

CAPAY VALLEY

January 2015

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The Greater Capay Valley
Historical Society
PO Box 442
Esparto, CA 95627

Pictures, Stories and Research to reveal and celebrate a very special place--the Capay Valley!

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

Cadenasso: As I was wrapping up the last volume of the journals for 2014 and calling it quits for awhile, of course I received some juicy tidbits that did not make it in time for the journals, but I wanted them in the book, so I am creating an addendum!

First, Janice Aoytes kindly pledged to my Kickstarter campaign to get the book into hardcover—and then also explained she was a descendant of the early Capay Valley pioneer Cadenasso family! I asked and she sent these treasures:

Top photo is of Antoinetta P. Cadenasso; and below it is husband Nicola Cadenasso. Italian, they were among the earliest Euro-pioneers to arrive, in 1870. They had 6 children, who would populate the area with Cadenassos! They are: Silvio, Clelia (Fowler), Tio, Arillo, Aida (Naismith—see volume), and Giovanni (called Johnny). According to Janice's brother Ken Han, they are descended from Clelia.



According to great grandson Ken Han, Nicola & Antoinetta's sons used the lumber from the dismantled Cadenssa School in the 1920s to build a home southeast of

Esparto on County Road 23, which still stands among other structures built around 1900.

Nicola would also build a barn at the old homestead in Cadenassa where he kept and bred draft horses.



The railroad changed the family name to end in an “A” when they bought the land to put a small depot on it: Cadenassa became the name of the town, the school and depot—which still stands where it was moved to, hidden behind a blue house just off of County Road 76 at Highway 16, I am told! Cadenassa School would first be called *Capay* School and was attended by Cadenasso children and many others from the Cadenasso and Dogtown areas—such as the Wood family—just northwest of Langville (later renamed *Capay*), following the rail line, which is just north of what is now Highway 16, following closer along Cache Creek. See prior volumes for facts on the Cadenassa - Capay Schools, the Wood family, the Vaca Valley - Clear Lake Railroad*...but for our purposes, here is another treasure Janice sent—the Cadenasso family portrait; Antoinetta and her six children, their spouses and children: Left to right, Back row: [Surnames are Cadenasso, unless otherwise noted] Mangolio John, Attilio Angelo, Charles Fowler, grandson Nick Levrero, Silvio Giuseppe, Aurelio, Welland Naismith. Front row: Elsie, Cloyd, granddaughter Neva Fowler Spalding, Clelia Cadenasso Fowler, granddaughter Veda Fowler Han, their “Nona” Antoinetta P., grandson Nick, Clara, Lena, and Aida Cadenasso Naismith. [*see volume 2, book pages 38-39 & volume 7, book page 122]



addendum ii

Excerpted from the first quarterly Newsletter for 2015 is the Mefford Family article...

JANUARY 29, 2015 QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE GREATER CAPAY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Meffords of Capay: Claire Mefford Mabry [whose husband Bill Mabry played fiddle for years with *Asleep at the Wheel* the Texas swing band—often locally, much to our delight!] contacted me recently and let me know her grandparents were great friends of my great-grandparents Wyatt Godfrey and Mary Duncan of Capay and Hungry Hollow from the 1870s. Claire's father Clarence was best buddies with their son, my great uncle Wyatt Godfrey, jr, as well. She sent me a great photo of the *Townspeople of Capay* [also seen in Ada Merhoff's book: *Capay Valley, The Land & The People, 1846-1900*] picnicking on the Duncan Ranch in about 1900 with our ancestors circled in ink for me—what a delight! She tells us some of her family history in Capay Valley, here:

"My grandparents came to Capay in 1877 from Elmira, Solano Co. They had eight children; three were born in Elmira and the other five in Capay. Their names were: George, John, Henry, Mary, Deina, Franklin, Stella and my father Clarence. My grandfather built a small house on what is now Mefford Lane in Capay. Two retired professors from the University of California bought the house around twenty years ago and had the name changed. My grandmother was forty-five when Dad was born. He said his mother always told him she was Stonewall Jackson's cousin, so I checked it out on the computer and sure enough she was. Her grandmother and Stonewall's father were brother and sister. She had died in the flu epidemic in 1913 and I had never even seen a picture of her until I got a copy of "The Jackson Brigade" quarterly. Her picture was on the back cover. Dad's best friend was Wyatt Duncan, jr, and their mothers were also best friends. I had never heard Wyatt's mother called anything but "Mother Dunc." Wyatt had a Stutz Bearcat car and dad said it was very very fast. At the same time he was telling me this he also mentioned a fine moonshine still hidden in the Capay hills. I asked him if there was a connection between the fast car and the still but he just smiled. Since it was prohibition at the time, I always wondered..."

