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CAPAY VALLEY

March 2012

Volume Seven

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.

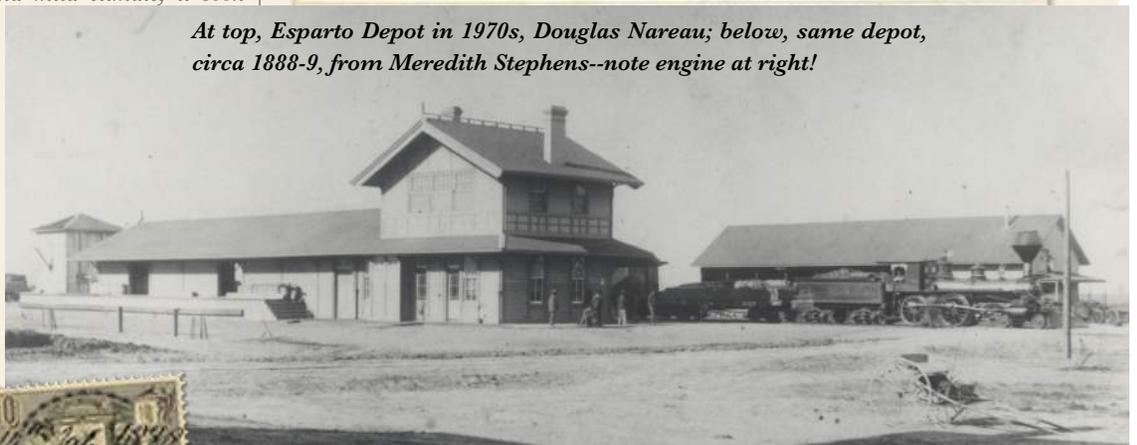
The annual Almond Festival was a delightful success, again--March 11 was threatening rain, but mostly sunny. The lack of rain and early spring-like weather this year meant the blooms were early, but there were many to decorate this beautiful Valley and thousands turned out to enjoy the views and events. As my article in the 6th volume revealed, this festival began in September of 1915, and while it has been moved to spring to include the blossoms, and missed a few years here and there, it is a favorite tradition--and great way to show off this amazing place we call home!

As that article also explained, *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...ah, yes, the Railroad!



At top, Esparto Depot in 1970s, Douglas Nareau; below, same depot, circa 1888-9, from Meredith Stephens--note engine at right!



Continued on Page 3

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

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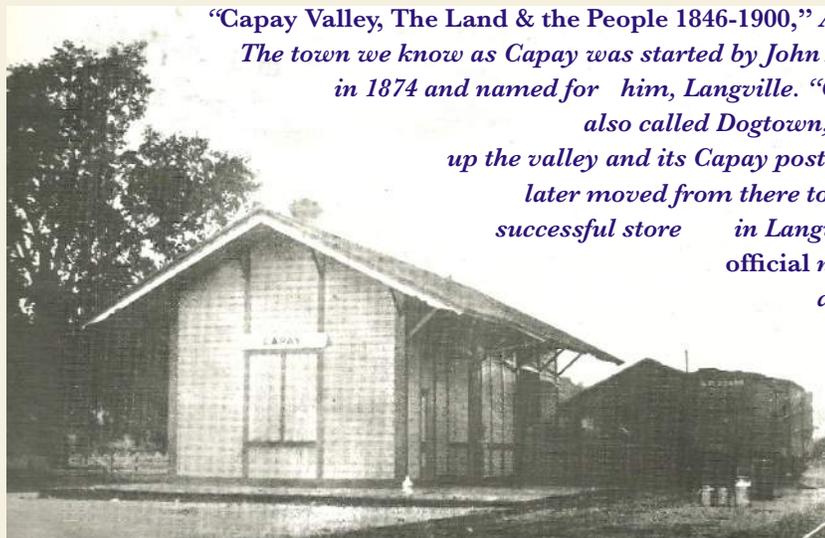
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Capay Depot April 1902: Local gal, Elvira Grey Duncan, and her new husband, James William Monroe from Buckeye near Winters, and their wedding party, prepare for the couple's honeymoon train ride to San Francisco. The tracks ran right down the main street in the town of Capay--which is Highway 16 today--and the agent-less depot was placed at the west end of town. Moved later, the remodeled building is now at Highway 16 and County Road 85, where the current tenants sell local honey and occasional local produce, such as walnuts and oranges. The original depot was built in 1888, causing the town of



Langville's name change to Capay, according to "Capay Valley, The Land & the People 1846-1900," Ada Merhoff. The town we know as Capay was started by John Arnold Lang in 1874 and named for him, Langville. "Capay City," also called Dogtown, was farther up the valley and its Capay post office was later moved from there to Wolf Levy's successful store in Langville--but the official name change did not occur until the Capay Depot was built.

The Railroad chugs on Toward the Beautiful Capay Valley

When the “land rush” of European pioneers began in earnest, it included 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**.

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. 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 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. 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; the Capay Valley Grange was established; 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--especially if there were a railroad! It is important to understand the significance of the railroad to the development of the crops in the Capay Valley.

