

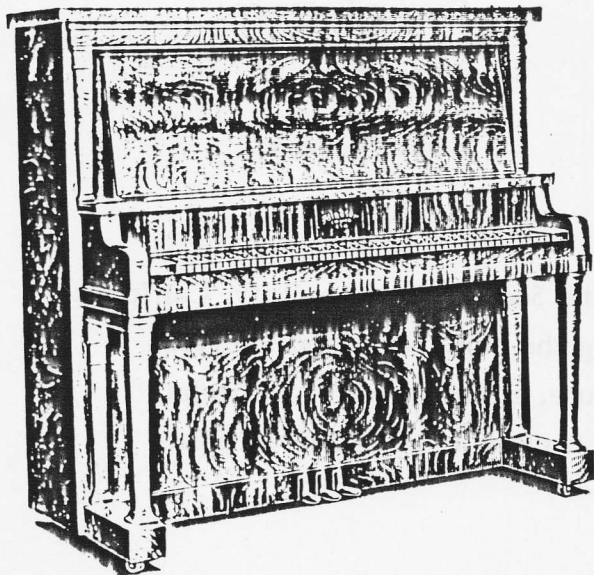
SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS BULLETIN

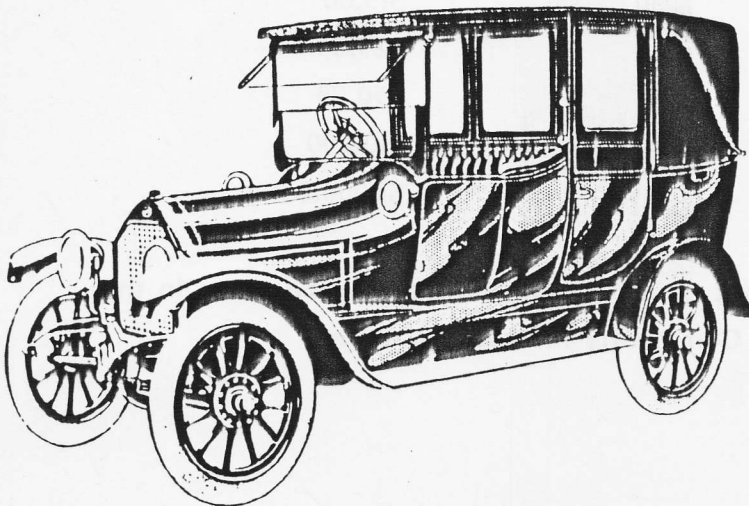
VOL. XXX No. 3

Yuba City, California

July 1989



65 WONDERFUL YEARS IN YUBA CITY



SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWS BULLETIN

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

Albert King, President

Constance Cary, Secretary

Elaine Tarke, Vice President

Wanda Rankin, Treasurer

DIRECTORS

Celia Ettl

Ronald Ross

Constance Cary

Fred Covell

Brock Bowen

Cassius Epperson

Elaine Tarke

Albert King

Randolph Schnabel

Edgar Stanton

Dewert Gruening

The News Bulletin is published quarterly by the Society at Yuba City, California. The annual membership dues include receiving the Muse News and the News Bulletin, 10% discount at the Museum Gift Store, advance notice of special events, such as Museum Galas and Historical Society Tours and invitations to exhibit openings at the Museum.

Dues are due as of January 1st of each year.

The dues schedule is:

Student/over 70 senior citizen/Library	\$7.50
Individual	\$15.00
Family	\$25.00
Business	\$50.00
Sponsor	\$100.00
Corporate/Benefactor	\$1,000.00

An index and file of all the past issues of the Bulletin may be found in the Sutter County Library and at Community Memorial Museum.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is with great reluctance that I have accepted the position of President of your society. This reluctance is prompted by the poor health of the society, a condition that seems to stem from a lack of membership, a lack of interest and a lack of identified purpose.

I must admit that I am as guilty as anyone for I too have been only a knife and fork member up to now, but feel it is time to do something that will make our organization worthy of the name.

The Sutter County Historical Society is over 30 years old. Many of the people who founded it and kept it running for many years have passed on leaving a younger and seemingly less interested group to keep it functioning.

If the society is to function at all it must have a purpose and an active membership. It is to that end that I am proposing some changes. I am also going to ask you some questions and hope that you will take the time to respond and send them back to us. The number of responses will also be informative.

The following statements are intended to stimulate your thinking.

