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CAPAY VALLEY

December 2011

Volume Six

greatercapayvalley.org

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

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

So, what's so special about this place we call the greater Capay Valley? As explored in the prior 5 issues, it has a lot to do with the beautiful and bountiful farm and ranch lands, and the unique history of integration and cooperation between the various groups that have come here--and either stayed on or have gone. But it is also the unique flora and fauna and the amazing sunsets and sunrises. And most of all, it is the spirit of the place, whether a 5-6 generation descendant of the earliest pioneers--or the native population or more recently arrived--the people who have stayed seem so hopeful and enthusiastic about the possibilities. There are the numerous festivals and celebrations, and then service organizations and non-profits keep popping up to try and improve on an already unique and special place. In this issue, I will cover the oldest festival of all, the Almond Festival, and one of the *service organizations*, the Esparto Regional Chamber of Commerce.



Egrets feeding on Cache Creek, December 1, 2011--unusual for this much water to remain at this time of year, so this scene is a rare delight!

NOTE: *The term used herein, "Esparto Judicial Township," refers to the boundary served by the old Esparto Justice Court and Census area.

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Special thanks to: Doug Nareau, photographer/historian; and donors Cathy Monroe-Stephens and Jim Hiatt; also Pat Harrison, Meredith Stephens, Don Warren, Lani Burris, Anthony Holiday, William Petty, Jeannette Molson, and Monique Garcia--and all the faithful subscribers and advertisers!

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Below: Croton setiger (formerly Eremocarpus setigerus), a species of plant known by the common names Doveweed and Turkey Mullein is an annual herb native to California, also found throughout western North America. A squat plant, it has furry, felt-like, hexagon shaped leaves, pale pink-green in color. The small green flowers are covered in soft bristles."



Right: Tarweed--that familiar, pungent smell on so many of our local hills! It may be a "pest" to livestock men/women, but it has a special place in my childhood memories--and the honey the beekeepers gave us when my dad let them use our back pasture had that heavenly pungent scent, too! According to the UCD site:

<http://californiarangeland.ucdavis.edu/Weeds/tarweed.htm>, in fall, "the disk flower has anthers that produce abundant pollen, an important food source for honeybees. In the summer tarweed's aromatic summer growth is sometimes tall and sticky. It is not palatable to livestock, hides forage needed by livestock, and coats the faces and legs of livestock with a tarry resin." --but bees love it!!

Yellow Tarweed, *Holocarpha virgata*, is a native plant that is well adapted to the hot dry summers in the Central Valley of California and the surrounding foothills.



Agriculture in the Capay Valley

[continued from Cover-Page 1]

The greater Capay Valley, rich in agriculture today, was largely overlooked by settlers during California's gold rush era. But with its abundant water supply and mild climate, it soon became an important center for California agriculture. In some ways, though, even the fertile land and good water source was of limited value at first, since transporting perishable crops to other areas any distance from Cache Creek was problematic--until the railroad arrived, but more on that later!

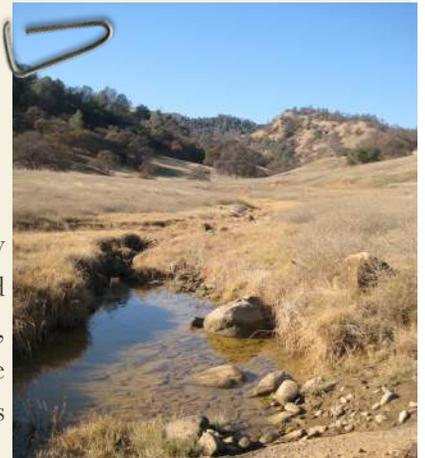
Therefore, though some farmers tried vines and orchards early on, in the years following the gold rush, the area was primarily a grain and cattle raising area.

When, in 1847, the northern seven and one-half leagues of the Rancho Canada de Capay grant was conveyed to Jasper O'Farrell, basically the Capay Valley as we know it, a "land rush" of European pioneers began in earnest--including some important speculators, like John Gillig and Sy and John Arnold. On August 11, 1850, the Arnold brothers made the first commercial subdivision in the region and sold off some 5,500 acres to nine different parties for a handsome profit, according to historian Douglas Nareau's *Historic Land Uses in the Esparto Judicial Township**.

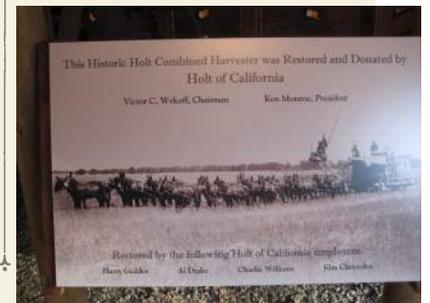
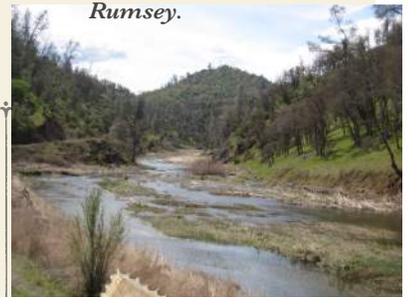
Then, in 1855, David Quincy Adams, looking for a better feed for his livestock, imported the first alfalfa into the area--and possibly the state. This alfalfa, known as Chilean Alfalfa, is believed to have come to the Capay Valley area from Chile where it was imported from Switzerland and known as Lucern Alfalfa. This is significant in that alfalfa requires abundant water, but if it is mostly used locally it need not be limited by transport concerns--but did require a means of irrigation.

In 1856, the first agricultural ditch in the area was constructed about three miles northeast of Madison on Gordon's Ranch. This canal was constructed by James Moore and led to other ditches in the area--the most significant being the Adams Ditch in the southern Capay Valley. The Adams Ditch was used to irrigate 150 acres of alfalfa and forty acres of garden crops, and was part of a larger system completed around 1870, which included the Adams Dam, forerunner of the present Capay Dam. [see volume 2]

Inspired, by 1858 land speculators Arnold and Gillig had purchased 13,760 acres in Capay Valley and began to subdivide the land into parcels of 200 to 3800 acres. Gillig planted grain, grapevines, and fruit trees northwest of Langville [the present community of Capay], and established the county's first winery in 1860. Other speculators, Rhodes and Pratt, each took title to 6800 acres in the northern valley and began to sell parcels to settlers. Scattered ranches and tiny settlements developed along



Salt Creek, above, near Guinda;
upper Cache Creek, below, above
Rumsey.





Agriculture, continued from page 3

the unpaved, dirt road [today's Highway 16] leading up to the quicksilver (mercury) mines in the canyons to the west, according to the Esparto Chamber of Commerce.

As explored in volume 4 of this journal, the Capay Valley became well known for viticulture, and by 1861, the *Capay Valley Winery* was awarded a gold medal as the finest winery in the State of California. The area's agricultural was off and running!

In the 1870's. Klaus Spreckels planted some of the state's first **sugar beets** in the area, which became one of the area's leading agricultural crops. Soon, the *Capay Valley Grange* was established, marking the first attempt at formal cooperation in the farm community--and growing quickly.

Livestock and grain farming were still the mainstays of the region's developing agricultural economy, but irrigation was changing the landscape--now, *thirsty* crops, destined for shipment, would soon flourish.

According to the Esparto Regional Chamber of Commerce website, "The Almond



Tree is the most mysterious nut tree and is mentioned in the bible in the *Book of Numbers 17:8*. Its crop is very valuable to our state and California is the only place in North America that grows almonds commercially. A \$2 billion industry, more than 6000 growers devote an estimated 530,000 acres in the Central Valley--California's largest tree nut crop--from Bakersfield to Red Bluff"--and throughout the greater Capay Valley area, of course!!

