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CAPAY VALLEY

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greatercapayvalley.org

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**Pictures, Stories
and Research to
reveal and celebrate a very
special place.**

*Focusing on the
Greater Capay
Valley, including
towns and areas
surrounding and
leading to Cache
Creek and up the
Capay Valley*

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!!

Where DID the time go--asked the ironic historian?! Seems like I was just putting together the last December issue of this journal and it is already time for me to be decorating a tree with all the ornaments my daughter Samantha made or that we collected over the years--we love this time of year and all the fond memories it brings! And even though the Capay Valley has lost some loved ones, some old-timers, some of whom I have enjoyed talking to in the last 4 years, we did have time to know them and celebrate them--and now we cherish their memory. I have included some memorials in this issue and have tried to spend even more time with some of the fascinating elders I have had the privilege to get to know in the last years while doing this research and writing--one of whom is Rosy Wanshop. But when I was going on about spending time with my "elders," Rosy pointed out that I was a senior citizen myself--she always did know how to shine a truer light on a situation! One of the things I love most about her! Like my Aunt Micki Zentner, she is an Oklahoma girl, after all--very pragmatic and straight-forward!

I had gone by to talk about her "roots in Capay," but she set me straight there, too: it turns out I had misunderstood--and misquoted in the September journal--her brother Ralph Criner: when he said he had



spent his youth in Capay, I assumed that meant Rosy had, too. But while he had lived in Capay as a boy--with his mom and many of her 10 kids she brought there with her after their dad died in Oklahoma--Rosy was not among them. She was older and stayed in OK to attend business college and then work at air bases during WWII. She finally did come out to California in 1944, working first in an air base in Pasadena, but later she joined her mother and siblings. Here, she began working at Wyatt's store in Esparto--where she met local boy George Wanshop. They married and soon bought the house on Grafton/20A (seen above) in about 1950, where they would raise their two daughters, Colleen and Cindy, and where Rosy lives to this day. She now leases a plot of land to the RISE Community Garden and enjoys looking out over it on the lovely Valley evenings between Esparto and Capay with her cats.

[Continued on page 13](#)

EDITORIAL INFORMATION

Contents:



PAGE 2

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PAGE 1 -- CONTENTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHICAL CITATIONS

Special thanks to: historians Douglas Nareau and John Gallardo; article-contributor Jim Hiatt--and all the faithful subscribers, donors and advertisers! I couldn't do this without you! And a big thanks to my Printer-Angel, Jane!

Page Cover-1 = Introduction
Elizabeth "Betsy" Monroe,
writer-editor-publisher

Page 2 = Contents/Works Cited

Page 2-7= The Bridges of Capay Valley

Page 8-11 = Capay Develops before the Gold Rush; Cattle and grain become the new "gold"

Page 12 = Yolo Land and Cattle Co.

Page 13= Rosy & George Wanshop

Page 14-16 = Our Migratory Birds

Page 17 = Saloons--Music & Community!

Page 18-19 = Ernie Lehman Remembers the Capay Saloons

Page 20-21 = Capay Saloons

Page 22-24 = Memorials: Micki Zentner; Bill Harris; Nancy Monroe Grasty

Page 24--Subscription Info/Ad

An excerpt from the memoirs of Frank Duncan of Capay and Hungry Hollow tells of the first bridges across Cache Creek between Capay and Hungry Hollow.

leading to them from the main road. The old ford of the creek was due north from the Craig place, and the road ran between the Duncan and Adams ranches to the Hungry Hollow section. The first bridge was built in 1884; George Tilly's father was the contractor and the architect of the first bridge. He was running the Hotel at Dogtown at that time. The second bridge was a steel bridge and was built about 1898 by P. N. Ashley. In time the approaches of this bridge washed out regularly every winter; Mr. McGlothlin used to keep a rowboat at his place and row the people across to purchase their supplies when this happened. The present bridge was built by Asa Proctor in about 1922. [NOTE: he refers to the bridge standing in 1931]

Doctor Craig was one man who crossed that creek for years in all kinds of weather before the bridges were built. He used to

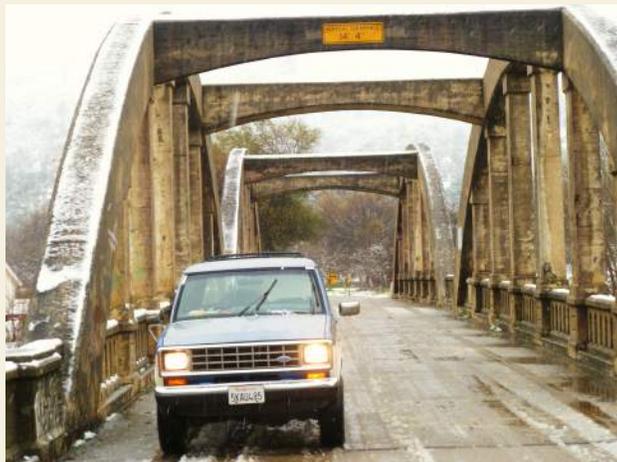
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*The Bridges of Capay Valley: in the upper valley at Rumsey, the current, uniquely arched concrete bridge seen at bottom left (in snow on January 1, 2011) was a replacement in 1930 for the 1910 bridge seen on page 6. It still remains as a valley jewel, but is sadly threatened by replacement--and there are many of us who would **not** like to see it replaced by the sort now in Guinda (see page 4) or the one below, north of Esparto...efficient, perhaps, but where's the charm?!
(Photos by Jim Hiatt)*



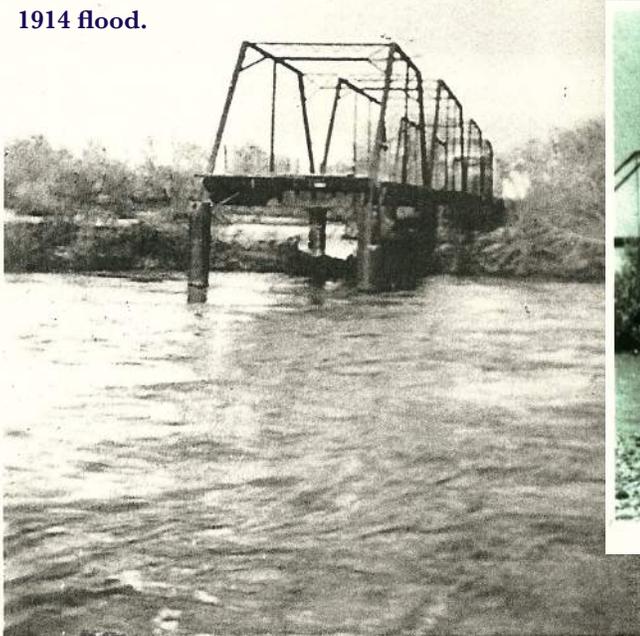


...and A River Runs Through It...The Beautiful Capay Valley invited settlement along what would be called Cache Creek. It has provided beaver and otter for early trappers--who left their caches of supplies and pelts at sites along the stream to collect later, thus the name. And it provided fish, water-fowl and plentiful water for settlers. Unchecked by a major dam until 1914, many bridges were built and rebuilt over the years--sometimes destroyed or severely damaged by frequent floods...The Bridges of Capay Valley

One such example is seen below & right in Madison, 14 miles east of the Capay Valley. The new bridge, built seemingly high above the waterline in 1911, was washed out (below) in the 1914 flood.



MADISON BRIDGE 1911



MADISON BRIDGE CACHE CREEK, YOLO CO 1914 DURING FLOOD

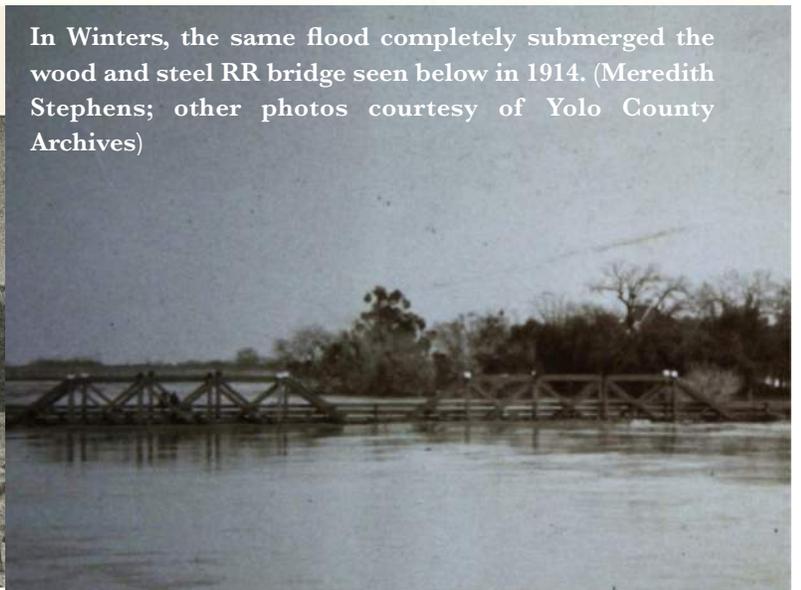


MADISON BRIDGE, CACHE CREEK, YOLO CO. WASHING IRRIGATION 1911

In Winters, the same flood completely submerged the wood and steel RR bridge seen below in 1914. (Meredith Stephens; other photos courtesy of Yolo County Archives)



LOCATION NEAR OLD MADISON BRIDGE CACHE CREEK, YOLO COUNTY 1914





Guinda Bridges from 1910 to 2013

The old steel and wood Guinda Bridge at left is seen in 1910. The one most of us remember fondly is below, looking from Guinda side in SE toward NW, taken in 2009. Below it is the same one taken in 1974.



GUINDA BRIDGE, GUINDA, CA. CACHE CREEK, YOLO CO. 1910



Below: In October 2010 the newest Guinda Bridge replaces the old; top photo shows the new bridge on right, looking NW from the Guinda side of Cache Creek; bottom looks from NW to SE toward Guinda. (Photos courtesy of Esparto Chamber of Commerce)



Photo at left taken by Doug Nareau, 1974.