1. The July 17th meeting (one of four required by the by-laws) is cancelled.
2. Why is it that of the approximately 230 Sutter County addresses to which our bulletin is sent only 7 are from the Rio Oso/Nicolaus area and none are from the Robbins area?
3. Did you know that your dues make you a member of the society and the Museum?
4. Did you know that the society's by-laws are badly in need of overhaul? The last revision was in 1969.
5. Did you know that we mail bulletins to over 50 members and organizations outside of Sutter County, including all over California, Oregon, Nevada, Washington, Arizona, Pennsylvania, New York and Wisconsin?
6. Why is it that so many people want to receive the quarterly bulletin but almost no one wants to work to produce it?
7. Why is it that at the January, July and October meetings required by the By-laws it seems impossible to get more than a handful of people to attend?
8. Did you know that the California Historical Society is in such financial trouble that it plans to sell its headquarters in San Francisco for \$8.75 million?

Now, please go to the next page. Answer the questions, make your suggestions, remove it from the booklet, fold at mark, tape or staple together, place a 25¢ stamp on it and mail it back to us. Your responses will be tabulated and reported in the October bulletin.

Thank you for your thoughts.

Bert King

SUTTER COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Name Address _____

Please respond to the questions, remove from the booklet, fold at lines, stamp it and mail it back.

1. Would you be in favor of a goal statement for the society that would include:
- A. Research, recording and preserving Sutter County History.
 - B. Financial and physical support of the Community Memorial Museum.
 - C. To raise the funds necessary to construct an agricultural exhibit building on the museum grounds.
 - D. Other
 - E. Other

☐ Y E S ☐ N O

2. Would you be in favor of changing the by-laws so that there would be only one general meeting per year?

☐ YES ☐ NO

Suggestion _____

3. Would
you be willing to work in one or more of the following areas? ☐

Membership

☐ Society Bulletin

☐ By-law revision

☐ Annual dinner meeting to plan for a place, food and entertainment

☐ Volunteer time at the museum

☐ Serve as an officer or board member of your society

☐ Other:

4. Would you be in favor of your society taking on an historical project such as
- 1. Developing a photographic history
 - 2. Researching to produce written documents
 - 3. Tape recording living history from some of our older residents
 - 4. Making videos of historical persons and/or places
 - 5. Other _____

5. Would you be willing to work on the project you marked? ☐ YES ☐ NO

6. Do you have any suggestions for making your society a better organization?

Please return this questionnaire by Aug. 1, 1989. Thank you.

Director's Report

Summer is one of my favorite seasons at the Museum. It gives us time to recover from the May/June blitz of school tours, 28 classes (800 children) toured the Museum between May 1 and June 14, and to contemplate the ways in which our educational programs are developing. Maggie Moyers has taken the traveling trunk to over 25 classes since the first of the year, and a new volunteer, Alice Coursey, a recent graduate of the Museum Studies Program at John F. Kennedy University, is developing an educational packet of slides, games and information on the history of Sutter County agriculture that will be available to the schools this fall.

Summer also gives the Museum staff, Commission and volunteers a chance to reflect on the year thus far and to plan events for the future. Such future events include "Birthday Bouquets : A Doll Tea Party" on August 2. "Birthday Bouquets" is a party planned by the staff to give the Museum and participants a chance to show off prized dolls. The Slitter Buttes Doll Club has graciously offered to help with the party. On September 14 the Commission will host its annual Salad Luncheon and Card Party, and on September 30, "J.J. Reilly : A Stereoscopic Odyssey," sponsored in part by Longs Drug Stores, will open as our local contribution to the international celebration of the 150th year of photography.

Since I have been at the Museum I have learned that summer is also the time to start thinking about Christmas. It is during the hottest time of the year that we plan the events to occur during the coldest. This year the theme of the Museum's Christmas tree is "California Christmas". We are asking everyone to participate by suggesting possible ornament ideas. If you have not contributed your ideas yet there is still time to make your mark on Christmas at the Museum.

Enjoy the days of summer, and come visit us. The Museum is not only a fascinating place to visit to learn about local history, we also have great air conditioning.

