

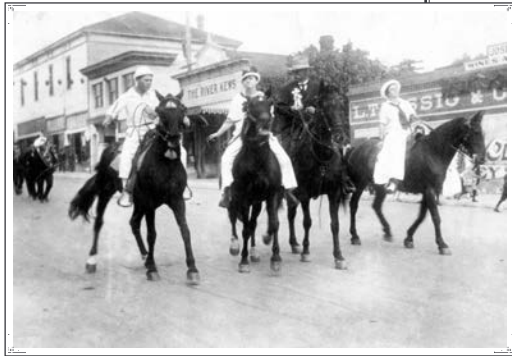
The Rio Vista Sesquicentennial Collector's Edition



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50¢



Tempers flair over Rio's official incorporation

PHIL PEZZAGLIA
Historian in-Chief

The original, or "Old" Rio Vista if you like, was settled in 1858. That settlement, however, was washed away in January 1862; and the present town was established in March 1862.

For the next 31 years, the township and its inhabitants lived their lives from day to day without a town government.

The first notion of the township of Rio Vista adopting incorporation came in November of 1877.

At a meeting on November 19, 1877, the citizens of Rio Vista gathered together to consider the importance of incorporation, discussing what exactly it would mean for the future of the town.

Both the pros and the cons were earnestly discussed that Monday evening among the citizens of Rio Vista.

A great fear was that had been present amongst the

See INCORPORATION, Page A6

COVERING CALIFORNIA'S FABULOUS DELTA AREA

RIVER NEWS-HERALD

ISLETON JOURNAL



The flood that destroyed Rio Vista

PHIL PEZZAGLIA
Historian in-Chief

The year 1861 proved to be the hardest winter the Rio Vista settlement had thus far encountered. The following fall had not been easy, and the winter brought high winds and heavy rains, adding to fall's destruction. Some accounts described it best as the proverbial "40 days and 40 nights" of rain, during which the waters of the mighty Sacramento River swelled and overflowed onto the lowlands.

During the final days of December 1861, the waters rose so high they washed away many of the smaller buildings in the fledgling Rio Vista town. But these villagers were a seasoned, close-knit group who had helped one another through many hardships of previous years. Those whose property was lost were quickly taken into the homes of the more fortunate. As the townspeople watched nature take its course, they realized that there was little to nothing they could do to prevent the damage from devastating the town.

The height of these storms arrived on January 9, 1862. It was on this day that a great storm hit the Delta town, bringing with it a fierce wind from the southeast and a heavy surplus of rain. This lethal combination of wind and rain caused the river to rise up over the banks and into the town.

See FLOOD, Page A3

Humphrey: The lost whale captures a nation

ARLENE RIVERA
Contributing Writer

Rio Vista can't possibly celebrate this monumental anniversary without remembering Humphrey the humpback whale.

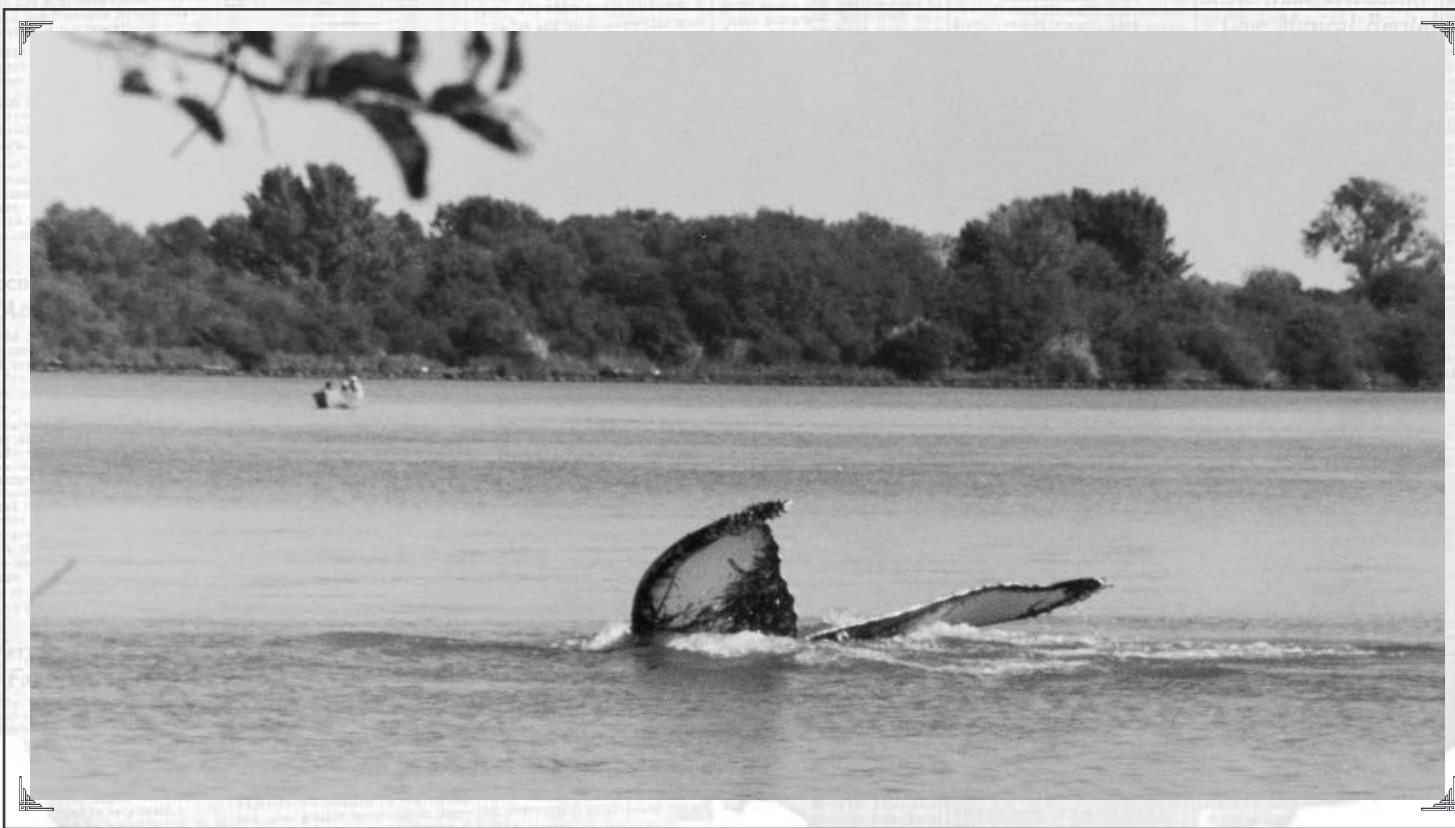
Humphrey recently celebrated his own anniversary in October of 2005, twenty years to the date he

mysteriously veered off course and into our Bay Area Delta waterways. All these years later, people around the world still remember watching, and often praying for, Humphrey on his long journey from San Francisco to Rio Vista, and his even longer journey back home to the open sea.

For reasons undetermined, the 40-foot, 36-ton humpback whale suddenly took a detour from his

expected Mexico-to-Alaska migration course, heading away from the saltwater whales need to survive and instead towards a freshwater habitat. First spotted at Oakland's Outer Harbor, he continued towards Sacramento and the Rio Vista Bridge, quickly becoming an inter

See HUMPHREY, Page A3



Centennial Celebration of 1958

PHIL PEZZAGLIA
Historian in-Chief

It may be hard to believe, but Rio Vista is 150 years old this year. The town surely doesn't look that old, but it is. It will be celebrating its sesquicentennial, a word that most people will not even try to pronounce. Will there be a celebration to

commemorate such a monumental occasion? I guess we will all have to wait and see.

When the town celebrated its centennial 50 years ago in 1958, it held a celebration that started on February 12 and ended on September 28. It was a celebration that left an impact that can still be seen today, if you know where to look.

Fifty years ago this month, a group of energetic local citizens, comprised mainly of business merchants, gathered together on November 11, 1957 for a special meeting sponsored by the Rio Vista Chamber of Commerce. The subject on the agenda that evening was interest and feasibility of a celebration commemorating Rio Vista's 100th birthday.

Among the 30 citizens in attendance that evening

were: Braid Pezzaglia, Ernie Blackwelder, John Aye, George Augusto, E.S. Egbert, Albert Anderson, Paul West, Joe Viera and Gene Heath. Several of these prominent local figures roots' dated back several decades and spanned generations.

During that historic evening meeting, Braid Pezzaglia and John Aye were the principle speakers, emphasizing the historic importance of such a cele-

bration. During the meeting, there was emphasis on the point that the only way for a several-month long celebration to succeed would invariably include full support of the local citizens, businesses and city officials.

Mr. Pezzaglia explained to the crowd that the first local post office was established in 1858, and from that

See CENTENNIAL, Page A8

The Origins of the Bank of Rio Vista established 1904

PHIL PEZZAGLIA
Historian in-Chief

What started out as a small bank with less than five employees back in 1904 has grown, over the past one hundred and four years, to a bank with dozens of employees, and four business locations; Walnut Grove, Isleton, and two in

Rio Vista.

Throughout the last one hundred years Rio Vista has had a handful of other banking institutions, besides the Bank of Rio Vista. However the Bank of Rio Vista was the first one to open in Rio Vista.

In fact, counting the Bank of Rio Vista, there have been nine financial institutions, which have had local

branches: The Bank of Rio Vista (Est. 1904), The First National Bank of Rio Vista (1915-1921); The Delta Bank (1922-1936); Bank of America (1936 late 1990's), San Joaquin First Federal Savings (1970's & 1980's), Washington Savings and Loan (1980's & 1990's), Bank of Alex Brown, (1980's) First Interstate, & the Bank of Stockton.

But the one financial institution that has remained constant throughout the years has been the Bank of Rio Vista.

Throughout the past 100 years the Bank of Rio Vista has had, including the present president Tim Kubli, only six presidents, three of which have had the last name of McCormack.

Of those 100 years, sev-

enty-six of them have had a member of the McCormack family as president. Wallace McCormack having held the position the longest, for fifty-two years.

The past bank presidents were as follows: Lars Peter Larsen 1904 -1920, Alden Anderson 1920-1925, Daniel

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Flood

From Front Page

The floodwaters were as high as twelve feet at the foot of Main Street, and before long the entire town was under water. Those who lived through the flood would later remember that for as many miles as the eye could see, the lands were covered with water.

Buildings were destroyed and often washed out from under, as the waves carried the debris quickly down the river. One story passed down through the years recalls a young married couple, by the name of Mr. & Mrs. Manuel Ramos, who had to be rescued by other villagers from a second-story window, as the waters were reaching such great heights.

The population, approximately 150 individuals, quickly gathered what they could, and helping one another, headed for higher ground. The group gathered on a mound, just a short distance below the settlement. Some reports describe this as possibly being an area in the Montezuma Hills. For the next three to four days, the villagers waited in the pouring rain until river steamers came and took them to more comfortable locations.

It was hard for the sur-

vivors to watch the town they worked so hard to build get washed out into the channel in a matter of mere hours. Surprisingly, though, through all of this tragedy, not one individual was lost.

The following were among those 150 survivors: A.J. Bryant, Robert C. Carter Sr., Robert C. Carter Jr., Issac Dunham, Simon Fallman, James Freeman, Thomas Freeman, James Hammel, Mr. & Mrs. C.A. Kirkpatrick, Sarah Marshall, Monroe Perry, Mr. & Mrs. Samuel R. Perry, Mr. & Mrs. Manuel Ramos, John M. Sidwell, William & Margaret Squires and A.G. Westgate.

This event will always be remembered as one of the darkest days in Rio Vista's history. It will, however, also be remembered in local history as the birth of the "new" Rio Vista.

After the tremendous ordeal the townspeople had survived, many left for other settlements, but four men were determined to try and re-establish the town of Rio Vista. They sent an inquiry to Gen. Vallejo about past weather situations in this area in order to choose another sight that would be out of the flood plane. The General sent them the following reply:

"December 12, 1842, the whole country was overflowed, and all that level part of your country

out to the hills at Vacaville. On that day I sailed in a schooner of twenty tons from the present site of Sacramento in a southwesterly direction, passing over what is now elevated farming lands in that section. The Montezuma Hills and other highlands were not submerged, but all the other country was. I was able to, and did, sail over these with ease where are now fine farms. Several hunters and their horses were drowned, and afterwards found at Benicia when the waters subsided. The overflow lasted for several weeks. No crops were then raised, as there were no settlers in the whole region at that date, only a few cattleherders and hunters."

Abandoning any hopes for a town on Capt. Davis' Lot. No. 3, the men looked downriver for a more secure location. They were looking for a place above the river's reach, which still had river access, to build a new town; a town that would also be named "Rio Vista."



Humphrey

From Front Page

national media star overnight.

The country, along with other parts of the world, tuned in to watch Humphrey's plight every evening, wincing as he dodged wooden pilings and low bridges, and rooting for marine scientists who were sent to save him from himself. Humphrey memorabilia of all forms can still be found online, often accompanied with talk of nostalgia about this whale, an animal that somehow seemed to capture the national zeitgeist

"Humphrey, the humpback whale, a mighty whale was he.

He swam into the Delta, to see what he could see.

The people stood and stared, the fish were scared.

He was famous across the nation, until they ended his vacation."

Humphrey brought some much-needed business to Rio then, as thousands of people packed the Delta's shorelines to get a glimpse of the strange phenomenon. Most Rio

while clanging metal pipes and other noise makers to chase him back, was unsuccessful.

The nation found hope, however, in the form of an animal recording expert named Bernie Krause. Humphrey was finally led back home by Krause's recordings of hungry humpback whales, played via underwater speakers by multiple boats. Humphrey followed the boats to safety, swimming under the Golden Gate Bridge on November 4, 1985.

"What you need to do is lure the animal with something pleasant. Loud noises don't work. It's so much better to be positive than negative," Krause commented.



of the time.

The name Humphrey traces back to Rio Vista, according to Birney Jarvis, the journalist from the *San Francisco Chronicle* who covered the 26-day visit. Jarvis recalls that the whale had no name in the beginning, a problem preventing him from doing his job. "So I decided to name him. I said to myself, 'Humpback... Humphrey.' It just seemed to fit," Jarvis explains. He also admits that he overheard the term from a Rio Vistan at a local restaurant.

Rio Vista dedicated a plaque in Humphrey's honor in January of 1986 that stands in front of the harbor today. The dedication, written by Richard Fonbuens, reads:


Vistans look back on that time with fond memories. Nearby restaurants have dishes named after him to this day. Humphrey's, a restaurant in Antioch, is itself a monument to the whale.

Delta resident Sharolyn Anderson remembers the visit clearly, "My relatives from Kansas were here, and it was a big deal to everyone. The ocean came to us."

The Marine Mammal Center, along with the U.S. Coast Guard, followed the lost whale along his entire journey, hoping to find a way to coax him back towards seawater. First, a noisy solution was attempted: The Japanese fishing technique "Oikami," in which volunteers followed by boat

Krause also remarked upon the depth of feeling associated with Humphrey, "You never saw anything like it. Thousands of people, screaming and yelling. Every time the animal surfaced there was this huge roar from the crowds. It really brought people together. Everyone had some way of associating or projecting onto that animal."

I guess we all veer off course from time to time, and if we're lucky, someone is there to guide us back home.



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THE HUMPBACK WHALE
OCT. 10, 1985 NOV. 4, 1985

HUMPHREY THE HUMPBACK WHALE, A MIGHTY WHALE WAS HE.
HE SWAM INTO THE DELTA, TO SEE WHAT HE COULD SEE.
THE PEOPLE STOOD AND STARED, THE FISH WERE SCARED.
HE WAS FAMOUS ACROSS THE NATION, UNTIL THEY ENDED HIS VACATION.
Richard Fonbuens AGE 12 YEARS

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RV BANK

From Front Page

McCormack 1925-1934, Thomas McCormack 1934-1949, Wallace McCormack 1949-2001, Tim Kubli 2001-present.

Just how were banking needs fulfilled prior to the Bank of Rio Vista's existence in 1904.

Starting in the mid-1870's and continuing through the turn of the century Rio Vista did have local, official Wells, Fargo & Co. Agents.

The first such agents were the Westgate Brothers, Edward & George who were the proprietors of a general merchandise store located on the corner of Front and Main Streets, in Rio Vista.

After, about twenty years of working as agents they decided that it was time to pass it on to someone else in town.

A gentleman by the name of E.M Chase, who also owned a general merchandise store, on the opposing corner of Main and Front Streets (the property that now has Jessen's located on it) was all too happy to take over as the local Wells Fargo & Co. agent.

These agents' money transactions consisted of gold, silver, gold notes, currency, checks and drafts.

These ways of banking was provided by the agents taking money and then sending it by steamship down the Sacramento River to San Francisco, were the money was put into the bank.

However the money was not physically in Rio Vista, and some did not find this to be the way that they wished to do business.

It was in the early 1890's that J. Stern & Co., what would shortly become the largest general merchandise store in Rio Vista, opened its doors, on the corner of Main and Second Street. Mr. Stern had a residence and a business location in both Rio Vista and San Francisco. He was a fine businessman, who understood that the survival of both his business and the community depended upon one another.

He therefore thought of a way to help the farmers,

thus in turn giving him a working relationship with the locals.

The following description of just how J. Stern operated, was given by Wallace McCormack, in an article written approximately a decade ago.

"He (Stern) would finance the local farms by carrying their accounts for the year, advancing money for seed and equipment that he did not handle. At the end of the year, farmers who had surplus money would deposit it with Stern & Co., which would place the money in its San Francisco account and hold on to the money until the farmers need it to buy more land or for some other purpose. As the farmers and ranchers became more affluent and prosperous, the need for a bank became apparent."

On April 9, 1904, a Saturday night to be exact, a number of local citizens, gathered together in the meeting room of the Rio Club. The purpose of this meeting was to address and discuss the need for the organization of a local bank.

At this point in time the bank was to be known as the Rio Vista Citizens Bank, however this name was quickly shortened to The Bank of Rio Vista.

It was during this historic meeting, that it was unanimously agreed to form a Stock Company, with a capital stock of \$50,000.00 divided into 1000 shares at \$50 each.

It was during this same meeting that a Board of Directors was elected. The seven men elected to fill those positions were: R.D. Robbins, of Suisun; Peter Cook, a local landowner, Ben Fleischer, a partner in J. Stern & Co.; William Burrows Presley, local landowner; George H. Butler, a general merchandise store owner, Peter Hamilton, local landowner and Capt. Lars Peter Larsen, retired ships captain and partner in Sullivan & Larsen, a local lumber company.

It was the wish, of the newly formed Board of Directors, that the majority of the stock, should be owned by local citizens of



Rio Vista.

The directors set out and canvassed the town hoping to find those with money to invest.

At this point in time Rio Vista's, in town population was 682, and that the entire township was listed at 1500.

Within a very short period of time seventy-two stockholders purchased up the \$50,000 worth of available capital stock needed for the banking enterprise, to get under way.