The new Guinda Bridge, above, taken Dec. 2013, by Jim Hiatt looks from NW toward Guinda, SE.



It was reading about Ol' Doc Thornton Craig fording Cache Creek on his black horse Bald Hornet carrying his black medical bag that made me come "home" to Capay Valley to research and write—*HE HAD TO BE GOING TO HUNGRY HOLLOW TO DELIVER BABIES AND TEND TO MY ANCESTORS!!* Later, he could cross the Capay Bridge--unless it was washed out, which frequently happened. Doc Craig died in the 1920s--just about the time they built the sturdier concrete bridges:



As I don't have many good pictures of the old Capay Bridge of my memory, I took these pictures of the Winters Bridge--still standing, but slated for demolition! The ones built north of Esparto and Capay were very similar.



Bridge, above, built in 1935, is crossing to Wilbur Springs, near Highway 16 and 20.

Another unique bridge is one we all refer to as *low water bridge* in the upper Rumsey Canyon across Cache Creek. Meant to allow trucks to ford in summer, it is designed to withstand being submerged throughout the winter and spring torrents.





Even now, when Cache Creek decides to flood, it shows its power. At left, seen in 2010, it rages over the 1914 Capay Dam--even with the newer dam that created Indian Valley Reservoir built upstream in the 1970s.

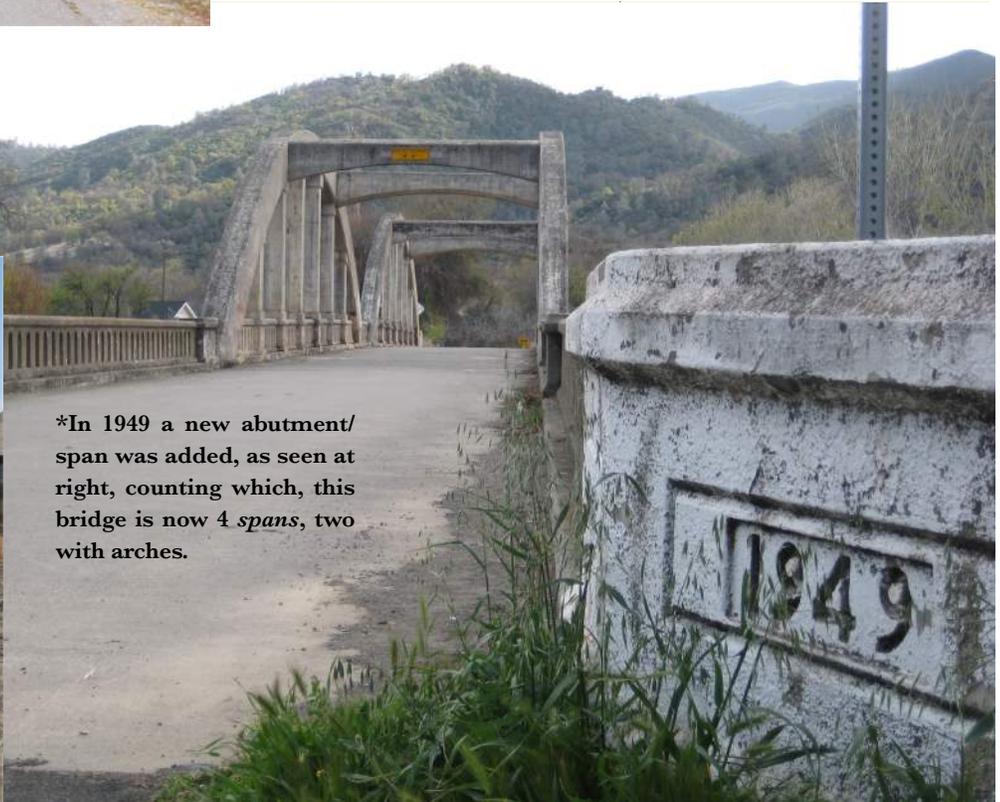
Below, the current Rumsey Bridge: the wood and steel bridge in 1910 was replaced in 1930* by the beautiful concrete bridge that remains today--but is slated for replacement, much to the dismay of many Valley residents. The Guinda and Capay Bridges met a similar fate, leaving only the Rumsey Bridge to represent these iconic and beautiful bridges in Capay Valley--and the only one in our area built with concrete arches! This is one of many designed by Asa Proctor--whose similar one still stands between Winters and Davis over Putah Creek.

Handwritten note:
 1910
 1930
 1949

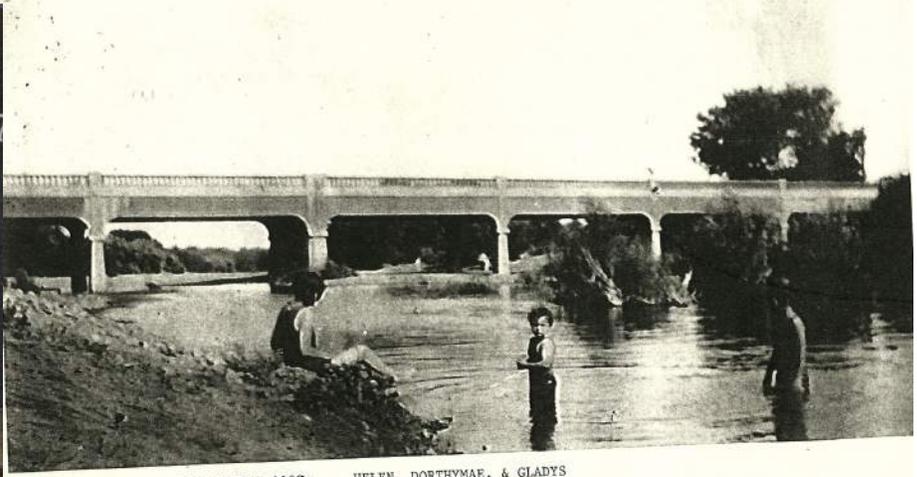


RUMSEY BRIDGE, RUMSEY, CA CACHE CREEK, YOLO CO. 1910 (NEW BRIDGE 1949)

A meeting of concerned Capay Valley residents will be held at the Rumsey Hall on January 6, 2014, at 6 PM, to discuss ways to preserve the iconic bridge, sponsored by the Rumsey Improvement Assoc. (RIA)



**In 1949 a new abutment/ span was added, as seen at right, counting which, this bridge is now 4 spans, two with arches.*



CACHE CREEK, YOLO COUNTY 1928 HELEN, DORTHYMAE, & GLADYS



The first Capay Valley bridges were built of wood and then replaced or reinforced with wood and steel. Those would be replaced with concrete bridges like the ones in Capay, Esparto, and Winters in around 1910-30, all similar to the one above: The *Cache Creek Bridge*, commonly called *Capay Bridge*, is seen here in 1928. The concrete *Rumsey Bridge* is unique in that it is our only one with concrete arches--built in 1930; added to in 1949.

At left are the plaques on the new Capay Bridge, constructed in 1997 and seen below left, taken in December 2013 by Jim Hiatt. The one above was constructed in 1919. Jim Hiatt recalled this: *"On the sign the first name is Asa Proctor. When my dad became Woodland's first Public Works Director, Asa was the City Manager and Dad worked under him. Mr. Proctor once told Dad that he had "built" 420 County Bridges, including the almost microscopic ones over a single ditch as we have in profusion in Western Yolo. He had been a Chief Building Engineer for the County most of his life. You'll see Stitt's name everywhere on bridges. Stitt was who Proctor worked under in County Projects of yesteryear, and Stitt's name is on most older county bridges, especially in western Yolo. Yolo County really grew during their times."*



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A new Era in the West: 1820s to mid-1840s --and how it affected the Capay Valley

We all know that Oregon and California were greatly changed after gold was discovered in 1848, an event that led to the westward rush in 1849 and to eventual statehood in 1850. But many of us are not as aware of how many adventuresome souls were here even before the 1849 Gold Rush. To better understand these changes, a brief history of the early 19th century California might help show how when the gold “panned out” many stayed on for the real “gold” here--the land of opportunity.

The Spanish established far fewer land grants than did the Mexicans, who had won their independence in 1822. Much more comfortable doing business with “foreigners,” such as trappers, traders, sailors and merchants, the Mexican government attempted to settle the area by issuing huge tracts of land to individual landlords, not unlike the European feudal system. The present native population was meant to be left to use the land “unmolested” in an attempt to keep the peace and continue to increase the settlement claims on the land. Foreigners were able to apply for grants if they first converted to Catholicism. Governors were encouraged to issue land grants, which became ranchos of many leagues. With these ranchos, the raising and marketing of beef and hides became important commerce.

*By the time adventuresome trapper Jedediah Smith [reportedly an ancestor of some of the Capay Valley Covingtons] came overland in 1826, a pattern was already established that opened a floodgate of interest that would so challenge the Mexican hold on the land that it would end with a war and the US taking possession of Alta California 1847. But even that was nothing to the changes that a gold discovery in 1848 would bring. In the following year alone, estimates claim 100,000 new people came to California. **The importance of wheat and cattle exploded as the hungry population grew.** And California was perfect for it: dry most of the year with large expanses of natural grasslands, which led to dry farming, while the rolling hills led to natural cattle grazing. It wasn't long before many of those 100,000 newcomers figured out that there was more money to be made feeding the masses than there was to be pulled from the creeks in gold. While two of the most powerful forces in that regard are Hugh Glenn, the wheat king, and Henry Miller, the cattle king, many others found their way to large tracts of land to make their wealth and to start California dynasties of their own—many here in the greater Capay Valley area. Instead of hundreds of thousands of acres, local settlers bought up pieces of huge land grants as they became available and farmed or ranched thousands of acres in the lush valley and the flats and rolling hill areas surrounding it. In addition to wheat and cattle, the fertile valley with its natural watershed proved also suited to orchards and vineyards.*

The development of what is now Yolo County: 1820s-1860s

Per "History Spots of California" it says of Cacheville/Yolo:

1828 American explorer Jedediah Strong Smith is thought to have hunted and trapped on the streams of now-Yolo County. He was followed by the numerous Hudson's Bay Company trappers. They cached their furs along the river and smaller streams, one of which would be known as *Cache Creek*, but then was known at *Rio de Jesus Maria*. One of their camps was called French Camp by early settlers and was on the north bank of Cache Creek about a mile east of present day Yolo, formerly known as Cacheville.