Jackie Lowe
Director

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TRUST FUND AND AG. BUILDING FUND

Caroline S. Ringler	In memory of Dorothy J. Covington
Delma Davis Reick	In memory of Margaret Welter
Mrs. Elmer C. Smith	In memory of Margaret Welter
Cassius Epperson	In memory of Margaret Welter
Dorothy King	In memory of Evelyn Harrison Weser
Cassius Epperson	In memory of Thelma Grow
Walt & Celia Ettl	In memory of Gladys Crawford
Mr & Mrs H. E. Edmonds	In memory of Thelma Grow
Louis & Betty Tarke	In memory of Margaret Welter
Randolph & Shirley Schnabel	In memory of Margaret Welter
Randolph & Shirley Schnabel	In memory of Dorothy Covington
Hap & Marie Campbell	In memory of Edith Taws
Ronald & Lila Harrington	In memory of Lorene Williston
Dorothy Ross	Outright Gift
Caroline S. Ringler	In memory of George Garcia
Don J. Strachan	In memory of Mr & Mrs Frank Welter
Cassius Epperson	In memory of Frank Welter
Cassius Epperson	In memory of Xonora Becker
Jack & Helen Heenan	In memory of Larene Clark
Wanda Rankin	In memory of H. Clarke Powers
Connie Cary	In memory of H. Clarke Powers
Connie Cary	In memory of Mr & Mrs F. W. Welter
Mr & Mrs R. A. Schnabel	In memory of Frank Welter
Delma Davis Reick	In memory of Frank W. Welter
Bob & Jean Heilman	In memory of Larene Clark
Eleanor & Joe McCarron	In memory of Larene Clark
Florence Arritt	In memory of Edna Harmon
Ed & Jean Gustin	In memory of Clarke Powers
Mr & Mrs Dick Brandt	In memory of Clarke Powers
Mr & Mrs Dick Brandt	In memory of Elizabeth Cothrin
Walt, Celia and Dorothy Ettl	In memory of Elizabeth Cothrin
Jack & Helen Heenan	In memory of Elizabeth Ford Cothrin
Connie Cary	In memory of Delle Teja
Crew of L.S.M. 217	In memory of Hedy Gruening

Norman & Loadel Piner
Bogue Country Club
Edwina Atterbury, Jim Virginia & Sally
Frances & Guy Davis
Tom & Marnee Crowhurst
Rosemary Redhair
Chris & Margaret Christensen

Helen Frye
Bud & Carmen Frye
George & Dottie Post
Bogue Country Club
Mrs. Philip Holmes
Beta Kappa Chapter of Alpha Sigma
Mr. & Mrs. Grover L. Davis
James & Alberta Gilpatric
Norman & Loadel Piner
George & Elizabeth Linteo
Helen & Lloyd Frye
Don & Alice Strachan
Bill Auradou
Helen Brierly
Albert & Mary Ulmer
Diane Alexander
Norman & Loadel Piner
Norman & Loadel Piner

In memory of C.E. Sullivan
In memory of Eula O. Harris
In memory of Frederick W. Cooper Jr.
In memory of Delle Teja
In memory of Fred Engle
In memory of Elizabeth Cothrin
In memory of Elizabeth Cothrin

In memory of Margaret H. P. Welter
In memory of Margaret McGrath
In memory of Lorene Williston
In memory of Helen Lindgren
In memory of Minna Tessie Wilson
In memory of Elice Burns
In memory of Gladys McVey Crawford
In memory of George Garcia
In memory of George Garcia
In memory of George Garcia
In memory of Frank W. Welter
In memory of Mr. & Mrs. F.W. Welter
In memory of Ed Coffrin
In memory of H. Clarke Powers
In memory of Evelyn S. Arnoldy
In honor of Loadel Piner's birthday
In memory of Clarke Powers
In memory of Mervin M. Lauer

From the Daily Appeal of July 2, 1872

A grand celebration of our national anniversary at Camptonville,
Thursday, July 4, 1872.

Program: Parade of Yuba Light Infantry. (In their new uniforms)
Grand Tournament! By the Knights of the Yuba Tilting
Club, in their new and splendid costumes. The services
of one of the best Mountain Bros. Bands have been
secured, and will discourse music throughout the day.

To conclude with a Grand Ball.

Go to Peri's Ice Cream Saloon for Ice Cream, Water Ices,
Strawberries, Fountain Sodas and all kinds of Confectioneries.
The Water Works Bldg, D Street, Marysville.

For a good cool drink, go to Uncle Charley Perry's formerly the
ice man, at the southeast corner of E and 3rd Streets, Marysville,
opposite the Masonic Hall.