While I am working on a much more thorough article on the railroad in the next volume, it is important to understand its significance to the development of the crops in the Capay Valley...After the Central Pacific Railroad established a line from Elmira in Solano County to Winters in Yolo County, five investors incorporated the Vaca Valley and Clear Lake Railroad in 1877, planning to extend the line north from Winters to Cache Creek, and then through the Capay Valley and on to Clear Lake. Although financing for the line was not quickly secured, the town of Madison was established where the railroad was to curve northwest toward the valley. Most of the village of Cottonwood to the southeast was moved to the new town, which became a center for grain shipping, according to Esparto Chamber of Commerce site.

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Farming in the Capay Valley:
A Long History, which
increasingly included Orchard
Crops--
Most Importantly, Almonds!

Below left, Festival Chairman, Shelford Wyatt--1915's "Prettiest Baby in the Valley"



LANI BURRIS - (1964) PRINCESS

Almond Festival
Thousands jam
route up valley
for annual event

See related photos, Page A-3.
By JACK C. RYE
Democrat City Editor
A little after noon Sunday, west-bound traffic on Highway 16 was bumper to bumper from Interstate 805 to Madison, where some motorists turned off to visit a car show.
It was the first stop of the 70th Almond Festival, which featured almond blossoms and man-made attractions from one end of the Capay Valley to the other.
Farther up the highway, at a stage near the south end of Esparto Park, Esparto High School Principal Nick McNicholas paused between duties as master of ceremonies for a series of skits to say he believed the turnout may have been a little smaller for this year's Almond Festival.
"Last year it (the traffic) was bumper to bumper by 9 a.m.," he said.
He estimated between 10,000 and 12,000 people turn out each year.
"We came to see everything," said Kevin Morley of Woodland, as he walked toward the park, where people visited booths selling food
spelled out in salmon-pink lettering.
There seemed to be motorcycles from everywhere. "More than 100," was the understatement from a Solano County biker. "I guarantee you that," said a friend.
Randy Ziemer of Vacaville said the Almond Festival always means a good day of motorcycling.
"It never seems to rain on the Almond Festival," he said, adding that the event starts the season for many bikers who take the opportunity to reunite with friends.
Traffic — motorcycles, customized cars and just regular automobiles — was heavy all the way up the Capay Valley.
But one block off Highway 16, it was quiet inside the Guinda Grange Hall, despite an attractive display of quilts, collectibles and other items.
Behind an array of tree seedlings, Guinda nurseryman Don Mrochinski said he believes that without a sign on the highway many Almond Festival visitors do not realize the Grange Hall is over there.
Faye Bennett of Esparto agreed with Mrochinski, but she did not seem to mind

Hope you can find something that works. The blossoms are just coming out and the Capay Valley is at its most beautiful. If you get a chance, come see us and enjoy a little bit of history. Could you please return the photos to me in the self addressed enclosed envelope. Thanks again for any publicity you can give us. A large number of our visitors over the past years have come because of the Bee coverage. We do appreciate it.

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The beautiful, fertile Capay Valley has long been home to orchards--spurred on by the arrival of the railroad--but nothing says the Capay Valley quite like the historic, annual Almond Festival...

--and nothing says Almond Festival quite like the crowning of the Festival Queen.



1984 Almond Festival Queen-Carole Rominger



THE MOMENT ARRIVES — Queen Glorie officially becomes the reigning sovereign of the Capay Valley Almond Festival as the retiring queen, Shirley Lloyd, crowns her successor. From left are Miss Lloyd, Queen Glorie Lewis and Princess Dawn Lehman.



Vol 6



Weather Will
Not Halt Capay
Almond Festival

ESPARTO, Yolo Co. — Rain or shine the annual Capay Valley Almond Blossom Festival will go off on schedule Sunday, beginning with a brunch and



Beginning on September 4, 1915, the greater Capay Valley began celebrating itself with the Almond Festival. On and off from time to time, it came back with a bang in 1965. After one 22-year hiatus, beginning during WWII in 1943, the Esparto District Chamber of Commerce voted to "reactivate" the celebration in 1964, but due to severe weather conditions, postponed the grand rebirth until February 1965--its 50th Birthday! Originally a fall festival, celebrating harvest, the chamber decided that the spring blossoms were the real draw for the valley, so the festival was moved to late February. In later years it was moved again to mid-March, due to a series of heavy rain years and late blossoms.

At various times, the festival either began in the small town of Madison on Highway 16 or Esparto, and went up the Capay Valley to either Guinda or Rumsey. Today, the 22-mile route begins in Esparto [since Madison no longer displays the traditional car show (which has been held in Esparto for years) but the Madison Fire Department is still the host] and ends in Rumsey--for ribs, music, and crafts!!



INVITATION

The Esparto District Chamber of Commerce cordially invites you and your family to attend the first revival of the old Capay Almond Festival held over 40 years ago. In those days families and friends of the valley came from miles around to enjoy the beautiful scenery and the scent of almond blossoms in the air. At no time of the year are the hills greener or the trees as pink as they are right now during almond season. Everyone in the Capay valley is proud of their land and the product it produces, they are proud of the fertile green valley bordered on either side with majestic green hills, it is because of this pride that they extend this invitation to you to join them this coming Sunday, February 21st.

—Highlights From Capay Valley's First Almond Festival—



FIRST FESTIVAL — This was the scene in Esparto September 4, 1915, at the first almond festival held in the Capay valley. We don't know who was riding in the auto shown above, but we do know that it must have been a grand thrill. Autos were the latest thing, almost, in 1915. The

Esparto district chamber of commerce is attempting to revive the festival and develop interest in the beauty of the valley especially at this time of the year with its almond trees bursting with pink-white flowers.



THE TOWN BAND — The town band of Esparto is shown as it lined up prior to the big parade through the town which began festivities at the first almond festival day September 4, 1915. Tomorrow's festival in Esparto and up the valley to Guinda will be smaller but the district chamber of commerce hopes that the festival will become a solid, annual event and will become a day to which everyone for miles around will look forward.

Festivities begin with the traditional pancake breakfast in Esparto, and the park and town are transformed with festivities--but if you haven't been up to the far reaches of the valley, you haven't tasted the famous Ribs at the Rumsey Hall nor danced to their live music. And you have probably missed the crowning of the Almond Queen (Most often at the Guinda Grange Hall) the day before, and have most certainly missed their intriguing blacksmith demonstration--and Shelford Wyatt's Grandmother's special recipe for "Grammy Wyatt's Almond Roca" featured at the Grange Hall. Shelford Wyatt, some of you may ask? Well, a descendant of a local pioneer family, Shelford was voted the first "Most Perfect Baby" in the first-ever Almond Festival in 1915--and 50 years later was instrumental in getting the festival reactivated in 1965. [NOTE: It was his grocery store at the northwest corner of Esparto at the dog-leg in Highway 16 en route to Capay Valley that was recently demolished. Many of us remember buying penny candy there on an open tab carried by our parents, and walking from store to store on the squeaky old wooden floors of that mercantile--groceries, hardware, 5-n10, etc.] **NOTE: Festival 2012 will be March 11!!! Don't miss it!!**



Photo at Right: 1965 Almond Queen, Shirley Lloyd, surrounded by, left to right: 1964 Yolo County Sugar Queen Lana Parker; 1930 Almond Queen Helen McCants; 1964 Almond Queen Lani Burris; and Princess Pat Johnson.



