warren was a past president of FOHS and Janet was a past Secretary.

Hoping to see you down at the History Center soon. Claudia Thorn, President Pete Schroeder, Vice President

### MCWILLIAMS SURPRISE GATHERING



leaders, volunteers and neighbors. Warren lead as Rotary President while Janet served as President of the Fair Oaks *Inner Wheel Club*. Together they co-founded the *Fair Oaks Foundation for Leisure and the Arts* which supports arts and cultural programs and most notably started the Concerts in the Park. They were also founding members of the "Society of the Rising Moon" that celebrates each full moon on the Fair Oaks Bridge with music, laughter and friendship. Their lives were gifts!

## FAIR OAKS CHICKEN FESTIVAL



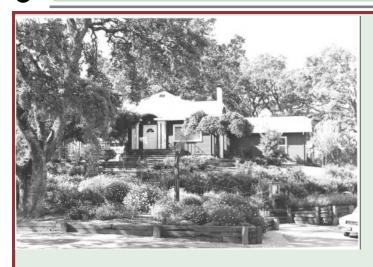
Manning
the booth at
the Fair Oaks
Chicken
Festival is
important as
we let the
public know
about us,
what we offer
and where we
are located.



**Chris Highsmith and Ralph Carhart** 

# SLOCUM HOUSE UPDATE

By Jim Pearce with an update by Terry Clifton



Charles Slocum brought his family to Fair Oaks in 1897 with the plan of opening a lumber yard to provide for all the incoming settlers' new homes. He built his first home in 1897 at the corner of Sacramento St. and Watkins Drive. Several years later he built his second home, with nine rooms, an attic and basement next to his lumber yard at the northeast corner of California Ave. and Main Street. He raised his children in the home and after they were grown he decided to build a smaller home on California Ave. The house, known by many as the Slocum House Restaurant, was completed in 1924, just a year before he died. His large second home, which the family rented out, burned down in 1930.

Ruth Slocum Gilmore and her husband Ralph lived in the Slocum House until Ralph died in 1954. Ruth stayed on until 1957 when she sold the house to Pete and Frank Campoy who turned it into a boarding house. In 1972, the Campoys

sold the home to Wada King who operated an Interior decorating studio in the house.

In 1976 Ken Bansemer and other investors bought the house, added two wings for the bar and kitchen and turned it into a restaurant. Craig LaMar and Jay Nelson were the managers of the Slocum House Restaurant.

Many Sacramento residents were very disappointed when the restaurant closed in 2011; the economy tanked and high end traditional restaurants fell out of favor with younger generations. Five years later, the property was still for sale at about one million dollars.

If you're interested in all the details, the Slocum House has been listed in the National Registry of Historic Places and the application is on our website.

Update: After the restaurant closed, it was eventually purchased by Gary & Wei who are the owners of the Fair Oaks Brew Pub. They have been working on the restoration of the building for several years. It will continue to be an upscale restaurant. As you can see from the color photograph, below, it should be quite nice.



# Membership News

### Welcome New Members

Tad Frease Diane & Margo Kelly-Abrams Emily Via

2025 Renewals at the Benefactor Level (over \$150)

John Thomas

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
John Herrmann
Max Jones
Lucinda Luttgen
Karen Miles
Ronnie & Shelia Mitchell

Howard Papworth
Barbara & Jerry Roper
Richard & Claudia Thorn
Woman's Thursday Club
Pete & Sharon Sarellana
Bob & Maria Sours/Melendey
Merl & Lori Susmilch

You can check your membership status here: www.fairoakshistory.org/status.html Or stop in, call, or e-mail the History Center



# **TICKETS ON SALE NOW!**

# Fair Oaks Historical Society

invites you to join us at the newly restored Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse on Saturday, October 25 for our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.

For tickets to the event, please complete this form and email it to fohistoryl@gmail.com, or print it out, complete the form, and mail it to:

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

Or you can drop off the form and check or cash at the History Center at 10340 Fair Oaks Blvd., Fair Oaks

No hard copy tickets will be mailed. All tickets will be at "will call" at the Clubhouse on Oct. 25.

You will receive a confirmation of your order by phone or email from FOHS.

We accept cash, checks, Paypal, and Square. Please use this QR code to pay electronically.





