

# TEMECULA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



## NEWSLETTER

February 2016  
Volume 16 Issue 2

*It is our mission to identify, preserve and promote the historic legacy of the Temecula Valley and to educate the public about its historical significance.*

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*Viola Carlson holding a photo of her younger self under the pepper tree.*

## Viola Carlson's Hyatt School Reminiscing

**By Jeffery G. Harmon**

On August 8, 2015, Viola drove her car through the Doffo Winery gate and parked under the shade of the old pepper tree. As she stepped out of her car and gazed at the rows of vineyards, she searched for a familiar landmark that would tell her where the Hyatt schoolhouse once stood. Glancing over her shoulder, she smiled at the pepper tree, the last familiar friend of a by-gone era.

Viola Carlson was born in 1928. She attended the Hyatt schoolhouse from 1935 to 1947. Her family lived in the Tualota Valley, a little east of the schoolhouse. The school session began about 9:00 in the morning each day. Viola walked barefoot two and half miles to school.

"My mother bought me leather shoes once," Viola explained, "but they were stiff and hurt my feet. I threw them away."

She glanced to her right, down the dirt path, and towards where the landscape took a gentle dip before descending up a hill. She pointed at the hill where rows of vines traveled west to east.

"That is where our playground was located," she smiled as she recalled fond memories. "We played baseball there." Her voice became serious as she continued, "One day I volunteered to be the catcher. The teacher was up to bat and she took a swing. She hit me in the head and knocked me out. I never wanted to be the catcher again."

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Viola would bring a lunch to school each day. It consisted of a sandwich, cookies, and fruit. There was no milk, because there was no refrigeration. The students ate their lunches at the picnic tables that surrounded the pepper tree. Its large branches provided a cool shade as they talked and ate.

“There was a windmill next to the pepper tree and there were ten mailboxes lined up in a row along the road,” Viola shared, “Mrs. Goodhart delivered the mail.”

There was no air conditioning in the schoolhouse. “If it got hot,” she explained, “we opened the three windows on one side and another window on the other side and the breeze would blow through.”

The one-room schoolhouse served 6 to 10 students each year. Students learned subjects such as spelling, arithmetic, reading, English, and geography. They did not use paper. All their work was done on the blackboard. She never had homework.

Viola had several teachers during her time at Hyatt. She remembered their names vividly.

“My teachers were Miss (Myrtle) Peatty for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade and Miss Elizabeth Conrad taught 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. (Virginia) Woodruff, who was married and had three children, taught 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>. Mrs. (Eldine P.) Waldron, who taught 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, was married and her husband was in the service.”

Across from the road, Viola’s uncle, Allen Sheld, farmed wheat and barley. At around 3:30 when school was over, Viola would cross the road and hitch a ride on the tractor with her Uncle Huck, as she called him.

The Hyatt school closed around 1947 because there were not enough students. Her brothers, Glen (Herky) and Bobby were transferred to the Alamos school, which was located at the

present intersection of Benton and Pourroy Road.

As Viola finished sharing her stories, I stared at the vineyards wishing to see the Hyatt schoolhouse. The building was razed in 2010. All that remains today is the school cement steps that were preserved and placed next to the old peppertree.

After her visit to the winery grounds, Viola Carlson bid farewell, got into her car and drove off towards her home. As I watched her leave, I came to realize that the Hyatt schoolhouse may be gone, but its legacy lives on in a former student’s heart and memories.

*Researcher’s Notes:*

*Special thanks to Viola Carlson for sharing her stories. To Mimi Milholland and Gail Barton for further interviewing and gathering more information. And thank you to the French Valley Historical Society for sharing this treasured story with us.*



Hyatt Schoolhouse June 1970  
(photo courtesy Rawson family)

## How much do you know about our local history?

1. As you know, the Butterfield's original planned route from Yuma through today's Palm Springs and San Bernardino was abandoned just weeks before the Butterfield started. There were two proposed alternatives. Obviously, the new route through Warners, Temecula, and Chino was selected. What was the other alternative to get the mail to San Francisco as quickly as possible?

2. So last month it was mentioned that the name "Temecula Township" in the 1860s census encompassed a much larger area than just what is really Temecula. In 1860 it was just an arbitrary name used for an area in the census. So what is a township and what township is Temecula in?

Answers on page 4

## Special tour of the Jensen Alvarado Historic Ranch and Museum and the Heritage House

Join us for a TVHS Tour on Wednesday, March 16<sup>th</sup>.

We will leave from the Red Barn and carpool to Riverside for a tour of the **Jensen Alvarado Historic Ranch and Museum**, followed by a tour of the Victorian **Heritage House** located nearby.