July 7, 1872 The Daily Appeal

Northern District Fair, 1872

The Eleventh Annual Fair of the Agricultural, Horticultural and
Mechanic's Society of the Northern District of California, will be held
in the City of Marysville, commencing Monday, Sept. 2, 1872, and
continuing six days. \$7,000 will be given in purses and premiums.

Reminiscences of Sixty-Seven Wonderful Years
Since Coming to California
By Myrtle Newcomb

One of my most precious possessions is a good memory, in which I am able to relive the better times of the past; much of which I would enjoy living again as I feel that many things about the "good old days" were better when life was much less complicated. Most prominent in my memory are the many fun-times which I have enjoyed in my long lifetime, and the past 65 years were spent right here in this community.

My earliest recollections of my life in California started when my sister and I arrived in Berkeley in the fall of 1921 from Fargo, North Dakota, by train which was split into sections and ferried across Carquinez Straits. That was a time before any bridges in the Bay Area and the only transportation to any point was by ferryboat. Key system electric trains took us to the piers - air and water were sparkling clear in those days. It seems it would have been wise to have kept those trains which could have been put to good use around the Bay Area; not only relieving automobile traffic but improving air quality. I was fortunate to have enjoyed that peaceful experience two years when I commuted from Berkeley to San Francisco. What a change has been brought about from the tranquil setting of those years to the hectic present times, with all of the bridges which after fifty years have long ago become outdated - all because of too many automobiles. It does seem that man's love of that mode of travel has gone too far! All large cities, and even smaller towns, are experiencing this bumper to bumper overcrowding which has brought about a new word in our vocabulary and in the dictionary - "gridlock."

After two years, my sister married and since my brother Randolph had just arrived in Marysville from North Dakota, I decided to visit him. In the fall of 1923, I remember coming on the Southern Pacific one car gasoline operated motor coach, called "The Skunk," which ran from the Bay Area through Knights Landing. It ran across Sutter Basin where Highway 113 is now located. This was all swamp and overflow land filled with tules, and the water came up to each side of the railroad bed - it looked like a huge lake. What a transformation this whole area has experienced since Reclamation District No. 1500 was formed, and the land reclaimed making this the richest farm land in Sutter County. Canals and levees were built, as well as the much needed Sutter By-pass. Sutter Basin Corporation, Ltd. Played the most important part in the development of the basin.

So, at age 21, I came here without any plans for the future - footloose and fancy-free and looking for adventure, which I definitely found - 65 years of the most enjoyable time of my life. It was much more than I could ever have imagined. I fell in love with the quaint little town of Yuba City on the banks of the Feather River, surrounded by beautiful orchards and vineyards of many different fruits right up to the town limits - Del Norte Avenue on the north, Clark Avenue on the west and Garden Highway on the south. Of greatest interest to me were the Sutter Buttes. I thought I had found a virtual paradise, filled with wonderful people like I had never before met. The people in both towns were so friendly and made me feel welcome. I immediately knew that this was where I wanted to live, and my life seemed to have already been planned.

The first order of business was to find employment, but even that did not seem to be a problem. Randolph had lived here long enough to

Have met a lot of people and many were helpful in trying to find work for me. I had been here only a few days when he told me that Jess Flanery at Decker-Jewett Bank knew of an opening in the Sutter County Courthouse with Fred Heiken, Treasurer & Tax Collector. I lost not time in getting there and fortunately I was immediately hired as deputy treasurer. (Fred always had a lot of fun telling about the Norwegian from Minnesota who came in asking for a "yob"!) This was the beginning of 33 enjoyable years of employment in two county offices and at the Sutter County Title Company, followed by 32 years of part-time work for special districts. Now, after my 65-year love affair with the Sutter County Courthouse, I am finally retiring from this special work. One main reason is again the automobile - no place to park!

The next most important event, which definitely changed the course of my life occurred at "The Atkins," a vaudeville & silent picture theatre, at First and D Streets in Marysville. It was the center of local entertainment and high school commencement exercises were held there. Randolph had introduced me to Lenore Riley de Armond. On a Sunday afternoon, she and I went there, and as the lights were turned on during the intermission I turned around and saw three young fellows sitting a few seats back. I asked her if she knew the one in the center (I didn't even see the other two!) She said she had gone to Marysville High with him but couldn't remember his name. We went to her home to look at the 1922 year book and found he was Ralph Newcomb. The very next night at the Armistice Dance at Forester's Hall, she introduced him to me. We were married in 1924 and kept on dancing thru 52 years more.