According to wikipedia, **The Vaca Valley and Clear Lake Railroad** was a standard gauge railroad that operated at Vacaville, California in the late 19th century. The Vaca Valley Railroad was incorporated on April 12, 1869 to run a branch from the mainline of the California Pacific Railroad (later Southern Pacific Railroad’s mainline between Sacramento and Oakland, CA) from Elmira to Vacaville. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_Pacific_Railroad See also Dunscomb, Guy L: “A Century of Southern Pacific Steam Locomotives, 1862-1962” (1963)--he’s the *real* “expert,” while wikipedia had some errors pointed out by my own RR expert, Henry Bender, who wrote in his article *SP Winters Branch*: “*First was the Vaca Valley Rail Road, incorporated April 12, 1869 to build from Elmira (first called Vaca Station) on the California Pacific Rail Road main line to Vacaville. It built this 4.35-mile-long line in June, 1869.*” Also check out Henry E. Bender, Jr’s “Southern Pacific Lines Standard-Design Depots.” Mr. Bender was instrumental in helping me prove that the small building in Capay on West 1st Street north of Highway 16 is “railroad” and worth saving from the county’s wrecking ball! We hope to shore it up and leave it sitting there for viewing, as part of our 1888 railroad history.

After the Vaca Valley Railroad constructed 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. 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 website.

Continued on Pages 3, 21, 22

Photos courtesy of Meredith Stephens



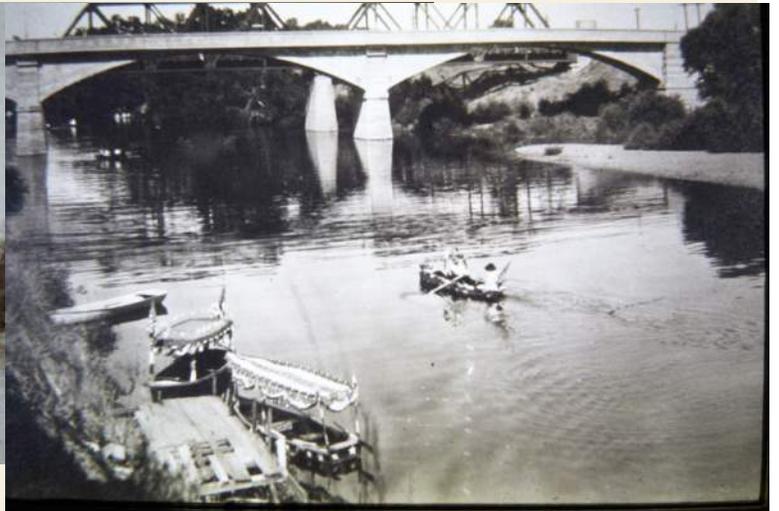
Top 2 photos: First Vaca Valley Locomotive in Winters 1875; C Train in front of Winters Station 1876. Bottom 2 photos: Winters Station and Ladies in front of Winters waiting room; This would have been the 2nd depot built in Winters in 1888, according to Henry Bender.



Vaca Valley Railroad Photo Gallery: Photos and Information

collected from long-time residents of The Greater Capay Valley by local gal

Meredith (Karlstad) Stephens



Three photos at top and right: 1878 flooding of the Winters RR Bridge; in spite of occasional flooding, excursions on the bridges and in Putah Creek became popular social activities--as did excursion train rides between Winters and Madison, "passengers and flat cars jammed to overflowing with bands playing," as reported in local papers. Top shows tracks into Madison from Winters.

The photos below show the town of Madison, with people watching an excursion train, with the Odd Fellows Hall in the background; and the tracks into Madison from Winters, which skirted three warehouses constructed to make Madison the line's major point for grain shipment.



Vaca Valley and Clear Lake Railroad continues...

PULLING OUT OF WINTERS STATION; DESTINATION RUMSEY



Above, Winters youth amused by the “No Trespassing” sign on the new Winters RR bridge. At right, the only real sign of Cottonwood now is the old cemetery--with many pioneer names. In 1877, when Madison got the next train station after Winters, bypassing Cottonwood, the residents literally picked up their town and moved it to Madison--which continued as the terminus until 1888, after which the struggling railroad received financing from Southern Pacific.

Once financing was improved, the Yolo County Board of Supervisors granted a franchise to extend the line to Capay on June 17, 1887, beginning construction on the 23.7 mile extension from Madison to Rumsey. Chinese work crews were brought in to assist, with many staying in the area afterwards to open businesses or to work for local pioneer families as cooks and caretakers. Things moved at an amazing

speed: Esparto Depot (above, right) was completed on June 20, 1888, and the town that was founded first as Esperanza later became Escalante, and finally Esparto. The new town was divided into lots with the west side of the main street designated by the Southern Pacific land agent, W.H. Mills, as “dry,” leaving the east side for a saloon and an elegant hotel (photo at right) built by speculators Watson Barnes and

Associates, who had bought up many of the lots. Barnes built the Barnes Hotel near the Esparto Depot and other businesses sprang up in this new “hub.” From here the tracks continued on to Langville--leading to a name change to Capay [see page 2] in 1888, where an agent-less depot was built.