Enjoy some of the photos she shared, here. She went on to tell more, but you will have to enjoy it on our website greatercapayvalley.org — or buy the Book: **The History and Stories of the Capay Valley**, by Elizabeth "Betsy" Monroe coming out February 2015! See the website for details and order instructions.



JANUARY 29, 2015 QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR THE GREATER CAPAY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



The Mefford house in Capay as it appeared recently. The Lane is now closed off to the house, but it still stands on Mefford Lane, originally South Second Street. The Historic Resources Inventory of Yolo County, found at the Yolo County Archives, pegs the date as 1876, (though the family is not in agreement...) and calls it a one-story saltbox style, “an excellent pioneer example built for important pioneers Henry and Mary Mefford...Mefford was a leading pioneer carpenter and builder in the Capay area and was responsible for building many of the early pioneer homes...From 1894-97 Mefford served as the County Hospital Superintendent...and was instrumental in the early growth and development of Capay.”



Above is the street sign for Mefford Lane. Behind it is seen the Main Street of Capay—also Highway 16, between Esparto and the Capay Valley. I am told the train tracks still reside under the pavement, as the Vaca Valley-Clear Lake line between Capay and Rumsey was discontinued by the 1930s before the road through town was paved. The line continued to run freight between Esparto and Capay, but the Capay Depot that originally stood at the far west end of town was moved to its current location at the corner of Main Street and County Road 85, at a spur out to Cache Creek for gravel loading.



Above:

Henry Mefford standing. Henry would help James Neilson build his first home in Esparto in 1888—the same year the railroad arrived.



Henry Mefford loading sacks in Capay. Inset is his wife, Mary Virginia Brake, 1844-1913, who would give him 8 children. Their youngest was Clarence, who would marry Marion Martin of Woodland.

As the Patwin tribe of Native Americans of Capay Valley—now legally known as *Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation*—are doing their own history, they do not need me to tell their story for them, but I am determined to at least honor their existence of thousands of years along Cache Creek before the Euro-pioneers arrived—including my own Scots ancestors. When I asked their historian for information, he directed me to their websites and invited me to borrow whatever I wanted from them. Most of what I had published when I started this research four years ago came from ancient—and often now-discredited—historical texts on the people who would tell you they were here “from the beginning of time.” Part of the the nationally recognized Wintun Nation, the Hill Patwin of our valley were greatly decimated by contact with “others,” just as were all Native People across this land. Their story was left out of our textbooks—just as were the atrocities committed against Blacks, Japanese, Chinese and others—until the 1970s when they began to get their due in our school curriculum. But even beyond what is in the textbooks now, the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation of Capay Valley has its own history arm compiling information, resources and stories: For more information visit:

<http://yochadehe.org/cultural-resources/living-culture-preservation/historic-archives>

— excerpts follow:

By amassing the largest collection of Patwin historic archives, we are able to understand our past and make informed decisions for the future. Our collections include written documents, historic video and audio files, and a collection of 12,000 current and historic images. Sources for these files include federal government archives, as well as linguistic and ethnographic field notes housed in a variety of universities from Berkeley to Harvard. Family collections, oral histories, and newspaper articles provide primary documentation to ensure our stories are authentic.

The Patwin historic archive is used in a variety of ways to support the work of government affairs, educational engagements, site protection, and internal programs. Through primary materials, we are able to engage multiple generations in our educational and cultural experiences.

Also check out: <http://yochadehe.org/heritage/history> — excerpts follow:

For thousands of years, members of California’s Wintun Tribes have been guided by a culture rich with an understanding of medicine, technology, food production and land stewardship. The towns and roads of today were the villages and trade routes of our past. Our land was healthy and our early communities thrived.

The arrival of missionaries and European explorers forever altered the course of Native people in California. Many Wintun people were enslaved to serve the missions, while abuse and disease further dwindled our numbers. By the 1800s, many of our ancestors were purged of their home and hunting lands by opportunists driven by gold and greed. Northern California Native people were decimated by the Gold Rush and federal policies that legalized genocide. During this time the Yocha Dehe population declined dramatically and our ancestors were rendered nearly extinct.