### **Evening Agenda**

5:00-6:00 Happy Hour 6:00-7:00 Banquet 7:00-8:00 Music and Entertainment

### Sign me up!

Name(s):
Phone:
Email:
Select one entree per ticket:
Horseradish Cream & BBQ Sauce Hawaiian Style Salmon Filet with Butter, Lemon, White wine and Garlic Portabella Mushroom Ravioli in Parmesean Reggiano Cheese Sauce topped with Grape Tomato-Spinach Ragout All entrees come with 1 drink ticket, garden salad, harvest vegetables, roasted red potatoes (except for ravioli), and dessert.
No. of dinner tickets x \$75 =
No of wine/beer tickets x \$5 =
No. of soda tickets x \$1 = (you will also be able to buy tickets at the event)  Sponsorship or Donation \$
(see FairOaksHistory.org for more info on sponsorships)  Total:\$



# Fair Oaks Historical Society Celebrating Our Community Saturday, October 25<sup>th</sup> 12:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Join us in celebrating 50 years of the Fair Oaks Historical Society and supporting our community as we mark our 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

# Opening Ceremony and Concert in the Park – Free!

Noon - 4:00 p.m.

# Banquet Dinner

5:00 - 8:00 p.m. Dinner Tickets: \$75

Meal choices: Tri-Tip, Salmon or Mushroom Ravioli

# Sponsorship Levels:

<sup>™</sup> Acorn - \$100

Business name and logo featured on event banner.

Sapling - \$250

- Business name and logo featured on event banner.
  - · One tickets to the event.

Mighty Oak - \$350

- · Business name and logo featured on event banner.
  - · Two tickets to the event.



Contact us for more info: (916) 844-7103



FOHistory1@gmail.com



# FROM THE ARCHIVES

By Chris Highsmith, History Center Operation Manager

# Improvements to the Clubhouse and Park Plaza

The 50s and the 60s were the growing years for the Fair Oaks Recreation, Park and Parkway District. More people were using the Clubhouse and various events were being held at the Plaza Park. The district started managing more parks around Fair Oaks and the parkway along the American River. This article is broken into different category topics to make it easier to follow. The topics will be the Clubhouse, Clubhouse grounds, Playground, Plaza Park, and lastly, events.

### Clubhouse

In 1950, the Fair Oaks Elementary School used the Fireplace Room from April 10<sup>th</sup> to June 15<sup>th</sup> to relieve the overcrowded condition at the school.

In 1951, the clubhouse exterior was repainted and a new roof was installed to replace the old leaking one, which had caused aluminum asbestos spray filler to leak from the cracks.

Aero photo of Clubhouse and Plaza Park taken around the early 1960s.

The Fair Oaks Park Board in 1952 decided to install a natural gas radiant heating system in the Civic Center Clubhouse to replace the present inadequate heating system, which used bottled gas. The board had the advice of a PG&E engineer and two other heating engineers, all of whom pronounced the present system at that time unsatisfactory. The heart of the new system was five radiant heaters, suspended overhead in the main auditorium and arranged that one end of the auditorium could be heated without fully heating other parts. All would be under thermostatic control. The old main furnace was now to be used to heat the basement and new ducts were added to distribute the heat more evenly. The two smaller auxiliary floor heaters then in use in

the auditorium were moved to the two restrooms.

Contractor P. L. Atkinson, who completely rebuilt the

fireplace in the Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse was said to have done a beautiful job with the low price of \$100. Members of the Eastern Star painted the inside and the Park Board installed a completely new lighting system in the Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse.

In October, 1952, Fair Oaks Business Association wrote letters to the Fair Oaks Park Board requesting the board to black-top the parking area in front of the Community Clubhouse and the driveway leading up to the from entrance of the clubhouse. The area could not be paved by the county as it was park board property.

The next year in October, Mr. Leo Malek had undertaken remodeling of the Fireplace Room and Mr. W. P. Cacciari did the architectural work. The Fireplace room was a "favorite meeting place" for small clubs and organizations. Using Cacciari's plan the room was finished in rustic fashion with knotty pine walls and exposed ceiling beams. Garnet (Tom) Fleming removed the old projection room that was from when the auditorium was used as a theater



and patched the inner wall after removal in return for the materials therein.