I was a bit confused about why the Esparto Chamber of Commerce tried to “reactivate” the Almond Festival in 1964, but didn’t actually do it until 1965,

so I asked several participants from that era. Many claim to have little memory of the details, but then I got lucky when I contacted Lani Burris (now Yukimura, living for many years in Hawaii), who had this to say:

*I was the first Almond Princess since Mrs. Helen McCants [1930 Almond Queen] was crowned (not sure that was accurate, but it is what I was told). I understood that the Almond Growers Exchange (something like that) wanted a princess so they did what was easiest and said the homecoming queen would be the almond princess. I was "crowned" at the high school barn dance in the social hall by A.D. Keisler. They did plan a festival, but, yes, the weather was too rainy, so instead they had a Hootenanny in the high school gym. I was introduced as the almond princess, and sang with my buddies Lana Parker, Mary Hayes and Suellen Hess (we had sung together since the 6th grade), and there was some other entertainment by some guys from Woodland, and the master of ceremony was **Gus the Gopher** from a radio station in Sacramento that was popular at the time. I have pictures of the hootenanny that someone gave me and shows the bleachers in the gym filled with townspeople. I remember everyone was encouraged to take a drive up the valley and see the almond blossoms, so that was it for 1964...And in response to a photo I sent her of the 1965 ceremony she wrote, I have that photo of Shirley being crowned, and I remember attending the breakfast with Lana and crowning Shirley at the VFW Hall--I think that's where it was; we had breakfast there...I think the chamber of commerce may have been involved in 1964 because Marty Wyatt [Shelford Wyatt's wife] was the one helping with the tabloid story. She had me pose for this picture for the cover in the Parker orchard next to the high school parking lot, and wanted a lot of blossoms around my face, so I was kinda stuck in this tree, and she had me hold a branch she snapped off from another tree, so more blossoms would be around my face--and you can see in the picture that it was not part of the tree...thought it was funny, but oh well...I know the Almond Festival has really "blossomed" since then, and feel honored to have been a part of its revival.*

And she is right, Mr. Keisler was present at the barn dance to crown her in 1964--he was the president of the Esparto District Chamber of Commerce that year and instrumental in reactivating the festival. In those days, according to long-time-local, Don Warren, who was very much involved in the festivals and Esparto chamber at the time, the small towns had district chambers, but were all under the umbrella of the Yolo County Chamber of Commerce, meeting regularly with other chamber representatives and county supervisors, et al. In 1965, when Lani crowned Shirley Lloyd Almond Queen in the first “new” almond festival, many of the different chamber presidents and county supervisors were present, all interested in seeing this festival revived--one of the few things they all could agree on, according to Mr. Warren!

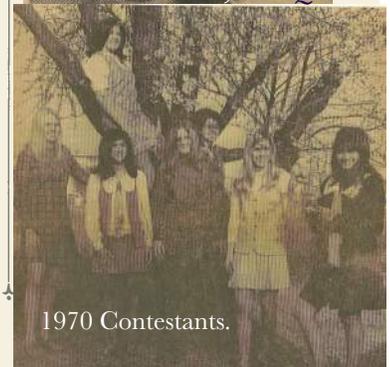
In 1970, the Chamber took over the Queen Pageant and the EHS Homecoming Queen and her court were no longer automatically reigning over the Almond Festival. Candidates would now be sponsored by various businesses and organizations--a clever move for a chamber of commerce, no doubt! Though frequently held at the Guinda Grange Hall, that year the crowning ceremony was held at the Rumsey Hall, sponsored by the *Rumsey Improvement Club* [now *Association*], after a traditional grand car caravan up the valley with candidates and their escorts.

Esparto Regional Chamber of Commerce, the official name today, began as a *district* chamber among many within Yolo County. Having promoted the “annual” [though not held consecutively since 1915] Almond Festival to draw attention to the Capay Valley and its agriculture, ERCC today sees itself as representative of the whole “region,” not just Esparto. In that way, it tries to embrace the whole “greater Capay Valley region”--and sees the annual Almond Festival as one perfect way to do so. Festivities begin in the town of Esparto, but everyone is encouraged to take the traditional and beautiful drive up to the valley towns of Capay, Brooks, Guinda and Rumsey and stop to enjoy the music, food, crafts, and entertainment all along the way. For more Info, go to:

espartoregionalchamber.com or almondfestival.com



Antoinette Perez, 1968 Queen



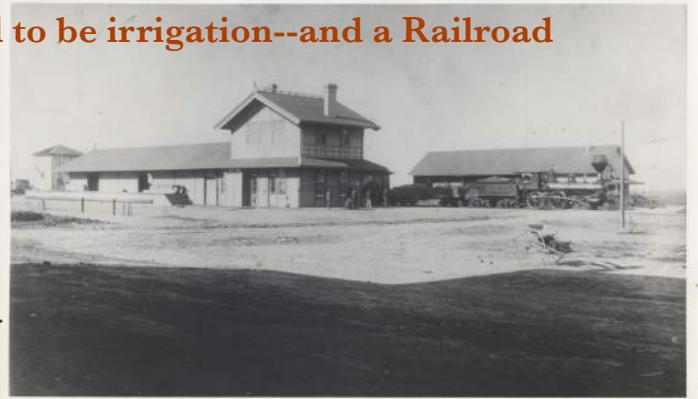
1970 Contestants.



But there would be no festival without the Almonds!

And for orchards to succeed, there needed to be irrigation--and a Railroad

In 1887 several San Francisco investors incorporated the Capay Valley Land Company, composed mainly of officers of the Southern Pacific Railroad. The company planned to divide several large land holdings into 10- to 40-acre parcels for fruit and nut farming and to establish town sites along the length of the coming railroad. That same year local farmers formed the Rumsey Ditch Association to build and operate an eight-mile irrigation canal (later shortened) from Cache Creek above Rumsey to the vicinity of Guinda. In 1888 the new town of Esperanza [renamed in 1890 *Esparto*, after a native bunch grass] was laid out, and railroad track was laid up to Rumsey (named for a local landowner) at the north end of the valley. By the time the first passenger train was running, Guinda had a house for the section supervisor and a bunkhouse for workers, and postmasters were appointed at Guinda [the Spanish word for the wild cherry trees], Rumsey and Langville [later renamed *Capay*].

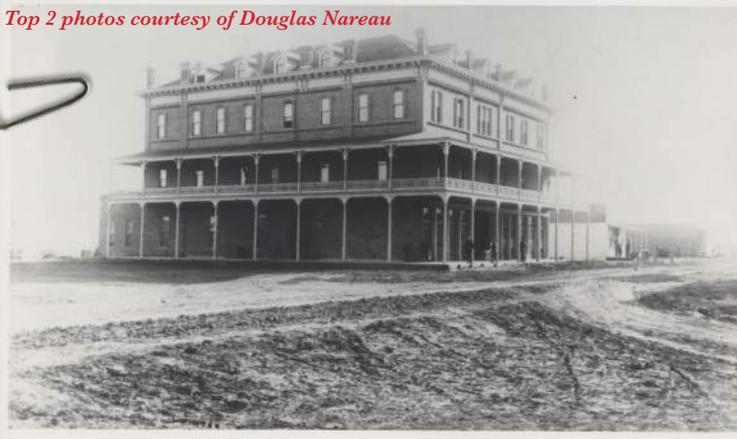


Typical and unique in the Capay Valley is the cooperative support the farms lend one another. A good example: Capay Valley Grown is a logo-label shared by 25-30 local farms in support of one another and the area.

“Capay Valley Grown is a partnership of farmers and ranchers who are all committed to growing the very freshest and tastiest of foods. Capay Valley Grown products, many certified organic, offer the delicious flavor that comes only from locally grown food. By dedicating themselves to sustainable production of cherished land, these farmers and ranchers have also dedicated themselves to your long-term satisfaction.” this quote is from their website at:

capayvalleygrown.com

Top 2 photos courtesy of Douglas Nareau



In 1889 the three-story hotel seen at left was completed in Esparto, featuring gas lights, a pressurized water system, and electric bells. A grand building difficult to imagine in the Esparto of today--a sleepy village in the process of a comeback!

Above: *Esparto Hotel*; the hotel was damaged in the 1892 earthquake but repaired; after a succession of owners, the grand building was sadly torn down in 1935.

Top Right: *Esparto Train Depot and engine*. Right: *Capay Valley Almond Orchards*. (Courtesy of Martin Armstrong)



PAGE 2—VALLEY TRIBUNE—THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1995

Yolo native recalls winning baby race

By Steve Archer
Tribune Editor

Although Shelford Wyatt was only six months old when the first Almond Festival was held, he still walked – or crawled – away a winner.