Continued from page 5:

In the early 1900s, our Tribe was forcibly removed from our village by the US government and placed on a federally created rancheria—otherwise known as a reservation—in Rumsey, California. Stranded on barren, non-irrigatable land, they struggled to survive. In 1940, our people gained a hard-won relocation to a small parcel of land further south in the Capay Valley, where they managed to cultivate small amounts of food. Without the opportunity to produce more than subsistence levels of crops, our ancestors, who had lived sustainably for thousands of years, became dependent on the US government for survival.

Finally, in the late 1980s, the tide began to turn. Some ancestral lands were restored to our Tribe, providing a land base for housing and economic development. It was at this time that the State of California instituted the California Lottery and the federal government enacted the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA). The United States Congress enactment of IGRA in particular provided a means to promote economic development and self-sufficiency with the explicit purpose of strengthening tribal self-governance. This offered the Tribe the opportunity to open Cache Creek Indian Bingo on part of our 188 acres of trust land.

Initially, our Tribe knew little about gaming. We focused our resources on building the necessary foundation for our tribal government to manage assets generated by the bingo hall. Powered by hard work and determination, we developed our own management strategy and expanded the bingo hall into the world-class Cache Creek Casino Resort, eventually providing economic development and stability for our tribal members.

The independence gained from the initial influx of gaming revenue gave the Tribe the wherewithal to reacquire some of our traditional lands, to invest in the future of our children through improved education and to provide philanthropic support for communities in need.

In 2009, the Tribe legally changed our name from the Rumsey Band of Wintun Indians, as we were originally labeled by the federal government, to Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, named for our homeland in our ancestral Patwin language. The name change represents an important mark in time for the people of Yocha Dehe. It connects our Tribe to our heritage and expresses our sense of pride and hope for the future.

Yocha Dehe Means "Home by the Spring Water" — along Cache Creek, Capay Valley

Patwin Language Program:

Since 2008, Leland Kinter has been teaching the Patwin language to his students at Yocha Dehe Wintun Academy. The classes started with one elementary class a week and have grown to include preschool, kindergarten, middle school and high school classes. In addition to conversational language, Leland uses a mixture of learning through games, intensive grammar, and culturally specific topics for lessons. Everyday conversation focuses on making Patwin language relevant.

Bertha Mitchell, a fluent Patwin speaker, has been teaching adult classes at Tewe Kewe since 2007. Her knowledge forms the backbone of all of the language work. Her classes are recorded, edited and added to the iTunes database and to the Patwin language website. The language from her class is used to build the curriculum for Leland's classes.

97° **Recognizing Tribal Lands:**

A new memorial garden exists at UC Davis, since an excavation crew uncovered 13 Patin burials on college property. UCD now celebrates over 40 years of offering The Native American studies department—which now offers a PhD.

Under the “Did You Know” on the website pages:

TO REDUCE EMISSIONS OF AIR POLLUTANTS, THE TRIBE’S FIRE DEPARTMENT FUELS ITS VEHICLES WITH A BIODIESEL BLEND

OUR WASTEWATER IS TREATED TO A TERTIARY LEVEL USING A MEMBRANE BIOREACTOR (MBR) TREATMENT PLANT, WHICH IS THE MOST ADVANCED TYPE OF PLANT AVAILABLE AND YIELDS WATER THAT IS SAFE FOR HUMAN CONTACT.

THE TRIBE EMPLOYS A STATE-OF-THE ART ELECTRODIALYSIS REVERSAL (EDR) WATER TREATMENT SYSTEM, WHICH EXCEEDS THE “BEST AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGY” STANDARD AND IS AMONG THE MOST ADVANCED TREATMENT SYSTEMS IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA.

AN ESTIMATED 80 MILLION GALLONS OF WATER IS RECYCLED ANNUALLY FOR USE AT THE RESORT FOR TOILETS AND GOLF COURSE IRRIGATION

TO PROTECT WILDLIFE HABITAT AND AGRICULTURAL LANDS, THE TRIBE HAS PLACED 1,200 ACRES INTO A PERMANENT CONSERVATION EASEMENT

THE CLUBHOUSE AT YOCHA DEHE GOLF CLUB IS CERTIFIED LEED SILVER AND OUR NEW FACILITIES BUILDING IS CERTIFIED LEED PLATINUM

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a voluntary, consensus-based, market-driven program that provides third-party verification of green buildings.
www.usgbc.org

We believe that harmony and balance come from understanding and cooperation.