"The old Hutton house is still standing on 325 Main Street. In 1857 the place became the county seat of Yolo County and was rechristened Cacheville. The post office had been established under the name of Yolo in 1853...by 1862 Woodland had become an important agricultural center. In that year the people voted to make it the county seat in place of Washington [which had been the county seat from 1851-57 and again 1861-1862]; further, Fremont on the Sacramento River" a half mile below the Feather River confluence "was briefly the first county seat of Yolo County in 1850-51."

Patrick Scribner

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William Gordon not only was credited by some sources as the “*first white settler in what is now Yolo County*,” he is also given credit by many as the first to grow wheat here, and in 1847 he started the first school on his land near Madison. “*Uncle Billy’ was a trapper and hunter, ‘rough and uneducated, honest, and hospitable’ and his place on Cache Creek was a ‘general rendezvous for settlers and hunters from 1843 to 1846’*,”--but also cattlemen, as we will see!--per “*The History of Yolo County*,” by Thomas Jefferson Gregory, 1913.

The First Massive California to Oregon Cattle Drive in 1843

The first of many interesting and daring cattle drives from the greater Capay Valley to Oregon involved the Gordon ranch, and also the area that would become the town of Yolo; typical of visitors to the area at this time, most rested on the Quesisosi Grant: “*In the spring and summer of 1830 another band of hunters, led by Ewing Young, trapped along the San Joaquin and Sacramento rivers and remained for a time on Cache Creek. Two years later, on his way to Oregon, Young again passed through Yolo County territory, camping near the mouth of Cache Creek [near Yolo/Cacheville]. Following up Capay Valley past Clear Lake, the party reached the coast some 75 miles north of Fort Ross, where they continued north as far as the Umpqua River in Oregon.*” Joseph Gale had been with this 1831 party and “*later held a cattle rendezvous on Cache Creek in 1843. The need for more livestock in Willamette Valley, Oregon, was the incentive to a daring project begun by Gale in 1841...he set to work to construct a ocean-going vessel which he proposed to take to California and there exchange for livestock...*” *The Star of Oregon* was launched on May 19, 1841 and late August 1842 set sail down the Columbia River to California. In SF, Jose Y. Limantour bought the ship in exchange for 350 cows. Needing more men to this stock-drive over the mountains to the Oregon settlement, Gale waited until the spring of 1843, gathered on Cache Creek. They recruited men eager to settle in Oregon and by May 14, 1843, drove 1250 cattle, 600 horses and mules & 3000 sheep over the northern mountain barrier for 75 days.”

The development of Cattlemen and Cattle between Oregon and California; To Explorers and Pioneers and Prospectors, all those Golden Native Grasses look like Bonanza! From Free-range to Barbed-wire, Grains and Alfalfa--California becomes Cowboy Country...But first, they have to get here...

Culled from various Histories of California and Oregon, I found the following, helping to show the movement of cattle between California and Oregon. Note, some of these names will sound familiar to us in the greater Capay Valley:

The Oregon Star, the first ship built in Oregon, set sail August 1842 and reached the Pacific Ocean in September 1842. On board were a group of young men who hoped to find white brides and better opportunities in California: Felix HATHAWAY, Joseph GALE, R.L. KILBORNE, Pleasant ARMSTRONG, George DAVIS, Charles MATTS and John GREEN.”

In October 1842, the Methodist missionaries and some settlers established the Island Milling Company to operate a mill on an island near the Willamette Falls. This launched a long and acrimonious land dispute with Dr. John McLoughlin.

Mount St. Helens erupted December 12, 1842. In Oregon, the winter of 1842-43 was exceptionally cold; ice blocked the Columbia River until March 13, 1843.

John C. FREMONT (1813-1890, a lieutenant in the engineer corps) led his second EXPLORING EXPEDITION during 1843. His troops left the Missouri and Kansas rivers junction on May 2, traveling slightly behind the 1843 wagon train. They turned off the emigrant road at Soda Springs to explore the Great Salt Lake. The 1843 wagon train trickled into the Willamette Valley over a period of weeks: some found a way through the mountains or along the shore with wagons and cattle; some went by way of Lapwaii, Waiilatpu and Walla Walla; and still others went directly to Ft. Walla Walla where they embarked in canoes down the Columbia River. Most had reached the Willamette Valley by late November 1843.

[All-Capitals were in the original texts for emphasis, so I left them...]



Meanwhile, FREMONT'S EXPEDITION had rejoined the Oregon Trail from their side trip to the Great Salt Lake. At a little bay along the Columbia River just below the Cascades, Fremont encountered a German botanist named LUDER who was working on his own.

The company with Fremont arrived November 4, 1843 at *the Dalles*, Oregon [*the end of the Oregon Trail*]. Fremont's Expedition continued on to California after purchasing supplies at Ft. Vancouver. They crossed the summit of the Sierra Nevadas [*interesting route...*] in January 1844, on their way to Sutter's Fort, California. Back in the States, Fremont was awarded a presidential nomination as "Pathfinder"; he also won a popular reputation as the "discoverer" of Oregon.

L.W. HASTINGS led a company toward California from Champoeg, Oregon, on May 30. Most of these were Oregon Trail travelers of 1842, now bound for California.

SOURCE: Lansford W. Hastings Emigrants Guide to Oregon and California [1845] (Hastings) also in Huntington Library MS; "Lansford W. Hastings Papers, 1847-49" (Bancroft MS); Hastings also wrote A New History of Oregon and California [1849].

Hastings arrived at the Sacramento River with only 16 men, about two-thirds of his original party. Although this party faced Indian attacks at the Shasta mountains and Sacramento River, there had been no fatalities on the way; about a third of the company had turned around and headed back to Oregon when they met a north-bound group from California.

L.P. LESSE and John MCCLURE led the party who reached the Willamette Valley from California in the summer of 1843. Henry BLACK and Joel WALKER returned with this company to Oregon in 1843, *driving a herd of horses and cattle.*

Elected as officials and sworn in July 5, 1843, were: David Hill, Alanson Beers, and Joseph Gale, the Executive. The demise of the early provisional government (as well as of the Methodist Missions) began early in 1844. The arrival of the great migration of 1843 in November, contention between the United States and Britain over jurisdiction, and U.S. Congress's legislation on Oregon ended the early pioneer era.

A FINAL NOTE: On September 28, 1843, J.W. Nesmith passed the Lone Pine, a frequently noted Trail landmark about 30 trail miles before the valley of Grande Ronde. By the time Lt. Fremont and his troops passed this place, someone had cut down the tree. The Lone Pine, which lent its name to the present-day city of La Pine, was only a stump after 1843. ***One era has ended and another begun...***

Cattle Industry--and Rustling--are Alive and Well!

Today, while cattle may not be driven such a distance on foot by horse-mounted cowboys, the business is still alive and well--even booming with a renewed culinary interest in beef. A breed bull can go at auction for \$20,000 and produce 40,000 off-spring in his lifetime--many of whom will end up as the "increasingly popular Black Angus choice meat cuts and rib-eye steaks," according to Anne Gonzales in the *Sacramento Bee*, September 14, 2012. She went on to point out that the 17th annual *Black Gold Bull Sale* was held at Colusa County Fairgrounds in 2012 and drew over 65 buyers from "all over the western United States and Midwest." I noted the odd title was "*Nearly 150 Bulls Sold for Breeding--or Steak*," presumably implying that someone might actually eat meat from a bull...last I heard, a bull was pretty stringy and tough, which is why cattlemen, ahem, "mark" the majority of the young bulls to make them steers--producing much more marbled and tender meat--but I digress. The point is, California cattle are still "gold," even though most are driven to market by truck these days--either legally or not!

Which brings me to another interesting article in the *Bee*--cattle rustling is on the rise! With an average cow now bringing around \$1,000, it is easy to see how someone might be tempted to make an easy profit by taking a few, say by trucks and trailers. "The speed of transport means you can load up a gooseneck trailer full of cattle and be in Colorado 24 hours later," quotes *Bee* author Edward Ortiz. Thing is, most of us are not equipped to do such work--so it is assumed that the rustlers are already knowledgeable people in the cattle business. According to John Suther, senior investigator with the Bureau of Livestock Identification, "They're neighbors. They're employees--hired men...It's a specialized business so people with knowledge of the cattle industry are the ones stealing these animals." All young calves are branded with a registered mark, so they are being rustled at an even earlier age to outwit the brand inspectors. In some cases, they are rounded up stealth-like by cattle thieves on horseback, then loaded into trailers for transport.

But don't be tempted: cattle rustling used to be a hanging offense...surely not worth THAT!

A Cattle Drive Through Guinda



Farnham and Byron Covington

In 1968 an article appeared in a local paper covering what used to be a common occurrence--cattle being driven through the Capay Valley by cowboys on horseback. Pictured and quoted here are Lee Farnham and Byron Covington, descendants of early ranching families in the Valley. They lament the number of cars (in 1968!) and wonder what it will be like in a few years. Today, the vast number of visitors to the Casino in Brooks and to the ever-more popular valley would make a cattle drive down Highway 16 improbable. But such drives are making a come-back, at least for their novelty. Recently, the Farm-to-Fork movement brought a cattle drive to Old Sacramento and at the Stockyards in Fort Worth, Texas, it is a daily tourist attraction.

... way. Along the way some calves and steers became overly curious about the Methodist church, the town hall, Andy Smith's phone exchange and assorted bushes, flowers and dogs, but were kept to the straight and more or less narrow by riders on their flanks.

It was a kind of thing, common in all the days the valley remembers, that is within the past 100 years or so, but a kind of thing passing from the scene.

And the reason for this, of course, is people. People in cars primarily, but people nonetheless.

"Country is getting

crowded," Farnham commented, looking around at the town of Guinda and at the brace of cars moving cautiously at either end of the riders.

And so in its way the country is getting overcrowded.