"I won the baby contest," Wyatt told the Valley Tribune. "The first festival was quite an affair and mother was very active."

Wyatt's mother also had a recipe for almond rocha which caused quite a stir at the time.

"We used Grammy Wyatt's almond rocha recipe at a General Electric display at the county fair one year, demonstrating stoves," Wyatt recalled. "They didn't sell many appliances but people would wait an hour to get a batch."

The secret to making exceptional almond rocha – and the key difference to peanut brittle – is using raw almonds instead of toasted.

"If you make almond rocha properly the oils from the raw almonds will escape – under the heat – into the sugar mix so the candy has a toasted almond flavor throughout," Wyatt said. "If you make it at a festival or county fair the aroma will bring people running."

"I think the almond industry is missing the boat by not taking advantage of the almond smell and promoting almond rocha," Wyatt continued. "I feel it could be very lucrative franchise."

A tourist attraction for almond rocha – like Ghiradelli Square for chocolate – would foster the smell of almonds toasting and introduce more people to the confection, Wyatt suggested.

According to Wyatt the festival was originally held in Capay but after World War II Esparto became the nucleus for the valley-wide event.

"I don't believe the festival was continuous from 1915," said Wyatt, "but after the war it was a regular event."

Wyatt's father operated a general store in Esparto which –

though the building is not in use – still bears the family name.

"I got acquainted with the valley as a teenager running a grocery truck from Esparto to Rumsey," Wyatt said.

Since the days of his youth Wyatt has seen the almond – and human – population decrease.

"The economics of the valley have changed considerably," Wyatt said. "There are more row crops, alfalfa and walnuts and less almonds."

"There hasn't been any significant population increase either," said Wyatt. "I think the population is less than it was 50 years ago."

According to Wyatt, almonds may now account for less than 25 per cent of the valley acreage, while almonds may have made up to as much as 50 per cent of the acreage 50 years ago.

"There probably won't be much more reduction in almond acreage because most people who could convert already have," Wyatt continued.

Wyatt said some have switched to walnuts because walnuts bloom later, are less susceptible to frost and yield more tonnage, although they need more water.

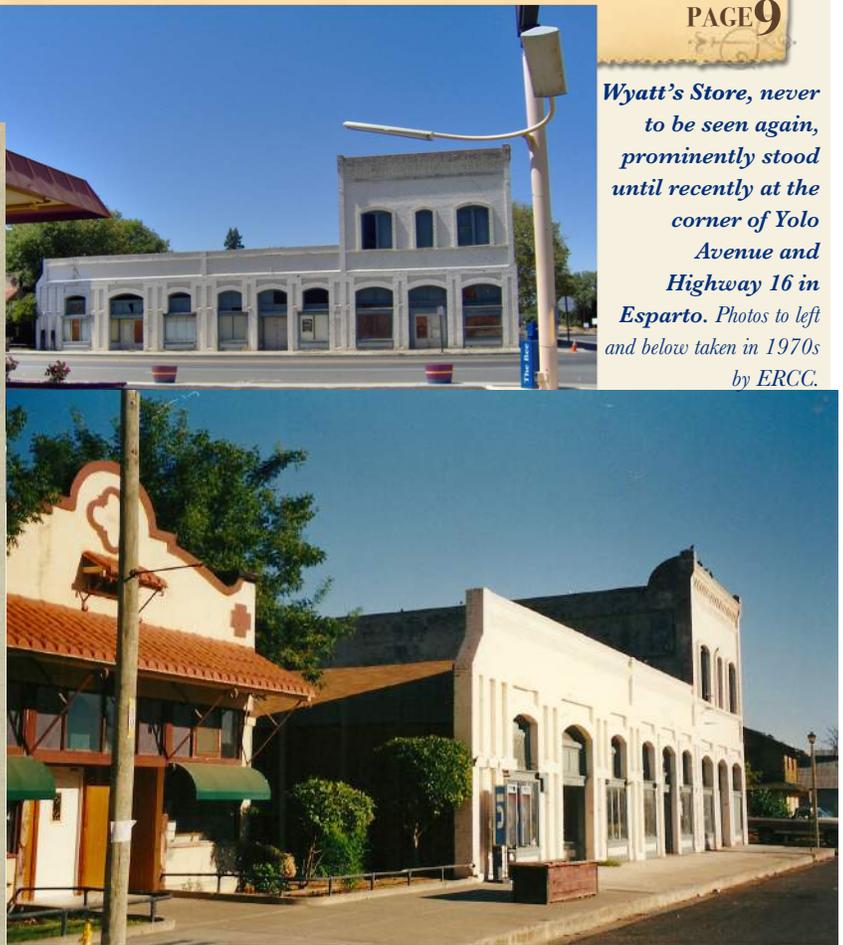
However, Rumsey and the area around county road 79 are still ideal for almonds.

"Rumsey is mostly a frost-free area," said Wyatt. "There are even some citrus growers at the head of the canyon."

Although there are many types of almonds, the most popular, says Wyatt, is the Nonpareil. The Nonpareil is favored over other types because of its thin shell, large meat and excellent flavor.

Wyatt said one variety that looked like it would be successful is the Jordan almond. But, after 10 years, the tree, "goes crazy on top."

"The trees start branching out non-productive shoots, like someone's crazy hairdo," Wyatt said. "There's nothing you can do when that happens."



Wyatt's Store, never to be seen again, prominently stood until recently at the corner of Yolo Avenue and Highway 16 in Esparto. Photos to left and below taken in 1970s by ERCC.

Fred and Roy Wyatt bought the building in 1915 [the same year as the first Almond Festival!] and it became known for many decades as the "Wyatt Building." Originally, Wolf Levy and Sam Schwab, successful Capay merchants, opened the building in 1889, just after the Railroad arrived in Esparto. Sitting across from the impressive 3-story hotel and across from the new train depot, all three were built as inducements to get settlers to Esparto. The Esparto General Store, an office, a meeting room, a hardware and a dry goods store filled the building for many decades. Sold by Shelford Wyatt in the 1970s, groceries were sold until the early 1980s and Giz and Alice Garrison ran what had been the Hastings hardware store from 1982 until 1996--by which time the building was in grave dis-repair.

Esparto's new Pacific ACE Hardware store is across the street in the newly remodeled IOOF building, which for decades housed the popular local "hub," Lindberg's Bar downstairs, and on the second floor a springy wooden dance floor. Anyone have pictures/stories of Lindberg's to share?



530-787-3800 in Esparto

As seen in the 1995 Tribune article above, the Wyatt family was long involved in almonds in the area--growing them and making Grammy Wyatt's Almond Rocha, and helping promote them with our long-lived Almond Festival!

Bees!!

--without them, no almonds!



I hadn't meant for this issue to be all about the birds and the bees, but sometimes life is just like that--and without "the birds-n-the-bees" there would be no "life," so there you have it! Knowing I was to write about the Almond Festival and almond crops in the Capay Valley, I bought a book by Susan Brackney, *Plan Bee, Everything you Ever Wanted to Know About the Hardest-Working Creatures on the Planet*, and became even more fascinated than I already was. Then I visited several websites--including good ol' Wikipedia. First, from one of our local beekeepers, John Foster's B-Z Bee site, here's the scoop!

History and Health Benefits of Honey

Honey is mankind's oldest sweetener. Honey is manufactured in nature's most efficient factory - the beehive. Bees make honey from the nectar of flowers and they will travel as far as 40,000 miles and visit over 2 million flowers to produce one pound of honey.

Honey has been found in the tombs of ancient Egyptian Pharos and man harvesting honey is painted on the wall of caves by pre-historic man.

Honeybees have been in Europe and Asia for hundreds of thousands of years. It was not until the late 1600's that the bee was brought to this country by Europeans. Native Americans called the honey bee "White man's flies." Approximately one half of the human diet is derived directly or indirectly from crops pollinated by bees. Today honeybees are an essential part of a healthy agriculture economy.