It must be pointed out that in 1904 Teddy Roosevelt was the President of the United States, J.E. Sullivan was Rio Vista's Mayor, a pound of cheese cost ten cents, a sewing machine cost around \$11, a ticket for two, which included dinner at a local ball cost anywhere from \$1.50 to \$2. The gentleman that ran the Rio Vista Water Works was making around \$18.75 a week.

Once we put it into this perspective, it is obvious that the majority of people in Rio Vista that did have money to invest were either land and property owners, or farmers and ranchers.

Now that the dream was coming together the Board of Directors next step was to elect bank officers.

The officers elected for the new bank were: Lars Peter Larsen- President; R.D. Robbins- Vice-president;

Horace L. Perry- Cashier; George H. Lamont- Attorney.

The bank filed the appropriate papers and was established as a state-chartered institution with the official document dated April 12, 1904.

Now that the Bank of Rio Vista had a Board of Directors, a state charter, seventy-two stockholders, \$50,000 in capital and an elected group of Bank officers, they now required a place of business.

The bank purchased a small piece of property on the south side of Main Street, between Second and

Third Streets, between J. Stern & Co.'s buildings and the blacksmith shop. A local contractor Weston W. Campbell, was hired to construct the building.

Foundation work began, during the first week of August 1904, for a new structure that would house the Bank of Rio Vista, for the next seventeen years.

With the entire town eagerly awaiting the construction of the new building, the builders put their shoulders to the grindstone and completed the building in less than two months.

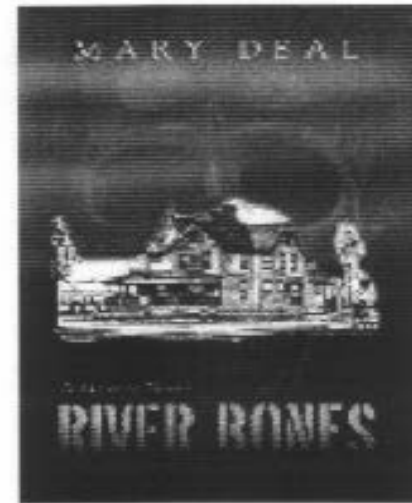
The front of the structure was a beautiful terra

cotta brick, while the sides and back were of red brick. The interior, of the building, had high ceilings and beautiful hardwood floors.

By the time the building was completed, the bank had invested \$7000, in the property, building construction, vault and office fixtures, making this new structure the most modern structure on Main Street.

It is obvious that this was a fine building, as it has still stands on Main Street, and is the home of All Animals Veterinary.

Continued on A12



River Bones

A mystery / thriller

By Walnut Grove native, Mary Ramirez Deal

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Continued From A11

A great need arose for the bank to open, even though their building was not yet completed.

The Bank of Rio Vista officially opened for business in early October 1904 with vice president R.D. Robbins on hand to wait on each of the new customers.

For the first few weeks the bank operated out of the small brick office building of the firm of Sullivan & Larsen, located on Front Street.

This was of course convenient as newly elected bank president Lars

P. Larsen was half owner of that firm. (The safe that Sullivan & Larsen used now resides in the front office of Rio Vista Real Estate.)

A few weeks later, during that same month of October, the Bank of Rio Vista opened its doors, in its new building, to the public. For each and every year, following its opening, the bank's business continued to grow steadily, as did the community of Rio Vista.

As the town of Rio Vista continued to grow, so did the hometown bank. The bank of Rio Vista quickly became a full service institution meeting and providing for all of the needs of Rio Vistans, as well as citizens of Collinsville, Birds Landing, Isleton, and the surrounding towns and districts.

The first advertising that the bank of Rio Vista did appeared in the February 3, 1905 edition of The River News. It was short and to the point. It read: Horace G. Perry, Cashier Bank of Rio Vista, Fire Insurance, Notary Public, Legal Documents, Bank Building, Rio Vista, Cal.

In a January 1906 advertisement the bank listed that it provided General Banking Business. Collections on all parts of the United States Received and collected. Drafts issued cashable in any city in the United States and Canada. Money telegraphed. Foreign exchange procured. Favors and accommodations consistent with safe banking extended to depositors and clients.

By 1908 the bank was providing numerous clients with checking accounts, safe deposit boxes, the availability of Bank Money Orders, savings department. And 3 percent interest on term deposits.

Early on in 1915, when the bank was eleven years old, the directors contemplated remodeling their

building, in order to better fulfill the needs of the rapidly growing bank. This idea was however, put on hold.

Early on this same year, rumors were in the air, with regards to another group of local gentlemen organizing a local bank.

Instead of remodeling, this year marked the first time that the bank put together a more progressive advertising campaign, in the local

River News newspaper. These specialized ads were offered with a different slogans and drawings each week.

The following was the text from the Bank of Rio Vista's Valentine's Day advertisement from 1915. This is by all means not what we would refer to today as a politically correct advertisement.

The advertisement read: "A fat bank account keeps hearts warm. When poverty comes in at the door love flies out at the window. Start a bank account. It is lots easier for a girl to love a boy who has a BANK ACCOUNT, and it is easier to love a husband with a bank account. Girls are looking for the boys with more in the bank, so are the girls' parents. Add to the list of charms a bank account and she will take lots more interest in you. Do your banking with us. We will serve your interests. Make OUR bank YOUR bank."

After an advertising campaign like that in 1915, what do you do the next year?

The only major events in 1916 was the addition, in March, of a "Wireless Instrument," which only had a receiver, and that the bank used for the sole purpose of knowing the correct time.

In April 1920, when the Bank was sixteen years old, it was felt, as it had been in 1915, that the bank needed a larger building.

They purchased a piece of property on the corner of Main and Second Streets, from the Dunn Estate, which at that point in time housed the Eclipse Saloon, under the proprietorship of Emil Renner. This is the present location of Richards Real Estate.

However this idea was put to one side when Bank President Lars P. Larsen, now sixty-five year old, sold his interests to Alden Anderson, whom was then elected president of the bank.

Through these early years few changes occurred within the banks Board of Directors. Directors didn't change often, or all at once,

but eventually Mr. Robbins, Mr. Cook, Mr. Fleischer, and Mr. Pressley all stepped down, leaving only Lars Larsen, Peter Hamilton and George H. Butler as original 1904, directors.

The most notable change in directors occurred when the two McCormack brothers, Daniel and Thomas accepted positions on the Board of Directors.

It should be noted that at this point in time Mr. Alden Anderson was quite familiar, as well as well known, in the field of banking. He had bought L.P. Larsen's stock in the Bank of Rio Vista in 1920, and succeeded Mr. Larsen as bank president that same year. But what exactly were Mr. Anderson's qualifications.

Besides being President of the Bank of Rio Vista, he was: President of the Capital National Bank of Sacramento, a \$10,000,000 banking institution; President of the Redding, National Bank of Redding; Placer County Bank of Newcastle; Placerville National Bank of Placerville; Vice-President of First Savings Bank of Shasta County; Director in Roseville Banking Company and Bank of Courtland.

By all means his resume was showcased that he was more than qualified to preside of the Bank of Rio Vista.

And it would be during his years as president that the Bank of Rio who move to its present location, on the corner of Main and Front Streets. At this point it is important to give a little back round on The First National Bank of Rio Vista, before we continue the history of the Bank of Rio Vista.

On March 5, 1915 five local Rio Vista businessmen gathered together in the hall above Brown Bros. store, located on the Main Street, between Second and Front Streets. The reasons for this meeting were to form a new bank in the town of Rio Vista. These five aforementioned individuals would hold the capital stock in the new banking establishment.

It was at this historic, March 5, meeting that the new banking enterprise was given the name of The First National Bank of Rio Vista. The Board of Directors were elected as follows: Dr. A.J.

McKinnon (the subject of article #99 April 30, 2003), J.T. Brown, F.J. Trigueiro, B.L. Sharp and W.L. Brown.

The officers of the new bank were appointed that same evening as follows: Dr. A.J. McKinnon, President; J.T. Brown, Vice-President; W.L. Brown, Cashier and

B.L. Sharp, Assistant Cashier.

Incidentally Mr. J.T. Brown was one of the original seventy-two stockholders in the Bank of Rio Vista, and at this point in time still held stock in the bank. The bank had a beautiful two-story building designed and then erected on the corner of Main and Front Streets.

Even though, in 1915, the town of Rio Vista's population was still less than two thousand, there still seemed to be enough business that both banks had more than enough customers.

In fact competition is good, in any business. It makes everyone try a little harder. And that is exactly what both financial institutions did. But in 1921 it was decided that the Bank of Rio Vista would purchase its competition and merge the two financial institutions.

Webster defines amalgamation as to unite or join together, and that is exactly what took place between The First National Bank of Rio Vista, established 1915, and the Bank of Rio Vista, now seventeen years old, in 1921.

During the first week of September 1921, preparations were being made by two members of the Board of Directors of the Bank of Rio Vista to purchase stock in The First National Bank of Rio Vista, with the intentions of merging the two local banking facilities.

Alden Anderson, President and a Director of the Bank of Rio Vista along with Daniel McCormack, a member of the Board of Directors of the Bank of Rio Vista purchased a combined total of 285 shares of stock from J.T. Brown, Frank Triqueiro and his daughter Mary Triqueiro, giving them controlling stock in The First National Bank of Rio Vista.

A meeting, on November 7, 1921, of the First National Bank of Rio Vista's stockholders, which now included Mr. Anderson and Mr. McCormack, formally adopted a resolution whereby the assets of the bank would be sold to the Bank of Rio Vista.

At this point in time the Bank of Rio Vista assumed all outstanding liabilities of the First National Bank of Rio Vista, Dan McCormack was appointed liquidating Officer for The First National Bank of Rio Vista.

The officers and Board of Directors of the Bank of Rio Vista remained the same after the merger, as the next annual election of bank offi-

cers would take place in January 1922. There was however some speculation as to whether or not any of the individuals who held positions as Board members of The First National Bank of Rio Vista might find positions on the Board at the January meeting.

Unfortunately none of the gentlemen found positions on the Board of the Bank of Rio Vista.

The official list for the Bank of Rio Vista officers and Board of Directors, after the merger, in November 1921 was as follows: Alden Anderson-President; Peter Hamilton- Vice President; Bruce Greig-Cashier; F.E. Mitchell-Assistant Cashier.

The Board of Directors were: Peter Hamilton, George Butler, Daniel McCormack, Thomas McCormack, Henry J. Durr, Alden Anderson, Arthur M. Larsen.

As a result of the merger and the enlargement of the Bank of Rio Vista it was decided that the Bank of Rio Vista would move from their location in the two hundred block of Main Street (presently the location of All Animals Veterinary) and move into the six year old

structure that The First National Bank had constructed and occupied, on the corner of Main and Front Streets.

The result of this merger, between the two banks, gave the Bank of Rio Vista a capacity double to that which it had, namely a Capital of \$150,000 and a Surplus of \$50,000.

Alden Anderson gave the following statement to the River News in the November 19, 1921 edition.

"The state bank, i.e., the

Bank of Rio Vista, will be retained, first, because its capital is larger and second because in a rural community the banking laws are so constructed that a state bank can better care for the needs of the community. A bank should be operated for the benefit and service of the town and the district wherein it is located. The national bank laws only permit of the taking of real estate security to a limited extent and at times when a loan has been made on real estate there is no best way, where, with full security a farmer can be assisted to move his crop of fruit, potatoes, beans, etc. This can be done to better advantage under the state banking laws than under the national laws in the small and rural sections.

The Bank of Rio Vista is a home bank for its home people and the whole board of directors is pledged to do everything it possibly can to assist and up build its town and the surrounding country. With a larger volume of business the bank will be in an even stronger position to care for the needs of its patrons and the business generally of this vicinity."

From this point on The First National Bank of Rio Vista no longer existed. It did however have a good prosperous run from its organization in 1915 to its merger in 1921, and for this it will always hold a place in Rio Vista's history. The rest is Bank of Rio Vista history, which is now in its 104th year of operation.

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1090 St. Francis Way, Rio Vista

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INCORPORATION

From Front Page

town's people for some time concerning the responsibilities imposed by the articles of incorporation was then expressed. It was known that some towns prospered after incorporation while others decayed due to expensive improvements forced upon the people by their new government. Too often these "necessary improvements" end up ahead of the necessities and wishes of the citizens.

At the end of the aforementioned meeting, it was decided that there were more against than for incorporation. The decision was therefore made to wait a few more years. In fact, 15 years would go by before the subject was brought up again.

The second notion of the township's incorporation came in the March of 1892.

At this point, it was generally felt that Rio Vista would not progress any further until it was incorporated.

What Rio Vista needed was a few of its leading citizens placed in positions of power with the authority to do something for the betterment of the township.

The editor of the *Sacramento River News* described the situation of Rio Vista in an article as follows: "We are homeless as at present situated, and we might add almost penniless. But give us municipal incorporation and we will neither remain homeless nor penniless as a community."

However, it was assumed that there would be some opposition to this proposed incorporation by a few of men who owned the most property; men who were never known to voluntarily give support to the fire company or any other public enterprises, even though, without incorporation, they were dependent on the same volunteer efforts they seemed to dismiss.

If such incorporation were to pass, the municipal incorporation of Rio Vista would be of the sixth class. The government of which would consist of a Board of Trustees, numbering five. This board would then have the following powers:

- First — to pass ordinances.
- Second — to purchase or lease real estate for municipal purposes.
- Third — to contract for supplying the town with water for municipal purposes.
- Fourth — to establish, build and repair bridges; to improve streets, sidewalks, etc.; to drain sprinkle and light the streets, etc.
- Fifth — to construct drains.
- Sixth — to provide fire engines and all other proper apparatus for the prevention and extinguishing of fires.
- Seventh — to collect street poll-tax.
- Eighth — to impose and collect dog license taxes.
- Ninth — to levy and collect a property tax.
- Tenth — to license, for purpose of regulation and revenue, all and every kind of business authorized by

law and transacted or carried in such town, and all shows, exhibitions and lawful games carried on therein: to fix the rate of license tax upon the same, and to provide for the collection of the same.

The leading businessmen of Rio Vista seemed to express themselves as being strongly in favor of the incorporation. Of course, there were the few citizens that wanted to further research the advantages and disadvantages of incorporation, knowing that if this went through Rio Vista would change forever.

A petition was written up, and described therein the boundaries of the proposed incorporation as follows:

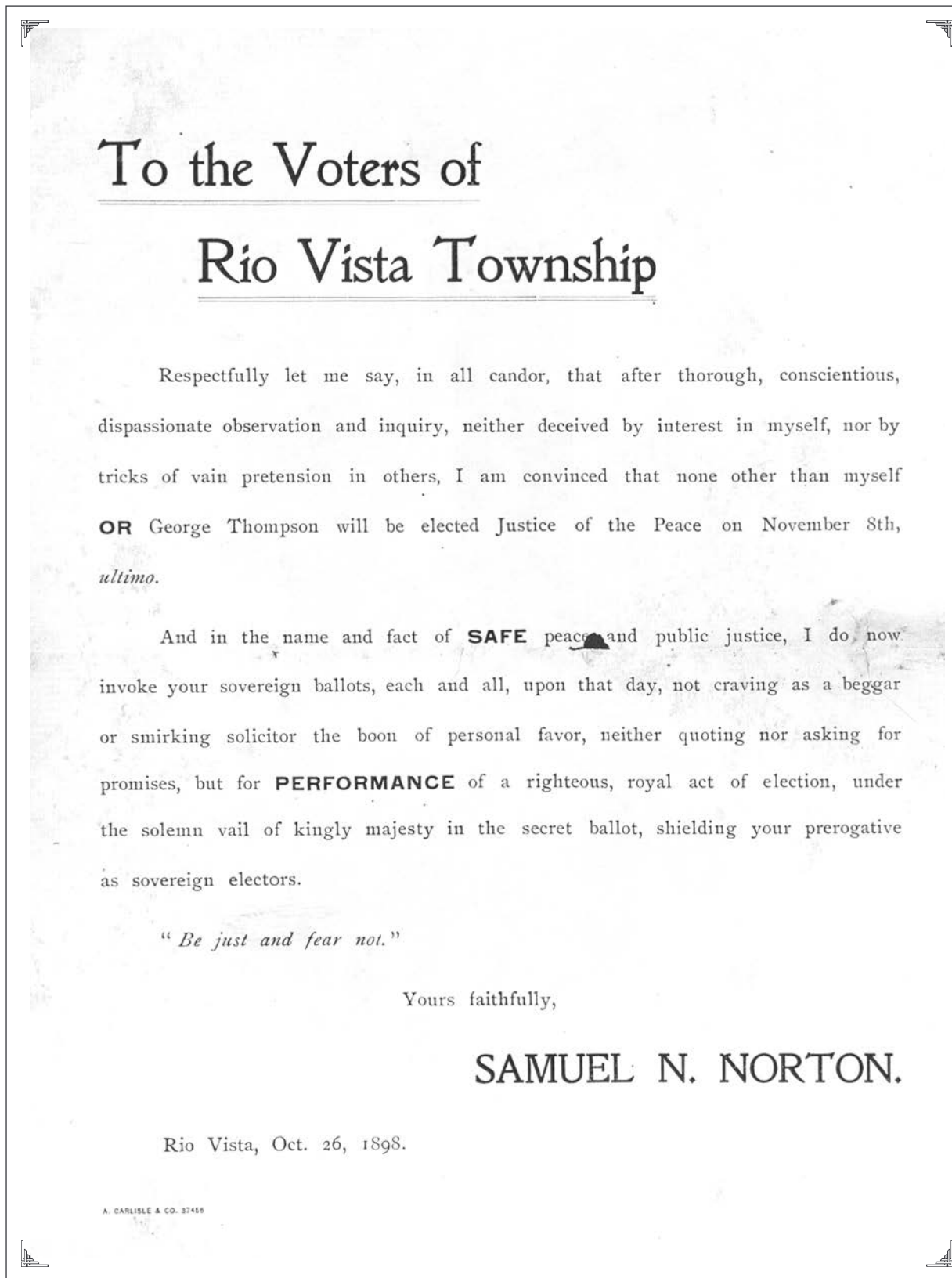
Beginning at the intersection of the center of Main Street or Wharf Street in New Rio Vista, as shown on the official map of said town filed in the Recorder's office in Solano County, April 22, 1862 with low-water line in the Sacramento River; thence following the line of low water in a northeasterly direction about 43 chains, more or less, to the southerly corner of land of Robert Watson: thence due northwest along the boundary between lots 5 and 6 of the Rancho Los Ulpinos, about 50 chains more or less, to a point due northeast of the most northeasterly corner of the Mason's and Odd Fellows Cemetery, as the same is now owned and fenced, March 25, 1862: thence due southwest to and along the northwest boundary of said cemetery and continuing the same course to land of Mrs. Maria Joseph and children: thence southeasterly about 53 chains, more or less, along the boundary between lots 7 and 8 of the Rancho Los Ulpinos to low water line in the Sacramento River: thence northeasterly along the same about 43 chains, more or less, to the place of the beginning.