It becomes easier and easier for the ordinary working stiff to come up with what used to be considered the amenities of life -- the refrigerators, the cars, the televisions, the houses. The hard things to get and keep nowadays are what used to be the common place things: the living things like dogs and cats, and horses. Sometimes it

seems that the simpler a man's desires are the more difficult the satisfaction of them in these days of multiplying complexities.

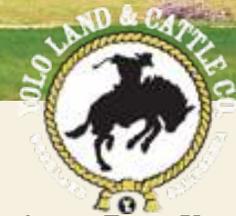
Anyway, the "Sunday drive was a little taste of the past in the present and was roundly enjoyed by those who attended it as a social event of some importance and considerable joy.

A little later in the year, after the grass turns color, the same men, boys, women, kids, dogs, plus perhaps a few more, and this reporter if he is lucky, will make the roundup in the hills on that west side.

In 1931 Frank Duncan was interviewed by the *Esparto Exponent* about his memories of growing up in Capay in the late 1800s. [see Pg 2, also] At right is one of his memories, pointing out that Capay didn't have a stock corral until 1915; ranchers had to drive their cattle to Madison or Cadenasso on horseback. [See entire Memoir/ Interview on greatercapayvalley.org]

After their right of way was fenced and they were running over it, a crew was sent up and tore up the switch and put it at the upper end of town, where they built their warehouse -- leaving this great mountain of wheat piled where the old switch was. Finally, the Railroad Company sent in flat cars at night and we loaded the grain out and we finally got it all shipped before rains, but we were pretty worried for a time. They didn't even give us a stock corral, we had to drive our stock to Madison or Cadenasso. Not until 1915 did Capay have even a stock corral.

What Goes Around Comes Around: Grass-fed Beef was the Norm in Early California and is now the *New Rage*. For decades, grazing cattle in our hills led to finishing them off in feed lots on fattening grains--and often chemicals to bulk them up, still common across the cattle-producing world--but many in California have started a trend back to the more natural method of grass-only grazing and sustainable land management. Beginning in the 1970s, *Natural*, *Sustainable* and *Organic* methods of farming and ranching began to take hold in Yolo County, often led by graduates of our local ag-school, UC Davis. Many in the greater Capay Valley embraced this trend and have carried it to a very successful farm-to-fork movement across the state--and country! One such family-run company is *Yolo Land and Cattle Company*:



For grass-fed beef: Scott & Karen Stone(530) 661-7038

For jerky, events, or weddings:

Casey & Angela Stone (530) 662-4093

See the website for Info on: Our Ranch : Our Commitment : Grass fed Beef : Jerky & Products : Event Venue
Yolo Land & Cattle Co.

Mailing address: PMB# 194, 1296 E. Gibson Road, Woodland, California 95776

(No walk-ins at this location.)

(Yolo County, near Sacramento and San Francisco Bay Area)

Contact Us: FOR BEEF 530-661-7038 or FOR JERKY AND EVENTS 530-662-4093

For website questions or comments contact the Webmaster (webmaster@yololandandcattle.com).

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Yolo Land & Cattle Co. Yolo County, CA

Conservation-minded family permanently protects their ranching operations

On March 25, 2005, Yolo Land & Cattle Co. placed approximately 6,983 acres into a land preservation agreement to be held by California Rangeland Trust. The Yolo Land & Cattle Co. Ranch is part of the Blue Ridge-Berryessa Natural Area which covers over 500,000 acres of inner-coastal rangeland and contains a unique assemblage of ecological communities. The ranch, studded with ponds and other wetlands, natural stream courses and waterways, and un-fragmented open space, provides habitat for native common and rare plants. Supporters of the project anticipate that this preservation agreement will serve as a catalyst to promote future conservation projects in Yolo County, where there is strong, long-term local political support for private conservation efforts of all kinds. The conservation agreement with family owned and operated Yolo Land & Cattle Co. will allow the owners to continue their innovative stewardship practices and entrepreneurial marketing techniques. The project was funded by the California Wildlife Conservation Board and the Great Valley Center. http://www.rangelandtrust.org/conservation-yolo_ranch.php

Established in 1976, Yolo Land & Cattle Co. resulted from the vision of family patriarch Henry H. Stone and his wife Suzanne. The original partnership operated on numerous ranches throughout California and Nevada, until Henry acquired sole interest in 1983. As the geneticist in the family, Henry utilized many types of cattle breeds over the years before settling on a Black Angus & Hereford cross as the optimum range cow. While most folks would have long retired, Henry is still going strong. Recently, he started a successful purebred Angus operation, which produces seed-stock for the commercial operation.

Sons Scott and Casey eventually joined their father to complete the present-day partnership. *Today, all family members are involved, and the ranch remains a true family business.*

Rosy (Criner) and George Wanshop

(con't from Cover page)

Seen at near-left, Rosy and George wed in Reno, Nevada, on July 4, 1949.

Below, George with first daughter, Colleen and his parents, Pete and Edith Wanshop.

Rosy's HS grad. picture 1941-2



Two of Rosy's siblings seen in their youth at left are Ralph Criner (see Journal 13) and Vernie, who would marry Bill Bahlman and live next door to Rosy and George, who lived within a mile of the Wanshop farm and their many relatives. Their several kids would grow up cousins with the benefit of aunts and uncles and grandparents and great grandparents farming and quilting and telling great stories.



After George's parents died, he and his sister Roberta sold the farm and eventually people drifted away to new lives--but Rosy is still at home in the house she and George bought from Nellie Meyers in 1950--one which Nellie's sister Alice Stephens claimed was built in 1915. Rosy and George did remodels and additions, but the original wood built-ins and moldings remain in her very homey house--welcoming her daughters, grandchildren and other family and friends, often.

The Wanshops have a long history in this area: a German family, George's grandfather Edwin (1846-1921) brought his family from Pennsylvania to California, first settling in Buckeye in 1899--later settling in Brooks in the Capay Valley, then outside Esparto--when son Pete was about 6 years old. George was born to Pete and Edith Wanshop on October 24, 1918 and worked for his father and grandfather on the family almond farm near the Capay Cemetery--where you will find all their headstones--and later also worked for Mr. Herbst in Esparto, and was a volunteer Esparto fireman, who hunted and fished for fun. George served in the Army during WWII in the Philippines and Guam. My memories of him mostly include the times I went camping with Cindy and her family in the 1960s in their pickup and small travel trailer--and his humor and big, hearty laugh! Sadly, George passed away on April 1, 1995 after nearly 50 years of happy marriage and within a mile of his birthplace.

The Criner/Bair Saga: Chapter Fifteen--Robert and Esther (Truitt) Criner
Family Group Sheet

—Rosy Ruth C. Wanshop
Photo: The Wanshops

Husband: George Edwin Wanshop
Born: October 24, 1918 in: Reno, Nevada
Married: July 04, 1949 in: California
Died: April 01, 1995

Wife: Rosy Ruth Criner
Born: July 06, 1924 in: Pasamonte, Union Co., New Mexico
Father: Robert Francis Criner
Mother: Esther May Truitt

CHILDREN

Name: Colleen Marie Wanshop Born: October 14, 1951 Spouses: Richard Ware, Derek Thompson	in: Woodland, Yolo Co., California
Name: Cynthia Lee Wanshop Born: April 20, 1953 Married: June 21, 1975 Spouse: Robert Merrill Boyer	in: Woodland, California in: Esparto, California

Rosy and Vernie were raised in Kingfisher, OK, near Enid and Oklahoma City, during the Depression and Dust Bowl, but even through trying times, Rosy has fond memories of such things as Swinging Bridge at Uncle John's Creek and a large, tight-knit family.

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Real Estate



Migratory Birds Commonly visit the Capay Valley --

some so regularly that they seem to be permanent residents, but truly are just passing through, stopping to feed on our lush farmlands and bugs--like those prolific Capay Valley Crickets!

This time, hobby-ornithologist Jim Hiatt brings us Bluebirds!

With our summer ending, fall finds many of our local birds leaving for Central America, such as our Western Kingbirds, but taking their place are Red Shafted Flickers warblers, Juncos, kinglets, and the delightful Meadow Larks coming in behind them during the Fall-into-Spring period. Another, somewhat magical and beautiful, bird is the Blue Bird, our blue-feathered focus for this issue. This one is an almost uniquely lovely species that arrives here late fall into winter and stays for a time and we know it as the Mountain Bluebird (*Sialia currocoides*).

We do have Western Bluebirds in mid-California, but they are normally a bird of higher elevation. I've seen them along Cache Creek and Bear Creek above Rumsey, and quite a number live along the Buck Island area there. We don't see these hereabouts, as they're primarily above 500 feet. But the Mountain Bluebird is nature's migratory gift here at somewhat lower elevations--and an extra special visual treat when the sun is just right in relation to them. Whether perched or airborne, they seem like winged jewels--little *winged sapphires*--and are, except for the Scrub Jay, really the only bluish bird we have in Western Yolo. Loveliest of all, they're here now!

I have been "shooting" these with my camera here for about 2 weeks now, having become appreciatively aware of their presence one day while on my way back from our south field. I had been on the dirt roads on a coyote hunt, driving the perimeter of our south field, and slowed down to see how many species of birds I could identify, when I was suddenly overjoyed to see these little beauties by the dozens! Reaction was, "Ohhh, geeeee, I had forgotten to look for these--now I wonder how long they've **been** here!? Let's see how easy these little ones are to get good pix of!!" In three days I snapped hundreds of what turned out to be pictures far better than I was hoping for! This was an unexpected Blessing, and deserves attention as a Christmas Gift to our readers--**Merry Christmas!**

These, surprisingly, are a member of the Robin/Thrush family, or *Turdidae*. And I tend to think of bluebirds as smaller than Robin-sized, but not so from my current experience and education. These have been such a treat to just watch and enjoy and learn from. In spending a goodly number of hours in a small pickup right next to our single Pistachio tree, I've gotten to know these such that it's been a more than rewarding experience. It takes patience; just sit for an hour and take them in...then do it again and again. The photos herein were for the most part taken within 10-15 feet. Staying in my pickup made it ideal, as I could move about in adjusting my position for capturing them with relative ease without disturbing them, as they didn't associate me apart from the vehicle--my own *bird blind*, if you will.