Have hayfever or allergy problems? Many individuals eat honey to build tolerances to pollen.

*Find out more about the **Health Benefits of Honey** by visiting bz-bee.com or emailing john at: johnfoster@bz-bee.com or calling: (530) 787-3044*

Want to visit the warehouse? It is at the Historic Oakdale Ranch at 17720 Oakdale Ranch Lane. Call for a visit!

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P.O. Box 699

Esparto, CA 95627

www.everythingabout.net/articles/biology/animals/arthropods/insects/bees/ carried the picture at bottom of a food-gathering yellow honey bee by: Larry Crowhurst / Oxford Scientific Films.

And from *The Economist* on-line, May 4, 2010, at www.economist.com/node/15612155 I got the cookie dough-fattened bee at the top left.

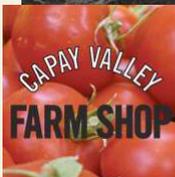
Also used was:

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bee

More information from all sites on next page.



*There are 11 families of bees, many of them native to California, but not the familiar “honey bee.” Since “honey bees” are not native to the US, why not just depend upon our many native pollinators? Well, as Wikipedia points out, while [our native] bumblebees have been found to be about ten times more efficient pollinators...the total efficiency of a colony of honey bees is much greater due to greater numbers. Likewise, during early spring orchard blossoms, bumblebee populations are limited to only a few queens, and thus are not significant pollinators of early fruit. And as **The Economist** points out, more than 80% of the world’s almonds are grown in California and, to pollinate them, the 7,000 or so growers hire about 1.4m of America’s 2.3m commercial hives. Thousands of trucks deliver the hives in February—from Maine, Florida, the Carolinas and elsewhere—and will soon pick them up again. The bees’ job is to flit from one blossom to the next, gorging themselves and in the process spreading the trees’ sexual dust. Farmers growing fruit trees, sunflowers, almonds (unlike many other nut trees, such as walnuts) and other crops needing pollination, now pay about \$150 to rent a hive, needing 1-2 hives per acre for almonds. The cost has increased drastically since 2006 due, primarily, to “colony collapse disorder” (CCD), a mysterious affliction that has drastically reduced their numbers, per *The Economist* article. Farmers, bee-men and scientists have speculated on many causes, including mobile-telephone radiation, viruses, fungi, mites and pesticides—or none of the above. In the absence of a clear explanation, one scientist, a Dr. Gordon Wardell, with a PhD in entomology, therefore a sort of bee doctor, is concentrating on something different: nutrition. He is force-feeding them protein. He owns a patent for MegaBee, which he says “looks like cookie dough.” He puts a bit of this into the hives, blocking the bees’ entrance so that they have to chomp their way through it.*



The creative “Bee gate” on John Foster’s front drive in Lamb Valley.



Bees make up a superfamily known as the Apoidea. Of the 11 families of bees, the Apidae include our most familiar bees, the honey bees and their close relatives: four tribes including orchid, bumble, stingless and honey bees. They make intricate nests and live in complex societies. Their pollen-carrying structure is a smooth, bristle-surrounded area on one segment of the hind leg, known as a pollen basket, or corbicula. According to Susan Brackney, bees are of the genus *Apis*, Latin for “bee,” and honey bees are commonly known as *Apis mellifera*, which translates to “honey-bearing bee.” The first bees brought from Europe were the German bees, but later Italian bees became much more popular, due to their mellower disposition--I will avoid the temptation to stereo-type here! Less aggressive and likely to sting, they are much favored to this day. John Foster specializes in providing Italian Queens to his clients, for instance.

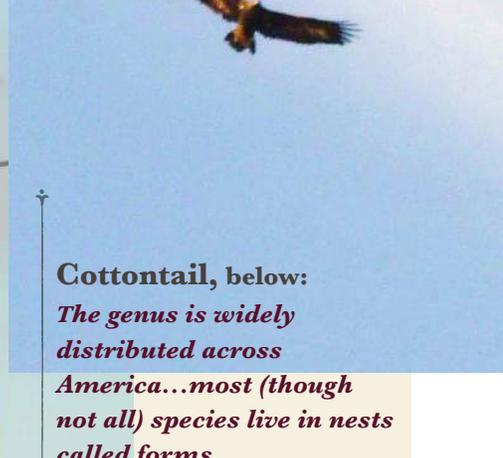
Honey bees come in three “types”: Queen, worker, drone--the latter are the only males and live only to mate with the queen...and then quickly die! Worker bees go from egg to adult in 21 days; drones 24 days; queens only 16 days. What a larvae will become is determined by the food they receive from the nurse-worker bees: a pure Royal Jelly diet for the queen, of course. Worker bees live from 30 to 140 days, depending upon whether they are bred to over-winter or just for summer work. Short and sweet!

info@capayvalleyfarmshop.com •

530.383.9022

THIS JUST IN: Red-tail Hawks and Golden Eagles!!

Below, 3 photos from center to right are “a couple of Golden Eagles! We usually have them as a Winter visitor, but this time there were two of them on succeeding poles just north of Esparto on Road 87,” stated an excited amateur ornithologist of Hungry Hollow, Jim Hiatt, who shared these pictures, taken December 19, 2011. “These are half again bigger than our more common Red-Tailed Hawk [see his December 2011 picture seen at left]; are the size of a hen turkey and have a wingspan of 6-7 feet; weighing 6-13lbs. As seen in flight, below, they have a light triangular area at the rump which helps distinguish them from other eagles.” Nesting: They have one brood of 1-3 eggs in nests made of piles of sticks and vegetation on cliffs, in trees, and man-made structures during April-August. “They are at the top of the food chain, avian-wise, and live for 20-39 years!”

**Cottontail, below:**

The genus is widely distributed across

America...most (though not all) species live in nests called forms.

Hares and jackrabbits, below left:

Are leporids belonging to the genus Lepus.

Considered by farmers to be “pests,” they offer enjoyment and entertainment to those of us content to watch their antics--but a meal to the majestic hawks and eagles!

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>

And what are these birds-of-prey looking for? Well, in this area, it would likely be jackrabbits or cottontails--the local farm fields are full of them!

“All rabbits (except the cottontail rabbits) live underground in burrows or warrens, while hares and cottontail rabbits live in simple nests above the ground, and usually do not live in groups,” according to Wikipedia. Hares and Cottontails “are adapted to the lack of physical protection, relative to that afforded by a burrow, by being born fully furred and with eyes open...hence able to fend for themselves soon after birth; they are **precocial**. By contrast, the related rabbits are **altricial**, having young that are born blind and hairless.”

When driving home on County Road 86 at night, just beside Durst Organic Farms, I have to slow and dodge many cute, little cottontail rabbits. Farther down the road, in front of my house, I am dodging jackrabbits--just like the many I knew growing up out here in the 1950-70s!!





When not coaxing hungry and desperate vagrant protesters to “move on,” peacefully, a wild west sheriff was often involved in gun battles, robberies, and escorting dangerous criminals to federal prisons, like San Quentin. Having had to shoot just such a “desperado,” one Joe Howard, who refused to go peacefully back to prison, the sheriff’s attention was drawn to a series of petty robberies and acts of revenge...

Plainfield Trap

Howard’s wild criminal life had not drawn to its close before a new series of petty robberies began throughout Yolo County. Howard obviously could not be responsible, he was put away in prison.

In September of 1912, Purinton’s store in Plainfield, southwest of Woodland, was looted. The thieves made a clean getaway. I went out and had a talk with Jim Purinton.

Local Color: Sheriff “Sunny Jim” Monroe

Continuing excerpts from the Memoir of James William Monroe, Sheriff of Yolo County from 1911 until 1939 on the 100-year anniversary of his becoming sheriff for 28 years.

“Be on the lookout for a return visit,” I warned. “A robber who has made his getaway will return to the scene, expecting an easy job the second time.”