The Fair Oaks Park Board started in April, 1955, a renovation project needed to modernize the Community Clubhouse and bring it up to existing building and fire codes. The firm of H. J. Harlow and Sons of Sacramento did the work of rewiring the entire building as ordered by the fire marshal, installing one-hour fire resistant ceiling covering downstairs and installing all new doors and "panic hardware," etc. Later in that year, they extended the roof for ten feet over the front landing.

In 1958, six and a half years since the roof was done, it started to leak again and started to damage the wood floor. It was found that the earlier salesman sold shingles that would not work for a roof as flat as that of the clubhouse. The roof was redone with the right shingles this time.

In 1958, the Fair Oaks Lion's Club installed a used range in the kitchen and donated it to the district. Near the end of summer of 1969, the gas stove in Clubhouse basement kitchen was being used by one of the women cooks who suffered severe facial burns when the oven exploded in her face. Several representatives from P.G.& E. were called out to check all features of the gas range for safety purposes. Their recommendation was to get a new range since parts for the existing range were no longer available. The board decided instead to remove the gas range and to purchase two electric ranges which would provide the two ovens and necessary burners to replace the defective gas range

In 1965 Mrs. Melvin, representing the Women's Thursday Club, requested permission to serve food and drink and to smoke in the auditorium. After much discussion, the Board agreed to permit this on a trial basis, but only if the meal was catered. Mrs. Melvin told the Board of the need in Fair Oaks for a building suitable for organizations to hold large dinners and luncheon meetings. She showed the Board members a copy of a typed survey form which the Thursday Club wished to use to determine what need there was for such a facility and asked the Board's opinion and cooperation; these were both given. In the spring of 1970, the clubhouse upstairs kitchen addition was completed. Administrator Seifert stated the cost was \$4,000; \$12,000 was budgeted, but because the construction was done by the park district maintenance staff, a savings of \$8,000 was realized to taxpayers. Two stoves, a refrigerator, a worktable, stove hood, tables, and table storage racks were installed. Organizations supplied kitchen utensils. The Women's Thursday Club sent a letter thanking the district for building the new kitchen and they donated a coffee maker as a gesture of gratitude for constructing it.

#### **Clubhouse Grounds**

In the summer of 1951, consultant Dana Bowers designed landscaping plans that were drawn by board member Don Hitchcock. The clubhouse grounds now had curbs, gutters and piping that had been installed around the Clubhouse. A combination incinerator and outdoor grill was built behind the club-

ACHINA -E

Aero photo of the Clubhouse and Plaza Park taken around the early 1960s.

house. In the year 1953, the County Health Dept complained about effluent (liquid waste) from the Clubhouse septic tank contaminating the downtown Water District well. John Henry Gysbers, with county prisoners' help, installed a pipe to lead Clubhouse septic tank effluent around the well.

### **Playground**

In the 1950s, there was more talk about building a pool on the Clubhouse grounds, but it kept being put off even with a positive vote from residents in 1956. After the 1950s, there was

no serious consideration of having a pool built.

The board in January, 1951, bought a complete set of playground equipment because it could have been taken off the market if there were Korean War shortages. For children of preschool age, there was a small slide, a merry-go-round, a jungle gym, a "balancing bar" and a set of swings with basket seats, all of which were installed in the grove of trees behind the clubhouse. And For school age children, a set of six swings was installed near the back fence at the east end of the grounds and under the oak trees there was (used in Sacramento in past years) a merry-go-round and a slide.



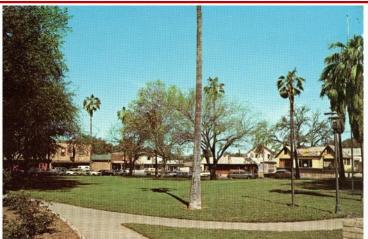
Kids creating art projects on Clubhouse grounds taken around the mid-1970s. In the distance in the top right is what is now Fair Oaks History Center.