For those readers familiar with the "hover-hunting" method used by Sparrow Hawks (Kestrels), White-Tailed Kites, and even Rough-Legged Hawks, you'll notice right away that these Bluebirds use this as one of their key ways of feeding, as well. In flying across the field, they suddenly veer upward, and flap their wings in such a way as to keep themselves locked in position, whilst scanning the ground underneath and nearby for crickets--and this field is abundant in those this year! The bird may look around for 10 seconds or so, and finding nothing effort-worthy immediately, continue on a couple hundred feet, again "tip-up" and hover--then suddenly drop nearly straight down, and grab one! From there he will fly to a perch for dining, such as a skeletal stalk of Mustard or another weed stalk--or as seen here, a fence or a tree, like my pistachio.



Crickets, according to good ol' Wikipedia, are: of the family *Gryllidae* (also known as "true crickets"), are insects somewhat related to grasshoppers, and more closely related to katydids or bush crickets (family *Tettigoniidae*)...They have somewhat flattened bodies and long antennae. There are more than 900 species of crickets. They tend to be nocturnal and are often confused with grasshoppers because they have a similar body structure including jumping hind legs. Crickets are harmless to humans--and Blue Birds love 'em!





or the fence-line nearby to *then* swallow it. I'm sure that the cricket's motion was part of the attraction, as I've read that with such avians as high-flying hawks or Buzzards, they actually have two lenses in their eyes, which they can move with respect to each other and thusly have the equivalent of a *zoom lens* feature, so they can cover a great deal of ground from a higher perspective. Perhaps the Bluebirds have something like that, as I watched them do seemingly the same thing, though I have not found confirmation of this

observation. I went to my trusty ***Birds of North America**** to learn more about their lifestyles, and found this winter visitor on the west side of the valley has a summer range on the western half of North America as far north as Alaska. Nesting is 2 broods per year, 5-6 eggs at a time, from May through July.

I do remember these lovelies from my youth, coming out here to see Grandma each Sunday. Always the birder, I'd see these blue jewels hover-hunting over these same fields. I knew what they were, just didn't pay as much as attention then. It's both amazing and a little humbling to suddenly discover—or in my case, rediscover—beauty that's always been here and is just waiting to be noticed!

The cricket is swallowed whole in almost a single convulsive motion. These birds have a peculiar action of seemingly *wiping* their beaks again and again sideways on a tree twig--almost napkin-like. There is often a second bodily convulsion as the cricket is still wiggling and not all the way down, yet. I had to shoot quickly, as these don't work their prey down slowly, as a snake does, but swallow the prey quickly.

As these birds are just passing through, I've learned to make it a point to just sit and watch and learn--and there is much to take in! They are not a shy bird, though they are a bird of the open field primarily, and not as much of your back yard, so not commonly seen--without a worthwhile effort.

The plumage is gorgeous. Males are a gentle sky-blue in the front from the head to the upper abdomen, and then whitish in the lower front. The wing and tail feathers are a deep, shiny-blue, and when seen just right in the sunlight, give a handsomely beautiful look to this bird in an area not normally known for spectacularly colored varieties. The female is just a fainter, somewhat duller-colored version of the male.

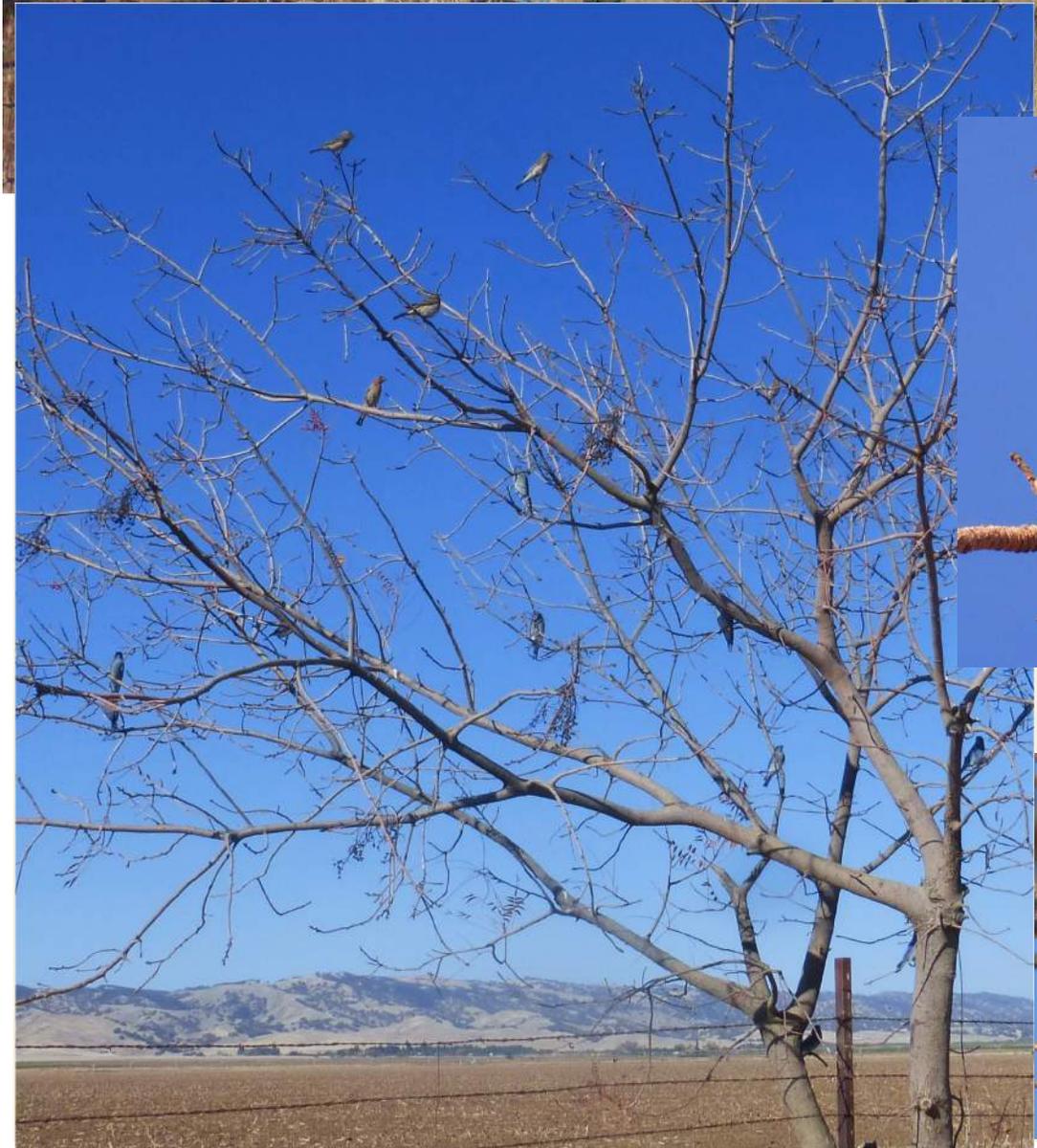
The ones I watched were almost uniformly silent for the first two sightings, and were not too interactive with each other. The little pistachio tree I was positioned by did occasionally have as many as a dozen in it at any one time. Delightfully, my third sighting found them engaged in quiet, but rapid-fire twitterings and chatterings--and frequently chasing one another. And woe unto the one that is *seen* with a fresh *catch* in its mouth, but has not yet downed it! In spite of this, they were also very tolerant of other species engaged in the hunting of the same insects. In this way, I was able to capture a great many very nice photos of House Finches and a Meadowlark on one occasion. Sparrow Hawks were hunting the same field for the same insect-fare, but would only alight in the tree when I was at a distance more comfortable for them. The hawks would hover-hunt in the field for the same crickets, but further out. Their eyesight seems to be noteworthy, as these would suddenly leave the tree and fly out 50-70 feet, and right to a cricket between clods, snatch it up and return to the tree



**Vuilleumier, Francois, Editor, Birds of North America, Dorling Kindersley, Ltd, New York, NY, 20009*



At left, on the fence & in the tree sit Bluebirds and House Finches, some about to land. A finch close-up below.



Below, even a Meadowlark joins in!





**PARTY WITH
"R BAND"**

AT THE CAPAY JUNCTION

**DINNER AND SHOW
BEGIN AT 5PM--KEEP US
ROCKIN' 'TIL THE COWS
COME HOME!!**

**THE MUSIC IS FREE
-FUNDRAISER RAFFLE
-AND BUFFET DINNER (FOR A
"SUGGESTED DONATION" AMOUNT)**

**BANDMATES:
VAL ZENTNER, EHS '72
BETSY MONROE, ROGER BURKE, EHS '71
VINCE LAMPMAN, DOUG NAREAU,
CANDY LOPEZ-HATANAKA, EHS '70**



**THE "EHS REUNION BAND" ROCKS A FUNDRAISER FOR
THE GREATER CAPAY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

OCTOBER 26, 2013!!!

**A BAND OF GROWING RENOWN,
6 GRADUATES OF EHS IN THE 1970S
REUNITED FOR REUNIONS--BUT JUST CAN'T STOP!!
COME JOIN US AND KEEP THE PARTY GOING!!!
HELP OFFICIALLY NAME THE BAND--AND DON'T FORGET TO BRING YOUR
DANCIN' BOOTS TO CAPAY'S HISTORIC SALOON: THE CAPAY JUNCTION**

*In the long tradition of live music, dancin' and community at the local taverns and saloons of the Capay Valley, **R Band** (aka EHS Reunion Band), a group of graduates from Esparto High School, formed a band at past EHS Reunions--and just couldn't stop!*

*We have played several local gigs as fundraisers and hope to raise enough money for **The Greater Capay Valley Historical Society** to place historic plaques around the Valley--starting with the Capay Junction! Come on out and enjoy the show--and help us out!!*



We are a cover band for rockin' 50s-60s-70s

**Rock-Country-
Blues-Funk-FUN!**

--so don't forget your dancin' boots!