The petition was to be put before the Board of Supervisors at the adjourning meeting of Monday, May 9, 1892. Unfortunately, when looking into the legalities of voting some information was found that they were unaware of. The following information ran in the April 15, 1892 edition of the *Sacramento River News*:

"The law regarding the qualifications of electors entitled to vote upon a question of municipal incorporation is very concise and strict. It requires that only those can vote who have resided within the proposed corporate limits for sixty days preceding the election, and that their names must be on the printed great register. It is therefore deemed only just, by the advocates of municipal incorporation, that the matter should be postponed for the time being, as the present great register is two years old, and work is about to be commenced on a new one."

At this point in time, the idea of incorporation was put aside, but not forgotten.

Nearly 19 months went by before the subject of



incorporation arose again. It was in November 1893 that a new petition was circulating to incorporate the town, and once again met with a very favorable response from many of the citizens about town.

During the regular December meeting of the Board of Supervisors, a petition was listened to regarding the movement for incorporation of Rio Vista as a town.

The law stated that the petition needed to be comprised of signatures from at least 50 qualified voters, residing within the limits of the proposed incorporated town. And that's what was presented to the Board, a petition with 53 qualified names. The following 53 signed the petition: D.G. Holt, J.C. Stanton, J. Stern, C.E. Garfield, Wm. E. Hector, J.H. Hartin, Otto Wilson, E.M. Chase, Wm. Ferguson, S.T. Hadley, Jas. U. Chase, H. Boock, Wm. K. Squires, John B. Nevin, Samuel C. Brown, N.M. Bailey, Wm. W. Simouse, E.C. Cameron, S.N. Norton, D.H. Collins, E.J. Fraser, D.W. Fraser, Joseph Miller, A. Gloff, Henry Charles (X) Scarlett, O.H. Elliott, L.P. Larsen, J.E. Sullivan, R.C. Carter, R.D. Carter A. Starstrand, W.S. Makemson, Ben Fleischer, A.C. Harvie, Wm. Wadsworth, W. Brusker, Wm. Busker, Jr., Frank Wilson, C.B. Elliott, J.A. Simpson, Geo. Jepson, P.F. Avey, George McIntyre, Geo. Fraser, John Frederickson, F.J. Kalber, John Frates, Wm. Simpson, Nicholas Francis, M. Christensen, G.H. Merrill, J.S. Foord, M. Stewart.

The law also stated that such a petition needed to be published prior to its presentation to the board for two weeks in a newspaper in the county. This too was strictly complied with.

The law also stated that the board shall take the peti-

tion into consideration and may adjourn time-to-time, not exceeding two months before calling an election. The board took the petition into consideration and decided to call for an election.

There was, however, opposition presented by attorney J.M. Gregory, and

signed primarily by women and non-resident property owners, claiming that the proposed incorporation was taking in hundreds of acres of farmland.

The board of supervisors was shown that the overall town limits would not be over three quarters of a mile square. They were confident

that even with further consideration they would not conscientiously cut down said limits, and therefore believed that it would be left to a vote by the people. The board ordered an election for December 30, 1893.

The vote for incorporation was held on Saturday, December 30, 1893, by means of the "Australian Ballot." An Australian Ballot is an official ballot that was first employed in Australia in 1856. This type of ballot was designed to insure secrecy at the polls. The Australian Ballot was used for the first time in the United States in Louisville, Kentucky, during a municipal election in 1888. In 1888 the Massachusetts State Legislature enacted a law, effective in 1889, which authorized the Australian Ballot in State elections.

The polls opened just before 8 a.m., with the election board sworn in by Samuel N. Norton. Mr. Norton was selected in the first place as a Clerk, but since he was a Notary Public, he felt that he was ineligible. Robert Lauritzen was chosen in his place. The board consisted of Dr. S.C. Brown and J.H. Hartin, judges; Dr. J.C. Stanton and J.B. Nevins, inspectors; Robert Lauritzen and W.B. Pressley, clerks, and Robert Smyth and Dr. W. Fraser, as ballot clerks.

Since this was the first local election, turnout was low. It hit its peak between 10 and 11 o'clock, when all three booths were being kept occupied. By

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As a Hunter Douglas dealer, we at Braid's sell more than beautiful window fashions, we also sell energy efficiency. Yes, window coverings are one of the easiest and most beautiful ways you can conserve energy and save money! Join us October 10th at 5pm for a short hands on Energy Efficiency Presentation sponsored by Braid's. Come meet with our Hunter Douglas representative as she shows you what your window coverings can do to give you up to 30% savings off your energy bill this year. Join Braid's as they celebrate their 70th year in business supporting the towns people of Rio Vista with Home Furnishings and window coverings. Come in to experience Braid's Hunter Douglas Showcase environment and Join Larry and Phil as they hold a drawing for a free energy efficient window covering to thank you for your support of Braid's Home Furnishing, family owned and operated since 1938. Stop by during the day for treats and a free Designing Windows magazine.



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Continued From A6

noon, more than 50 votes had been polled, and it looked as if the majority favored incorporation.

Throughout the afternoon, the flow of voters was fairly steady. There were however some questions as to the citizenship status of a few voters, but in the end those few questionable votes did not affect the outcome of the election.

Of the Rio Vista population of approximately 650, only 129 were eligible voters, and of the 129 eligible voters only 119 turned out. Of the ten that didn't show, it was known that eight of them favored incorporation. Of the 119 ballots, 105 were counted; 9 ballots were thrown out, and 5 voted for officers but neglected to vote for or against the Proposition for Incorporation. One of the aforementioned five penciled in "yes" in the line for incorporation, but did not stamp the cross, except for some of the officers, and only the latter were counted. As for the nine that were thrown out, the paper described them as "several were marked with pencil, and otherwise intelligently voted, while the majority were terribly botched, and showed that the ones who handled them knew as little about the Australian system as it would be possible for anyone to know."

The results of the election votes were as follows:

- Propositions:**
- For Incorporation.....59
- Against Incorporation.....46
- For Trustees:**
- Louis C. Ruble.....81
- Martin Christensen.....79
- Edward C. Dozier.....77
- James. E. Sullivavn.....73
- Geo. Thompson.....72
- William. Ferguson.....3
- L. Tryon.....3
- Joseph Bruning.....2
- J.H. Hartin.....1
- J. Stern.....1
- Robert C. Carter.....1
- H.A. Johnston.....1
- For Treasurer:**
- Lars P. Larsen.....82
- Oliver P. Egbert.....28
- Williamm. Ferguson.....5
- Frederick Kalber.....4
- William B. Pressley.....1
- D.G. Holt.....1
- For Clerk:**
- J.S. Foord.....71
- Lars .P. Larsen.....1
- J. Fredrickson.....1
- For Marshal:**
- Henry Boocks.....61
- John B. Fiscus.....2
- Otto Wilson.....1

L. Craner.....1
From these results, the town became incorporated as a municipality. The Board of Trustees were made up of: Martin Christensen, (Martin Christensen was the subject of Article #29 – November 21, 2001) L.C. Ruble, Edward C. Dozier, (E.C. Dozier was the subject of Article #18 – August 29, 2001) Jas. E. Sullivan and Geo. Thompson. Lars P. Larsen (L.P. Larsen was the subject of Article #48 – April 3, 2002) was elected Treasurer, J.S. Foord was voted in as Clerk, and Henry Boocks was elected Marshal.

The voters felt that these gentlemen would represent the town with its interests close to their hearts. M. Christensen, L.C. Ruble held farming interests in the area. Mr. Larsen, a partner in the firm of Sullivan & Larsen, was one of the leading businessmen in town. Geo. Thompson ran a saloon, J.S. Foord was postmaster at the time, and also held the position of secretary in the local Knights of Pythias since its organization. Henry Boocks was described as an excellent local night watchman and would be a credit to the position of Marshal.

At the first meeting of the Board of Trustees, Martin Christensen was chosen to be President of the Board. At this point in time the town did not have a mayor, they had a president of the board.

For some reason, which still remains uncertain, Henry Boocks failed to qualify for the position of Marshal, and a gentleman by the name of Hartman was appointed to the position. Mr. Hartman was a partner in one of the local butcher shops.

There were, however, a few individuals who were not completely satisfied with the incorporation issue's results. In August of 1894, the incorporation of Rio Vista was contested by two of its property owners.

Papers were filed in the case of Joseph Bruning and J.H. Gardiner vs. the Town of Rio Vista, and served upon President of the Board of Trustee's Martin Christensen, on August 17, 1894.

The plaintiffs' attorney, a John M. Gregory, who presented opposition back in 1893, presented the position to the board of supervisors.

Attorney J.M. Gregory, a former judge, was still rather upset from his

December 1893 encounter with the board. He had an ego, and it was bruised. Mr. Gregory was upset because the board did not see fit to adjourn from time to time, which would allow him an opportunity to collect a rather large fee from his clients for every time he appeared before the board to oppose the granting of the petition.

This bothered Mr. Gregory so much that, assisted by Attorney General Hart, and on behalf of several Rio Vista property owners, attempted to bring about a suit to convince the board of supervisors that they, as well as District Attorney Geo. A. Lamont, knew nothing about the incorporation of towns of the sixth class.

The Board of Trustees, to appoint a committee to represent the town, in engaging an attorney, held an emergency meeting in which Jas. E. Sullivan and Geo. Thompson were appointed. The two men met with District Attorney, Geo. A. Lamont, in Fairfield, within the next few days, and engaged his services in defending the town.

The following is a quote from the complainant:

"And the plaintiffs further allege that Wharf Street and Main Street in said Town of Rio Vista are not one and the same, as referred to in the petition and orders herein, but the centers of said streets, as they are laid down on the official map of said town filed in the Recorder's office of Solano County on April 22, 1862, are ten chains apart: that thereby the boundaries of said town as fixed by the Board of Supervisors are so indefinite that it cannot be determined what they are from the proceedings herein.

"That said, Joseph Bruning is a resident within the limits of said Town of Rio Vista as laid out by the said Board of Supervisors, and has a large amount of property taxable therein, to-wit: \$13,850.

"That said, J.H. Gardiner is not a resident within the limits of said town of Rio Vista as laid out by said Board of Supervisors, but has a large amount of property taxable therein, to-wit: \$12,143.

"That of the lands included within said town limits, 128 acres belonging to said J.H. Gardiner and 170

acres belonging to said Joseph Bruning are farming land, pure and simple; not fenced by itself, and used entirely for farming purposes, and will not be benefited in any way by any proposed incorporation of said town.

"That on the day set for the hearing of said petition J.M. Gregory, an attorney-at-law, appearing for Joseph Bruning and J.H. Gardiner, who have a large amount of property included within said territory, applied to the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors when the Board was not in session to know when the matter of incorporation of the Town of Rio Vista would be heard, and stated to him that he wished to oppose the making of the order, and wanted to be heard on behalf of said Joseph Bruning and J.H. Gardiner in opposition thereto; that no hour had been fixed in the notice given for the hearing; that afterwards when said Board was in session, on said 4th day of December, 1893, said J.M. Gregory again appeared before the said Board of Supervisors and asked the Chairman of said Board to inform him at what hour it would be heard, and was told by said chairman that he (said Chairman) did not know; said J.M. Gregory then informed said Chairman and said Board that he wished to oppose and contest said application for incorporation on behalf of said Joseph Bruning and J.H. Gardiner; that said Chairman informed him that as soon as the matter came up for hearing he would have him called, said J.M. Gregory being engaged in the trial of a case in the

Superior Court of Solano County, and not being able to be in attendance on said Board during the whole day.

"That when said matter came up for hearing said J.M. Gregory was not called, and was not informed that the said matter was being heard, and no opportunity was given him to call witnesses in opposition to said application for incorporation.

"That as soon as he could after the hearing of said case in said Superior Court he went before said Board of Supervisors and then found out for the first time that they had had a hearing on the matter; he protested against their action and desired to be heard in opposition, and said Board of Supervisors refused to hear him; and refused to allow him to call witnesses, and refused to

hear any testimony on the subject, and refused to rescind or modify their action in the making of said order."

The City of Rio Vista Logo (Seal), includes Incorporation December 30, 1893. We can see that Mr. Gregory's efforts against Incorporation were to no avail, and Rio Vista started a new era.



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On the occasion of its
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- ~ Member of Waterfront Committee
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- ~ Community Emergency Response Team Member - Solano County/Rio Vista

I want to work on the challenges that our city faces, and want the opportunity to work towards the best possible solutions. Our downtown needs to move forward on revitalization, we need a balanced budget, and we must work on improving both senior services and youth programs. Some of our biggest upcoming challenges are the water and sewer rates, upgrading of our streets and general infrastructure, and strengthening the Police and Fire protection for our City. Rio Vista is facing challenging financial problems that will take courage and leadership to solve. I believe I can provide the leadership to move forward on all these issues.

**A vote for leadership,
results & common sense.**

I.D. #1290120



**Serving the Community
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**Congratulations Rio Vista on
150 years.**

CENTENNIAL

From Front Page

the birthdate of the town was derived. Joe Viera continued the local history lesson by reading passages from "History of Solano County 1878," which contained information on the early establishment of the public school and the Catholic and Congregational churches.

Many great ideas were brought to the table that evening, including a "kick-off" dinner to be held in early 1958 honoring the oldest native-born Rio Vista resident. The possibilities of a local museum were suggested, as were pageants, parades, contests, dinners and dances.

Ernie Blackwelder had this to say, "Rio Vista never let us down, and they have never dropped the ball on a promotion for the city, and I'm confident that the Centennial Celebration will be a huge success."

When Gene Heath, chamber president, closed the meeting, the feeling was unanimous that a celebration was in order.

Over the next several weeks, plans were made for a dinner which would celebrate the beginning of the year's festivities. Postcards were sent out to the older citizens of the town requesting birthdate information. The returned cards were gone through, with the results determining the oldest living local-born citizen.

An official Rio Vista Centennial "kickoff" dinner was held on February 12, 1958, at the "old" Veterans' Memorial Hall located at the corner of California and Third Streets.

The dinner of oven baked chicken was hosted by Master of Ceremonies C. Earl Stewart. One of the highlights of the evening's entertainment was a local musical quartet called "The Gin Rummies," who performed period songs. The group was comprised of Bob Bader, Walker Willis, Tony Anthony and Perry Edwards, with Bob Ruth accompanying on the guitar.

Joe Viera read stories about Rio Vista's formative years and how the community was established to an enthusiastic, interested audience.

One of the most informative speeches of the evening came from Dr. Richard Coke Wood, who was the executive secretary of the statewide Conference

of California Historical Societies. Dr. Wood, a history professor at the College of the Pacific, Stockton, spoke on the subject of California centennials and the importance of local museums.

That evening, 24 "old-timers" were honored, their ages ranging from 75 to 93, Jim Simpson being the eldest in attendance.

It was apparent by the attendance of the

kickoff dinner and the enormous interest of the community that the Centennial Celebration was off to a good start.

Over the next several weeks, volunteers were recruited and committees were formed. It seemed as though the majority of the town wanted to be either volunteers or in some manner connected with the celebration.

The Rio Vista centennial organizational meeting was held on March 26, 1958. The purpose of the organization was cited as follows: "The purpose of the Rio Vista Centennial was to inventory the past 100 years whereby we may better build the future through the experiences gained. This is an impartial, non-political, non-profit community project."

On March 27, 1958 a.m., "Fum" Jongeneel was unanimously named general chairman of the Rio Vista Centennial Celebration, an honor that he accepted without hesitation. Once in control, Jongeneel's first order of business was to set April 7, 1958 as the final day for drafting celebration activities. Sol Mogel, councilman and owner of a local pharmacy, was appointed assistant chairman, while Thelma Lee was named secretary and Henry Darville treasurer. Committees were formed to organize a historical museum, parade, whiskerino contest, dances, barbecue, publicity and advertising, etc. Wm. "Bill" Foster (original owner of Fosters) was designated as photographer, and Braid Pezzaglia was in charge of special events. The most time-consuming project of all was undertaken by Idella Church, who designed and created a centennial scrapbook.

With all of the committees formed and a chairman appointed, it was finally time to plan the events that would take place over the next several months, culminating with a centennial



"blow-off" celebration on September 28, 1958.

A "centennial calendar" was created, which listed events to take place each weekend from the beginning of May through the end of September.

As the centennial committees were busy organizing each of their events, it soon became apparent that a temporary office need be established, with its own telephone line.

In late April 1958, a business office for the Rio Vista Centennial Committee was set up in Assistant Chairman Sol Mogel's drug store, at the corner of Main and Third Streets. The store made for a fitting central location in downtown Rio Vista.

Just about every event that took place around town during the five-month centennial festivities was somehow tied into the celebration.

On April 20, 1958, the Rio Vista Farm Bureau Center held its 11th-annual barbecue. The event was held at the Hamilton Ranch, located just eight miles west of town. The day's event included "sheep-dog trials" and a beef barbecue. The cost was \$1.50 for adults and \$0.50 for children. A special recognition of the pioneer citizens and families of pioneers from the area was a highlight of the day.

It was during April that Miss Idella Church began

collecting the needed materials for the centennial scrapbook, gathering both old photographs of a general nature as well as any photos she could find that had been taken at previous centennial-related events.