Also check out:

<http://yochadehe.org/cultural-resources/site-protection>

Chairman

Marshall McKay

leads the elected Tribal Council of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation. He began his career in tribal government in 1984 and in January 2012 was re-elected to his third term as Chairman. Born in Colusa, California, the Chairman grew up in Brooks near his present-day home in the Yocha Dehe tribal community. A cornerstone of his leadership is his commitment to cultural renewal and preservation, a focus he extends into education programs and sustainable land-use practices.



Newsclipping courtesy of Stan Gladney

Origins & history of Yolo County

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the first in a series about the origins of Yolo County.

By JACQUE (REIMER) VAUGHTERS
Democrat staff writer

The following Indian tradition, relative to the great valley of central California, and as such applicable to our own county, is of such ancient origin that it would be impossible to trace it even if it were possible to do so by the Indian moons. It passed from father to son through countless generations of Indians (sic, Native Americans), until it was at last interpreted by the Mission Fathers.

"Many, many moons ago this great valley of central California was a vast inland sea, having for its eastern boundary a range of mountains now known as the Sierra Nevada, and for the western boundary the Coast Range.

"The Indians lived around its shores happy and contented, going back into the mountains in search of game and again returning to fish along its peaceful shores.

"In the midst of this quiet and contented life, an earthquake shook this body of water to its very depths. Mt. Diablo was upheaved, a blazing mountain, emitting vast quantities of smoke and fire, from which it takes its name, Devil Mountain. The sun was obscured and the terrified Indians, convulsed with fear, lay prostrate on the ground, or fled toward the mountains. On the third day the smoke cleared, and this vast body of water was found to have escaped through an opening in the Coast Range, now known as the Golden Gate, and what was before a vast inland sea had become a beautiful inland valley."

The Indians, in time, occupied this valley, not divided, however, as they were in the northern part of the state into large tribes, but scattered over its surface in innumerable small bands.

When the first settlers came to Yolo county they found a number or these bands located

in different sections of the county. One of these bands, the Yodos, is of especial interest to us. The word "Yodo" is an Indian word, meaning the land of tules or rushes, and Yolo, the name of the county, is a corruption of this word. This band occupied the region in and around Knights Landing, and their chief, Yodo, is well remembered by old settlers.

He is described as being somewhat of a finer type of Indian than the average "digger." He wore his hair roached high off his forehead, and sitting in council, surrounded by bands of Indians collected from different parts of the county and other counties, he made a striking figure.

According to accounts of these early settlers, the Indian population in Yolo county and all through the great central valley at the time of their coming was very sparse. There were two reasons for this:

The bleached and dismembered remains of Indians were found in large quantities, as evidence that some fatal disease had quickly decimated their number. These were so thick in the vicinity of the Yodo mound at Knights Landing, where Mr. William Knight built his first rude house, that he collected and buried them in one side of the mound.

Another and more potent reason was owing to the fact that the Mission Fathers had previously traveled through the valley and succeeded in gathering many of these Indians around the missions of Southern California.

(Look for additional information about the origins of Yolo County in next Sunday's column)

— Compiled and edited from a paper written by Miss Kathryn Simmons, and read before the Federation of Women's Improvement Clubs and the Woodland Shakespeare Club, published in "Woodland Daily Democrat," Thursday Evening, Feb. 16, 1905, page 4, columns 1 through 4. Jacque Vaughters can be reached at (530) 406-6246.

Origins & history of Yolo County

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is another in our series about the origins of Yolo County, which began Dec. 18.

By JACQUE (REIMER) VAUGHTERS
Democrat staff writer

Much more might be said in a general way of the life and custom of the Northern California's early Native Americans. Bancroft in his "Native Races of the Pacific Coast" devotes many pages to describing the Indians of the great central valley, but since his description applies to all the bands and no special mention is made to any in Yolo county, I have preferred to make reference to the Indians as the early settlers found them.

Changing the subject to the early trappers, some authentic tradition exists of the trapping period in Yolo county. The county was on a direct highway between the north and the south, and was visited by almost all the older hunting and exploring expeditions. Tradition relates that Jedediah S. Smith, the famous trapper, spent much time in Yolo county, as early as 1825.

Between the years 1833 and 1845 the Hudson Bay Company had a California department with headquarters at Yerba Buena. They had two trapping stations in the state where they cached their skins, caching them as they went north in the spring and removing them as they went south in the fall.

One of these stations was located about one mile east of Cacheville (sic, Yolo), in a grove of oak timber. If it were possible to exactly locate this spot it might be classed as an important landmark of the county.