By PATRICIA VALENZUELA
Democrat staff writer

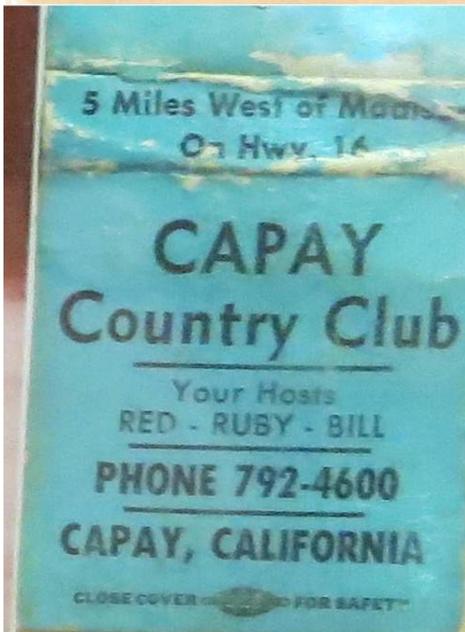
A lost dog sign is posted on the door of Capay Junction. The Main Street saloon has been a fixture of Capay and its history for more than 100 years.

If you want Capay's history walk into the saloon and look up. The history is hung from the ceiling. Oil flares, old cowboy hats, cotton from one of the Valley fields, and a number from the old Capay steam engine are just pieces of history one could find on the ceiling.

Behind the bar are 20 white coffee mugs with names such as Toad, Leon, Bill and D.B. The mugs belong to the local morning coffee group. Residents walk into the bar beginning at 5:30 a.m. to drink a cup of joe and discuss what's on their minds.

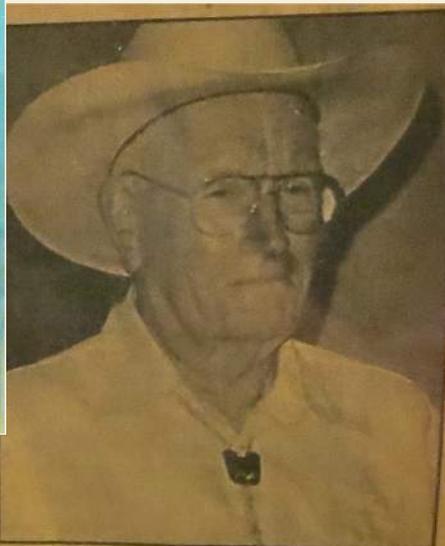
"It is probably the

R Band has played The Capay Junction, The Road Trip Bar and Grill in Capay, and Rosie's Island in Esparto.



The Capay Junction 530-796-2440

**The Road Trip Bar n Grill
530-796-3777**



RED VIEU



The Bars, Saloons or Taverns of Capay, a 1950s Memory from Ernie Lehman:

What really contributed to Capay's character were the three totally different types of taverns, bars, or saloons that were there! As you're driving west on Highway 16 on the left was a tavern called *The Country Club* [Now *The Capay Junction*]. It had different owners throughout the years I was there and even was closed from time to time for months. The west side or right-hand side of the country club was the main entrance which led to the bar itself and a little diner set up. As you walked in the place, the bar and diner were to your right. It was a very basic set up but it looked kind of neat with the diner there. What I mean by that is you could sit there and watch them cook the food for you. As you entered the first 15-20 feet was only about 30 foot wide or less and then to the left there was a pool table and a jukebox with the restroom doors and then a huge open dance floor. I was a kid and it was monstrous to me with a huge hardwood dance floor, this place was made for dancing as it had a bandstand all the way to the back right hand corner. But other than that the place was boring for me--since I was a kid! It was amazing, as the people who owned or ran the *Country Club* seemed to change all the time so I never really got to know them. I do remember some very large dances there though and there were some pretty rowdy people who owned it or rented it at times. But that is a completely different story...

Just down the street was *Ike and Kay's Louie's Tavern*. It was a two-story Spanish looking building which had a single floor section coming out the back. It was a fairly large room with a back door leading to a patio then a large lawn. There was also a door on the right-hand side of the room leading to more parking and huge Duncan-Monroe barn-warehouse. There were three doors that you could enter: one on the east side of the building from a small parking area; the other two doors were in front of the building facing Highway 16. One door was almost centered, while the other door was all the way to the west side of the building. When you walked in the center door there was a fairly long bar to the right that curved about 5' from the outside wall all the way along the right side of the building where the second door was. Behind the bar there was a walk-in refrigerator with doors where beer was stored and a draft beer tap. I loved the look of it! To the left there was a dinner area where there were actually stools bolted to the floor to a dining bar--and for some reason the floor had about 2' drop that looked like a ramp coming down from the back dining area toward the front door. It was actually a very cool set up where you had the bar to the right in the dining area with its own bar to the left very close together. The single story room at back was open with tables used for eating. There was a door to the left just beyond the café area where the restrooms were located—in what seemed to be an add-on--judging from the fact that there was a window from the kitchen area into this enclosed walkway area—it was a covered area over a cement walkway with doors into men's and women's stalls,

Mom and dad wanted to compete with *The Country Club* so they extended the back single floor space another 40 or 50 feet that was used for a dance floor and stage, eventually. It wasn't as neat looking as the *Country Club's* dance floor but it was a dance floor—and there were many dances there to live local bands. I thought this was too bad, in some ways, because the little patio had chairs where you could look at the very large lawn, and then an almond orchard out back, and then see the hills to the south, which is very cool—literally and figuratively—in the hot summers! And incredibly beautiful when the a'monds were blooming! We had some very large dances for a few years until Mom and Dad got tired of the fights, etc. They ended up turning the dance floor into a small country store for years, and eventually turned it into a games room where there were pool tables a shuffleboard and other games, plus a few tables and chairs for those wanting to sit away from the bar.

Over the years other modifications were made, like where the Café area was enclosed and made into a restaurant-style kitchen with a cook named after a plant--Iris, maybe?--during the short-lived idea that Capay needed a restaurant within feet of a rowdy country saloon! I didn't like it because I loved sitting at the cafe/diner bar while Mom made me the best chili burger ever, while listening to some farmers, cowboys or venders talk about their day! Dad also put in a large circular poker table and had poker being played for a while. Also a wall was built to the right and left part of the bar where you first walked in making additional storage space and making it where there was only one door to go in and out of at the front of the saloon. One of the storage spaces eventually turned into my bedroom--which was exciting because it was only a single sheet of plywood between me and the bar! There was also a very large icehouse put in to the east side of the bar, with 100 pound blocks of



ice, stored and sold to whoever needed ice—which was eventually replaced by an ice machine. A lot of ice was sold during deer season. (I loved that old icehouse because I could jump from a window from the second floor onto the icehouse and then onto the ground--very cool!)

There used to be a third bar further west on the right-hand side of the road, which was called *Clara's Place*. It was very small, a single-room Tavern, which had a small bar which maybe had eight, possibly 10 barstools and a few tables with two restrooms in the back. This was an incredible place because it was run by this lady who was the owner-bartender who only had one leg! She scooted back and forth with an office-type chair that had wheels on it! She would get sodas, beer, put money into the cash register and everything else a bartender would do while scooting back and forth in this chair. You would ask for a pop of some sort and *bam!* She would be off in one thrust! I loved it! She was great and a tough lady who was not worried about you worrying about her having one leg. Behind the bar there were large magnificent pictures of horses; different colors, running, fighting, etc. We used to go there and buy a pop and talk to Clara, who would tell great stories and also be very concerned about us learning what we needed to learn in school. There was nothing special about this place except for Clara, which really to me was the entire place--what a great little place! Also I learned very early on you did not want to irritate Clara because she would set you straight quickly! Clara's place burned down I think in the late 1960s or early 1970s, which was too bad because I never had the chance to have a beer at *Clara's Place* talking to Clara, which I would've enjoyed immensely--what a fantastic place and a great gal!

Ernie said he did not remember ever seeing me at Ike and Kay's when we were kids, but I was there occasionally--and responded with a story of my own:

I don't recall seeing you there much, either, Ernie--but now I know you may have been out jumping off bridges or floating down to Esparto!! But when I went to the hills with Dad, we came in occasionally to drink coffee at the bar with the morning regulars...one of my own stories has to do with being in there with Dad en route to the hills one such day. Dad greeted the men at the bar, and even though I was probably about 14, they let me sit there with my dad for some reason. Dad and the other ranchers and farmers were laughing and telling stories when Mr. Roy Hackett, the respected elder African-American from Guinda walked in. They all greeted him and seemed genuinely friendly--but some called him "boy," at which point my Dad physically ridged. Dad stood up and just asked him to join us for coffee, on him, at the bar. Mr. Hackett politely said Thanks, but no, and headed for the back tables. Dad said, Betsy, come with me, and we went to sit with him. Dad insisted on treating him to a coffee and sat there chatting with him for awhile...and when we walked out later I asked why someone his own age would call him "boy" and got this: "Betsy, some people need to make other people feel small so they can make themselves feel big..." As I continued to ponder this, we went on to the hills to do whatever cattle-doings Dad was up to that day--I was going to ride my horse, no doubt--so I had to wait to get home that night to ask Mom what that was all about; she was much more likely to explain things in detail. Later, I realized that day how naive I was in my little world!! This was about 1967. I learned by their example that you can get along with all kinds of people and still be true to your own convictions. And unless really pressed, you can just express your disagreement and disapproval and move on--like Dad did at Ike n Kay's that day!!

In so many ways the Capay Valley was unique in its acceptance of all ethnic groups and "class" levels, but I found out later in life that the under-current of prejudice was also there. My parents, Tom and Jean Monroe, tended to keep us from it, but when it raised its ugly head, they gave us lessons in how they expected us to handle it and still be a part of the community. In our immediate family we all refer to this as The Cowboy Way, because to us that term means: always do the right thing, tell the truth, treat everyone fairly and have respect for yourself and others. I left

Camay Valley at 17 to go to college, travel, have a family and several careers. I ended up becoming a teacher and then a principal at an alternative junior high for students being expelled. Always, I continued my parents' traditions with the students who came my way. Often they did not have much parental guidance at home, so I said, "I am going to give you the benefit of having Tom and Jean in your corner--and we will all live by the Cowboy Code of Conduct!" They laughed at first, but soon bought into the idea that there was a certain way you were supposed to behave--and they did so. When my father died in 2003, the students grieved with me for the man they had never met, but had come to respect, Cowboy Tom Monroe of Capay Valley.