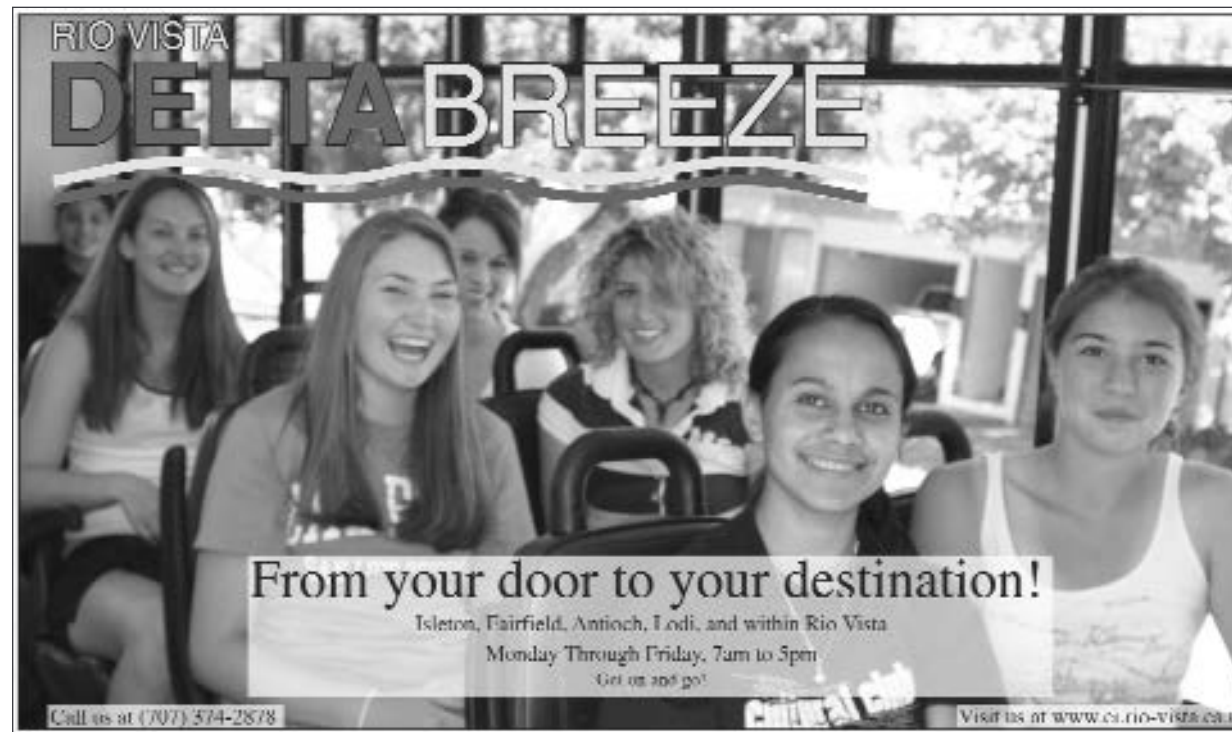
The month of May was an active month for Rio Vista. The first event came on May 1, 1958, with the start of the whisker-growing contest, or "Whiskerino" contest, which was opened to all of the men of town. In order to enter the contest, a "Brothers of the Brush" badge had to be purchased for \$1.00. This entitled the bearer to grow a beard. The

badge had to be worn in plain sight at all times. If a contestant was seen without his badge in public sight a \$0.25 fine was placed. If one was to shave his beard and start again, a \$1.00 fine was given out. Prizes were given out in September for the following categories of beards: longest, originality, bushiest, neatest, biggest mustache, reddest beard, blackest beard, grayest beard, best van dyke and best goatee.

With the Brothers of the Brush taking off so successfully, the "Sisters of the Swish" was created for the women involved with the events. The ladies of Rio

Vista held a meeting on the evening of May 16 at city hall to review their duties and activities throughout the celebration. To be a member of the sisters, the women had to dress in period attire each Saturday, all day, whatever they were doing. Like the Brothers' organization, they too had buttons, which sold for \$1.50.

Continued on A9



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Congratulations Rio Vista on 150 Years!

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Continued From A8

The second weekend of May, committee members started gathering items for the centennial museum, which would be located on Main Street. The doors opened the last week of May, under the direction of Mary Older and Lorna Perkins, with the museum located in the building adjacent to Western Auto on Main Street, open weekdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. (presently the site of a karate studio).

The final weekend of May was busy with a kickoff barbecue at Egbert Field, the town's brand-new baseball park located on St. Francis Way. Local citizens were urged to attend the day's events in period costumes. The official dedication of Egbert Field, named after local baseball enthusiast E.S. "Eggie" Egbert, who was oftentimes referred to as "Mr. Baseball," would not take place until July 20, 1958.

May was also the month that the official centennial emblem was adopted. The design, drawn by local chiropractor Bob Bader, epitomized the 100th-anniversary celebration to the utmost. The imagery of the emblem, representing elements of river, steamship, fish, gas rig, wheat and a pioneer couple, tied the history of the town together in a delightful and symbolic picture. The image, once adopted, was placed on all stationary; it adorned the cover of the centennial scrapbook, and appeared on plates, glasses and ashtrays, which were available for purchase. Mr. Bader was well-known locally for his ability as an artist. Some of his other projects included the covers for Fosters menus, which he did during the late 1950's.

The committee announced plans to have four queens reign over the centennial festivities in early May. The queens' duties would be to appear, in centennial dress, at all of the events staged for the several months of celebration, and then reign over the final celebration on the weekend of September 27 and 28. The centennial committee decided that the queens would be chosen from students at the local high school. Each class at Rio Vista Joint Union High School, freshman through senior, would choose a queen to represent their grade.

During the May 8 meeting of the Rio Vista City Council, the council granted the centennial fund \$5,000 for use in the year's promo-

tions. With this generous financial contribution, the city expressed their support towards the forthcoming events and celebration.

On May 24, 1958, the Young Ladies Institute (Y.L.I.) held a fashion show and luncheon. Much of the days festivities were geared to tie in with the centennial celebration, such as the appearance of a barbershop quartet, period music and a period costume show.

On June 8, 1958, the Rio Vista Centennial Family Picnic Day was enjoyed with a parade from Main Street to the baseball park on St. Francis Way. The parade, under the direction of Howard Calinoff, was led by Police Chief Pat Cardoza and Deputy Sheriff Al Pennell. The parade was followed by many events staged at the ballpark, such as: a square dance demonstration by the Rio Vista Square Dance Group; Balloons to the Moon contest, the coronation of the centennial queens, greased pig races, etc. The day's events were conducted by Rio Vista Storage Activity Area and members of Battery D-436 Missile Base, with Col. I.M. Diamond holding the position of general chairman for the day's events.

All of the events were well attended, and luckily weather conditions had so far been accommodating. But there were still many more events to come before the final celebration at the end of September.

In this day and age it might be hard to understand how an entire community was able to put together an event as complex as the Rio Vista Centennial Celebration of 1958. With the modern convenience of today's technology, which seemingly make so much of our day-to-day tasks quicker and simpler, it still seems as though our lives today are so busy that the staging of such an event may almost seem like fiction to many. However, the Centennial Celebration was an event that lasted in the memories of local citizens for the rest of their lives.

The summer of 1958 was full of scheduled centennial events which were fun for the entire family. Not only was the Centennial Celebration in full swing, but as a positive byproduct, the committee was able to pull the community even closer together by tying in other local events, creating community spirit that would be hard to match. For instance, on June 22, the baseball park, Egbert Field,

was officially dedicated; that month Crosby's Service Station, located at the intersection of Highway 12 and Main Street, held its grand opening, and the Kelly and Miller Circus arrived in Rio Vista, and pitched their tents on Airport Road across from the city dump. Those were just a few of the other events that had young and old rallying about town.

When the centennial museum opened its doors under the direction of Mary Older and Lorna Perkins, the community was truly excited. Some of the items on display were: two Indian skulls from the original site of Rio Vista; gold scales and Civil War sabers, 1911 vacuum cleaner; edition of the *Daily San Joaquin Republic* dated June 12, 1859; two glass lamps from Rio Vista's coal oil street lamps; an 1838 dime and cooking utensils that were brought across the plains via covered wagon in 1861. This may not seem like much now, but it was a start. It is important to note that the centennial museum was just set up for a few months, and it should not to be confused with the present Rio Vista Museum which was founded in 1975. When all was said and done, more than 4,030 individuals had signed the guest register at the centennial museum.

One event that definitely gave people the feeling of being transported back in time was a riverboat outing. The Mansion Belle, the last stern wheeler in operation on the West Coast, was hired to take passengers on an excursion down the Sacramento River on June 29, 1958. The boat left Sacramento at 8:30 a.m. and made stops at Courtland and Isleton before arriving at Rio Vista around 12:30. Two hundred energetic delatans boarded the ship and relived the days of a bygone era.

The centennial committee came up with a range of events, with one held each weekend at the very least. One of the most well-attended events held was presented by the local Veterans of Foreign Wars, who presented old-time melodramas at the Youth Center. The audience would "boo" when the villain walked on stage and "cheer" when the hero appeared.

The Vista Theatre held festivals of silent movies with silver screen legends Rudolph Valentino, Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplain and the Keystone Kops. These silent screen gems were entertaining to both the children who were seeing them for the first time

and the adults who remembered seeing them in their youth. Many of them may very well have seen them in their day at one of the early local theatres, the Netherlands Theatre or the Vista Theatre.

Rio Vistan's love water, and an event that combined water and fun was the "Aqua-Fun" water carnival, featuring events that ranged from water ballet to a full blown fire department vs. police department water feud. The latter event showed all that kids aren't the only ones who enjoy water fights.

The climax to the Rio Vista Centennial Celebration occurred on the weekend of September 27 and 28. A grand ball was held on Saturday night at the Veteran's Hall, located on the corner of California and Third Streets. The hall was the location of most dances held in Rio Vista during that period of time.

As mentioned earlier, other events were inter-mixed with the Centennial Celebration. Probably the biggest event to coincide was that of the Bass Derby, which was held the same weekend as the climax of the centennial festivities. This event was held with all the grandeur that its predecessors had.

Sunday, September 28, 1958, was a day that most old-timers will still remember. The events of the day began at 12:30 with a parade of more than one hundred entries. Parade entries included: five marching bands, twenty-five floats; fifteen horse teams; seven majorette units, five drill teams, and many more. The parade began in the new "Riverside" subdivision and proceeded up Main Street,

turning up Seventh Street and then turning down California Street, ending in the city park. Interestingly enough, most of this parade was captured on 16mm film, and has been preserved for the ages. A crowd of approximately 6,000 was present to watch the parade. Rio Vista organizations were represented well in the parade with local entries by the likes of: Rio Vista Eagles; Royal Neighbors; Soroptimist; Rio Vista Depot; Rebekah's; Rio Vista Fire Department, Boy Scouts, Camp Fire Girls; Rio Vista High School; Rio Vista Grammar School, Jack Bauman, Y.L.I.; Blackwelder Manufacturing Co., etc.

After the parade, a barbecue was held in the city park, with plenty of food for all who attended. During the barbecue, the judging took place for both the Brothers of the Brush and Sisters of the Swish contestants. In the Wiskerino contest, Bill Brown was given the honor of "Mr. Wiskerino." Other awards went to Bob Lewis, Norman Silva, John Kolko, Bill Carlos, Manuel Goveia, Gordon Gratus, J.C. Brown, William "Curly" Hurley, Bob Bader, Bud Holland, Buster Brown, Marty Kofod, Milton Wallace and Jackson Bailey.

With so many events taking place during the Rio Vista Centennial Celebration, from the kickoff dinner in February to the final event held in September, it is difficult to go into great detail regarding each and every one of them. Hopefully

this and the previous two articles have scratched enough of the surface to show just how involved the community was in coming together and celebrating the 100th birthday of Rio Vista. The 1950's were a decade of many changes about town, and all over, for that matter.

The memory of the Rio Vista Centennial has been kept alive by the scrapbook which Idella Church put together. The books were originally available for the purchasing price of \$2.00. As events took place, and more pages commemorating those events were completed, those pages could be acquired and added to the book. Not everyone kept up with those pages, therefore some of the books will have more pages than others. These books are hard to find these days, since nobody wants to give them up. Some may wonder about, lost to plates, glasses and ashtrays, still adorned with the centennial emblem. The emblem is often part of an item that surfaces once in a while. Most people who own such things have kept them as a memory of the event, and very seldom part with them.



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A History of Rio Vista's Service Clubs

PHIL PEZZAGLIA
Historian in-Chief

Rio Vista's can be proud of the service clubs that are organized locally. These organizations have been instrumental in Rio Vista's past and present and will no doubt have an important place in our community's future.

It would be hard to list all the accomplishments of each of the local organizations in our community. It would require several hundred pages to do justice in presenting the history of each club.

What I would like to focus on is the early years of the local clubs; who organized them, when they were chartered, and how they grew during the first couple of years. I'd also like to describe some of the programs, activities and events that they implemented during those formative years.

These service organizations are voluntary and non-profit. Members meet regularly and perform charitable work by fundraising or by hands-on efforts.

The Women's Improvement Club established 1912 when a group of local women organized a club to improve Rio Vista and its surrounding vicinity. The group met at Town Hall and occupied the offices of the Knights of Pythias Hall, located on the northwest corner of Second and Montezuma Streets. Prior to the meeting invitations were sent out to every woman in town seeking help for the organization. This established the beginning of the Women's Improvement Club.

The first club officers were President Mrs. Geo Brown, Vice President Mrs. Jas. Hamilton, Recording Secretary Margaret A. Hamilton, Financial Secretary Mabel Ruble and Treasurer Kathryn Offerman.

They were instrumental in helping Rio Vista get a library and spent countless hours on city park plaza improvements during the early years. They sponsored everything that benefited Rio Vista's progress.

In September of 1920 the Woman's Improvement Club joined the State Federation of Women's Clubs, and by 1923 the membership was listed at seventy-five members. During the 1920s the club raised enough money to purchase the vacant lot on the southwest corner of Fourth and Montezuma Streets.

On March 23, 1928 they opened the Women's Improvement Clubhouse with an elaborate celebration. The day's festivities began with a luncheon at the Hotel Rio Vista. The luncheon was conducted under the supervision of Mrs. L.A. Anthony, who handled reservations as well as supervised the dining room's decorations and table arrangements.

After the luncheon was complete the attendants adjourned to the new clubhouse. Mrs. Mark Church and Mrs. Roy Goodman, as well as a few other able assistants, had gone to great lengths to provide a beautifully decorated atmosphere for this most memorable of occasions.

Floral greetings were displayed throughout the clubhouse building. Those who sent floral arrangements were the Rio Vista



Rio Vista Rotary Club, Charter Night, 1953 at the American Legion Hall

Post and Ladies Auxiliary, Kiwanis Club, Friday Club, American Legion, Saturday Club of Vacaville, Wednesday Club of Suisun, Miss Clara Dills, Mrs. F.A. Steiger, J. Stern & Co., Brown-Gordon Company, and the Rio Vista Aerie of Eagles.

Rio Vista, has been a crying need to our city for many years. It will be successful in promoting community spirit, which is needed, a worthy movement and a better understanding in our community."

The ceremony was concluded with Mrs. Duncan S.

Robinson's reading of Van Dike's verses on *The House and the Door*. Mrs. Thompson, Mrs. Nunes, Mrs. Lent and Mrs. McCormack served tea after the programs were completed. For over ninety years the Women's Improvement Club has been a vital part of the Rio Vista community. There are only a handful of organizations in Rio Vista that can claim such a long history. In recent years the name on the building has read The 401 Club. The Organization of the Rio Vista Lions Club established on Jan. 28,

1938. Twenty local businessmen gathered together to organize, elect officers and apply for a charter from Lions Club International.

Officers elected that evening were President Sam W. Smith, first Vice President Walter B. Grimes, second Vice President Douglas McCormack, third Vice Secretary Roy S. Ish, Secretary/Treasurer L.R. Farrell, Lion Tamer Albert Anderson, Tail Twister John F. Abel, E.S. Egbert, G. Gordon, Rev. J. R. Lauritzen and Director Victor Morgan.

It was jointly decided that meetings would be held every Tuesday at 12:10 p.m. at the Rio Vista Hotel.

Jack Dole, of the Rio Vista Hotel, promised he would assist in making arrangements to take a vacant space in the rear of the kitchen, and create a meeting place for the club. He also suggested that this room be put into use by other local organizations.

The first regular meeting of the local club, sponsored by the Lions Club of Fairfield, was held on February 1, 1938, at the Rio Vista Hotel. The official charter was signed by thirty-five members at a meeting held on February 5, 1938.

Meetings were held

throughout the month of February, with an emphasis on the clubs Charter Night celebration.

Charter night was held on March 18, 1938 at the Women's Improvement Club. More than 185 people attended the evening's festivities. Dr. Walter Dexter, who served as the state superintendent of public instructions and was the first vice-president of Lions International spoke at the event.

Harry Mortensen, secretary of the Fairfield Lions, assumed the position of toastmaster for the evening while Senator Thomas McCormack, was an additional featured speaker. Each of the three men gave insightful and appropriate speeches.

Sam W. Smith accepted the Rio Vista Club charter from District Governor Don M. Leidig. Leidig awarded silver key memberships to Sam W. Smith, Laurence Farrell and W.W. Dawley, by Don Leidig.

The members of the Rio Vista Lions Club who signed the charter were John F. Abel, Floyd Allender, Albert Anderson, E.F. Blackwelder, Dr. J.J. Couperus, W.W. Dawley, W.H.K. Dunbar, E.S. Egbert, L.R. Farrell, C.W. Flodin, W.E. Gailey, G.C. Gordon, Dr. Tom M. Green, Walter B. Grimes, Howard Heringer, Roy S. Ish, J.R. Lauritzen, Douglas McCormack, Wallace McCormack, Willbert C. Miller, Rev. Victor Morgan, W.E. Moser, R. Pezzaglia, J.W. Richards, Sam W. Smith, John B. Thomas, O. Truitt, and A.C. Wood.

Over seventy years later, the Rio Vista Lions Club is just as active as the day they were organized.

The Organization of the Rio Vista Rotary Club established in Dec. of 1953. Hale Meader, George Augusto, William H. Bourne, Herbert Stevenson, and Arthur Handjian, gathered at the Rio Vista Hotel to discuss organizing a local Rotary Club.

Prior to the meeting, Meader sent out cards to eligible members of the community asking them if they would be interested in joining.

In January 1953 the businessmen of the community organized a meeting in Rio Vista to talk about starting a local Rotary Club. Five members of the Dixon Rotary Club and four representatives of the Antioch

Rotary Club were present at that Jan. 7th meeting. Both clubs were co-sponsors of the Rio Vista Club.

Members of both clubs described the history and nature of the organization to a group of interested future members.

Local Rio Vista attorney Hale Meader, acted as temporary chairman for the evening's meeting.

On the evening of January 15, 1953, twenty-seven local professionals gathered to listen to George Drollet, of the Dixon Rotary Club, Ian Strange, Don Little, and Victor M. Parachini of the Antioch Rotary Club.

J. Price Gittinger of the University of California at Davis was the featured guest speaker that evening. The twenty-seven men in attendance decided to apply for a charter. On February 13, 1953 the Rio Vista Rotary Club received its charter.

The District Governor, Otto Hieb, was in attendance as well as Ian Strange and Vic Parachini who represented the Antioch Club. Jerry Fiedler and George Drulay also attended and represented the Dixon Club.

The newly formed organizations Charter Night was held on March 14, 1953. More than 400 people were in attendance at the American Legion Hall, located on the corner of California and Third Streets.

The clubs charter members were James W. Arnold, M.J. Asta, George M. Augusto, Bernard F. Bowler, William H. Bourne, O.A. Church, Charles C. Crosby, J.A. Dole, C.W. Flodin, Paul J. Fritts, Arthur S. Handjian, S. Lyle Johnson, John L. Kincheloe, Nolen King, Paul Lamothe, Irving P. Leutholtz, Jesse Marks, H.A. McDougal, Hale Meader, warren D. Noteware, J.W. Richards, Arthur C. Schafer, Ebner Schafer, Herbert M. Stevenson, Milton Wallace, Stanley Webster, and Elmer Wendt.

The clubs first officers were President Hale Meader, Secretary O.C. Church, Treasurer Ebner Schafer, Elmer Wendt, Jim Arnold and John Kincheloe.