In March 1951, a volunteer work party organized by Alden Brock and others who volunteered their services for part or all the day on weekends were park board members J. D. Hitchcock and Harry Voth; park custodian Rudy Swarowski; George Sherman, Ted Olson. Dick Ludeman, Garnett Fleming, L. C. Wasgatt, Howard Blower, Harold Lathrop, Elmer Williams, Ralph Hinsey and Darvin Burdzelauskas. Most of the volunteers had skills ranging from civil engineering degrees on down. Mrs. Brock served sandwiches to the workers. Art Hyland had furnished at least \$100 worth of time and materials like topsoil, sand, etc. By the time it was finished, the playground area had been graded, piped, equipped with automatic sprinklers, planted to lawn and set up with playground equipment. In May of 1952 while laying out the diamond on Clubhouse grounds, board members and Little League coaches found that the area was too small for regulation Little League play, but it was used as a practice diamond or for softball and was installed anyway. Ten years later in 1962, a letter from Tom Ross claimed damages for his son's wristwatch, claiming the watch was broken by a baseball in flight out of the Clubhouse grounds. The board rejected the claim but posted signs that no more hardball baseball use would be allowed on the Clubhouse grounds.

### **Plaza**

In May 1951, Downtown Fair Oaks was all torn up. PG&E dug a trench straight down Howard Street (breaking a few water and drainage lines in the process) in preparation for laying the natural gas main into the business section, and the Plaza was also being worked on. The Park Board was installing a new sprinkler system there with Howard Nelson digging the trenches across the lawn. A few months later, the Park Board put in cement sidewalks in place of the old gravel ones around the four sides of the Plaza

At the February 24, 1954, Board meeting, there was a delegation representing local businesspeople, headed by E. G. Prowell, former Park Board chairman and now president of the Fair Oaks Civic Club. Mr. Prowell said the delegation wanted to have the county build a "Hall of Justice" in the Fair Oaks Plaza. Discussion followed. It was stated that plans had already been drawn by the county; the building would be about 40' x 50'. Brock and other members told the civic representatives the central Fair Oaks business district already was congested and location of the justice court within the park would add to crowded conditions. Brock told club representatives an effort should be made to find a more suitable site for the court in Fair Oaks rather than in the park. A few weeks later Mrs. Edward K. Rabitte, president of the Good Earth Garden Club, a section of the Women's Thursday Club of Fair Oaks, opposed the plan. She later sent a letter saying, "We believe the park is a beautiful asset to Fair Oaks; it gives character to the business district, furnishes a convenient place for civic gatherings and affords welcome relief from the concrete and asphalt crowding us in on all sides." A month later the Park Board recommended a site on Temescal Avenue owned by A. L. Price was suitable for a new Justice Court Building. The Temescal Avenue property was chosen after Mr. and Mrs. Price reduced the price from \$5,000 to \$4,000.



Fair Oaks Plaza Park in the early 1970s. On the right side of photo is one of the Gas Lights.

Raymond W. Grady, president of the Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce, asked the Fair Oaks Park District for permission to develop parking facilities in the central business district park plaza on Jan 27, 1960, O. Stanley Hoover, chamber manager, explained the central portion of the plaza would be developed for the parking of 37 autos. None of the trees or flower beds would be removed. A concrete slab would be used for recreational purposes. Several people were on hand during the meeting to protest the proposal: Among them was Mrs. Edward K. Rabinette, who said of the plan "I am opposed to seeing our park used for such a purpose, it would destroy the character of the little village. The plaza is the focal point of the community. We have a unique little village and we feel the plaza is a beauty spot. We

don't want it destroyed. The merchants can find some other way to solve the parking problem." Directors of the Fair Oaks Park District ended up rejecting the proposal.

Later in 1964, the Chamber of Commerce wanted to illuminate the town with gas lights. PG.&E made a plan for gas lighting of the plaza. If the plaza were lit, the chamber said this would encourage others to follow. The lights would complement the quaintness of the Community. The Park District agreed. The project started Monday, November 1,1965, with the District staff doing the trenching, making holes for poles, pouring cement and backfill. Mr. Broadley, local plumber, would install and connect the gas lines in accordance with County requirements and install the light standards and lights; the project was done at Christmas of that year. In a few years' time, on Jan 27, 1960, the Gas lights were removed because of the cost of using them, plus no one else ever installed them in town.

### **Events**

The Fair Oaks Fiesta continued after the 1949 Centennial Fiesta event. Frank Leoni the Chamber of Commerce President asked if Park District would like to cosponsor the annual Fiesta and participate by granting use of physical facilities and manpower required for the event. The district declined. In 1989 the



Photo from the Fair Oaks Fiesta around mid-1970s.

carnival was dropped for a more a country and local flavor. Next year there was a jumping frog contest that was added; Jim Racy started the Toilet Bowl Races in 1991. As of right now the Fair Oaks Fiesta has been discontinued because of on Jan 27, 1960, all the work being in the Village Park.