Jim promised to be watchful. He repeated my words to his mother and his sister...brave women and as able as men in a crisis.

So, when the bandits--there were three of them--made a second visit to the Purinton store, their intended victims were ready for them.

Grim Battle

There was a running fight and then the burglars were tracked to an empty cabin in Plainfield. Jim, his mother and his sister crept around the place and surrounded it. They concealed themselves as well as they could, and began to fire. That little family surely filled that cabin full of holes, all right enough!

Summoned to the scene of action, I arrived to provide reinforcements. With all of us peppering away at once, we sounded like a little battery, I guess.

But the concealed men gave no indication of their presence. I had expected them to fire back, and was

puzzled when they did not. “Sure they’re in there?” I asked Purinton.

“Dead sure,” he replied, tightlipped. So we fired on.

“Surrender, and we’ll hold our fire!” I called at last, when our guns were smoking.

Scared Stiff

There was a short silence. “They’ve escaped, somehow,” Purinton said in a discouraged voice.

But he was wrong. The men were still there...and scared silly. They walked out as meek as sheep, their hands in the air. They had not fired a shot to defend themselves.

Two of them, Fred Anderson and Charles Johnson, were ex-convicts. They each got 30 years. Their companion, Fred Weinberg, a sailor, was let off with five.

Obviously, sometimes the events were almost comical, though dangerous. At other times, they were more tragic...

Herbert Fitzgibbons was one of Yolo County’s “bad men.” He wasn’t courageous. I’ve even accused him of being yellow, but he was a dangerous enemy.

Sheriff James Monroe, continued

When I heard rumors that the W. A. Lillard family, who resided on a ranch between Winters and Davis, had wisely taken a hand in breaking up an affair between Fitzgibbons and a girl employed on the Lillard ranch, I had an idea that maybe the Lillards had steered straight for trouble.

It wasn't one of those crimes you can prevent. Because no one knew when and how Fitzgibbons would strike. And at the time I had nothing definite I could hang on him.

Sought Revenge

One night, Fitzgibbons and four friends were whooping it up all right enough to celebrate the birthday of Jimmy Davis, one of the outfit. Davis was only 21, but he had a criminal record and he was a "tough guy."

Fitzgibbons began his old chant against the Lillards. "I'll get even with them some day. She was the nicest girl I ever knew."

"Oh, come off." Jimmy Davis pulled his cynical young mouth into an ugly sneer. "Why don't you get even if you're mad?"

In a few minutes the five had the whole thing planned. An attack on the Lillard home...that would avenge Fitzgibbons. And robbery...that would make it worthwhile.



The companions stole a car and drove to the Lillard ranch, arriving there just on the stroke of midnight.

Yellow Streak Shows

I already have said Fitzgibbons was yellow. He stayed in the car with Jimmy Davis and sent the other three, John Franks, John O'Connor and Ed Brock, into the Lillard home. Only one of the trio was masked.

Mr. and Mrs. Lillard and their son, Tom, were herded together in one room. Tom was a warm blooded youngster, and he was not afraid of a fight. So the bandits roped him up with neckties and flung him on the floor.

Mrs. Lillard moved towards her son, but one of the bandits brutally shoved her into the bathroom. Her protesting husband was locked securely in a clothes closet.

Then the trio looted the house, stealing watches, some valuable pearls and \$20 in money. Leaving the Lillard family bound and locked up, the marauders drove rapidly away.

Tom Lillard worked desperately at his slender bonds. Pretty soon they began to give a little, and then he was free.

He called Constable Joe Huberty at Davis, explained the situation, and then hurried to help his parents, who were beginning to call impatiently for assistance.

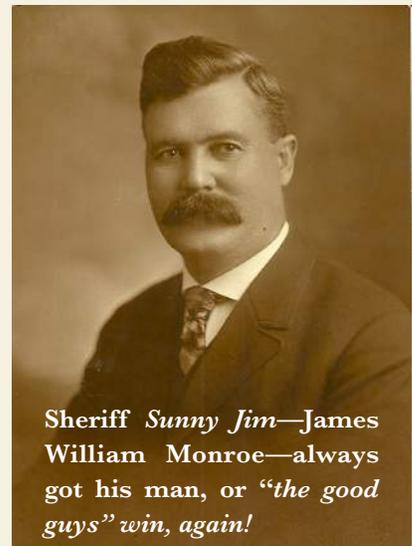
**Tragedy Stops Flight**

In the meantime, the five bandits were pushing their stolen car at top speed. They flew through the town of Dixon. Constable Clay Grove was on the watch for them and tried to intercept them.

That pace was deadly. The driver of the car tried to dodge the officers. He swung heavily on the steering wheel. The tires screamed against the pavement. The car reeled drunkenly for a few seconds...then crashed to its side.

Davis Was Crushed Underneath. He was through with life on the night he became of age.

The other men, all badly injured, were brought by Officer Grove to the Woodland clinic. Fitzgibbons, Franks, and O'Connor were jailed. Brock remained in the clinic with a broken pelvis and Franks later joined him there when he was discovered to be suffering a ruptured bowel. All went to prison.



Sheriff Sunny Jim—James William Monroe—always got his man, or "the good guys" win, again!



We have a unique and extensive history of African-American settlers in the Capay Valley area, especially in the valley town of Guinda. Celebrating this history, each second Saturday of February, the valley hosts Black History Day at the Guinda Grange Hall at 11AM. February 11th this year will celebrate not only the local settlers, but also the African-American experience, overall.

Most of you may know that since 1976 February is Black History Month, an observance of the history of the African diaspora in a number of countries outside of Africa. Observed annually in the US

and Canada in February, it is also observed in the UK, but in October. In the US, Black History Month is also referred to as African-American History Month--and while it is not without controversy, mostly about whether a country ought to observe a month devoted to one race, it is an opportunity to focus on a history that weaves itself throughout our entire American experience, so we "historians" and teachers welcome the focus.

According to Wikipedia, "Black History Month was begun as Negro History Week by historian Carter G. Woodson in 1926. His goal was to educate the American people about African-American History, focusing on African-Americans' cultural backgrounds and reputable achievements." In that same vein, I want to "educate" the readers in the same way--but focus on our own rich local history.

As seen in this newspaper clipping, the Hayes family settled in the Guinda area along with many African-American families and felt themselves "above racism"--a point they celebrate to this day in the Capay Valley.

PARADISE FOUND



Alfred Hayes holds a muzzle-loading shotgun that his father, Roy Hayes, bought in 1895. The Hayes family and a black family headed by Green Berry Logan were homesteaders and good friends in Guinda in the late 1800s. The Charles Simpson family (inset) arrived in Guinda about the same time.

Story by
GREG TROTT

High in Guinda, homesteaders were above racism

The dirt road wound like a coil through the Guinda Hills above the Capay Valley. On a wet day, a four-wheel drive vehicle would have a go of it on this dirt path.

Luckily, the day was dry and gorgeous. "Just a little farther," said Bill Petty, 77, the guide. A little farther means about five miles by Guinda measurement. Driving through gates, pastures, washouts and nudging confused cows aside, five miles seemed more like 500.

Finally, the truck rolled to a stop on a grassy point overlooking the Capay Valley. It was a view worth the drive. Cache Creek flowed down below, intersecting almond and walnut orchards. The roofs of farmhouses sat like dice that had been rolled on the green of the valley floor. Is this heaven?

"Here it is," said Petty, getting out of the SUV and walking to a small, wire-fenced area.

It wasn't much. Inside the fencing were a few headstones and rocks. Nothing else. This was all that was left of a small community that thrived just a 100 years ago. This little piece of loneliness was called The Summit by some and a more derogatory name by others. That name included a racial slur indicating that it was a "heaven" for blacks.

Why? Good question. Ask around and you'll get different answers. Some thought it was called that because of this small cemetery where black

homesteaders were buried; others suggest that it was what movie theater balconies were called back when blacks were not allowed to sit on the main floor.