The Soroptimist Club of Rio Vista was established in 1956. An organization is only as good as its members and the town of Rio Vista had some very energetic, hardworking women that were interested in forming a local club.

More than twenty women showed an interest in joining. The twenty individuals who will always be remembered as the charter members were co-owner of Kofod's Trucking Company Ruth Kofod, Executive Secretary for Chester Cunnington Martie Cunnington, co-owner of Gambles Western Auto Supply Company Mary Health, co-owner of Geo. Augusto Insurance Agency Theresa Augusto, co-owner of the Rio Vista Laundry and Cleaners Elaine LaMonthe, Owner of Miller's Gift Shop Ethel Miller, co-owner of Bob Simons Seed Treating Leverne Simons, co-owner of McCord's Accounting

Service Mary McCord, co-owner of Leutholtz Crane Service Eleanor Leutholtz, Counselor at Rio Vista High School Irma Jellett, owner and operator of a farm Eva P. Hamilton, co-owner of Walter Olsen & Son Shell Products Eliana Olson, co-owner of Bird's Apparel Ruby Bird, co-owner of Schafer & Loudon Mary

Older, co-owner of Blackwelder Mfg. Co. and Iron Works Mildred Tudhope, co-owner and Editor for The Delta Herald Barbara Eckman, Bess Combs; Assistant Cashier of the Bank of Rio Vista Ruby Paolinelli, co-owner of the Milton Wallace Plumbing & Heating Mary Wallace, Lois Heringer, and Joanne Evans. Women not included in the picture are owner of Stenographic Service Thelma Lee and co-owner of Hap's Boat Rental and Sales Zeldia Robertson.

Over fifty-two years ago the Soroptimist Club of Antioch sponsored the Rio Vista Club's Charter Presentation and Installation of Officers.

The event began on Feb. 18, 1956 at 7 p.m. at the Masonic Hall located on the corner of California and Second Streets. However, the event had been originally scheduled at the American Legion Hall. Approximately two hundred guests were in attendance that evening, at \$3.25 a plate.

Representatives from Soroptimist Clubs from Tracy to Lakeport were in attendance. Clubs from Fresno, Lodi, Walnut Creek, Oakland, Pittsburg, Antioch, Hayward, Fairfield, Placerville and Sacramento were some of the few represented.

Besides the in-person representatives, greetings were sent from 650 member clubs. A speech titled the Soroptimist Beginnings by Violet Richardson Ward, the Charter President of the very first Soroptimist Club was the highlight of the evening.

Those greeting the new club were John Kincheloe of the Rio Vista Rotary, Ross Furlong of the Rio Vista Lions, Vern Hutton of the Isleton Lions, Joe Lorentz of the Rio Vista Chamber of Commerce, Mrs. Joe Richards of the Women's Improvement Club and Dr. E.W. Simmer the Mayor of Rio Vista.

It was at this meeting that the first officers were installed. They were named President Ruby Paolinelli, Vice President Mary Wallace, Secretary Barbara Eckman, Treasurer Eliana Olson, Director Ruby Bird, Director Irma Jellett, Delegate Eleanor Leutholtz and Delagte Eva Hamilton.

It was noted in a Soroptimist newsletter that those charter members were shy about giving their slogan for the first time.

Some of the earliest meetings were held at the member's homes. According to the charter program it was listed that the club would meet Thursday's at 12:10 p.m. at the Women's Improvement Club. Eventually membership grew and it was decided to meet in the banquet room of Fosters (1959-1967). This continued for a few years before changing to The Point Restaurant (1967- present).

The Soroptimist Club of Rio Vista took pride in the activities their club was involved in. They knew how important these programs could be to the community.

Several of the early programs were the Youth Employment Organization (YEO) which was established in 1956, the Levee Lopers which was established in 1958 and the Courteous Driver Award which was established in 1958.

The "new" Rio Vista

PHIL PEZZAGLIA

Historian in-Chief

In March of 1862, four men, Samuel R. Perry, John M. Sidwell, William K. Squires, and Issac Dunham, all from the former Rio Vista settlement (see Flood story), went to see Mr. Joseph Bruning. Bruning was a wealthy rancher who lived a league downriver on a higher plat of the land grant, located on an upper edge of the Montezuma Hills. Bruning had previously been in the hotel business in San Francisco, but due to ill health he purchased land in the Los Ulpinos grant around 1858. The purpose of this visit by the four men was to ask Bruning for a plot of land on which to rebuild the Rio Vista settlement. Mr. Bruning granted their request and gave them some land on the northeastern part of his property. Accordingly Mr. Bruning surveyed and recorded the town plat of "New Rio Vista" in 1862. T.J. McWorthy, who then owned property adjacent to the northern edge of Bruning's, also surveyed and recorded an addition to the town. It was then decided that Main Street would be chosen as the line of division between the two ranches. From this point in time on Rio Vista was free to grow.

The "new" Rio Vista grew quite rapidly, and many of the people from the old settlement returned to start again. Hotels and stores were established; S.R. Perry erected the first store. J.M. Sidwell put up a hotel, on Second Street (the present site of Hotel Ram), as did Wm. K. Squires on South Front Street (where the present parking lots are for Bank of Rio Vista). This was a perfect location, right across from the steamboat wharf. J.C. Carter built a two-story home that was the object of many conversations.

The post office was established at Samuel R. Perry's store, located on the southwest corner of Main and Front Streets (the present site of Bank of Rio Vista), with Mr. Perry assuming the position of postmaster, a position that he had held in the old settlement. Incidentally, the Perry home was located next door to the south of his store. On February 21, 1863, local hotel owner William K. Squires was appointed to the office of postmaster.

Robert Carter & son built and operated another small salmon cannery on north Front Street until 1865, when Robert Jr. opened a tin store.

One of the first orders of business for the new town was to construct a wharf, which Joseph Bruning built in the spring of 1862. The Steam Navigation Co. purchased it afterwards, and eventually California Pacific R.R. Co. took over.

These years will be remembered as the golden age of river transportation,



with side-wheelers and schooners filling the Sacramento River. The ships brought mail and passengers, etc.

Like any town, the need for a cemetery arose, and therefore The Public Cemetery was laid out in 1862 on the far east outskirts of town, near the Protestant Cemetery and adjoining it on the far side. The first burial on record, that is the first head stone, was the infant son of P.A. and M.E. Hatler, who died on June 13, 1862.

Mr. Joseph Bruning always held education in the highest regard, and therefore donated land for the first public school house. It was erected in the summer of 1862 on the corner of Fifth and Montezuma Streets (the site of the present-day Bruning School). Classes started in the fall of 1862, with James U. Chase as the first teacher. There are, unfortunately, no records that can be found regarding the school between 1862 and 1870. Therefore it is impossible to give an accurate list of all the teachers who have taught there and/or the students who attended classes there. The following teachers are known to have taught between 1862 and 1870, but the exact years are not known: Jas. U. Chase, Byron Hunt, Mr. Burdell, Miss Mary Burns, Mrs. R. Thrust, Miss Sweetland, Miss Stone, and Miss Fannie Davis.

When the town turned six years old, the need for religion was addressed. As with any group of people, the town was divided between choices, therefore

both a catholic church and a congregational church were organized.

The St. Joseph's Catholic Church was founded in June 1868, and has the honor of being the first church built in Rio Vista. The church was erected on Fourth Street (the same location that it is today), and was named St. Joseph's after the gentleman who had so graciously donated the land on which the church would be built, Mr. Joseph Bruning. St. Joseph's fell under the jurisdiction of the Suisun Parish.

The Congregational Church of Rio Vista was the result of Samuel Brown, M.D., who gathered together the citizens of Rio Vista into a Sunday school, in August of 1868. His work, along with a visit from then Superintendent of Home Missions, Rev. J.H. Warren, D.D., resulted in the organization of a congregational church, the First Church of Christ, in Rio Vista, on May 29, 1869, with 15 charter members.

The American Home Missionary Society helped the church through its infant years by providing financial assistance, allowing the Church Building Society to build a house of worship on Sacramento Street, just north of Main Street (the site of the present congregational church).

The first acting pastor of the church was Rev. S.B. Dunton, who held the position from May 29, 1869 to November 1869.

Among those who moved to Rio Vista during the years 1862 - 1869 were: James T. Hadley sometime

prior to 1863, Marcus Champion prior to 1865, William Sprague prior to 1865, John Ingersoll prior to 1865, John & Ida Fiscus arrived in 1865, Bridget Hart in 1866, Thomas Powell Emigh in 1867, the Dozier brothers; Leonard, Edward Charles, Melville, and Anthony arrived from South Carolina in 1868, George H. Fry prior to 1869, N.C Butler and his family in 1869, Charles M. Stoll in 1869, opening a harness shop on May 12, 1869.

Beside the aforementioned townspeople, Joseph & Johanna Hall and A.G. Westgate, from the old settlement relocated in the new town.

It is easy to see why so many consider Joseph Bruning to be one of the most influential founding fathers of Rio Vista. Mr. Bruning was a truly generous benefactor to the community, whose generosity gave Rio Vista a foundation to grow on.



Rio Vista Sportsman Paradise

This t-shirt design was created by LeRoy Weber in 1950. It was originally sold at Weber's Federated Store, which became Weber's Dept. Store in 1955. Weber's was in operation here in Rio Vista from 1942-1995.

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Rio's 1936 discovery of gas

PHIL PEZZAGLIA
Historian in-Chief

It had been speculated for a number of years that there might be a presence of oil in the Rio Vista/ Montezuma Hills area.

In 1920, an expert in the field of geology was hired and sent out to the Montezuma Hills to inspect the area, gather some information and make a report. The report was favorable, and interest in drilling for oil was initiated.

In 1921, Pacific Gas & Electric drilled the first well, suitably named "Montezuma No. 1." This well was under the direction of a Stanford scientist and educator by the name of Dr. Bailey Willis.

Montezuma No. 1 was spudded on July 10, 1921, approximately seven miles west of the town of Rio Vista, in the Montezuma Hills. P.G. & E. leased a large tract of land with expectations of discovering oil.

At the end of five weeks, drilling had reached upwards of 1,000 feet. At that point in time, engineers expected to drill a minimum of 2,500 to 3,000 feet before any definite results could be expected. For 320 days, drilling crews worked with rotary equipment in eight-hour shifts before the well was finally shut down on May 16, 1922. Unfortunately, ten months worth of work found nothing, and Dr. Willis didn't realize that he missed discovering the natural gas field by drilling only five miles too far west.

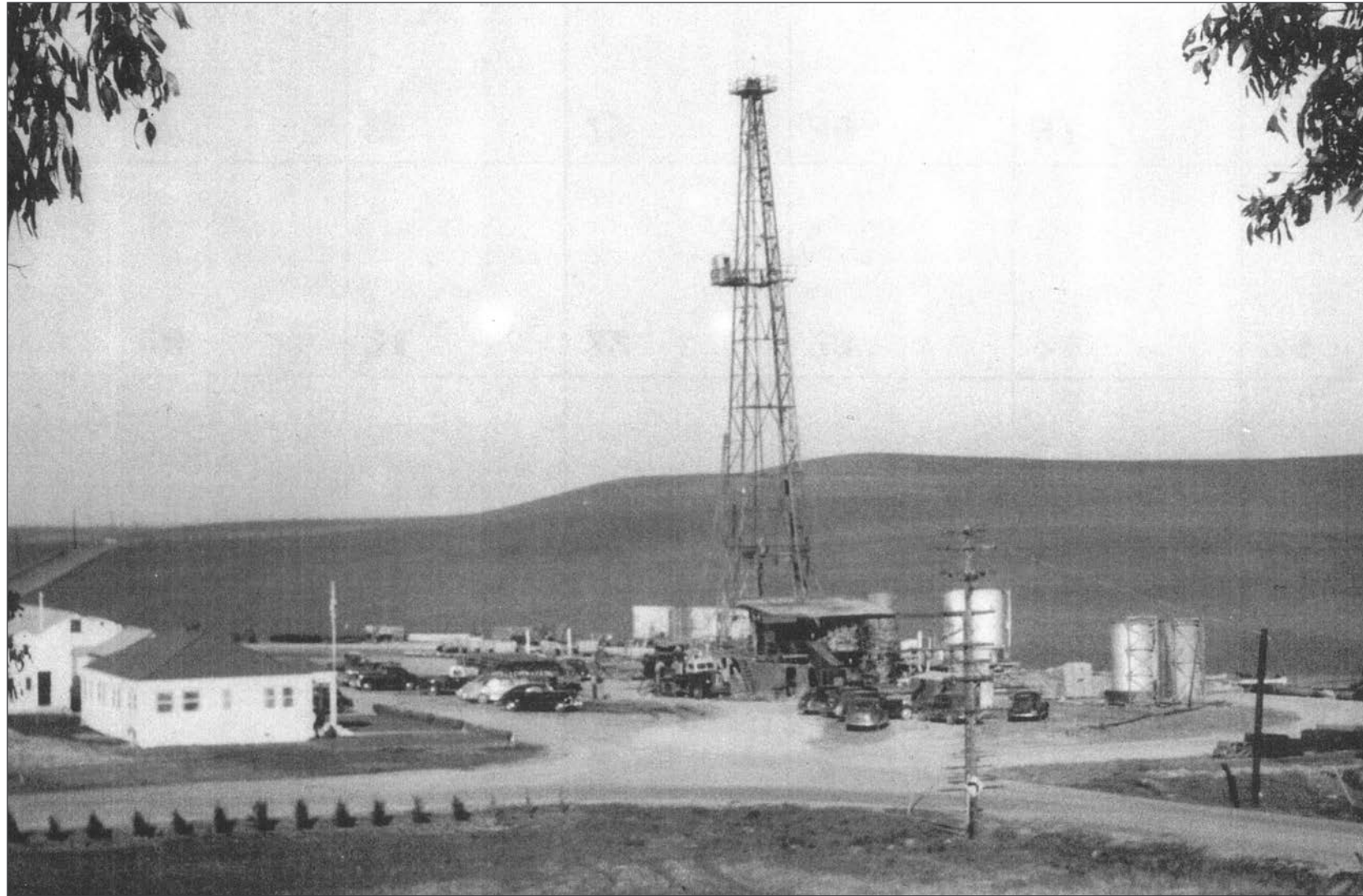
Six years passed, and drilling for oil became just a thing of the past; a story that people were already starting to forget about.

Then in February 1928, a Mr. Foster from Tulsa Oklahoma spoke at the Rio Vista Veterans' Memorial Building, located on the corner of California and Third Streets, regarding the possibilities once again of locating oil in the area.

Mr. Foster offered to drill test wells, for free, in order to ascertain whether or not there was any oil or gas in the territory. This idea met with little interest.

Eight years passed, and in 1936 the idea of drilling for oil in the Montezuma Hills presented itself for a third time.

It was in this year that the Amerada Petroleum Company took a look at data compiled by a geologist named Downs McCloskey. Mr. McCloskey gathered reflection seismograph data and performed field geology tests in the Montezuma Hills. After analyzing the data, compiling it and presenting it to Amerada, talk of drilling in the Rio Vista/Montezuma Hills area once again came up. It was because of this data that Amerada looked into and took extensive leases on



Gas Well Emigh #1-June 18, 1936

land in the area.

Some of the farmers still had the memories of the earlier drilling stuck in their heads, but they were willing to take a chance. And it was a very wise move.

The history-making gas well to be the first drilled was on Arthur Emigh's property, just two miles west of town. The Amerada Petroleum Corporation brought in Emigh No. 1, as it was named, on June 18, 1936.

However, when the wildcat went up, Amerada was actually drilling for oil when they discovered gas.

In 1936, natural gas was worth only seven cents per thousand cubic feet (Mcf). In fact, in 1936 gas was considered a by-product in other parts of the country. It was often flared due to lack of a market.

Pacific Gas & Electric was the only company at that time that would purchase gas. However, they had an ample supply of gas coming in from the Kettleman Hills, south of Coalinga.

For these reasons, the Rio Vista Gas Field would develop at a rather slow rate.

When Emigh No. 1 was completed, the gas flowed at a rate of 8,750 Mcf per day through a one-half-inch tubing beam. The casing pressure was 1,700 pounds and the tubing pressure was 1,375 pounds. The shut in pressure was 1,720 pounds.

The total depth was 4,485 ft, with an 11-inch casing cemented at 4,278 ft with a 6 and 5/8" liner landed on bottom. It took a total of 44 days to complete.

1936: As many native Rio Vista residents know, the first official well was Emigh No. 1. And it was the biggest thing to happen in the area in many years. In fact, many local citizens and school children sat in the surrounding fields watching as the wells were constructed and put into operation.

The second well drilled,

that same year, was on property owned by Perry Anderson. The Taft Drilling Company, hired by Standard Oil Company of California sunk a well in June of 1936. The well was sunk 400 feet and capped at 376 feet. Water was encountered in 59 feet of gravel.

The third well to be drilled was "Happe No.1." Amerada began drilling on the first week of July, on the Happe Ranch, one mile due north of Emigh No.1.

Arrangements were made and a pipeline was laid from Emigh No.1 to both the Anderson property and the Happe property. The purpose of this line was to cut some of the oil expenses, using gas to fire the boilers and generate steam.

It was in June of 1936 that two noted geologists, Ralph Arnold of Los Angeles and Harold Boyd of New York City, traveled to Rio Vista to inspect the surrounding territory. Once again, the small town of Rio Vista found itself in the news. People would hear about the Rio Vista Gas Fields all around the country.

This year also saw a large group of people involved with the drilling industry invading Rio Vista. Thoughts were that one of the companies should quickly construct more houses, however, Rio Vista did have some available housing at the California Packing Corporation Plant #22, located on River Road.

Many employees were provided with accommodations at the plant. These cabins were normally utilized as housing for workers during the canning season. Mr. A.C. Wood, superintendent of the plant, was generous enough to provide these structures for the use of the individuals working for various drilling companies.

1937:

In 1937, Pacific Gas and Electric constructed a 10" pipeline starting in Vallejo and connecting with the Rio Vista Gas Field.

Vallejo received its first delivery of gas from Rio Vista on September 8, 1938.

By the end of 1937, the west end of the gas field had been established by drilling two dry holes: "Happe 1," drilled by Amerada Petroleum Corporation, and "Neil C. Anderson 1," drilled by Standard Oil Company of California.

1938:

In 1938, eight more wells were drilled and completed. One of which was "Midland Fee 1," drilled by the Texas Company.

1939/1940:

The year 1939 was not as prosperous as the previous two years. This particular year saw only one well completed, while 1940 saw an upswing, with four wells drilled and completed.

1942:

In 1942, the Rio Vista Gas Field totaled 55 wells. By this point in time, Standard Pacific Gas Line Inc., had installed a 16" line from its terminal in Antioch into the east end of Rio Vista's field.

This was the definitive year that marked the turning point for the Rio

Vista Gas Field. Events arose, due in part because of the war with Germany and Japan, which would call on the Rio Vista Gas Field to be utilized to great extents. What happened can best be summed up from the following excerpt from the magazine "Standard of California - Summer Bulletin 1945."