Ralph had arrived here with his family in 1921 from Seattle, Washington. During his senior year, he was already managing a 100-acre cherry orchard for R. W. Skinner and Carl Schnabel, living in a small house at the orchard and doing his own cooking. He admitted that he had been living on canned peaches & cream and scrambled eggs. Randolph and I were living in the Smith Apartments at 6th & D Streets, and Ralph eagerly joined us for many dinners. (I think that must have been another reason for my staying here - he needed a cook, and he ever did learn how.)

You could count the cars in these two towns when I came here and they were all old Model-T Fords, Dodges and other early makes. Many young people have asked how we managed to get around without cars. I tell them, "we walked!" I remember walking twice daily from 6th and D Streets to my work in the Sutter County Courthouse. Once in a while, I was lucky when Ralph came along in his dilapidated Dodge roadster and picked me up on my way home - sometimes right in the middle of the Fifth Street bridge. (Could it have been just in time for dinner!) The only other alternative was the old streetcar, which cost five cents to ride between the two towns. One bridge was all that was needed and was really used more as a footbridge. Now, two bridges have become outdated and it would be hard to count the cars which cross both each day. I'll take things the way they were way back then - at least, we got our exercise. With all of the stop signs and bumper to bumper traffic, it may be that before long it will be quicker to again walk between the two towns!

More good fortune came my way because of two nice friends, Fred and Ora Heiken, who built a tiny house for me in back of their home on Yolo Street. They realized how impossible it was to find apartments in Yuba City. This was the beginning of "Heiken Court," where he

Eventually built three more homes a little bigger than mine. After we were married, we lived in the one next to mine. It was nice to be closer to my work. Good fortune kept coming my way through the years and I have been fortunate to have lived in two more new homes - one on King Avenue when we built the first home to open the King Tract in 1926, and another on Villa Vista Avenue in 1941, the first house in Allen Gray Subdivision where I still live.

Since the only way to get in and out of these two towns was by train, there were quite a few years when the town towns were isolated, more or less, but it afforded us the opportunity to enter into community projects, together with the full enjoyment of various clubs and lodges where good fellowship was evident. There was more togetherness. It was such fun knowing everyone - there were no strangers. We all entered into the spirit of local events, such as Sunday picnics in various groves, boat races on the Feather River and yearly 49-er parades down D Street. Everyone dressed in early day outfits - the men also entered into the spirit - even Judge Mahan. We even wore our outfits to work. I have a picture of Fred Heiken dressed as a woman and Hedley Hall on a bicycle built for two. Ed von Geldern was always the ring leader and parade master, arranging floats mounted on horse drawn wagons. He never ran out of clever ideas.

We had several good local dance bands and every Saturday night the dances were always friendly gatherings. Some of the places were open air pavilions - the Feather River Resort just above the Fifth Street bridge and one on E Street, as well as Forester's Hall and Hotel Marysville. Before the dances, we gathered on D Street to visit our good friends in their businesses where we did much of our shopping as they all kept their stores open.

Everything was done so differently back then - we always dressed up for every occasion. At least one night during the week, we would all have a night on the town, going out to dinner to the many fine Chinese restaurants in Marysville, such as the "Lotus Inn" where we always met good friends to enjoy a leisurely good time. We not only went for dinner but for a lot of fund. Uriz Hotel and Marysville Hotel both had excellent dining rooms.

Something which has always fascinated me about the early days of Yuba City. In the tiny original town, so many things were on a small scale. Some of the original maps show the first subdivisions as having lots which were only 20 to 50 feet wide and 70 to 90 feet deep. Many small homes were built on these lots with only a 50-foot frontage but 90 feet deep. There was barely enough room for a very small house, but a big backyard which was probably used for the necessary vegetable garden. Since there were no cars in those days, there was no need for a driveway - a hitching post out in front was about all that was necessary. The first cars were not very big, so a narrow driveway was crowded in next to the house, with an open carport. The driveway always came in straight from the street and being so narrow was hard to get in and out of; and many still remain the same.

As new subdivisions were formed, the lots became bigger to accommodate larger homes, as well as the 2-car garages and wider driveways.