Petty knows different. Petty is black. His relatives grew up in these hills perched above the tiny town of Guinda. His explanation of the now-derogatory name? "It's because they lived so good up here."

"They" are black families who moved to the hills above the Capay Valley in the 1890s to homestead. Green Berry Logan, who is buried in the small cemetery, was the first and most prominent black homesteader to arrive. He brought his family from Dunningan. There was musician/barber Charles Simpson who moved here with his wife and daughter. There were other black families, too. Like the Hacketts, related to Petty by marriage, the Hemphill clan and the Longfus family.

They found the Guinda hills, at 1,200 feet, to be nirvana—a place where they could escape from oppression, own some land and make some money. These weren't urban dwellers. They came from the farmlands of Missouri and North Carolina. Their parents had been slaves. Logan, for instance, had a white father and black mother.

They were seeking paradise, and found it in this remote corner of Yolo County. Yet it wasn't just black families in these hills attempting to eke out a living in land ■ See Paradise, Page EF



William Petty, above, and Clarence Van Hook, below, are instrumental in keeping the Black History alive in the Capay Valley.



Above, Clarence Van Hook plays at a celebration of his good friend Al Hayes at Al's 90th Birthday, May, 2010, seen below with family and cake.





Many African American Families Homestead on a Heavenly Summit 1,200 feet Above Guinda, Beginning in the 1890s.



The first African-American settler to homestead in the Guinda area was Green Berry Logan, [seen in photo to left] moving his family from the Dunnigan area in the 1890s. Green Berry is buried in the Logan Cemetery up on the “summit,” a heavenly 1,200 feet above Guinda, which was at one time home to about 100 settlers. Once the private *Logan Cemetery*, it is now located on property left by Green Berry to the Hayes family, who keep its access open for descendants to visit.

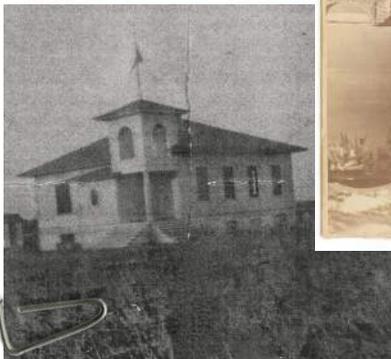
As covered in prior issues, the settlers built their own school [seen at lower left], but eventually joined the other local students in the Guinda School after 1912. Following after Mr. Logan was a barber/musician, Charles Simpson, who moved to the summit with his wife and daughter. There followed other Black families, among them were the Hemphills, Longrus and Hacketts, related to local historian Bill Petty’s family by marriage. And just like so many other families in the valley, there were several marriages between clans, as seen to the left with Harriet Emily (Logan) Simpson [later Hickerson]: “Hattie” was Green Berry’s niece, who married Charles Simpson and started a family. [After Simpson’s death in 1912, Hattie married Maryland Hickerson.]



The second African-American homesteader to settle in the area was Charles Henry Simpson, seen at left, and buried in the Logan Cemetery. As covered in volume 1 of this journal, he is responsible for the “Simpson Grade,” still kept graded and useable today by the Hayes family.

These delightful pictures and much of the history is courtesy of Jeannette Molson, descendant of the Logan family. Her grandfather, Alvin Alfred Logan, Sr., was born to Green Berry and his first wife, Lavinia Coffey, along with Green Berry, Jr--known as “Green.” Only one of the nine children born to Green Berry’s second wife, Mary Ann Dix, a part-Wintun Indian, married and had a family.

Jeannette also enlightened me about other families down in the valley: “The Browns and Watkins families had homes in Brooks and right outside of Guinda, down the road from where my grandparents lived. Carmen



African-American History of the Greater Capay Valley, continued on page 17

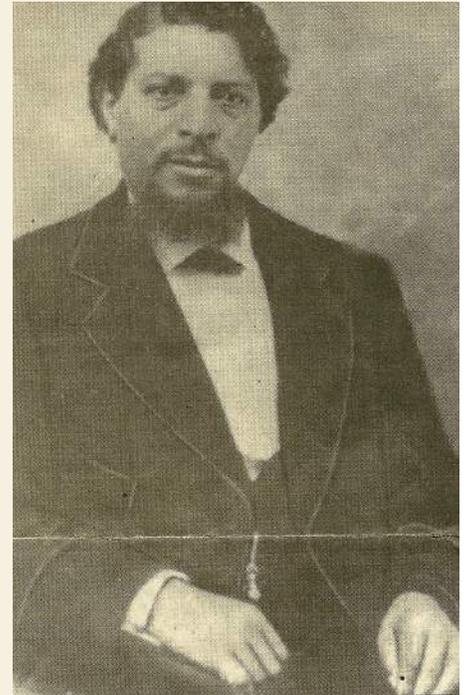
African-American History of the Greater Capay Valley, continued from page 16

McClellan had a business in Guinda, and my cousin, Charles Simpson, grandson of Charles Henry Simpson, had a beautiful home right outside of Guinda. It was called, 'La Hacienda de Guinda'. The Watkins and brown families lived in the area for many years--just ask the local folks about Walter Brown and Dave Watkins."

Among other topics, Jeannette and I discussed the appropriate way to refer to *People or Families of African Descent*--her personal favorite. I have moved between Jeannette's preferred term and *Black* and *African-American*, as it seemed appropriate to the writing--partly because many were not of pure African descent (Green Berry Logan being a perfect example, whose father was "white") and partly because it is always troubling to me to refer to a person by a skin color. If I have learned nothing else in my last year of genealogy and history research, *nothing is simple* and pure when it comes to our blood lines! One of my great discoveries has been my family's possible relationship to Basil Campbell, "largest Black landowner in Yolo County" at one time. Most do not know his lineage, but might know he came to California as a slave to the John D. Stephens family. But as his last name implies, his roots lead back to a family named Campbell in Coopers County, Missouri--*my* family! Who his white father was I couldn't say for sure, but he was born to a mother owned by James D. Campbell, neighbor to one of the other two original white settlers of Coopers County, the Stephens family--to whom he was sold as a young age. More on Basil later, but my point is, when you begin the search you never know what you will find--and labeling a person by a single "color" or race is simply *not simple*. Nor accurate!

Basil Campbell, landowner...coming to California with John D. Stephens in 1854, Basil and JD had an agreement that he would "work his way to freedom" within ten years. By 1861 he renegotiated and bought his freedom at \$700 for his remaining 3 years. During his 7 years, JD had been helping Baaz invest his money and he was worth about \$10,000.

In 1884, his total wealth was estimated at \$100,000...2000 acres of tilled land and 280 acres of untilled land, valued at \$51000, \$3100 in livestock as well as 66 acres of hay, 12 horses, 3 mules, 1100 sheep, 80 hogs; acres of wheat and barley and numerous commodities.



Basil "Baaz" Campbell

Courtesy of Yolo County Archive

Speaking of nothing being simple: some in the Stephens family claim this commonly accepted picture of Basil, above, is actually his brother; and no one but I seems to feel the man standing in the middle of the Stephens harvest picture, below, in hat and vest is a visiting family friend, Basil Campbell--Any ideas out there??



CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

BASIL CAMPBELL CONTINUED:

At a time when almost all Afro-Americans of economic prominence made their gains through mining, mining-related business or business enterprises, Campbell made his advancement through agriculture(3)."

Cited from:

1-San Francisco Examiner, 11-29-1884

2-US Census for 1880, Products of Agriculture in Yolo county

3-Delilah L. Beasley, The Negro Trail Blazers of California (LA, CA., 1919), 70-71

In 1865 Baaz was elected as delegate to the State Convention of Colored People and became vice-president; and in 1873 he was sent as state delegate to the National Colored Convention in Washington, DC.

By the time of his death he had wealth and respect among people of all colors in Yolo County.