"The importance of Rio Vista was accentuated in 1942 when the large Stanpac pipe line, which had been bringing a daily maximum of 150 million cubic feet of natural gas from the San Joaquin Valley oil fields to northern California industrial plants, was converted as a war measure to carrying crude oil to San Francisco Bay refineries.

In addition, to conserve fuel oil for use by the Navy and Merchant Marine, a program was initiated to supply the oil consumed in stationary plants.

The burden of supplying the stepped-up demand for natural gas by industries in the bay area fell largely upon Rio Vista. Last winter, the field produced at a rate up to 700 million cubic feet per day for peak loads, and averaged for three months' period better than 537 million cubic feet per day.

This was twelve times more than for the same period in 1940, and was more than 90

per cent of northern California's entire dry gas output."

1944:

On November 30, 1944, the Rio Vista Gas Field had 72 producing wells. In addition, there were 8 shut-in, 4 drilling, 1 suspended and 11 abandoned.

The following list shows the production of the Rio Vista Gas Field from its initial discovery in 1936.

1936.....123,973 Mcf
1937.....1,249,948 Mcf
1938.....3,799,238 Mcf
1939.....6,772,221 Mcf
1940.....8,223,070 Mcf
1941.....15,805,109 Mcf
1942.....76,697,619 Mcf
1943.....129,356,559 Mcf
1944.....(first 11 months)
140,004,408 Mcf

The size of the gas field was documented in 1944 as 20,550 acres. The field extended northwesterly, and was close to 7 miles long by 5 miles wide. The field lies primarily in Sacramento and Solano counties, with a small portion extending south into Contra Costa County.

In the years between 1936-1944, the Rio Vista Gas Field was divided into five producing zones, the Emigh Zone, Hamilton Zone, Anderson Zone, Midland Zone and Unnamed Zone.

The majority of wells drilled in the Rio Vista Gas Field during these early years met with little or no difficulties. All of these wells were drilled by the "rotary method."

The first few wells drilled, which required considerable coring and testing to be performed, took an average of 35 to 45 days to complete.

Once enough information was gathered and a firm grasp of the field was determined, the general practice was to drill to a calculated depth and run the electric logging device to determine the top of the gas zone.

This procedure would speed the process to in order to take only 15 to 25 days to complete a well.

It would take pages and pages to write a complete history on the Rio Vista Gas Field; hopefully this will shed a little light on their early years.



Mr. Herliby and son Billie, Middle 1930's.

The Story of Old Rio Vista



PHIL PEZZAGLIA
Historian in-Chief

On December 3, 1855, John Bidwell's 17,752-acre land grant known as Los Ulpinos was sold off in lots to the highest bidder. This sale took place on the steps of the Benicia Courthouse. Among those who purchased lots was a gentleman by the name of N.H. Davis. Colonel Davis purchased six various lots, for a grand total of \$440.

Once Colonel Davis owned several lots from the December sale, it was time to do something with the land. He had bought this acreage with the intent to subdivide part of the land into a town near the Patwin Indian village of Hale Che Muk. In the fall of 1857, he came to his new land and surveyed a plot on lot no. 3 for a town. The site that he chose for the settlement was approximately one mile below the mouth of Cache Slough. It was called Los Brazos del Rio (Arms of the River) because it was situated so near three branches of the Sacramento River.

During the next five years, a number of buildings were erected at the settlement. The first building to be erected was the home of Col. Davis. The second building to go up was that of a storehouse, moved from Sidwell's Landing at McIntyre Point in the Georgiana District, on Grand Island, and occupied by A.G. Westgate for mercantile purposes. Sidwell's original general store on Grand Island had been opened in 1854. This building was located on the corner of Main and Front Streets.

It didn't take long before a number of buildings were constructed in the new village. There were two stores (Samuel R. Perry and A.G. Westgate), a butcher shop by A.J. Bryant, a hotel by the Freeman Bothers (James and Thomas), and a hotel by William K. Squires constructed in 1859. Col. Davis convinced J.M. Sidwell to move his thriving general store away from Grand Island to take advantage of the fisherman trade. At this point, Sidwell had been in the general merchandise business for several years.

Other buildings included a blacksmith shop by Simon Fallman, a drug store by James and Thomas Freeman (who also had a hotel), a livery stable by James Hammel, a salmon cannery by Robert Carter Sr. & Son, who also ran a tin shop, a drug store by C.A. Kirkpatrick and several private residences, making in all quite a thriving little village. The Carter family moved to the village in 1859.

Due to the rush of miners, machinery and supplies to the gold fields by ship, the need for a dock at the settlement was evident. In the spring of 1858, Col. Davis hired John Sidwell to construct a wharf 75 feet long and 24 feet wide. The following year, the California Transportation Company leased the wharf and doubled its size. This great structure made it possible for all the steamers, like the New World, Senator, Antelope and Eclipse, to make daily stops at the small but rapidly growing settlement. Undeterred, Col. Davis petitioned for a post office, which would force

the steamer New World, which carried mail, to stop. A post office was approved with the provision that the name of the settlement be changed. "Vista del Rio" was agreed upon, and used for a short time. John M. Sidwell was appointed first postmaster on December 28, 1854, having past experience as both postmaster and justice of the peace. He held the office of postmaster until August 18, 1858, when Charles A. Kirkpatrick was appointed.

Mrs. Kirkpatrick, wife of Charles, decided that a new name should be given to the place, and chose "Rio Vista" (La Vista del Rio, in correct Spanish), which means "river view." The

new name was quickly adopted.

For the next five years, Rio Vista was a thriving village. Salmon fishing was a well-paying industry, engaging numerous men. The Carter's built a cannery, and both fresh and canned fish were shipped daily on the aforementioned river steamers from the new wharf.

As salmon fishing was an important part of Rio Vista's very existence, postmaster

Kirkpatrick wrote a detailed article entitled "Salmon Fishery on the Sacramento River," published in the June, 1860 edition of *Hutchings' California Magazine*. An important paragraph from the article

states: "From facts obtained from the obliging freight clerks of the C.S.N. Co.'s boats, we learn that from the principle shipping port of the Sacramento River, Rio Vista, there are an average of 150 fish, or 2,250 pounds, sent each day to market, for five months of the year, making a total of 22,500 fish or 337,500 pounds; the greater part of these are shipped, and used fresh in San Francisco. But this number forms but a small proportion of what are caught, the principle part being retained and salted, or smoked, or otherwise prepared for shipment to various parts of the world — many finding their way to Australia, and the Islands of

the Pacific, as well as to New York, and other domestic ports on the Atlantic seaboard."

At this point in time, it looked as though Rio Vista was embarking upon a long and prosperous existence. Unfortunately, this was all about to change.

*It is interesting to note, at this time, that some accounts chronicle Brazos del Rio as being no more lawful nor less immoral than any other community of the hectic, but romantic, mining camp days. Events came to pass in the 1850's that inspired law-abiding citizens of the town to organize a vigilante committee, similar to those that existed in San Francisco at the time.



The Two Rio Vista Bridges

PHIL PEZZAGLIA
Historian in-Chief

When one thinks of Rio Vista, one of the most common landmarks that will surely pop into one's head is the Rio Vista Bridge. It can be seen in the city's logo and on Bass Derby T-Shirts, as well as numerous other articles depicting Rio Vista. One must remember that the Rio Vista Bridge was not constructed for more than a half century after Rio Vista relocated to its present location.

It is also important to note that the existing bridge is the second bridge created to span the Sacramento River in Rio Vista.

In fact the history of the Rio Vista Bridge can best be described in three phases. Phase one was that of the original "Strauss Trunnion Bascule" bridge completed in January 1919.

The second phase can be considered the era when the then "new" bridge, our existing bridge, was constructed alongside of the old bridge. Thereby having both the old bridge and the unfinished "new" bridge existing side by side for a period of time.

The third phase in the history of the Rio Vista Bridge consisted of work on the existing bridge, started in 1943 and completed in 1946, with the lift section completed in 1959.

As far back as 1914 there has been talk of a bridge being built across the Sacramento River at Rio Vista, thus joining the mainland with the fertile islands to the east, as well as connecting Solano County with Sacramento County. At a meeting in Sacramento in January of 1915, the Solano and Sacramento boards of supervisors, along with a committee representing the Rio Vista Chamber of Commerce, discussed this unique bridge across the Sacramento River.

According to the figures given at the meeting, there was a little more than \$10,000 gathered in bridge funds. An estimated \$25,000 would be in the fund by July 1, 1915. At this point in time, the estimated cost for a bridge would be about \$250,000, half of which was to be paid by Sacramento County. Because the funds were so far off, it was decided that the War Department, the federal department that specified that the work be done, should be asked for an extension of the July 1, 1915 starting date. The War Department granted an extension on the permits, stating that construction must be started by July 1, 1919.

In 1915, supervisors made a tax levy of five cents on the \$100, a levy that would be made each year for the next three years, in order to raise the needed funds. After some time, the respective counties finally appropriated the money and the bids were let. It was at this point in time that the United States declared war on Germany, and due to the war effort, a shortage of steel had arisen. This held up the start date for the construction of the bridge. Another area of complaints came from several navigation companies. These complaints were regarding where the preliminary foundations were being set. However, the navigation complaints were overruled and construction was quickly resumed.

The construction of the original bridge started in 1918 and was completed in January of 1919. Solano and Sacramento counties shared

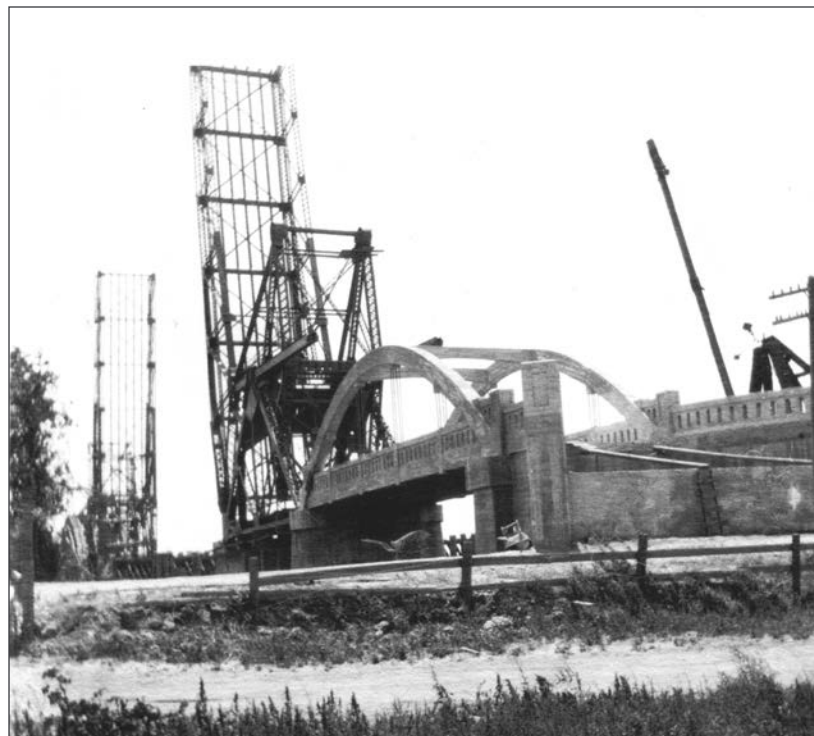


Rare photo of an old and new Rio Vista Bridge, late 1950's.

the cost of \$260,000 jointly.

The new bridge linked the town of Rio Vista with the "newly" constructed River Road, on the eastern shore. At this point in time, plans were being made for a future highway heading to Sacramento, following the river. Plans were also being made to better the road between Rio Vista and Suisun.

The *Solano Republican* announced the bridge's opening: "The Rio Vista Bridge across the Sacramento River is one of the largest struc-



Shortly after construction of original Rio Vista bridge in 1930.

tures west of the Mississippi."

The Rio Vista Bridge was designed by Joseph Baermann Strauss (1870 - 1938), a well-known designer of bridges. Many bridges have been credited to him during his lifetime, however, he is most known for designing the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco.

The bridge was a Strauss Trunnion Bascule design. The structure consisted of four bowstring arch spans, a 1,600-foot short span timber trestle and a double leaf bascule span. The bridge had a total length of 2,430 feet and a clear width of 18 feet, with the strength to sustain a 15-ton road roller. Only a few such bridges had been built in the United States at that time, although it was a very popular type of bridge used throughout Europe. The Bascule, or balanced-lever bridge, had become an important factor in transportation for the time.

A Strauss-Type Bascule bridge operates by a system of counter weights, gears and motors to rotate the "leaves" of the bridge up and down. The "leaves" are the sections,

which rotate up and down away from the centerline of the river, providing clear passage for river traffic.

The fixed trunnion bridge was gaining popularity during this era in England, Germany, Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden. This type of structure operated with the "leaf" mounted on trunnions (axles or short shafts) in bearings rigidly fixed to the masonry. The trunnion, or fulcrum, divided the leaf into a long arm spanning the channel and a short arm extending shoreward,



Shortly after construction of original Rio Vista bridge in 1930.

which is counterweighted to make the turning moments of force of the two portions equal and opposite.

The combination of these two styles made for a very attractive and efficient bridge.

With the construction of a bridge that spanned the Sacramento River, the residents of Rio Vista felt an overwhelming feeling of freedom.

Rather than depending upon river travel just to go to Isleton, one could now motor upriver.

Unfortunately, the lifespan of the Rio Vista Bridge would be filled with a variety of damage, resulting in multiple repairs and closures.

The first five years of the bridge's life were rather uneventful, with the exception of 1921, during which the state of California took over the bridge, adding it to the state highway system.

The first of many more problems occurred in May of 1926. During a standard opening of the bridge, the main drive shaft in one of the leaves broke. This unfortunate occurrence left the bridge leaf in the open posi-

tion, in turn closing the bridge to automobile traffic for approximately 36 hours.

This aforementioned accident occurred on a Sunday evening, and by three a.m. Tuesday morning the bridge was back in full operation. Thus speedy repair can be credited to the workers who worked around-the-clock, using their own personal vehicles when needed to transport parts and equipment.

The gears and shaft had to be removed from the bridge and then shipped to the closest repair facility, which was in San Francisco. There the gears were fitted onto a new shaft, and then shipped back to the waiting workers at Rio Vista, and quickly reinstalled.

Probably the most major hindrance during those repairs was the fact that a lot of the required work had to be done during the night, and from boats.

In March of 1927, the Rio Vista Bridge felt the wrath of the Sacramento River, when a partial section of the long timber trestle was washed away by floodwaters.

Due to the damage incurred, the bridge would be closed for several weeks for repairs. However, a detour bridge was constructed across Wood Island during the time of repairs.

During the first few weeks, the crews received their first setback when on March 4 a barge, dragging its anchor, struck some of the pilings.

Thus resulting in sections of the recently constructed spans falling into the river. Three tugboats, each containing a crew of ten, were quickly called upon to remove the barge from the scene. Thus done, repairs were once again started.

Having the bridge closed for several weeks caused some inconveniences for the local citizens. It seemed that the locals had gotten fairly used to the convenience of a bridge, even though it was at this point in time less than a decade old.

During this time the only way across river was by much the same as today. The route was via Ryer Island, by ferry. This ferry, operated by the State Highway Commission, only ran between the hours of 5 a.m. to 5 p.m. then. During those hours, the ferry was free, however a fee of fifty cents was levied upon it after hour passage was required.

Local businessmen in both Rio Vista and Isleton remarked on both the inconvenience and the loss of busi-

ness, due to the closing of the bridge.

In mid March, thanks to the work done under the direction of Len Isham, who provided a temporary structure, the Rio Vista Bridge was once again opened to vehicular traffic.

According to the April 22, 1927 edition of the *Isleton Journal*, "The sum of \$120,000 to complete the Rio Vista Bridge across the Sacramento River was provided in a bill passed last Monday by the state senate. The measure was introduced by Senator Ben F. Rush of Suisun and is for the purpose of making repairs to the structure recently damaged by floodwater. Following passage of the bill by the senate, the measure goes to the assembly for action."

When funds arrived, work continued. The newly reconstructed bridge consisted of an "A" frame timber forty-one feet in length, supported on pile bents. In order to keep some of the costs down, workers removed the decking from the old section and reused it on the new section. This construction was completed in March of 1928, at a cost of \$70,000.

Only one year passed before the bridge was once again suffering the ravages of the Sacramento River. During the last week of March, 1928, the current and high waters started to wash away piles that were supporting the new wooden section of the Rio Vista Bridge, towards the Brannan Island side of the bridge, thus causing it to appear to be sagging.

Once again repairs were needed for the bridge across the Sacramento River at Rio Vista.

During the next 15 years from 1928 to 1943, the State of California would spend \$185,000 on the Rio Vista Bridge. Unfortunately, even with all repairs done it still managed to end up at the top of the list of bridges that needed to be replaced.

It was finally decided during the first couple of years of the 1940's that Rio Vista needed to have a completely new bridge constructed. Even though the existing one was only less than a quarter of a century old, it already needed to be replaced.

The year 1943 marked the beginning of construction on the "new" Rio Vista Bridge, a bridge that would not be formally dedicated until 17 years later, on April 1, 1960.

The company of Lord & Bishop was secured to construct the substructure of the new two-lane bridge just west of the existing Rio Vista bridge structure.

The east portion of the bridge was completed in 1945. It consisted of 1,300 feet of steel trusses, at a cost of \$960,500.

In the *California Highways and Public Works* May-June 1960 edition, we find the following reference to the crossover: "In 1945, the old timber A-frame spans, then in poor condition, were replaced by a series of 180-foot steel truss spans on a new alignment located 60 feet upstream from and parallel to the old bridge. A crossover for traffic was constructed between the truss spans and the westerly portion of the old structure, so that from 1945 to 1960 a combination of the new and old structure was used."

This new/old combination of bridges opened to the public on January 12, 1946. From 1946 to 1959 a combination of the old and new bridges stood side by side, and were used in combination. The "crossover" took

advantage of the old bridge's movable span and the new bridge's completed sections.

During this time of construction, it was necessary to continue providing a working bridge for both vehicular as well as water-navigating crafts.

When the initial plans were drawn in 1943-1944 for the 1,300-foot structure, the location of the piers and the length of the structure were based on the existing navigational channel.

This plan would change when the Sacramento deep-water channel was being formulated in 1947. It was at this point in time that the Corps of Engineers made the request to make the centerline of the new navigational channel 575 feet to the east of the existing one.

Due to this change, the crossover, which had been in use since 1946, had to be reconstructed, and changes had to be made towards handling traffic issues.

In fact two crossovers, constructed of steel and wood, were built.

The following description of the two crossovers appeared in the *California Highways and Public Works of May / June 1960*:

"On crossover No. 1, one side of the existing truss span was supported on timber pile bents, and the top chord and lateral bracing supported by a strong back placed over the top chord. Five panels of the truss, along with about 180 feet of sidewalk, were removed to provide adequate roadway clearance for entry to the truss roadway.