Many streets in Yuba City are quite narrow - some only fifty feet wide. No longer are they used solely for driving cars. On most of them, you will find cars parked on both sides, making it difficult

to drive through, and the city street sweeper can do nothing but a snakelike trip to avoid the cars, which doesn't allow for very clean streets. This street parking came about, not only because of too many cars being manufactured; but, along came house trailers, RVs, motorcycles and boats on trailers which had to be parked in the driveways and on lawns, as well as on the streets. The garage turned into a storeroom, or in some cases a family room. Not very many driveways are big enough to accommodate all of these mobile inventions, so nice lawn areas are sacrificed for parking lots. The one-car family changed as offspring reached driving age and more cars joined the home parking lots and the streets.

When I see countless TV commercials showing car lots everywhere overflowing with new and used of all makes - foreign and domestic - I wonder where there will ever be room on our streets, roads and highways when there is no room now. Highways and bridges can't possibly be built fast enough to keep up with the car population. By the time they could be completed they would be obsolete; just as the Golden Gate, Bay and Carquinez bridges have already become. Where did all of those cars come from; and another good question - where did all of those people come from? The unanswered question - where will it end? For my part, I would like to see Yuba City just as it was before the automobile took over, but I will have to rely on my good memory to retain that picture. I'm sure we enjoyed our cars much more in the days of the "open road," going for a leisurely drive on a summer evening in a roadster, with the top down, just to cool off and enjoy the peacefulness of life as it was - even in an old model!

It is unbelievable what commuters into the large cities seem willing to contend with. Being so married to their cars, they do

their morning grooming in the car, eat their breakfast; and now, they're on the phone: very few of them make it to their jobs on time.

Yuba City's growth was gradual - the first business district being Second Street, then moved to Plumas Street and Colusa Avenue. In the past few years, the movement has been westward toward the Sutter Buttes, taking out those beautiful orchards. I'm sure we all hope that we will never see condominiums and malls on top of the Buttes! In spite of so many drastic changes having taken place in many areas, one precious beauty of nature still remains the same - the Sutter Buttes. Some things should never change and they should forever remain as they are now.

My life is still filled with pleasures of which I could never have dreamt - my cup more than runneth over. In October 1987, Barbara Alcorn, a teacher at Robbins Elementary School invited me to play my "Ragtime Piano" for kindergarten through eighth grades, which they had never heard. I was given a royal welcome with posters which the students had more lining the walls of the long hallway to the auditorium, where I played and gave a short talk about some of the highlights of my long life. This started a new career for me and inspired me to entertain others at clubs and lodges; and I made a return visit there in June. My 86th year was a "banner" year - literally: on my birthday, Barbara brought two long banners made on computer and colored by the students - each has sixty signatures of everyone in the school. They read: "We think you are very young at hear" and "happy birthday Mrs. Newcomb." I feel that I have been adopted by some wonderful young people who make up my "fan club." They have surprised me with many letters of praise, and on Valentine's Day a stack of beautiful handmade Valentines with original messages of love, together with a

small pictures of each one. They all say they like my music because it makes them feel good - needless to say, that makes me feel good! I plan to play for them again this spring.

My most cherished memories are of the 52 years which Ralph and I were privileged to enjoy together. We both seemed to be grateful that we did arrive in this wonderful place at almost the same time. We were never afraid of hard work, both having started at age 17. It was this hard work which afforded us the things which we enjoyed. Daring to build two homes was most exciting, and in which we took great pride. We always seemed to enjoy the same things in the great outdoors. We were never afraid to try something different and we were the first in this area in many activities - skiing and boating, about which I have written stories. We had no desire to travel to faraway places as we found our enjoyment right here in the state and not far from home. The farthest we strayed was cruising the Sacramento & San Joaquin Rivers and the San Francisco Bay Area in the days when the Delta King and Delta Queen made their daily trips from Sacramento to San Francisco. Nothing could ever have equaled those times. At home, we were two busy people; both being active in local organizations - Ralph in Masonic Lodge and I was kept more than busy in Eastern Star and Business and Professional Women's Club when it was first organized locally.

These are some of my most memorable recollections of this area, which I have kept stored in my memory bank. I am glad that I have been able to retain the most pleasant of the days that used to be, and still continue to be. It has been fun being a part of those 65 years. I could not have chosen a better place to live, or found more friendly people who have made my life so enjoyable; and it seems to be never ending, as my life gets more exciting with each passing year.

Written by Myrtle
March 17, 1989