Bands of men called "free trappers" cached their furs all along Cache creek; from these two sources we have the names Cacheville and Cache creek.

Passing from this trapping period we come to the period of settlement. For the purpose of settling California in the interests of Mexico, the Mexican government gave grants of land to actual settlers in this state. These grants were given to a Mexican citizen, either native or adopted, or who must have married a Mexican wife, in which case the land was granted to the wife. One of these grants led to the first settlement made in Yolo county.

In the year 1841, a party of 25 persons left Santa Fe, New Mexico, and after traversing the country almost unknown to civilization, arrived at the old San Diego Mission. They remained during the winter and in the spring the party separated.

Mr. William Gordon was born in Ohio about the year 1800. Sometime during the early 1800s, his love of adventure and for the wild life of the west prompted him to leave his native state and he wandered among the Rocky mountains, finally reaching Mexico, where he became a Mexican citizen by adoption, married a Mexican wife and, through her, received a grant of land.

In the year 1841, a party of 25 persons left Santa Fe, New Mexico, and after traversing the country almost unknown to civilization, arrived at the old San Diego Mission. They remained during the winter and in the spring the party separated.

Among the number that pushed northward was Mr. William Gordon and his family. Leaving the San Diego Mission with his family and driving a few head of stock cattle and horses, he made his way to Sutter's fort.

Gen. John A. Sutter who had located there 18 months before, gave Mr. Gordon and his family a hearty welcome. They did not remain long but crossed the Sacramento river and settled on what is known as the Gordon grant, about 10 miles west of Woodland, thus becoming the first white settlers in the county.

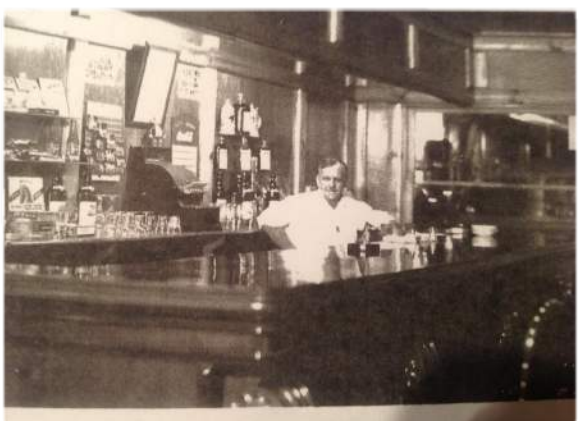
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GUINDA COMMONS – A RUSTIC BBQ

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Below: the large bar, reportedly imported in the 1870's and moved here from Esparto, still exists.



The restaurant-bar that is today **Guinda Commons**, which was established March 2013, has a lengthy Capay Valley history: According to the January 28, 2014 article in the San Jose Mercury News: “*The Commons fits anyone's idea of a roadside tavern that was once a way station for 1920s-era hunters.*”

Owners Richard and Lori Day-Reynolds fell in love with the building, as well as the valley, when they first visited in May 2012. They immediately decided to sell their barbecue restaurant in Portland and move to Guinda. Lori says: ‘There was something in these hills that took my worry meter and turned it way down...’ The rich history is obvious in the interior of the Commons which includes Lori & Richard have heard an oral history of the place that includes: The original name was **Bennett's Rustic BBQ**. They've been told it was a hunting lodge in the early days. The location included a gas station that was deactivated several decades ago Next, it was **Jo & Ed's**. Edna's son Ray—who with his son Keith owns and runs Stingrayz Marina in Knights Landing—has many great stories of the Guinda of his youth and still owns property in Guinda. Check out stingrayzmarina.com — and go see Ray! Marian and Frank Nichols operated the business as **Nichols Rest Stop** for 18 years in the 1980's & 1990's. Frank & Marian still live in area and manage the Western Yolo Grange Hall on Forrest Avenue up behind the historic Corner Store. Next came **Fat Boy's**, 1997-1999 (owners unknown); and then **Murray's Bar & Grill** 1999-2002—Jim & Roberta Murray still live in area. And then it was **Ibarra's Restaurant** 2002-2012; Estachio Ibarra died last spring, but his widow & daughter still live in the area.

Today: **Guinda Commons**, where Richard applies his Tennessee heritage to cooking and serving the best smoked meats, hearty soups and other house-made sides. Great slaw—not too sweet!! Lori makes pies and other tasty baked goods from scratch. They stock a wide selection of beer, hard ciders and local wine. There's a large patio out back with a stage for live music events