After completion of the new lift span and timber fenders, crossover No. 2 was constructed. This involved entry through the side of an existing concrete tied-arch span. Several hangers between the arch and roadway were removed, and pile bents and steel needle beams placed to support the roadway.

Upon completion of crossover No. 2, traffic was routed over it and crossover No. 1 was removed. This allowed for removal of the easterly portion of the old structure, routing of water traffic through the new lift span, and completion of the new truss over the old navigable channel."

Due to the shortage of steel because of the war effort, as well as funding issues, work on the bridge came to a halt, with this portion of the bridge completed at a cost of \$730,000.00.

The U.S. Corps of Engineers gave final approval for the construction of the final portion of the bridge on February 2, 1950.

However money for this phase was not made available for some time.

More than a decade went by before work was resumed on the "new" Rio Vista Bridge. The local residents found that they grew accustomed to this way of getting across the Sacramento River.

It wasn't until the 1958-59 fiscal year that funds were provided.

In 1957, Judson Pacific-Murphy of Yuba Consolidated Industries, Inc., was awarded the contract to construct the remaining section of the Rio Vista Bridge. The contract was for the reinforced concrete and construction of the structural steel bridge. A bid of \$2,146,870, with a completion date of June 1960, making for 550 working days, was accepted.

This new portion was approximately 1,150 feet

Continued on A9



Rio Vista Bridge, January 1967, after Italian freighter *Illice* took out 100 feet of the bridge structure.

Continued From A8

long, and extended westerly from the section of truss spans constructed in 1945.

Two separate contracts were issued for the construction of the westerly section of the bridge, one for the substructure and one for the superstructure.

Included in the superstructure contract was the construction of an approach structure located immediately west of the west abutment, consisting of 441 feet of continuous slab.

The cost of the substructure totaled \$960,000, while the superstructure on the west end, which included the slab approach, amounted to \$2,410,000. Work on the substructure commenced on April 2, 1957, and this phase was completed on October 30, 1958.

This new construction featured a 26-foot roadway with a four-foot sidewalk on each side. The vertical clearance for vehicles, in the truss spans, was 15 feet.

The superstructure consisted of 1,150 steel truss spans, designed to look like those used in 1945, while still utilizing the latest design features and methods wherever possible.

Work officially started on the superstructure on April 24, 1958, when the order was placed for the structural steel. On December 4, 1958, work was started on the erecting of the east tower, with the west following shortly thereafter.

In order to erect the steel structure, a steam-operated floating tower derrick crane was brought into service. This crane had the ability to lift 100-ton loads up to a height of 205 feet above water elevation.

Most of the tower sections and truss units were assembled at the contractor's yard in Richmond, California, and then shipped to Rio Vista by barge in pre-assembled sections.

These sections were then put in place by the use of the aforementioned crane—and a lot of manpower.

Long hours and many days passed during the construction of the remaining half of the bridge, but the people of Rio Vista were more than willing, knowing that the long-awaited outcome would be an attraction that would be synonymous with Rio Vista's finest.

Let us take the next few paragraphs to relate some of the more technical specifications of the Rio Vista Bridge.

The vertical lift span measured 306 feet, and was, by 1958 standards, the second of its kind in California, the other being located in Fruitvale.

The highest point of the two towers measures 210 feet above mean low water. Each tower is equipped with both an elevator and a stairwell.

The lift span was con-

structed in 102-foot, pre-assembled truss sections that were supported on false work bents at the three points of the span.

The control tower would be the center of operation for the bridge. With the flip of a switch, two 380-ton counterweights would move into motion and raise the 755-ton span over 100 feet at a rate of 15 feet per second.

The counterweights weighed in at 213 lbs. per cubic foot. Grocco & Hanson of Vallejo did all concrete work on the project. This included the counterweights, 6" bridge decking, the control tower and approach trestle-work. Rio Vista Building Materials Co. of Rio Vista supplied all of the concrete.

The lift span was designed to be driven by two 30 horsepower motors, with one located in each tower. These two motors, installed by the Enterprise Electric Works of San Francisco, had the main purpose of overcoming the friction created in the raising and lowering of the bridge span.

A diesel engine generator was installed, in case of a local utility power failure, which would kick on the 100-kilowatt generator, powered by a 167 horsepower diesel engine.

Unfortunately the technical information regarding the structure of the bridge would generate many pages of data. Therefore I believe that the proceeding is enough to give the reader a little background.

The completed bridge was a true testament to keeping a dream alive. It may have taken nearly twenty years to be completed, but as the majority would say it was well worth the wait.

In fact the Rio Vista Bridge was given the Steel Institute's Award for the Most Beautiful Movable Steel Bridge completed in 1959.

The "new" Rio Vista Bridge was officially open to traffic on April 1, 1960. The Rio Vista Chamber of Commerce sponsored the opening ceremonies, which featured Lieutenant Governor Glenn M. Anderson, Senator Luther E. Gibson of Solano County, and T.F. Bagshaw, assistant director of public works.

The Rio Vista Bridges Gets Severed in 1967

During the late Sunday afternoon of January 15, 1967, the city of Rio Vista, as well as the surrounding area, was engulfed in a dense fog.

The weather on this less than perfect day was officially described as: No wind, with dense fog, visibility limited to less than 100 feet. The water current was flooding at approximately 0.6 knots.

Bridge tender Clyde Spencer was going about his regular duties in the control room of the Rio Vista Bridge.

This same afternoon, the 157-foot, 10,595 gross-ton

Italian freighter *Illice*, under the command of Captain Giuseppe D'esposito, was traveling up the Sacramento River to Sacramento.

The *Illice* was a steel hulled, single screw, cargo vessel with 9,000 horsepower.

Built in 1964, at Palermo, Italy, she was owned and operated by the Navigazione Arenella S.P.A. via Savona, Geona, Italy.

As the *Illice* made her way up the Sacramento River and closer to the Rio Vista Bridge, visibility was at such a low that Captain D'esposito could only make out one of the bridges two towers.

The captain followed procedure and radioed ahead to raise the bridge. The bridges lift span was then raised.

As the *Illice* approached the bridge, Captain D'esposito had to make a decision. Being only able to see one tower, he had fifty-fifty choice to make. Should he go to the left or right of the lone visible tower.

Unfortunately the choice that he made would prove to be incorrect.

The *Illice* missed the open lift span, and instead struck the stationary section of the bridge that was adjacent to the east tower.

At the last moment, just minutes before impact, Captain D'esposito gave the orders to reverse the engines. However, even though the engines were engaged in reverse at the time of impact, the weight and momentum kept the ship moving forward.

Damage resulted in the loss of a 140-foot truss span, and some of the concrete pier pedestals were cracked and/or broken.

An additional 36-foot of adjacent span would need replacement, and of course paving, from the point of impact.

The *Illice* dragged away an entire 140-foot truss span weighing approximately 400 tons.

It was approximately four hours that the *Illice* was trapped by the damaged truss span before the truss wreckage could be pulled away from her.

The *Illice* suffered only minor injuries and was on her way shortly thereafter, proceeding to the Port of Sacramento, to complete her business transactions and take a load of rice to Japan.

As for the citizens of Rio Vista, their lives would be slightly disrupted for the next couple of weeks.

For the next 22 days, crews worked nonstop in order to put the bridge back into active duty.

Shortly after the January 15 accident, a large crane was floated over to the bridge and work began on the process of removing some of the steel from the damaged areas. Unfortunately matters were often complicated by bad weather during this first phase of repairs.

The contract by the state

for the temporary and permanent repairs was awarded to the Murphy Pacific Company. Orders were given to "move with all possible speed" to complete the temporary repairs.

At this point in time, George Thompson, resident engineer for the state on the job, estimated that repairs might take approximately two weeks.

The crew for Murphy Pacific Company consisted of twenty men, working seven days a week from six a.m. until dark. Unfortunately, a storm during the first week of repairs made it necessary for work to be halted due to rain and wind.

A 140-foot temporary span was constructed on pilings and four steel beams, covered by six-by-eight timbers and asphalt.

Besides the inconvenience of not being able to cross the Sacramento River by bridge, the city of Rio Vista felt some other aftermath.

The business community was hit hard. Highway 12 gasoline stations reported that they were doing as little as one-third of their normal business.

One of the major impacts for the gasoline stations was that local citizens were not traveling out of town as much, and some of the citizens were keeping their cars on the other side of the river.

The merchant's downtown, as well as other businesses on Highway 12, suffered greatly, some of which actually changed their hours to shorter hours during these three weeks.

The businesses felt the impact, not only from the people passing through town, but also from our upriver neighbors who normally dealt with the local Rio Vista businesses.

This was a time when an enormous amount of work was being done in the gas/well-drilling industry. These crews were working 24 hours a day. Amerada Hess ended up chartering a boat to be on call 24 hours per day, at \$250 per day, just to take their workers back and forth across the river.

With so many people working or traveling between Rio Vista and the upriver towns of Isleton, Ryde, Walnut Grove, Locke, Courtland and Clarksburg, as well as Lodi, Stockton and Antioch on a daily basis, something had to be done to help.

It must be remembered that students at Rio Vista High School came from various towns and ranches on the other side of the river.

This need for a "foot ferry" was answered when arrangements were made through the cooperative effort of the State Division of Highways and the Rio Vista Army Depot. Col. Charles S.

Sajac, and Hershel Brown, executive officer at the base, made these arrangements for an Army LCM to be put into operation. This vehicle would ferry people from Rio Vista to Uncle Bobbie's Resort, on the other side of the river.

Originally the LCM was intended to transport local students and those attending the local high school, as well as those traveling to Stockton from town to attend San Joaquin Delta College.

On the first day of operation, the craft carried 229 passengers; the second day rose to 575 passengers. During the next few days, the amount of passengers to use the LCM increased each day, going from 683 to 766, then up to 935 passengers. By the second day of operation, the ferry found more than 1,000 people per day utilizing the service.

In fact, on numerous occasions the local baker provided donuts, etc. to the passengers. On one particular day a cake-and-coffee party was celebrated during the crossing.

After a while the LCM switched its every-half-hour schedule to a schedule dictated by need. During this time, Walter Willis was one of the pilots on this ferry run.

The city of Rio Vista had two local doctors in 1967. Dr. Edwin G. Simmer and Dr. Arthur Parades. Both doctors made the best of the situation at hand. Dr. Parades had his own boat, which he took across river to his car in order to travel to the Lodi hospital to call on patients, while Dr. Simmer made arrangements for local Lodi physicians to look in on his patients.

In the event of an ambulance call, the doctors would call the ferries and have them wait.

The ferry to Ryer Island and Howard Landing ferry's were in great demand during this time.

However, during high waters and bad weather the Howard Landing Ferry had to suspend service for a few days, as it is cable operated, and the high waters made it impossible to make a safe landing.

On Monday, February 6, 1967, the Rio Vista Bridge was back on active duty. At two pm citizens and dignitaries gathered at the east end of the bridge, the site where the *Illice* struck the bridge three weeks prior. Approximately 150 local citizens were in attendance for the event.

The Rio Vista Chamber of Commerce organized the ceremony, without speeches, for the opening day. Those who had a hand in the arrangements for the celebration included: Thelma Lee Young, Lyle Jesse, and Bill Smith.

The Rio Vista High School band performed "The

Star Spangled Banner" under the direction of Mr. Robinson. While at the same time, ships whistles up and down the river blasted.

Officials on hand for the ceremony included; Assemblyman Edwin Z'berg of Sacramento County, Solano County Supervisor Ray Church, J. Ellis Godfrey, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, William Jones, Director of Public Works, Val Bell, Jones' deputy, Mayor Sal Fisher of Rio Vista, Mayor M.J. "Butch" Francioni of Isleton, Col. Carl S. Leidy and Lt. Col. Charles S. Sajac of the Army and aides of the State Division of Highways, both local and district.

Instead of a ribbon, a huge steel chain was cut, in a symbolic gesture for the re-opening.

Television crews were presents as well as press from all of the surrounding areas. The *Vallejo Times* was most generous with its front-page article regarding the re-opening ceremony.

The first vehicle to cross the bridge was not an automobile, as it had been at early Rio Vista Bridge openings. This time around it was a unicycle ridden by Roger Ostlund, 13, son of Marvin Ostlund, who was in charge of bridge and ferry operation in this area for the Division of Highways.

Following the ceremony, the officials and workers on the bridge enjoyed a gathering at The Point Restaurant.

During the next two weeks, the Murphy Pacific Company continued to work on the bridge, attempting to straighten sections that had been damaged in the wreck.

The wreckage that had sunk would remain at the bottom of the Sacramento River until June, when barges and cranes were brought in to remove them.

A new permanent span was fabricated in a San Jose steel plant. This section would be brought up river in June and put into place as temporary repairs. This process would close the bridge for approximately three days.

At this point in time, the Murphy Pacific Company would be called in to complete the job.

The total cost of repairs would amount to \$500,000. The operators of the *Illice* were sued for \$600,000.



Dedication of the Rio Vista Bridge, April 1, 1960.



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Braid's Home Furnishings

PHIL PEZZAGLIA
Historian in-Chief

Seventy years ago Braid Pezzaglia opened Braid's Appliance Store with the intention of providing excellent products and service to the community that he was raised in. Those same ideals regarding customer service and selection continue today with Braid's son Larry operating the business, assisted by Braid's nephew Phil.

Over the course of the last seventy years the business has seen many changes take place at both a local and industry level due to styles and trends changing. The name of the store has changed from Braid's Appliance Store to Braid's Home but one thing has remained consistent. Braid's has always provided a high quality of service.

How did this seventy-year-old business come about? Romildo Pezzaglia was the second of seven children born to Romildo and Bessie (Mayhood) Pezzaglia. He received his education at the local schools and graduated from Rio Vista Joint Union High School in 1932. Due to the difficulty in pronouncing his name, by both his siblings and schoolmates, he received the nickname Braid at an early age. From that point on the name stuck.

After graduation Braid accepted a position at J. Stern & Company, the largest general merchandise store in Rio Vista. His father, Romildo, had been a partner in the firm until his untimely death in 1930. Braid quickly learned the business and sales technique, which allowed him to be elevated to the position of Sales Manager.

In 1938, Braid felt that he had the experience to open his own appliance business, so he rented the old Belknap Plumbing and Electric building located on the corner of Third and Sacramento Streets. When the doors opened on Sept. 1, 1938, his store contained \$700 worth of inventory of home furnishings, which included Venetian blinds, window shades, floor tile, linoleum and gas and electric appliances manufactured by Wedgewood and Philco.

Braid had a keen eye for business, thus he envisioned the growth of Rio Vista, and had every intention to expand his business to accommodate this growth. He looked over the business district of town and felt that the best location would be next door to the Skaggs Safeway grocery store and across from the local fire-house.

In 1939, he purchased two lots in the 300 block of Main Street, from the Bettencourt family. This purchase had one stipulation, which was that the house that occupied the property would be relocated on the corner alley lot adjacent to the property. Once



Braids store front, 1949, ten years after construction.

this provision was fulfilled, it was time for local contractor Fred W. Lavering to begin construction on a modern two-story building, with a full basement. The main floor would serve as the appliance store, the basement would be utilized for storage, and the second floor would be a residence for Braid and his wife Josephine.

While construction was being completed on the new building, Braid moved his business into one of the two small storefronts, in the Vista Theatre building. A grand opening was held in the new structure in March 1939. At this point in time additional items, such as paint, mattresses and plate glass were added to the inventory, thereby having a grand opening inventory amounting to \$5000. Over the course of the next few years the business continued to grow, as did the community.

In 1946, Braid's younger brother, William "Bill" Pezzaglia, returned to Rio Vista after serving in the United States Navy. Upon his return home, Braid offered him a job, which he accepted, and held until he retired in 1991.

In 1948 Braid, once again, saw the need to expand. He hired local contractors Ralph Gormely and Warren Eycner, otherwise known as E & G Construction, to build a 2000 sq. ft. addition to the building.

With this showroom addition more furniture could be added to the inventory. The showroom was filled with bedroom sets, sofa and chair sets, coffee and end tables, kitchen sets, amps, and more floor covering. As the styles changed, Braid kept abreast of the changes, and he continued to add additional inventory.

In 1974 Braid's youngest son, Lawrence "Larry" Pezzaglia moved back to Rio Vista and joined the family business. Unfortunately his time working side by side with his father was short lived.

In August 1977 Braid passed away at the age of 63. He was survived by his wife Josephine and three sons Chris, Marty and Larry.

Larry then took the reins of the business and has been in control ever since.

In 1989 Braid's nephew, Phil Pezzaglia, joined forces with Larry and Bill. Two years later Bill retired but not before technique of the trade to the next generation.

Today the store features everything needed to fulfill one's window covering and floor covering needs. Braid's is a Hunter Douglas

Centurion Showcase Dealer featuring the entire Hunter Douglas window covering line. They carry two full lines of fabric for custom draperies and a line of Englander Mattresses. When it comes to floor covering, the store features samples of ceramic tile by Royalty, vinyl by Armstrong and Tarkett, laminate by Armstrong Bruce and Tarkett and hardwood by Bruce Robbins and

Armstrong.

As Rio Vista has grown with the expansion of the Trilogy and homecoming communities, Braid's remains committed to maintaining their small town way of conducting business and making every customer feel at home. Larry and Phil work hard to offer superior service, by staying current

with product trends and the newer technologies affecting all areas of business today. Doing business in the neighborly manner Braid established seventy years ago remains. The commitment to selling quality products and providing excellent service is still top priority.



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ASTRO-GRAPH
 By Bernice Bede Osol
 Wednesday, Oct. 8, 2008

It behooves you to work hard and put your best foot forward in the year ahead, especially when chaos is prevailing all around you. Your ability to keep your head could turn out to be the best way to gratify your highest ambitions.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23) — Your lack of fiscal discipline could be sowing the seeds of spender's remorse. If this is the case, learn from it instead of merely grumbling about your plight.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) — In situations where being mildly assertive is enough, take care not to be too aggressive. To establish a good mode of behavior and conduct, utilize charm — which is a far superior tool.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 23-Dec. 21) — We all experience the difficulty of trying to forgive and forget, which could be your problem at this time. It usually proves to be counterproductive, so let it go and get on with your life.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19) — You'll deal with others in a generous manner as long as they are going along with your thoughts. Meet a challenge, however, and that individual won't be treated with the same benevolence.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) — Take care that you don't come off as being friendly only to those who have something to offer. If you appear to be manipulative, you could jeopardize several relationships.

PISCES (Feb. 20-March 20) — It's rarely a good day to discuss politics or religion with someone who feels as strongly about his or her opposing views as you do yours. If you open this can of worms, you'll be sorry.

ARIES (March 21-April 19) — When it comes to forming a partnership, be careful to team up only with those who have proven themselves to be aboveboard. Back out of an arrangement if you suspect someone is shady.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) — Should effective allies be hard to come by, don't hesitate to go it alone, especially in matters of extreme importance. Rely on your own assets, and they won't let you down.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20) — Don't make the mistake of thinking subordinates can be driven or pushed into submission. It could prove to be a regrettable tactic — lead by example.

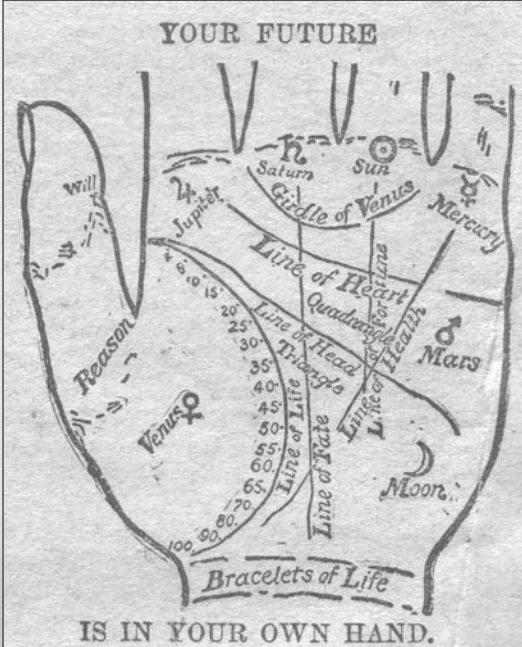
CANCER (June 21-July 22) — It might be OK to be a risk-taker when you sense the odds are in your favor, but this isn't likely to be one of those times. If you attempt to do so anyway, the results might be regrettable.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22) — It might be difficult to admit that you were wrong about something once you realize this to be a fact. But, unless you do, you will only prolong the inevitable and give yourself more unhappy hours than need be.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22) — Unless you read all the instructions and directions carefully, a job you've never done before could turn out to be a major disaster. Learn the ropes first.

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Religion



Revival Spirit

By Pastor Ella Ray

One hundred and fifty years ago there was no Congregational Church in Rio Vista. However, in 1867 the Congregational Church in Rio Vista was born. Reading through the church's history and scanning the words of Congregational ancestors, I could not help but be reminded of how our Christian heritage was rich with folks who served a Risen Lord.

The Congregational Church is rich in history but richer in its relationship with Jesus Christ. I found a treasure chest of written documents and pictures that trace the history of our church and Rio Vista in the church's safe. They describe activities and visions of pastors in the 1800s that speak to all of us today. All pastors involved with the Congregational Church worked to bring revival within the little town of Rio Vista. One of the articles I

read said that these were the years of great interest in the church and things spiritual. People traveled to San Francisco by steamer because there were other Congregational groups in there. Visitors from the city would come to share in the meetings. The Rio Vista members gladly took in the visitors.

During damp weather the meetings saw mud. There was a saying that Rio Vista mud sticks like sin. Yes there is such a thing as sin. On Sept. 18, 1896 the Congregational Church was looking for a pastor. The requirements were interesting to read. They revealed the mentality of the town at that time. The letter described how great Rio Vista was since it had been incorporated. Excellent sidewalks had been built and lights on the streets were erected. It was stated that at one time a multitude of hogs and stock invaded yards, gardens and open kitchen.

The letter then went on to state the need for a pastor in the clean town. The letter warned the reader that the church was comprised of life-robust, energetic, bright and religiously inclined people. Because of this they were able to detect a "shoddy" pastor. They were not looking for a degree or name of importance.

The church was asking for "a young man with genius above the average, large common sense, energy, and singleness of purpose, studious habits and a clear voice. He has to be as sure that he is born again as he is sure that he was born of a mother. He does not choose ministry as a choice of profession but because he has felt the call of God. If He has the call from above it will be evident by a heart all-aglow for Jesus and a great love for lost souls. He will be happy to cast his net with the people and be one of them. If this describes the man who is interested then he will be welcome."

A document stated that the Angel Gabriel would be visiting Rio Vista and might be interested. The letter discusses the preaching and

sends a warning that old and used sermons were not acceptable. "If the preacher has a barrel of old sermons it would be well to take them to the back door of some poor widow, to be used as kindling in her cook stove. Rio Vista people are supplied daily with fresh mild butter, eggs, steaks, and chops and have no relish for salted horse meat."

The letter goes on to read that college and seminary veal can be kept in the refrigerator and fed to the city folks but not in the town of Rio Vista.

All of the letters in the church history call for a Revival and praise the commitment to Jesus Christ. They refer to the spiritual hunger in the pews that call for words that are nutritious for the soul. They denounce the importance of eloquence and scholarship if there is no Holy power.

"The cause of Christ today, (May, 1896) demands pulpit power that is connected with the conversion of sinners."

The Congregational Church envisioned being a nucleus around the friends of Christ. I am blessed to be

part of this history.

All churches need the spirit of revival. It is what grew our churches and added souls to the Kingdom. A revival is a time to awaken to the power of God's activity. There have been several Great Awakenings in America. However, these periods did not last because people forgot what happened.

This is the time for God's people to pray for growth and power so another revival will awaken our town of Rio Vista. Vince Havner wrote that the greatest need in America is an old fashioned heaven born, heaven sent revival. When clouds have hung lowest, when sin has darkened the sky and faith has been the weakest, there have always been a faithful few who were not sold out to the enemy.

Revivals are usually preceded by a time of spiritual depression, apathy and gross sin, in which a majority

of nominal Christians are hardly different from the members of secular society, and the churches seem to be asleep. Revival comes when the Christians yearn to feel the power of God and they begin to sense that the Lord is present. In the midst of all our economic and moral challenges, God is ready to hear our prayers. Maybe in another 150 years historians will recall that there was a mighty revival causing hearts and souls to be rekindled in miraculous happenings in the churches.



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(707)469-1546
Pastor Scott J. Stone
Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.
Sunday School 9:00 a.m.

Anniversary Prayer

We thank Thee, heav'nly Father,
For ev'ry earthly good,
For life, and health, and clothing,
And for our daily food.

O give us hearts to thank Thee,
For ev'ry blessing sent,
And whatso'er Thou sendest
Make us therewith content.
Amen.



April Avery

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Pastor Manuel B. Soria
UNION BAPTIST
Pastor Bryan Pichura

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
Pastor Ella Ray Toscano
WINDBORN CHURCH
Pastor Dustin Butler
ASSEMBLY OF GOD
Pastor Thomas Allums
CHURCH OF CHRIST
Ralph Sills, Minister
CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER DAY SAINTS

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Branch President
RESURRECTION LIFE CHURCH
Pastor Robert Turner
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Foster's, a Rio Vista landmark



Bill Foster takes down a moose in the 1940's

NICOLE BAPTISTA
Editor

Black and white photographs line the walls just beneath an array of exotic animals from Africa, Canada, and Alaska. Grey leathery earlobes hang from an African elephant's head propped upon the wall. The tusks dangle beneath its half-ajar mouth, and its trunk protrudes into the room, hovering over hungry customers. A lion's tooth pierces its lip, sunken behind a beautiful large

mane of fur. Giraffes, tigers, deer, bear, monkeys, and more decorate the narrow bar- a bar filled with a rich history of a man and his passion for animals. Foster's Bighorn was established in Rio Vista in 1931 by hunter and businessman William (Bill) Frates. Frates' bootlegging squanders resulted in Assistant District Attorney Earl Warren hunting him down. To escape the law Frates changed his name to Foster, bought a bar and café' in the quaint town of Rio Vista, and gradually

built a legitimate business. Working as an apprentice in a foundry Foster met Henry Snow, the inspiration for his big game passion. Snow, an African hunter, brought the first African wildlife films to the states in 1918. In 1919 Foster made his first voyage across the sea and came home anxious to return. After years of saving, he returned to Africa in 1928 and continued to travel the world until his sixties. Throughout Foster's travels he became infatuated with taxidermy and learned the trade by his friend, John

Jonas, who accompanied him on most of his trips. Foster quit hunting in 1953 after colliding with another vehicle on Hwy. 12. Though he loved the sport, his injuries kept him from pursuing such physically challenging tasks. Foster's Bighorn boomed as soon as Foster starting running the joint, and continued to do so until 1963 when he caught a fatal case of pneumonia. His wife Ethel died twelve years later and the bar was passed through various owners. "People come from all over the West United States [hunters and regular people] who say Rio Vista automati-

cally makes them think of Foster's," said owner Howard Lamothe. "I came in one night and talked to Dorothy, told her I had some cash and she wanted out." Tony and Dorothy Brown were the owners before Howard Lamothe bought the business. Lamothe speaks of Foster is the highest regards. Foster's life experiences, trophies, business tactics, and personality inspired Lamothe to restore the old building, bring in revenue, and preserve the irreplaceable history hanging from its walls. "When these guys come

in here they sit and stare at the walls like the animals are alive," said Lamothe. "It's a magnificent place. Old-timers come by and shake my hand because I made it look good again." The curved bar top has been renovated, along with new paint and tabletops. The back of the bar is an original and displays smaller creatures such as owls and fish. The collection can intimidate the squeamish, but the preservation of life brings in tourists from all over.



Denis and Linda Van De Maele, Van De Maele Farm, Isleton

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A VIEW FROM THE POINT

BY JIM BAUMANN

No Spacing; A View from The Point



The Delta Marina began operations in 1959 and The Point Restaurant opened its doors in June 1964. I don't remember much about those days, but one thing that sticks out in my mind was the day in December '59 when, dressed for cold weather, this little six year old fell off one of the docks at the Delta Marina and went right to the bottom. I remember my feet hitting the mud and I started kicking to get back to the surface and when I broke the surface of the water I was screaming. My Dad ran down, grabbed me and pulled me right out. My mom put me in swimming lessons the next summer.

One of my friends back then was a girl named Susan we lived across the street from one another. Susan was in for lunch two to three weeks ago with her mom and aunt and she asked me if I remembered when we got married (silence). The story goes, as she says, one day sometime between '59 and '64, we were around eight years old, the moms were out of town and my dad was supposed to be watching us (lets hear it for the dads of the world). Well, according to Susan we had the ceremony somewhere around where the maintenance shop is now located. I'm told I was the preacher and the groom and she was the ring bearer and the bride. I still don't remember it, (really Vic) but I got a big kick out of hearing the story.

As I said earlier, the restaurant opened in June 1964. I was eleven and I do remember thinking it was cool to come in after school and make milkshakes and fries for my buddies and

basically get in everybody's way. Of course, along with the privileges came the duties. I started washing dishes at a pretty early age and breaded so many shrimp I wouldn't eat them for years.

In 1968, I met my future mother-in-law, Madeline Ramos. She came to work for my dad that year and continued on, except for the year we were closed, working here for 32 years. We have had a lot of great people work here over the years. Jeff Bell works for KCBS 740 and has recently written a book. His family used to spend summers here on their boat and Jeff worked as a bus boy. His sister still lives in town.

I was looking back through some old menus and pictures and had forgotten some of the many changes that have taken place over the years. When Jack first built the restaurant it included the dining room, captain's room, kitchen and channel room. The channel room is the circular room that the bar is in. Over the years the restaurant has been added onto approximately nine times. I had a telephone service person tell me once it was like the Winchester house east. Before we put the booths in there was a counter with about ten stools facing the kitchen. We have also, over the years, put in three docks for our boating customers.

When I showed some of our customers the old menus one suggested we have history day and go back to the old prices. Back then a chicken salad sandwich with potato salad sold for 65 cents, a Halibut dinner was \$2.25, Filet Mignon \$4.25, double thick Lamb chops were \$4.50,

Abalone steak was \$3.50 and a 10-12oz Australian Lobster tail dinner was a whopping \$5.25. I thought about their idea of a history day and told them we could call it our, iGoing out of business sale. i

Thank you to all that have supported us over the past 44 years we couldn't have done it without you.

Jim and Vickie Baumann

Lemon Pepper or Cajun
Cattfish on Swiss Chard
2 servings. Recipe can be doubled
2 Bacon slices
3/4lb Seasoned catfish
filet

Lemon pepper or
Cajun seasoning
1/2lb Red or green swiss
chard stems trimmed leaves
thinly sliced crosswise
1T minced garlic
3T White wine vinegar

Cook bacon in a large heavy skillet until brown and crisp. Transfer bacon to paper towel and add fish to drippings in the skillet. Cook over medium heat until golden and opaque in the center 4-5 min per side. Transfer fish to plate and keep warm. Add chard and garlic to same skillet. Cook about 3 min until chard wilts and add vinegar and chopped bacon. Add pinch salt and pepper then toss, while cooking, to coat the chard with the juice, about one more minute. Divide chard between 2 plates. Top chard with fish and serve.



"Our son will hopefully continue with running the family business," said Vicky. "It's what he is planning on doing as of now."

Dolk Tractor employs eighteen people and is capable of shipping worldwide. Field service mechanics travel to customers. Dolk has witnessed the Kubota brand transform into a top-selling product line, carrying over eighty tractor models. Dolk carries Holland Tractors, Ago Tractors, Bush Hog equipment, Land Pride equipment, Gearmore equipment, Solex Wholegoods, Fastline Trailers, Hesston Hay equipment, Yetter No Till equipment, Great Plains equipment, Darf Hay rakes, Wilcox Agri products, Domries Tillage products, Schmeiser Tillage products, Durand-Wayland/John Bean sprayers, Vrisimo mowers and shredders, generators, water pumps, and replacement engines.

"We have mostly reoccurring customers from Rio Vista and many from Lodi," said Vicky. "We always hope to add new ones."

Dolk Tractor Company is currently located at 242 North Front Street, Rio Vista, Calif. 94571.



Revival Spirit

By Pastor Ella Ray

One hundred and fifty years ago there was no Congregational Church in Rio Vista. However, in 1867 the Congregational Church in Rio Vista was born. Reading through the church's history and scanning the words of Congregational ancestors, I could not help but be reminded of how our Christian heritage was rich with folks who served a Risen Lord.

The Congregational Church is rich in history but richer in its relationship with Jesus Christ. I found a treasure chest of written documents and pictures that trace the history of our church and Rio Vista in the church's safe. They describe activities and visions of pastors in the 1800s that speak to all of us today. All pastors involved with the Congregational Church worked to bring revival within the little town of Rio Vista. One of the articles I read said that these were the years of great interest in the church and things spiritual. People traveled to San Francisco by steamer because there were other Congregational groups in there. Visitors from the city would come to share in the meetings. The Rio Vista members gladly took in the visitors.

During damp weather the meetings saw mud. There was a saying that Rio Vista mud sticks like sin. Yes there is such a thing as sin. On Sept. 18, 1896 the Congregational Church was looking for a pastor. The requirements were interesting to read. They revealed the mentality of the town at that time. The letter described how great Rio Vista was since it had been incorporated. Excellent sidewalks had been built and lights on the streets were erected. It was stated that at

one time a multitude of hogs and stock invaded yards, gardens and open kitchen. The letter then went on to state the need for a pastor in the clean town. The letter warned the reader that the church was comprised of life-robust, energetic, bright and religiously inclined people. Because of this they were able to detect a "shoddy" pastor. They were not looking for a degree or name of importance.

The church was asking for "a young man with genius above the average, large common sense, energy, and singleness of purpose, studious habits and a clear voice. He has to be as sure that he is born again as he is sure that he was born of a mother. He does not choose ministry as a choice of profession but because he has felt the call of God. If He has the call from above it will be evident by a heart all-aglow for Jesus and a great love for lost souls. He will be happy to cast his net with the people and be one of them. If this describes the man who is interested then he will be welcome."

A document stated that the Angel Gabriel would be visiting Rio Vista and might be interested. The letter discusses the preaching and sends a warning that

old and used sermons were not acceptable. "If the preacher has a barrel of old sermons it would be well to take them to the back door of some poor widow, to be used as kindling in her cook stove. Rio Vista people are supplied daily with fresh mild butter, eggs, steaks, and chops and have no relish for salted horse meat."

The letter goes on to read that college and seminary veal can be kept in the refrigerator and fed to the city folks but not in the town of Rio Vista.

All of the letters in the church history call for a

Revival and praise the commitment to Jesus Christ. They refer to the spiritual hunger in the pews that call for words that are nutritious for the soul. They denounce the importance of eloquence and scholarship if there is no Holy power.

"The cause of Christ today, (May, 1896) demands pulpit power that is connected with the conversion of sinners."

The Congregational Church envisioned being a nucleus around the friends of Christ. I am blessed to be part of this history.

All churches need the spirit of revival. It is what grew our churches and added souls to the Kingdom. A revival is a time to awaken to the power of God's activity. There have been several Great Awakenings in America. However, these periods did not last because people forgot what happened.

This is the time for God's people to pray for growth and power so another revival will awaken our town of Rio Vista. Vince Havner wrote that the greatest need in America is an old fashioned heaven born, heaven sent revival. When clouds have hung lowest, when sin has darkened the sky and faith has been the weakest, there have always been a faithful few who were not sold out to the enemy.

Revivals are usually preceded by a time of spiritual depression, apathy and gross sin, in which a majority of nominal Christians are hardly different from the members of secular society, and the churches seem to be asleep. Revival comes when the Christians yearn to feel the power of God and they begin to sense that the Lord is present. In the midst of all our economic and moral challenges, God is ready to hear our prayers. Maybe in another 150 years historians will recall that there was a mighty revival causing hearts and souls to be rekindled in miraculous happenings in the churches.

Dolk Tractor Co.

NICOLE BAPTISTA
Editor

In 1948 Dolk Tractor Company was born. Seth Dolk and his son Stanley started the family-owned and functioned business, which celebrates its sixtieth anniversary this year. The Sacramento River Delta has lived off agricultural businesses for generations, making Rio Vista the perfect grounds to open shop.

The competitiveness in business created a need for change. By diversifying their product supply the company kept its clientele and enabled customers to continue shopping locally. In 1960, Stanley took over the business full-time and decided to add a large service building to its existing lot. Soon after Stanley's son, Rod joined the family team.

"With the changes in the economy came changes in the company. We have farming products and consumer products," said Vicky Dolk. "We advertise online and get people from all over. Our farming products are mainly on the Sacramento River where our consumer

products are purchased in the foothills, such as Brentwood and Oakley."

As the times changed, so did the company's prospects and business ventures. The White Corporation bought out Oliver. This change pushed Dolk Tractor Company to add the Versatile Tractor line, which met the farming communities needs. The Kubota Tractor line and Honda generator brands were added in 1981 and a variety of larger tractors were introduced after the Ford Corporation bought Versatile Tractor.

In 1985 Vicky Dolk, Rod's wife, joined forces as company manager. Within five years the Kubota line grew in popularity, and by the end of the nineties Dolk Tractor Company provided a large range of equipment for small and large farming needs.

"I joined because my kids were in school," said Vicky. "I decided that it would be interesting to be part of the business as well."

Vicky and Rod's son Rick began working for the family in 2003, adding to the company's traditional and successful business ethic.