(see poem page 20)



The Capay Saloon aka Lautze's is the most memorable of the several old saloons in bustling Capay at the turn-of-the-last century. It also served as the Yolo Brewery Steam Beer Depot, with the train tracks right out front--Hey, isn't it time for someone to put a microbrewery in Capay?! There are today two saloons in Capay today, a very modernized Road Trip Bar and Grill, and The Capay Junction, keeping the old-time saloon spirit alive.

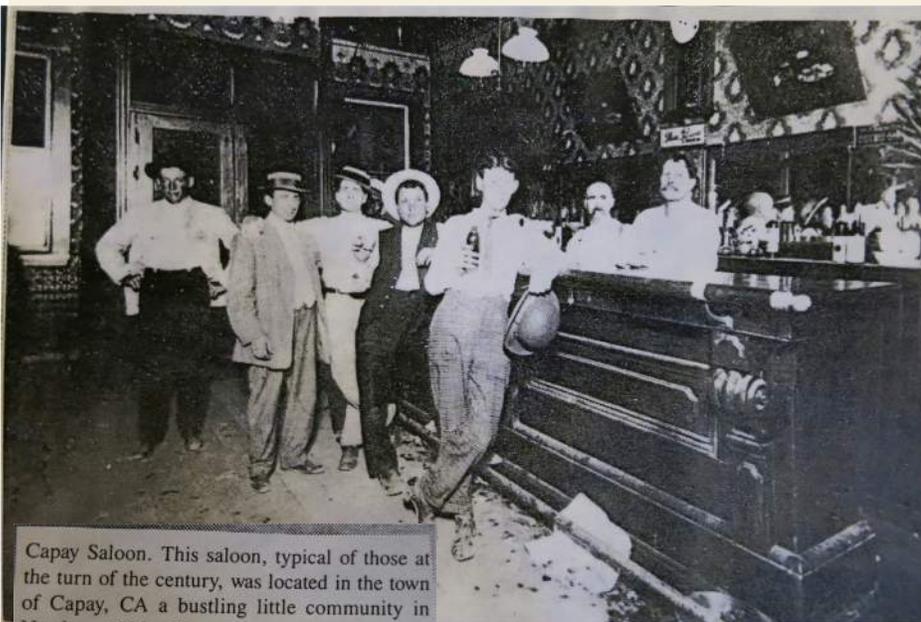


At right: The late *Bob Kelley, seen in 2002, tending bar in what is now The Capay Junction. His wife, owner Gail Graham, contends that her saloon was the original Capay Saloon/ Lautze's...though local historians dispute this claim, placing Lautze's Capay Saloon farther west on Main Street. I



swear I will get to the bottom of this--heading off to the Recorder's Office, soon, with Gail's Parcel Number, which she says proves her case! But whichever is the case, Gail and Bob ran the Capay Junction as the "Cheers' of Capay," in celebration of the old Capay Saloon tradition, a place where locals still come to meet and keep a town's soul alive.

Below is an interior shot of the original Capay Saloon in about 1900. (photos from Gail Graham)



Capay Saloon. This saloon, typical of those at the turn of the century, was located in the town of Capay, CA a bustling little community in Northwest Yolo County.

Tom the Cowboy
 With a straw colored hat,
 And his horse named Tom,
 He goes riding into the sunset.
 Through oak trees,
 Past deer,
 Bounty hunting for bear,
 Seeing rattlesnakes slithering past.
 And with a "howdy",
 He passes by.

Poem above was lovingly written by one of my 7th grade students on the passing of my father, Tom Monroe, Feb. 2, 2003.



The three Capay Saloons Ernie Lehman described on pages 18 and 19: at bottom left is the concrete pad, all that is left of *Clara's Place*, where Clara Spaulding ran her small saloon tucked into the houses she owned, seen here, still standing [until 2014] on the north side of Main Street/Highway 16; At top left--so renovated it little resembles Ernie's memories of his parents place, *Ike and Kay's Louie's Tavern* of the 1950-60s--is now *The Road Trip Bar and Grill*, which celebrated the local cattlemen by putting their brands on old barn boards along the walls, seen below. It still offers a small convenience store and dining--though considerably more elegant than the diner Ernie recalls! The two photos on the right are of *The Capay Junction* today, the *Country Club* in Ernie's memory...



Entering Capay from the east, the first saloon on your left is the *Capay Junction*; and just 200 steps west is the *Road Trip Bar & Grill*.



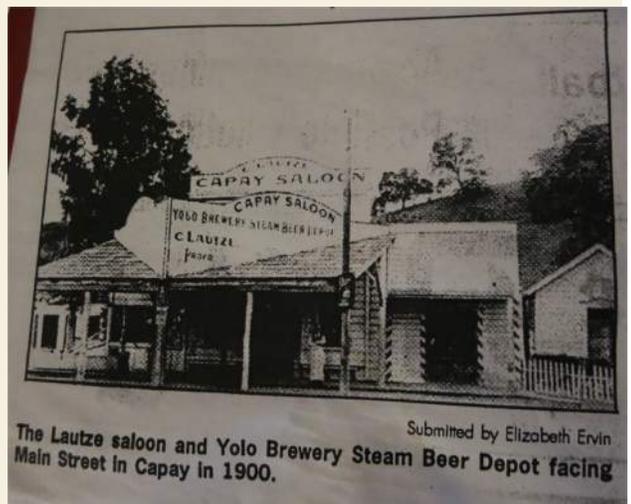
Above: top photo is today's entrance; below it is the right side of the Junction today--no longer the entrance Ernie recalled, but now storage and an office.

Below: note the barbershop on the right side of Lautze's Capay Saloon below, 1900; the historic wooden house seen at right still stands in that spot, partially hidden in old-growth trees, across from Clara's old site, seen at left.



Above is the site of Clara's Place in 2013; seen set back at right is believed to be the Tandy's original harness shop, moved back from its place on Main Street to this spot in later years.

* Bob Kelley chose to dress as an iconic 19th Century barkeep--as you can see from the picture on page 20. Gail Graham and her partner Ruth Cranston bought the bar in 1982 and Gail married Bob Kelley in 1990. Bob had lived and worked in the area for about 20 years before he met and married Gail. He tended bar since about 1995 until health issues led him to retire with Gail to Chiloquin, Oregon, in recent years. Bob passed away on December 1, 2013, comfy in his chair at home with Gail.



The Lautze saloon and Yolo Brewery Steam Beer Depot facing Main Street in Capay in 1900.

Submitted by Elizabeth Ervin



In Memory of those We have Loved and Lost...one of the great blessings of this research I do in the Capay Valley is being invited into the lives of so many wonderful people--some I knew as a child growing up here and some I only recently met, but all of whom I have come to know and admire so much more as an adult asking them to share their memories of the Capay Valley with me--and you.

Myrtle Sarah Zentner

April 1, 1927 – Sept. 11, 2013

Myrtle Sarah Zentner, who started as a rodeo calf roper and saddle bronc rider and wound up as one of the first woman justices in California passed away at her home with her family at her side on Wednesday, Sept. 11, 2013, at the age of 86.

Born on April 1, 1927, in Indianoma, Okla., Myrtle moved to Monrovia at the age of 6. She traveled to Ravendale and Southern California where she became a model. She also got interested in rodeo calf roper and saddle bronc riding, and pursued these passions when moving to Northern California.



She met the love of her life at the age of 18, and married Burnell Zentner in Reno, on Feb. 2, 1946. They had four children, Burnell, Sandra, Val and Joan.

Myrtle and her husband of 57 years would farm together in Yolo County. There she would study law on her trusty tractor and passed the California Judicial Council in June 1963. She was a judge in the Justice Court District in Capay, serving from 1964 to 1977, and was one of the first women judges in California. She also sat in at other justice courts throughout the state as assigned by the state Judicial Council. She retired in 1989 after a long career of dispensing justice.



Myrtle Zentner

She enjoyed being around her grandchildren, and also liked tole painting, making her famous cowboy coffee toffee, "Micki's Tacos" at the Capay Valley Almond Festival, and planting flowers in her beautiful garden in Capay.

Myrtle is survived by her children Burnell and Diane Zentner, and Val and Bonnie Zentner, both of Esparto, Sandra Allen of Colleyville, Texas, and Joan and Bob Tompkins of Capay. She is also survived by grandchildren, Tony and Crissa Zentner of the Redlands, Becky Zentner of Sonoma, Kelly and Danny Currywood of Esparto, Andrew Zentner of Woodland, Aaron Zentner of Fort Irwin, Texas, and Sarah Zentner of Winters; and great-grandchildren Dalton and Mason Elster of Sonoma, and Alana Currywood of Esparto.

She was preceded in death by her husband Burnell Zentner and grandson Eric Zentner.

"Mom, we all miss you very much!"

Donations in her memory may be made to the Esparto Fire Department.

Three of them passed away this fall and have left a huge hole in my heart: my Aunt Micki Zentner, my Cousin Nancy Monroe (see pg 24), and William Harris, who just dropped out of the sky like mana from Heaven one day to help me see this place in the 1920s and 30s through his fond and funny memories--many of which I have shared with you in this journal over the last three years!

Myrtle Sarah Burns did not like her name, Myrtle, so she called herself Micki from an early age--and to me she will always be Aunt Micki. She became Micki Zentner at 18 when she met and married local boy Burnell Zentner--like me, a descendant of the Capay Valley Duncans, thus my father's "cousin." To us Monroe kids, though, he was Uncle Burnell. He and Aunt Micki had four kids, our nearest neighbors and "cousins." Raised, as we were, on the old Duncan Ranch in Hungry Hollow, we all spent a great deal of time messing around in the Capay Hills and on Cache Creek together. Micki was an eclectic artist, both inside and out of the house, and Burnell was an inventor of frighteningly fun play structures to keep his and the neighbor kids amused. Micki was always there to sooth our bumps and bruises--and send us back out to play with an unconcerned smile.

I came to find out many who knew her as Yolo County's first female Justice of the Peace called her Myrtle, which threw me when I first came back to research this area, so I asked her about her name...and her life. She was warm and funny right to the end of her life and I will be forever grateful that I came home in time to become reacquainted.



She told this story as though it happened yesterday: Born in Oklahoma, Sarah Myrtle Burns moved to California with her widowed mother and her older sister, Caesarine, at 8 years old. Working as cook at a family hunting camp in Lassen County, she met the Leslie Button family and they invited her to spend some time with them at their home in Hungry Hollow before she went home to her mother one summer. What she did not know was that they thought she should meet their ranch manager, Burnell Zentner, so they sent him to meet her at the bus station...and his proposal came before her next bus home. They were able to buy the Button place later and raise their 4 children there.

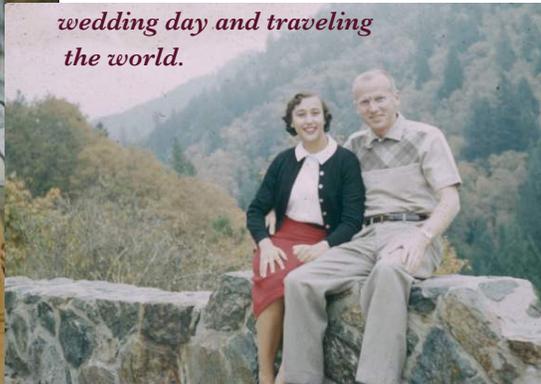
The Burnell and Micki Zentner home (right, County Road 85) was built on a parcel carved out of the original Wyatt Godfrey and Bill Duncan Ranch; the house was built in the 1920s—probably by my great uncle Wyatt Duncan, jr.—but later sold to Leslie Button. The tall pine to the left was annually decorated with Christmas lights each December by Burnell--to the very tip top, visible for many miles, much to the delight of people from all over Yolo County--

MERRY CHRISTMAS, ALL!!!





class of 1944, passes on to join his beloved wife Olga, seen here on their wedding day and traveling the world.



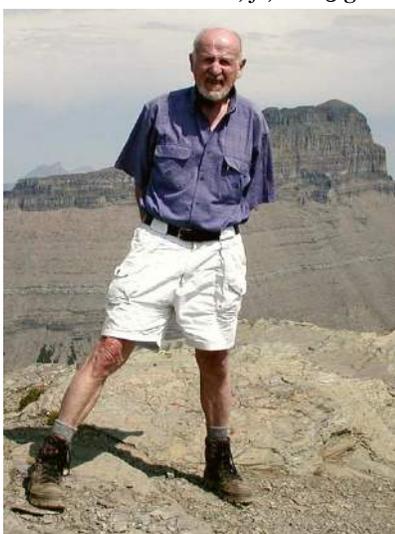
50 years ago, 1944
 Esparto athletes will stage a lengthy boxing card Friday, April 21 at 8 p.m. at the Capay Valley high school.
 Handling arrangements for the fistcuffs show are Cyril Jorgenson and Erving Kantlehner of the Esparto faculty. A large percentage of the boys of Esparto High School will take part in the bouts which are being arranged for the following: Sabino Galdwoz, Oscar Durst, Edward Mast, George Garcia, Tom Lindberg, Gerald Fletcher, Claude Alexander, Bryon Covington, Charles Taylor, Richard Covington, Gilbert Garcia, Cowles Mast, Eugene Scholtz, David Peterson, John Peterson, William Fletcher, Andres Campos, Douglas Bradshaw, Rudolph Gonzolves. William Harris, Jim Rominger, Robert Nichols, Elard Rocha, Valetine Mata, Joe Gwesur, Harold Brackett, Elmer Duncan, Ted Manas and Jim Mitchell.

William Harris was the son and only child of an Esparto’s early pharmacist (see volume 8), also William Harris. Bill’s grandparents joined their pharmacist son in the Esparto area in the 1920s and are buried in the Capay Cemetery along with their son and his wife, Helen (see volume 8). I came to find out that Bill was often referred to as “Little Biscuit,” as his father was “Biscuit”--don’t ask me why, Bill never did explain. He also did not want to go into detail about this article I found regarding the EHS Boxing team, “I am no pugilist; that did not go well...” was all he would say--in his usual deadpan way. But he did explain a lot of other mysteries for me in the last three years--told me many hilarious stories, to boot! Sadly, Bill passed away November 3, 2013, in Spokane, Washington, at 86 years old. He just showed up in my life one day--by email. He offered me a travel log written by a Taber of Capay Valley (volume 13), but when I recognized his name, having just read about his father, Esparto’s pharmacist of the 1930-50s, I asked him to tell me what he remembered about the Capay Valley--thus beginning a delightful correspondence of almost 3 years! Not only did he subscribe to the journal--and reluctantly contributed many of my favorite stories--but he got his three children to subscribe, and made two generous donations to the cause to keep me going. His children, Craig, Rebecca and Bill, jr., shared some information and pictures with me recently so that I could honor “Little Biscuit” in this journal he helped me produce--and keep lively!

According to his children, *William Harris enjoyed hiking, mountain biking, and skiing. He was proud to be a resident of Esparto and enjoyed telling stories of what was happening when he was growing up in the Capay Valley in the 1920-40s. He attended Esparto High School until 1944 and had many fond and funny memories of Esparto and Capay--and the people!*

He really enjoyed reading the periodical produced by The Greater Capay Valley Historical Society and also enjoyed contributing from time to time! He will be buried with his wife Olga in the Capay Cemetery in the Harris Family burial plot.

While Bill grew up in Esparto, he was born July 11, 1927 in Aberdeen, Grays Harbor County, Washington. His mother, Helen (Brown) Harris, made a trip to Washington where she had family to give birth, due to a complicated pregnancy. Their home was Esparto where they lived in the apartment above his father’s drugstore and then moved to a house in town. They bought some property in Capay Valley and built a house around 1945. Graduating and leaving Esparto in 1944, he served in the US Armed Forces as an ambulance driver for the injured. He was a pharmacist and worked in the medical industry and was widowed when wife Olga passed away on April 17, 1989. His survivors are Craig Harris, Rebecca Texier and Bill Harris, jr, and 3 grandchildren, Max 25, Romy 18, and Naomi 13.



Rebecca shared: “This picture is Dad during his happiest times on the top of Glacier Park Mountain. He moved there shortly after my mother died and took up hiking with a group called ‘the over the hill gang’. They would meet for coffee in the same place every week and discuss the next adventure. These guys hiked the mountains of Montana for many miles in a day; it was far from a sissy walk; these men were stellar athletes. Someone wrote a book about this group, but I don’t know much about that. He was proud to be a native of Esparto and promised his mother that he would never sell the Capay Valley ranch. Capay is in our hearts and we plan on keeping it in the family for generations to come.

Soon Bill and Olga will have headstones in the Capay Cemetery along side his grandparents (below) and his mother and father.





Become a member of *The Greater Capay Valley Historical Society* to receive all 14 back-volumes for 2011-13 for only \$150; and/or get the 4th annual subscription to the Journal's 4 quarterly, 24-page volumes of 2014 for \$60. Send a check made payable to TGCVHS and all your mailing/shipping information to:

The Greater Capay Valley Historical Society
Elizabeth Monroe, editor

PO Box 442Esparto, CA 95627 **CAPAY VALLEY**

FROM:
THE GREATER CAPAY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 greatercapayvalley.org

December 2013 Volume 14

California, 95627, at 5:00 P.M.



GRASTY, Nancy Monroe

Nancy Adair Monroe Grasty, 80, of Sacramento, passed away November 12, 2013 after a long struggle with Alzheimer's disease. Her final years were not what anyone had hoped, but through it all, glimpses of her humor and sparkle remained. We learned to appreciate these small gifts. She is survived by her beloved husband James, her children Martha (John Steinhoff) of Madison, WI, Jim (Heidi) of Gold River, and Jennifer Foley (Dave) of Sacramento; four wonderful grandchildren, Megan and Mallory Grasty, Lauren and Ian Foley; sister Martha (Ray) Donnenwirth, brother Jim Monroe, sister-in-law, Barbara Monroe, and many relatives.

Nancy was born in Woodland, CA on August 22, 1933 to James and Lucille Nurse Monroe, who preceded her in death. She grew up on the Monroe family ranch in Yolo County, graduated from Esparto High and Chico State University. For over forty years Nancy taught elementary school kids to read and succeed. She loved the beach, especially Bodega Bay and Kauai.

We thank everyone at Aegis Carmichael for their compassion and attention to Nancy. We are extremely grateful. A visitation is Sunday, November 17, 2013 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Lind Brothers in Carmichael, CA; burial will occur on Monday, November 18, 2013 at 1:00 p.m. at the Capay Cemetery in Capay, CA. Please make remembrances in Nancy's name to your local Alzheimer's Association chapter.



Below: Future sheriff Forrest D. Monroe stands at right, while his younger brother, Jim Monroe— Nancy's father—stands at left of father Sheriff James Monroe.

At right: Sheriff James Monroe and his wife Grey (standing at right) with the first four of seven children: Mary, Forrest, Jim & Wyatt.

These first four children were born in the Duncan-Monroe house (seen above with a typical large family gathering) where my cousins Nancy, Martha and Jimmy were raised by Jim and Lucille (Nurse) Monroe. Her father Jim was named as ranch manager by his parents when his father was nearing retirement as sheriff of Yolo County.



My beautiful first-cousin Nancy Monroe was 20 years my senior and married Jim Grasty in 1957 when I was only 4, so I mostly just remember their later visits to the Monroe Ranch with 3 kids not much younger than I—and how warm & sweet

they all were! It was nice to see so many of our mutual family in Capay again on Nov. 18th. That's Nancy kneeling at bottom right in photo above left in the 1950s at the Monroe Ranch.

Nancy now rests between the headstones of her uncle Tom Monroe and Great-Grandparents Wyatt and Mary Duncan, not far from her parents Jim and Lucille (Nurse) Monroe in the beautiful Capay Cemetery.