Wayne Rice, president of the Fair Oaks Business Association, announced a mobile chest Xray unit of the Sacramento Tuberculosis Association would be stationed at the Fair Oaks Plaza from 12 to 6 PM March 27<sup>th</sup>, 1952, to take X-rays

The spirit of Christmas descended on Fair Oaks in 1953 as the Fair Oaks Park Board refurbished the 73-foot living Christmas tree in the Plaza with new, permanent lights. More than that, the entire downtown section would be decorated for Christmas. Cashier J. W. "Bill" Pugh of the Suburban Bank obtained two truckloads of decorations for hauling them away, (used in Sacramento in past years) with Sturch's Furniture Store supplying the truck to transport one load to Fair Oaks.

The cooperative Christmas party staged by Fair Oaks businessmen on December 18th, 1953, attracted a large crowd. Here is the list of events that happened on that day: Started with Santa Claus entering town with great fanfare at 4:30, leaving his reindeer out on Sunset Avenue and being driven into the center of town on a specially decorated truck supplied by Edgett Motors. Clearing the way for him was Deputy Sheriff Charles Kauffman's car, with siren blowing. At the corner of the Plaza, Santa took up his stand and passed out 525 sacks of candy, with the help of Jim Savre of the Lions Club. The candy was gone by 6:30, but Santa played on until 7 p.m. The John Holst School choir started the song program with several Christmas Carols, dedicating their last one to Mr. Holst himself. Mr. Holst personally wished one and all a Merry Christmas. At 5 p.m. the Junior Choir of the Faith Lutheran Church sang many more carols. Only sour note of the afternoon was that struck up by several dozen youngsters with little whistles taken from their candy stockings; they gave the Faith Lutheran Junior Choir a bad time for a while. At 7 p.m. a special evening program featured the San Juan High Girls Glee, a talented and charming group; the Gallaher sisters, Stephen Pierce, and the "Singing Stuarts" child quartet. Rain between 6 and 7 p.m. kept down the crowd for the evening show, but those who came were an appreciative audience. Special credit was due the Diamond Match Company for supplying lumber and transportation for the stage in the Plaza and to Mr. and Mrs. Rudy Swarowski and the Fair Oaks Park Board for arranging for the use of a piano from the Community Clubhouse for the evening program. Fair Oaks merchants were so pleased with the big party that there was already talk of repeating it on a larger scale the next year.

On June 3rd, 4th, and 5<sup>th</sup> in 1955, the Chamber of Commerce put on a Nimbus Dam dedication ceremony in the Fair Oaks Village and had a commercial carnival on Community Clubhouse grounds.

For Christmas in 1957, the chamber of commerce put on a lighted Christmas card display in the Fair Oaks Plaza. Plywood displays, 4 by 8 feet, were illuminated with spotlights.

We always enjoy receiving stories about and photos pertaining to the history of the Fair Oaks area. The next article will be on the life of Gen. Charles H. Howard of the Howard-Wilson Publishing Company.

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** 



## 2026 Membership Renewals Start now

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.

Life Members do NOT need to renew!

\_\_\_\_\_\_



# Fair Oaks Historical Society 2026 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 years in in a state 2026 Chicken Festive		

Dues are collected on an annual basis in January. New members joining at the 2026 Chicken Festival or after October 1<sup>st</sup> shall be considered paid for 2027. 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:	Date:
X	

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: <a href="https://fairoakshistory.org/join/join.htm">https://fairoakshistory.org/join/join.htm</a>

### Thank you for your support!

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

For questions, please contact the History Center or FOHistory1@gmail.com.

Membership Coordinator use only:

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



You can check your membership status here: www.fairoakshistory.org/status.html

# 2025 HISTORICAL SOCIETY CALENDAR

50th Anniversary Planning Mtg
Executive Board Meeting
October 21
50th Anniversary Celebration
Quarterly General Meeting
Cancelled
Executive Board Meeting
November 18
Christmas Tree Lighting
December 5
Executive Board Meeting
December 16



Fair Oaks Historical Society P.O. Box 2044 Fair Oaks, CA 95628 PLEASE PLACE STAMP HERE

To: