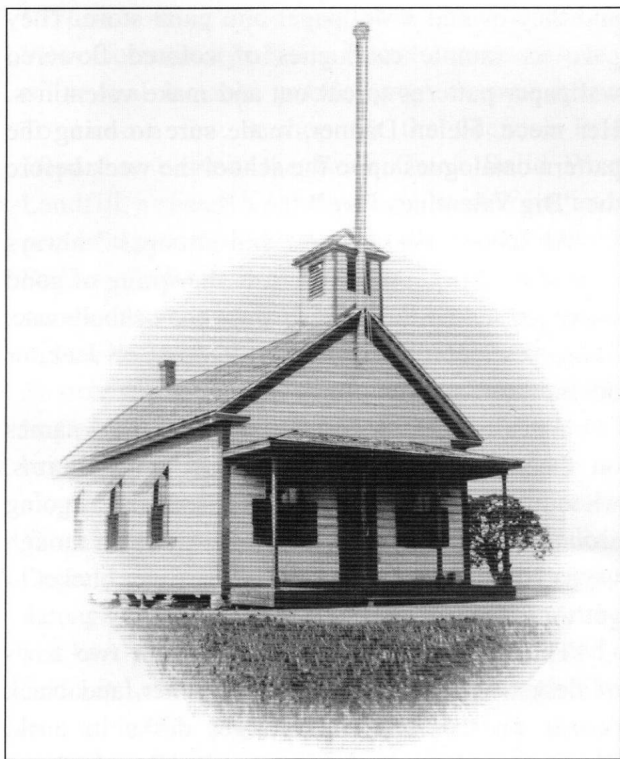


MEMORIES OF THE OLD ORIGINAL “RED HOUSE” IN SALT SPRING VALLEY

By Ella McCarty Hiatt—2005



The Salt Spring Valley School that the author attended.

*Photo courtesy of Frances Tower Henry, 1943;
from the files of the Calaveras Historical Society.*

My fondest memories of the Old Original Red House are in the years of 1927 through the 1930's, when Mr. and Mrs. Abner Jack and family came to live there. They had a daughter Doris, and a son, Bob. The Jacks were related to the Jack family in San Andreas (which made it a familiar name to me). Mr. Moreing owned the Red House Ranch at that time, and he hired the Abner Jack family to be his caretakers.

Doris and Bob enrolled in the eighth grade at the Salt Spring Valley grammar school in the fall of the year of 1927. My brother Tom and myself were also starting in our eighth grade at the school. He and I were the last, and youngest, of the McCarty family children to attend the Salt Spring Valley School.

Our McCarty Ranch home was on Rock Creek Road, about four miles south of the school. My brother Tom had a cut down Model T Ford car, which was called a “Bug”! It had two seats in the front, just back of the motor, and the back end was left with a flat bed on the metal frame and over the back wheels of the car. It was fun riding in it,



The Old Original Red House, in snow in 1930. Doris Jack is in the foreground, and a lovely old truck is visible on the far left. Photo courtesy of Doris Jack Bates.

instead of walking as we used to do, or sometimes we rode with the Copper Ore trucks that went by toward Milton, and we got out at the turn off at Salt Spring Valley Road.

The Salt Spring Valley School

Our teacher at the Salt Spring Valley School was Mrs. (Jake) Tower, (nee Julia Drew of Copperopolis) and we loved, and respected her. After we all lined up outside and saluted the flag, we marched back inside, two by two, to the tune of "God Bless America". There was a phonograph at the school, but our teacher was musical and played the piano. She usually played two or three songs for us to sing before classes began, then it was time to review our homework that she had given us to do. She had all eight grades to get started, so it usually took up most of the morning (with one recess outside, in between, if the weather was good). In the afternoon sometimes older pupils could work at a table to make maps of places we were studying in geography. We mixed some flour and water to form valleys and to make mountains, and when it hardened, we could use watercolors to paint them green or brown.

On Fridays, we all had to help clean the schoolroom. Older ones could sweep and dust and little ones

were sent outside with the black board erasers (to clap the erasers together to get the chalk dust out). They could do this on the porch, if it was raining. There was a cabinet with a glass front that had six or eight shelves full of books for us to read. Everyone in the "Upper Grades" had to read at least one book a month, as part of our schoolwork.

We had special fun days also, such as the annual Easter Egg Hunt across the road, in and around the tall rocks! The pre-school children in the area were always invited to the egg hunt.

On Valentines Day, we always had a "Valentine Box". We were lucky to have pretty paper to make valentines, as our teacher, Mrs. Tower, had a sister in Stockton, who was married to Mr. Clyde Danner, and they owned a wallpaper and paint store. They gave us sample catalogues of colored flowered wallpaper patterns to cut out and make valentines. Her niece, Helen Danner, made sure to bring the pattern catalogues up to the school the week before the "Big Valentines Day"!

At school, the "biggest and strongest" always packed the bucket of water from the spring of good water just down the hillside from the schoolhouse. These years of 1927 and 1928, it was Bob Jack, or my brother Tom McCarty.

We all had our own cups with our names on them, to keep from spreading "cold" germs, whooping cough, chicken pox or whatever was going around! We got most of these anyway, even though we had a long handled dipper in the water bucket to get water for our cups!

This was a one room school, with two rows of desks; smaller desks toward teacher, and black boards on the wall, with larger desks in back. There was a large "schoolhouse clock" up high, so everyone could see it to "learn to tell time", and to not be late getting in from recess! On each side of

the clock were pictures of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.

We all studied real hard, as I remember, and were glad that we did, because some of the questions in the eighth grade test were about the "Constitution of the United States". All four of us graduated, and looked forward to getting our diplomas. However, our teacher (Mrs. Jake Tower) became ill with severe migraine headaches, and had to send us to Milton to receive our diplomas at the Milton School. Mrs. Alvin Prouse was their teacher, and she welcomed us to join her graduates. Mr. Charles Schoewerer, the "Superintendent of Schools", was there to hand out our diplomas, as well as those of the eighth graders of Milton. We were sorry not to have our graduation exercises at our own school, but were also sorry for our much-admired teacher who was so ill.

This school is still there now in the year 2005. The Tower families have taken good care of it, along with the help of some of the former students with money raising projects and such. We have had quite a few school reunions in recent years, and it was nice to see Doris and Bob Jack there as well as our former schoolmates and some of the older people from the earlier years such as the Towers, Stegmans, and Wilsons and even sometimes a teacher that had taught there.

The Red House

Doris and Bob only had to come about two miles from the Red House to school. Sometimes, for fun, they came in a horse and cart, and I was asked to ride home with them a couple of times when I stayed over night with Doris at the big Old Red House.

Sometimes during those grammar school days, when I was invited to stay over night with Doris in the big old two story Red House, we slept in her bedroom up on the second story, and it was an exciting thing for me, just to sleep upstairs!

Mrs. Jack was a very nice lady. Her job was to cook for the workers at the "Ranch" and sometimes, for people traveling that road from Milton to Angels Camp. People all had some sort of automobile by 1928 or 1929, and didn't usually stay over night.

It snowed in Salt Spring Valley in 1930, and two pictures were taken of Doris Jack standing in the snow beside the Old Original Red House, and also a picture of her standing by a small building nearby.

Mr. Andy Williams, by this time, had bought the whole Red House ranch in 1930, and had started to build his Spanish type "Mansion" home. It was being built about a quarter of a mile north of the Old Red House. A picture was taken of the beginning of the construction work on it, and that was also covered with some snow.

Mr. Williams had sold his "Piggly Wiggly Stores all over the World", as he was fond of saying. But when Safeway Co. bought the stores they were simply just called "Safeway", same as today.

Andy Williams hired Mrs. Jack to cook for the thirty men working on the construction job, so she stayed on, and did the cooking for them all. She cooked and served their meals to them in the large kitchen and dining room of the Old Red House. She had a couple of girls helping in the kitchen, one of which was my older sister Lucile McCarty,



Doris Jack, in front of the Old Original Red House's wood shed in snow in 1930.

Photo courtesy of Doris Jack Bates.



The Red House "Mansion" under construction by Andy Williams during a snow in 1930.

Photo courtesy of Doris Jack Bates.

who drove back and forth to Red House everyday from our home across the Valley to work in the kitchen (everyone was glad to have jobs as it was the "depression years", of the 1930's).

When the construction of Mr. Andy Williams New House was finished the Jack family moved back down to Ceres, California, where they had been living before they came to the Red House. Mr. Moreing and Mr. Abner Jack were friends, and Mr. Moreing wanted Abner and his family to come back down and work with him, at his ranch (we certainly missed them!). This was in the late 1930's and the Old Red House still remained, to be used for workers homes, for some more years.

Captain John Wright had built this two story Original Red House in 1886-87. He built it for a "Stage Stop" on this northeast branch of the Antelope Trail, in Salt Spring Valley. He painted it red, and also painted the roofs of his white barns in this same red color. He had acquired so much land around the area that eventually people started calling it the "Red House Ranch".

Frances (Tower) Henry, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Frank Tower, knew quite a lot about Captain Wright. She informed me that the Captain's sister married Mr. Al Beck, who was an Uncle to Frances and her sisters Marian and Alice (Tower). Captain Wright and his wife, and the Beck family were all from Oakland, California.

One of the Tower family's favorite stories was when Capt. Wright went to visit "Grandma Tower" and her husband Jacob. The Captain asked Grandma Tower how she liked his new house? And she replied, "I don't like the color!!"

She and Jacob had built their white two-story home in the late 1860's, in about the upper middle part of Salt Spring Valley. This is where the old "Antelope Trail" came up from below Gopher Ridge Mountain from the west and into the Salt Spring Valley. It was then called the "White House Road", and had been a stage stop and way station for many years. The road went through the Tower Ranch and up Carmen Grade to get to Angels Camp. In one of Grandma Tower's diary pages she wrote, "The men are working on Carmen Grade today."

Captain Wright was interested in mining, as well as having many acres of land. He had included the little place called "Lost City", which was about two miles from his main ranch and was separated by fences and a dirt road that led past the Pedrolí Place, the Stegman Ranch, etc. and branched off to the northwest, and on down through the DeMartini Ranch to Valley Springs. Lost City was believed to have been settled by French Trappers in the 1840's. It consists of crumbling clay colored rock in old buildings, and the same rock type in open ovens and chimneys. A small stream of water runs



The Red House Mansion as it appears today.

Photo by Bonnie Miller, September 2005.

through the lower end. Capt. Wright probably thought there might be gold or copper ore there, but none was ever believed to have been discovered. (See *Las Calaveras*, January 1953, July 1960, and July 1961).

The Captain had bought a part of the Alto Mine down toward Knights Ferry near the Stanislaus River, which was on part of the "Spanish Grant" (the *Rancheria del Rio Estanislau*, see *Las Calaveras* October 1982 and January 1989). He bought the part of the grant from Manuel Castro in 1863, and eventually was in partnership at the mine, with Tom Lane.

The mine was doing quite well, with a 10 stamp mill, operated by electric power from an electric line that came up from the town of Knights Ferry. This same power was eventually extended to the mining town of Hodson, and to Angels Camp. Tom Lane was associated with the Utica Mine in Angels Camp, where his brother Charlie Lane was manager and part owner of the Utica Mine.

Captain Wright stayed down at the Alto Mine a lot of the time and while there, in 1903, he had a bad fall when riding his donkey. This was probably his transportation around the mine. He did not recover from this accident, and died in that year of 1903.

Mrs. Wright kept the partnership in the mine for about three years, then in 1906, contracted that part

of the mine and the part of the "Spanish Grant", to W.O. Manson. It was in litigation for a while, but eventually she received her money for the property from the "California-Calaveras Mining Company", organized in January 1907.

It was said that when Captain Wright owned some of the buildings and a dance hall at Ramsey Flat near the Alto Mine he would not allow any saloons. There was a school, a post office, a church, and the dance hall, which all provided jobs for local residents.

When Mrs. Wright sold the Red House Ranch property she went back to live in Oakland, California.

"Taking a Step Back in Time" ***The Peach Orchard***

There is probably no way of knowing if Capt. Wright in 1886 had known about the Peach Orchard Farm that had been established in the 1850's. It was two miles above the site that Capt. Wright had chosen for his Red House Stage Stop. The Peach Orchard Farm was on this same north-eastern branch of the Old Antelope Trail. The farm was started by Garcelon and Kallenback. They planted an orchard and raised vegetables. It was just on the edge of the tree line, of that part of Bear Mountain that must have had better weather for vegetable gardening. Maybe the area had no cold frosty weather because of the protection of a

few native oak trees there. There was a perpetual stream of water that came through the farm, from above, from springs on Bear Mountain. They built a two story hotel and made it into a stage stop, with other buildings and homes for their garden workers. It was the only place in Salt Spring Valley that was hiring people and paying wages.

When my grandfather Thomas McCarty came to California, around the "Horn" in 1850, he pre-empted some land in the southern part of Salt Spring Valley, on the Stockton Road, then headed for the Peach Orchard Farm to earn some money to pay for his land as soon as the government released it for sale.

The Peach Orchard Farm hauled their produce by horse and wagon, and delivered to San Andreas and to the gold prospectors at "Angels Creek". In 1848 Henry Angel started a trading post there, and it consisted of about 300 people at that time. (Later on, as the population grew, it was called "Angels Camp"). The prospectors there made enough money to buy provisions at the trading post. Perhaps some of the workers for the Peach Orchard Farm drove the produce wagons to Angels Creek. My grandfather seemed to go to Angels Creek often through the later years, so he might have become acquainted with people there in his Peach Orchard days.

In 1852 he decided to go back to New York and ask his sweetheart Miss Agnes Dean to marry him. They were married at his brother Michael McCarty's Hotel at Elysian Fields, Hoboken, New Jersey, then began his return trip to California. They took a ship to Panama and after walking across the "Isthmus of Panama", they boarded a ship there that was headed for San Francisco. A trip by river boat took them to Stockton, and by stage coach to Salt Spring Valley. They went to the Peach Orchard Farm again, and he got a job, as he needed money. When they finally left the Peach Orchard, they went to Angels Creek to stay and prospect for gold but eventually came back to Salt Spring Valley.

Mr. Jacob Tower had arrived in Salt Spring Valley in the 1850's and he also went to work at the Peach Orchard Farm. He then established his own ranch on the western center of the valley, which was on the main route of the Antelope Trail. Mr. Jacob Tower and Mr. Bisbee were partners and they raised hay and grain and vegetables for sale. When Mary Howard and Jacob married, it became a favorite

stage stop and way station for travelers on their way to Angels Camp, and "Calaveras Big Trees".

When my grandfather Thomas McCarty had paid for his pre-empted land, he built a log cabin with a small store on his ranch on Stockton Road (now State Highway 4) and used it as a stage stop. He had some gold scales and weighed the prospectors' gold that they traded for groceries and supplies. There were a few members of the Me-Wuk Indians still living in the surrounding area, and they traded their Indian rock mortars for bacon, beans, and flour.

McCarty went to the Angels Creek trading post to buy new supplies for his store. Later, he raised his own livestock and eventually became a large sheep and cattle rancher. He and his wife Agnes (Dean) McCarty raised nine children at their "Log Cabin Ranch".

There were not many families in Salt Spring Valley yet, in the 1850's, but Madame Felix had arrived from France at that time. Her husband, Sylvester, had sent for her when he had acquired some land on Rock Creek Road, which was on the south part of Salt Spring Valley coming from Milton, and on to Angels Camp and Murphys (and to the Big Trees). Her husband was killed in a wagon accident, so she made her place into a stage stop and way station on top of a small grade on their ranch on Rock Creek Road. Her nearest neighbor was Alban Hettick, with his big garden of fruit trees and grapes.

My family eventually became owners of the large Hettick Ranch, and I can remember the Hettick house. It had a long sink counter in the kitchen with drains to wash grapes, and a wine cellar downstairs. There were two water springs in his garden, and a creek so he did not lack for water.

When my father bought the Hettick Ranch in 1901 he bought the Hettick Ranch cattle AH brand, which is still being used through the years by McCarty family inheritors.

Getting back to the 1850's, Madame Felix's stage stop burned, and she moved to the Hettick House. Madame Felix was a good friend of the Tower and McCarty families. She acted as a midwife (nurse) when their children started arriving, and some of the McCarty children were born at the Hettick Ranch. Grandma Tower called her son, Jake Tower, "Madame Felix's Strawberry Baby", because he loved the strawberries from the garden when they

went to visit her. ("Madame" is a name given to the married women of France).

Madame Felix died at the age of 60 years old, in 1880, and was buried beside her husband Sylvester Felix on the lower edge of the Hettick garden. There was always a patch of a green "Myrtle" plant, to mark the spot where the graves were. Alban Hettick lived to the age of 82 and was buried in Murphys Calif near his relatives. In recent years when the Meridian Royal Mine property came nearby to the graves, they were all exhumed and moved to Murphys.

Most of these roads in Salt Spring Valley existed from the Mi-Wuk Indian trails, when they made their annual trip from the High Sierras down over Bear Mountain to Salt Spring Valley. They stayed here all winter, to escape the cold weather of the Sierras. Just about every stream of water had a least one Indian mortar hole worn into rock ledges beside the streams. The Indians made the mortar holes by using another smaller rock, used like a pestle, until it was deep enough to hold a basket full of acorns, to be ground, and then cooked over a small fire. This was their main meal, except for deer meat, which were probably plentiful. They would use the deerskins to make moccasins and tents for their camps. The "Antelope Trail" was no doubt named because of the Indians. It is certain that the Antelope Trail was there long before Captain Wright built the Old Original Red House in 1886-87.

The Ofenheims and Fires

The Red House and ranch were purchased by Mr. and Mrs. William Von Ofenheim in the year of 1946. They were of a different class of people than some of the former owners. He and his ancestors were from Austria. He liked using the title of "Von" Ofenheim, because it was used as a prefix to Austrian personal names and meant a sign of nobility of birth. Sometimes he was called "William" by his friends in San Andreas, but never "Bill"!

He had a sister who lived in England, and he called her on the phone every morning according to their trusted housekeeper lady, Mrs. Henley. (She was also hired to take care of their home, when they made their annual trip to England every year). She loved to cook some of his favorite meals, such as English food like "Yorkshire Pudding" (and also Pheasant, which he himself shot during pheasant season). Mr. Ofenheim's clothing was like that of

an English hunstman, with jacket and khaki colored trousers and high top boots.

The Ofenheims lived in the Red House "Mansion", which they enjoyed very much and it suited their lifestyle. They had three children who were in boarding school in Oakland but preferred "city life" instead of "country".

Mr. Ofenheim was interested in Calaveras County business. He was especially interested in helping the Mark Twain Hospital become an upcoming first class hospital. He attended many of their meetings, sharing advice and suggestions.

The Ofenheims liked living in Salt Spring Valley because of its openness, "like a small country of all its own". Among their neighboring visitors were Frances Tower Henry, and her niece Carolyn Hogan Kenfield. Also invited were friends with children that enjoyed being able to swim in the swimming pool. Mr. Ofenheim liked to watch them swim but they were advised not to splash too much water on the plants and flowers around the pool. They were told also that they must always take a shower before getting into the pool. They did so, as the shower was nearby, and they said it was really a cold shower! They didn't mind that, as those summer days were so hot!

Mrs. Ofenheim sometimes gave luncheons out on the large screen porch at the north end of the house and hired local people to help with this type of entertainment. They always had someone from the area for steady kitchen helpers and housekeepers.

Mr. Ofenheim hired Mr. Darryl Stoddard and Mr. Walter Stone of Copperopolis, for his outside ranch bosses to take care of the cattle and horses and other ranch duties. They lived in the Old Red House, with their families. Walter Stone and his wife lived on the upper floor, and the Stoddard family lived on the bottom floor. On the morning of Jan. 4, 1953, sparks or a log rolled out of the huge fireplace (which heated the whole house, and was on the bottom floor). It started a large fire and Mr. Stoddard was unable to put it out. The Stoddard's had two little girls, and they hurriedly got them outside, while at the same time alerting Walter and his wife to come down and get out as fast as they could. The whole two story Red House caught on fire, and burned to the ground!

This was such a sad ending for the Original Red House! It had been there 67 years and had



The beautiful Red House Ranch still graces the Salt Spring Valley today.

Photo by Bonnie Miller, September 2005.

sheltered many people through those years. It had stood sturdy and strong, and Captain Wright would have been proud that he had built such a good building for his stage stop!

Mr. Ofenheim built two new Bungalow type houses for these two families to live in and for future ranch workers. He built them near the tall trees where the Original Red House had been, where the water spring and well furnished the water for the whole ranch. The trees are still there, and people can be reminded where the "Original Old Red House" stood.

Frances Tower Henry's list of first owners of the Red House Ranch was:

1. 1866: Captain John Wright (the builder)
2. Mr. Cockran
3. Mr. Moreing
4. Mr. Andy Williams
5. 1946: Mr. and Mrs. William Von Ofenheim

Mr. Ofenheim still moved the cattle down to their lower ranch near Salida, California, but he needed more feed for cattle at home. In the last part of May 1961 he decided to have a control burn, which the ranchers were allowed to do. This would allow green grass to grow for cattle feed the next year. The Forest Service brought their caterpillar bull dozers to the area above "Carmen City" where Mr. Ofenheim wanted it cleared. The bulldozer men cleared the thick brush, poison oak bushes, and dead limbs of old fallen trees. The brush etc was all

pushed down in to the steep ravines to be lighted and burned there.

The fire trucks and other extra equipment were parked down at the bottom of Carmen grade, if needed if the fire got out of control. There were fire trucks all around the control burn area to keep fires from spreading. Two teen age boys, (Howard Northington, who was a nephew of Walter Stone, and Gary Hiatt) were standing above on a dirt road watching the fire in the first ravine, when they saw Mr Ofenheim and his guest coming up the hill in his jeep with more fuel to be used to start fires. He had one man inside the back of the jeep with the fuel container; whose name was Roy Cunningham. There was a rock covered half with dirt, and the jeep hit the rock. Mr. Ofenheim lost control and the boys saw it tip over, and the fuel explode in the back. It blew Roy Cunningham completely out onto the ground, and the jeep with Mr. Ofenheim and guest rolled down the hill tipping over a couple of times. Gary quickly grabbed Mr. Cunningham and rolled him in the dirt, because his clothes were on fire from the fuel explosion, and therefore saved his life. Howard ran down the hill to help Mr. Ofenheim and guest, as the jeep stopped nearly on top of the fire. There was a top on the jeep, so they weren't severely injured, but their legs were entangled in the gearshift and brake. Howard helped them get out and away from the jeep, before it caught on fire. He then ran down to get the fire truck crew to help them with Mr. Ofenheim and his guest, and to help Gary with Mr. Cunningham.

Both of these two local boys deserve a lot of credit, for their quick thinking in helping these three men! Howard lives in Copperopolis, and Gary is from Salt Spring Valley (McCarty Ranch). Mr. Ofenheim was extremely grateful, and notified the National Court of Honor of Boy Scouts of America that Gary had saved a man's life in a forest fire. Gary was a member of the local Troop 43 of Boy Scouts of America, and the National Court of Honor recommended that he receive proper credit. Gary received a "Medal of Merit" from the Boy Scouts of America for "Saving the life of Roy Cunningham". I raised Gary as my foster son, and I was very proud of him and his friend Howard.

Mr. and Mrs. Ofenheim lived happily on through the years in their Red House home, until they both passed away in the late 1960's. Their children have since sold the whole ranch, but I think it will always be called "Red House Ranch".

Contributing author Ella McCarty Hiatt is a life-long resident of the Salt Spring Valley, and has witnessed more than ninety years of rich history unfold before her in this beautiful valley.

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 Judy Marvin—"Madame Felix"
 O. Henry Mace—"Back Roads"
 Frances Tower Henry—"Notes", Capt. Wright
 Mr. Walter Stone—Original Red House
 Mrs. Estelle Henley—"Mr. Ofenheim"
 Howard Northington—Brush Fires
 Gary Hiatt—Brush Fires

NEW OFFICERS FOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

In July the Calaveras County Historical Society welcomed a new slate of officers at the annual business meeting held in San Andreas. In a fun ceremony, former society president Betty

Snyder installed the officers in to their new positions. She handed each one a fruit or vegetable that held desirable qualities that would be useful in their new functions.



Pictured kneeling in front is new "Top Banana" President Wally Motloch and Vice President Duane Wight. Standing, from left are Treasurer Don Maguire, Secretary Rosemary Faulkner, and Directors Jeff Tuttle, Gary Herd, Rosemary Wilson, Lowell Herbert, and Bob Belmont. On far right, holding her empty picnic basket is former president Betty Snyder.

HISTORIC CANNON RECOVERED!!

In July the residents of Calaveras County learned some wonderful news. This historic, pre-Civil War cannon that had been stolen from the People's Cemetery in San Andreas in 1998 has been recovered!

Most people had given up hope that a relic missing for so long could be found. Acting on an anonymous tip, the Calaveras County Sheriff's Department obtained a search warrant and dredged a small pond on a remote ranch in Mountain Ranch. With the assistance of the Calaveras County Road Department, the cannon was removed from its submerged hiding place with a backhoe. It was quickly delivered to the Sheriff's Department in San Andreas where inmates cleaned it up and gave it a new shine. It was determined that the bronze cannon was surprisingly no worse for wear after its seven year hiatus in the pond.

The cannon weighs 790 pounds and is solid bronze, cast in 1847. The field howitzer is designed to fire a twelve pound ball. It was given to Calaveras County by Congress in 1912 and originally displayed in Burson. In the 1920's it was moved to San Andreas and mounted in the People's Cemetery.

The cannon is sister to another howitzer cast by the same foundry. An earlier cannon, cast in 1844 and weighing only 777 pounds, was paired with the stolen cannon at the time they were given to Calaveras County. It is not known whether either cannon ever saw battle. What is known is that they both have been fired right in San Andreas many times.

The two cannon gained notoriety in 1993 when sixth grade Essay Contest student Carl Anderson researched and wrote about the history of the cannon. Then in the 1990's the cannon were featured in several military displays and re-enactments. They were periodically fired to commemorate various events, including Historical Society functions.

Sadly, in 1998, the temptation to possess one of the great cannon proved too much for a local prankster, and it was stolen from the cemetery. The Historical Society promptly provided reinforcement for the remaining cannon and posted a healthy reward for recovery of the missing one. Civil War organizations across the country were enlisted to watch out for the cannon should it appear for sale, yet it had never even left the county. The pond proved too good a hiding place, and the cannon dropped from memory.

Our hats are off to those who remember this piece of history and chose to act on it. Beautiful artifacts as these could be lost to time if not remembered by dedicated individuals and groups such as the Historical Society. Thank you to those who provided the tip, and to the Sheriff's Department for their good work.

For more information about the fascinating history of the cannon, readers are encouraged to read the October, 1997 issue of *Las Calaveras*.



The two cannon were fired in the People's Cemetery in a military re-enactment on July 24, 1997. On the left is Larry Schneider, on the right (loading) is Ed Pico, of the Stockton, 3rd US Artillery, National Civil War Association. Photo from the files of the Calaveras County Historical Society.

TOMMY TAYLOR, 85, PASSES ON

by *Bonnie Miller*

Third generation and lifelong resident of Calaveras County, Thomas A. "Tommy" Taylor passed on in July of this year.

Tommy was born in 1919 in Rail Road Flat, and he lived there most of his life. He was married for more than 60 years to his childhood schoolmate and lifelong friend the elegant Mary McPherson Taylor.

Tommy graduated from Calaveras High School and attended the College of the Pacific and later served in the Naval Construction Battalion (the "SeaBees") during World War II. After his service he operated the Taylor Logging Company until he retired from the logging business in 1975.

Tommy was always known as a bit of a prankster, but always a good friend. Above all, he was a friend to Calaveras County. Most recently he was known for his service to the residents of Calaveras County. In 1980 he was elected to the Calaveras County Board of Supervisors where he served four successful terms.

At Tommy's retirement from public life in 1996, a roaring roast was held at the Rail Road Flat Community Hall. Tommy's contribution to several notable public projects was hailed. To name a few, a shop for the Glencoe Road Department crew, the Rock Creek Solid Waste Landfill, a sheriff's substation in West Point, and a new bridge on Rail Road Flat Road over the South Fork of the Mokelumne River. He worked hard to secure funding for roadways, and was prominent in obtaining funding for a new bridge on Highway 26 over the Middle Fork of the Mokelumne River. In 1998 State Assembly Resolution 105 named the bridge in his honor.

I'll never forget the first time I met Tommy. When I was just a kid starting out in the Road Department in 1986, I was required to photograph damage caused by storms during heavy rains. I had just barely made it in 4WD out of what remained of Summit Level Road. I stopped at the Haigg's Store in search of a hot cup of coffee, even though the power was out all over the area. I was approached by a kindly fellow from the back room whom I felt was surely going to admonish me for tracking mud

in to his store. Instead, he asked me in detail "how bad are the roads out there?" I learned first hand that he really cared about the roads, and what the residents were up against. From then on I admired how he cared about the every day details within county government, his community and his beloved Calaveras County. I was proud to call him "my" supervisor from District 2.

As a supervisor, Tommy was known for his long-winded stories about "the good old days" when a person's word was better than a contract. His amusing but common sense stories always wound up with a good moral applicable to the matter at hand.

Tommy was truly a good friend to the residents of Calaveras County. He never differentiated between one person and another. He treated everyone equally, and everyone with respect. Therefore everyone considered him their friend, and they could always count on him.

Four years ago Tommy and Mary moved to San Andreas. He passed away quietly at the age of 85.

Biographical information courtesy of the Calaveras Enterprise and personal knowledge of the author.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS FOR TOMMY TAYLOR

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The Calaveras County Historical Society is a non-profit corporation. It meets on the fourth Thursday of each month in various communities throughout the County. Locations and scheduled programs are announced in advance. Some meetings include a dinner program, and visitors are always welcome.

The Society operates the Calaveras County Museum which is open daily from 10:00 to 4:00 in the historic County courthouse located at 30 Main Street in San Andreas.

The Society's office is located in historic San Andreas, the Calaveras County seat. Visitors are always welcome to stop by the office for assistance with research, and are encouraged to visit the museum while in the area. The office is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 to 4:00, and the telephone number is (209) 754-1058, or contact us at: CCHS@goldrush.com.

Donations

The Historical Society is grateful for the following donation:

June 2005

German engraving of goldwashers on the Mokelumne River—Rosemary Wilson, Mokelumne Hill

Photograph of Southern Pacific No. 2521 engine—Wally Motloch, Mountain Ranch

Two constable badges & two deputy sheriff badges, one blackjack, one brass knuckles, one billy club—Rhoda Stone, Copperopolis

Two ledgers from Sheep Ranch, indian baskets and misc. photos—Carole Stephens Whisman, Vallecito

New Members

The Historical Society welcomes the following new members:

June 2005

Mr. & Mrs. John McGrath, San Andreas
Gary Hamrick, Acampo
David Evans, Fair Oaks

August 2005

Michael & Kathe McCartney, Amador City
Mr. & Mrs. Steve McLeod, Long Beach
Don & Linda Winn, Mountain Ranch
Chris & Linda Bonnet, Modesto
Patrick B. McGreevy, Glencoe
Kent L. Wilson, Mountain Ranch
Lloyd & Dianna Ames, Glencoe
M.J. Mobley, Mountain Ranch
Tad Folendorf, Angels Camp
Ruby Parlor #46, Native Daughters of the Golden West, Murphys

April

Gary Giovannoni, San Andreas
Dan Johnston, Sacramento

Donations

July 2005

Book: "Calaveras, the Land of Skulls," by R. Coke Wood—Wally Motloch, Mountain Ranch

Book: "The Big Tree Exhibits of 1870-1871 and the Roots of the Giant Sequoia Preservation Movement"—Gary D. Lowe (Author), Livermore

Photos of Hetch Hetchy & Big Trees—Marilyn Cutting, Livermore

Antique Doll "Pansy"—Beverly Hickman, Jackson

August 2005

Two photos of Valley Springs & two photos of Will Rogers making the movie "The County Chairman"—Margaret Des Jardin, Palm Desert

Three photos of the Nuner family circa 1900—Carolyn Fregulia, Jackson

Copy of a tombstone rubbing of the Samson & Bradshaw grave 1851—Annette Thompson, Oakland

To the General Fund—Roy & Janet Clifton, Sunnyvale