For information, contact Phil Washum at:  
pcwashum@verizon.net

## *From The President*

Everybody has a name and in historical circles even buildings have names. If you read the society's mission statement on the left side under the heading you will understand why plaques and written information are so important.

We spend a good sum to print brochures that are free to visitors in Old Town so they can visit historical buildings and learn a little of the history behind those places that are also marked with plaques.

During 2016 we will be re-evaluating the condition of the plaques in Temecula and will repair those that need it and will consider where more plaques are needed.

We are also going to expand our focus to the greater Temecula Valley and consider where plaques should be placed in the town of Murrieta.

In addition to the plaques and brochures, we will be exploring with the Temecula Valley Museum ways to set up cyber hot spots that visitors may access by cell phone connection.

Imagine the option of hearing recordings of voices, music and background sounds related to the historic locations.

We think this is taking the education part of our mission to the next generation. Thank you all for your membership in our organization and for participating in our mission.

I encourage everyone to support The Second Hand Band who are donating their time and talent in a special benefit concert for the Temecula Valley Historical Society's Scholarship Fund. It will be held at "The Merc," one of the oldest buildings in Old Town Temecula on Friday, February 19<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. To reserve tickets for the two hour concert, send \$15 per person to TVHS, P.O. Box 157, Temecula, Ca 92593-0157

Rebecca Farnbach

## Upcoming Events

**Friday, February 19, 2016 7:00 p.m.** TVHS Scholarship Fund Benefit Concert at the "Merc"

**Monday, February 22, 2016 5:30 p.m.** TVHS membership meeting. Social: 5:30 p.m.—6:00 p.m. Program starts at 6:00 p.m. Dr. Anne Miller will present "What Was Where When in Historic Temecula." In her presentation she will show images and map overlays of locations of historical significance in relation to present day streets and buildings.

**Wednesday, March 16, 2016** Tour of Jensen Alvarado House and Museum and a tour of the Victorian Heritage House in Riverside. Contact Phil Washum at: [pcwashum@verizon.net](mailto:pcwashum@verizon.net) for additional info.

**Monday March 21, 2016 5:30 p.m.** TVHS membership meeting. Social: 5:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. Program starts at 6:00 p.m. Robert Wells will speak on The Story of Walt Disney: Creating Kingdoms.

Monthly Meetings are held at the Little Temecula History Center (The Red Barn on the west side of Kohl's Dept. Store), 32085 Temecula Parkway.

Please join us for a "Meet & Greet" time at 5:30 p.m. prior to the meeting on Monday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>. We would like to get to know you.

REFRESHMENTS will be served.

### Special Announcement

The public is invited to participate in a special opportunity drawing at our "Meet & Greet" social time on Monday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, at 5:30 p.m. at the Red Barn. The winner will be announced immediately following the guest speaker. Must be present to win. The winner will receive two tickets to the Reality Rally Celebrity Reception and Casino fundraiser at Wilson Creek Winery to be held on April 8<sup>th</sup> from 5:00 to 10:00 p.m. Winner will meet and mingle with over 100 Reality TV Stars. There will be casino games, wine, food, music and more.

For more information, contact Cheryl Cady at: [ccbissi63@gmail.com](mailto:ccbissi63@gmail.com)

## How much do you know about our local history?

Answers:

1. The second option for the Butterfield was for the stage to carry the mail from Yuma to San Diego and put it on a ship going to San Francisco.
2. In the eastern states, townships (called civil townships) are irregularly shaped legal jurisdictions, within and subordinate to the counties. In most of the rest of the county, the land is surveyed and divided into townships and then into sections (that are about a mile square) as defined by the Public Land Survey System. While in some places those surveyed townships are given names, the townships in the west are simply defined by their location. The Temecula City Hall is in Township 8 South, Range 3 West, San Bernardino Meridian (abbreviated T8S R3W SB). The History Center is in T8S, R2W SB; and most of the Santa Rosa Plateau is in T7S R4W SB. While none of this matters to most people, except historians and genealogists, there has never been a "Temecula township".

For more information, contact Anne Miller at [DMEAJM@earthlink.net](mailto:DMEAJM@earthlink.net)

## Membership News

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS:

Toni Benson  
Sue Blanch

THANK YOU FOR RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP:

Ken & Mary Lavezzari

**March TVHS Newsletter ... Anyone having items to be included in the March 2016 Newsletter should submit them to me by February 26, 2016.**

**Judy Preimsberger, editor  
Email: [pberger30@verizon.net](mailto:pberger30@verizon.net)**