I am grateful to William Petty and Jeannette L. Molson for much of this material and pictures. Jeannette's mother, Addie Mae Logan Molson was a dear friend of my father's and was a delight to know, a woman of great humor, common sense, talents and interests. She sang and played big band piano to make ends meet in college at UC Berkeley. Raised in Capay Valley, she married James T. Molson, who encouraged her to go back to college for her credential at Sac State College. She became the first African American teacher in the North Sacramento School District.

And among the many newspaper clippings I got from Mr. Petty, I would love to mention Benjamin Asa Longrus, who lived in Hannibal, MO, while Samuel Clemens was forming his ideas about slavery and race relations, and who came to California at about 20, settling first in the Winters area, his family having belonged at one time to Briggs and Ely families in that area--and once to Daily Democrat editor Ed E. Leake's family. It was an article in that paper I used to get much information on Basil

Patrick Scribner

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Campbell. And then there is Capay Valley midwife Mary Frances Gaither--but I will do her justice in 2012 when I write about Ol' Doc Craig of Capay, under whom she practiced.

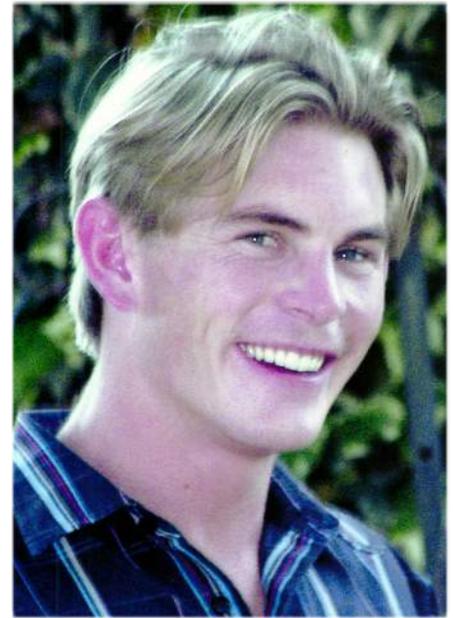


And speaking of local enterprisers: the Hacketts of Guinda were a family I knew fairly well, growing up, but I had never met one of the eldest daughters of Roy Hackett. Her stage name was Shirley Haven and she worked with Eartha Kit; traveled with the Charles Brown band for years; was in the first all-black color movie, "No Time For Romance"; recorded a couple tunes with the Four Jacks; and was part of the first all-black USO tour--and while touring in Korea she adopted Anthony Stanton, giving him her married name, Holiday. she brought him back to Capay Valley to grow up with Roy and Bamma Hackett's kids. The Hacketts had been in the valley since the 1940s and William Petty's sister Iris met and married Roy, Jr., thus blending the Petty and Hackett families. My hat is off to the enterprising spirit of my Capay Valley "neighbors"--like the lovely Shirley Haven who, through her son Anthony, gave me permission to use the great ad photo of her, above!



In the most loving and grateful memory of Alvin and Gayle Hiatt, who began their married lives on May 24, 1947 in this photo at left--and were the most wonderful and loving parents to 3 appreciative sons for nearly 59 of their 63 years, until Mom's passing to Heaven in June of this year. Few have been blessed as much as we three sons with such endless love, sacrifice, and guidance. Until we are all together again THERE! Your sons, Jim, David, and Randy Hiatt.

Gayle Goodnow Hiatt, descended from an early pioneer in the greater Capay Valley, passed away peacefully in June 2011, following her beloved husband, Alvin, by only 7 months. Gayle grew up in Hungry Hollow and attended the Capay School before marrying Alvin, a *Dunnigan boy*, and settling with him in Woodland. There they raised three boys, all of whom spent a great part of their lives visiting the old ranch in *Hungry Hollow*--named so by Great Grandpa John Phineas Goodnow, a pioneer of the Sacramento Valley, and beginning in 1867 the owner and occupant of a ranch 3 1/2 miles north of Capay, which is in the family to this day, nome of our birdman, Jim Hiatt.



Eric Burnell Zentner, born February 20, 1981, at Woodland

Memorial Hospital. Second son to Val and Lisa Zentner; grandson of George and Veniva Alcock, of Winters, and Burnell and Micki Zentner of Hungry Hollow. Early on, Eric and his older brother Andrew lived on the Singleton Ranch, east of Winters, on three hundred acres of walnuts near Putah Creek--where they fished, played and went to Winters Elementary School. In 1989, they relocated on the Zentner Ranch, just north of Capay. There they now fished and played along the banks of Cache Creek, and went to school in Esparto, Eric graduating from EHS in 1999. Eric loved the country life that the Capay Valley had to offer, but on the summer after his graduation from EHS, he decided to leave for Hollywood to become an actor. With nothing but ambition, a small portfolio, and a few hundred dollars in his pocket, Eric headed for Los Angles. But while always

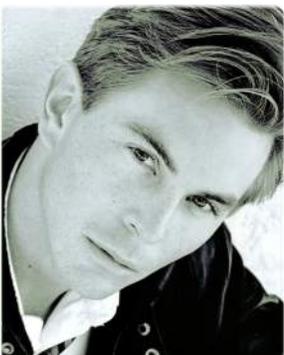
the simple country boy at heart, he saw his ambitions pay off. Within four months he was on three K-Mart commercials, in the UCLA magazine, and on his way of becoming a Super Model.

Eric's first big break was with *Teen Magazine*, eventually featured in six *Teen Magazines*, and two *Seventeen* magazines. He landed a five-year contract with Macy's. Then his big break was with Versace and Louis Vuitton, then *Vogue*, *In Style*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Esquire*. And by 2002, Eric was even in *Playboy* magazine--as one of the top male models of

Europe. And Eric began acting--cameo's in *One Life to Live*, and in several Music videos with the group *No Doubt* and Katy Perry's "Hot N Cold."

Eric had just gotten the role as Nico, in the Cinemax Series, "Life on Top", when the sad news came...an auto accident on Saturday, March 26, 2011...

You were *always* a shining star, Eric, and will live in our hearts forever.





Native or non?
Hmmm According to California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife at http://www.dfg.ca.gov/wildlife/nongame/nuis_exo/red_fox/ the non-native red fox is an intruder. Though it looks similar, it should not be confused with the native Sierra Nevada red fox, a threatened species found only in the Sierra Nevada and

FROM:
THE GREATER CAPAY VALLEY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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CAPAY VALLEY

December 2011 Volume 6

Become a member of *The Greater Capay Valley Historical Society* and receive the second annual subscription to the Journal's 4 quarterly 24-page volumes of 2012. Send a check for \$60 made out to TGCVHS and all your mailing/shipping information to:

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Cascade mountain ranges. Non-native red foxes were introduced decades ago for fox hunting and fur farming. Over time, these foxes escaped or were released. Their populations have grown and gradually spread throughout the Sacramento Valley, to other lowland areas, and to the coast. Within the ranks of carnivores, those mammals which prey on others, the red fox (*Vulpes vulpes*) is the most widely distributed carnivore in the world. There are dozens of subspecies of red fox and each subspecies has adapted to the special habitat and prey conditions within its range. The red fox is native to Canada, the continental United States, Europe, northern Asia, the Middle East, and northern Africa. Only one subspecies occurs naturally in California: the Sierra Nevada red fox (*Vulpes vulpes necator*). The range of the Sierra Nevada red fox is limited to the conifer forests and rugged alpine landscape of the Sierra Nevada and Cascade ranges between 4,000 feet and 12,000 feet—mostly above 7,000 feet. The Sierra Nevada red fox is so uncommon that the California Fish and Game Commission declared it threatened in 1980. Populations of red foxes are found elsewhere in California but these animals are not native; they have been introduced by people. They are now numerous at many locations.



Red Fox Family below: Photos taken by Jim Hiatt on April 23, 2011, near County Roads 19 and 92C, very close to the Clover Schoolhouse. A mother with her two kits: "I was able to get the close-ups when the kits saw mom leaving out into the field, and they retreated into a culvert, so I positioned myself just above and behind them--down wind, so they never even knew I was there, two steps away."