Photos and information courtesy of Meredith Stephens



Continued on Pages 20-21

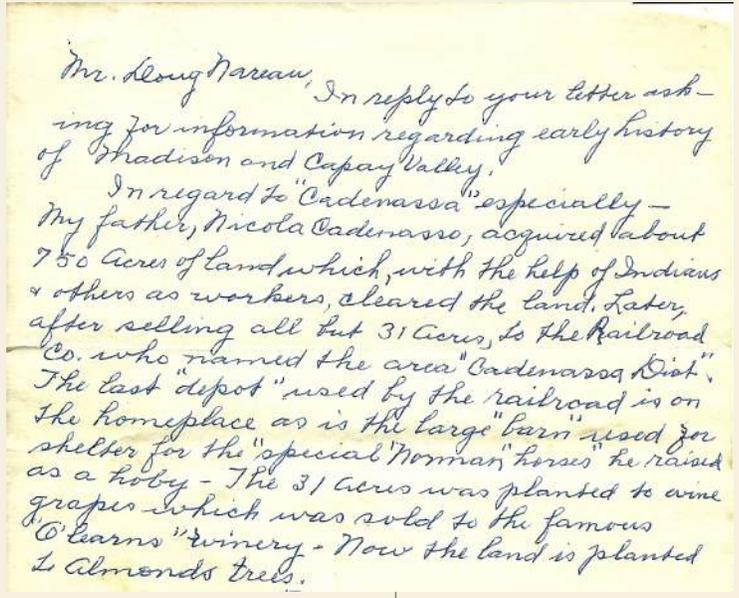


Above: a young Winters couple on the first Winters RR bridge.
 Courtesy of Meredith Stephens

The Capay Valley Land Company was a subsidiary of *The Pacific Improvement Company*, a private firm created by the Big Four in November 1878 to take over railroad construction and property management from the earlier *Western Development Company*, according to Henry Bender. From *Yolo County Land of Changing Patterns* [see Works Cited, page 2] we get: in 1887 it purchased “several large bodies of the choicest lands” in the area from Madison to Rumsey. And Mr. Bender adds: *The Vaca Valley & Clear Lake Railroad did not keep that name after May 4, 1888 (not 1887), when it was merged into SP subsidiary (holding company) Northern Railway Company. Under this name the Pacific Improvement Company completed the 23.7 miles from Madison to Rumsey on July 1, 1888. Under this new name and the injection of funding, “construction proceeded swiftly...” Next stop Esparto!* Developers of a tract formerly owned by Rhoads Stephens Bonyngue located a new 580-lot town called Esperanza in the center” of a subdivision. A manager of the Capay Land Company, William H. Mills, named the streets of that town

which would eventually be renamed “Esparto after a post office of that name was established in March 1890. Esparto grew rapidly,” at first, due to “\$125,000 worth of improvements in the town” that included a 2-story grammar school [and eventual high school in 1982, the second oldest in Yolo County after Winters -- see page 24 of this issue].

In June of 1888, the railroad reached “Langville, a town originally laid out in 1874 by John Lang and Jesse Aldrich.” Since the “Capay Valley Land Company had no lots to sell there” they were not going to build even a depot “until landowners helped underwrite its construction.” When I read this in *Yolo County Land of Changing Patterns*, it reminded me of an amusing family story about how my great grandfather, Wyatt Godfrey Duncan, and others who campaigned to get their depot in Capay, forgot to stipulate they wanted an agent--so, ironically, all they got was an agent-less, 1-story depot in an already existing and vibrant town, which many assumed would always surpass Esparto in size and importance.



Above: A letter written by Aida (Cadenasso) Naismith explains to historian Douglas Nareau in 1974 how her father and mother, Nicola & Antoinetta Cadenasso, sold

about 720 acres to the railroad, so they might place a depot in the community they named “Cadenassa District.” A small 12-by-12 foot depot was built--Aida recalls getting on and off trains here. [It was later moved to a Cadenasso homestead off CR79.] A school was indeed built on the “knoll” sold with this parcel and was part of the “Cadenassa School District,” [see the feature in volume 2 of this journal].



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The newest event venue at the gateway to the beautiful Capay Valley.

Redbud -- Magenta Everywhere!

EVEN WITH ALL THE FRUIT AND NUT BLOSSOMS, THE REDBUD STANDS OUT!



Sweet smelling and brilliant to see! When Jim Hiatt went to photograph the Redbud in Capay Valley, but got distracted by vultures [page 17], he did remember to shoot this tree in full bloom.

Western Redbud, native and common in California, *Cercis occidentalis*, ranges from California east to Utah,

primarily in foothill regions. Its leaves are more rounded at the tip than the relatively heart-shaped leaves of the Eastern Redbud. The tree often forms multi-trunked colonies that are covered in bright pink to magenta flowers in early spring, (February - March), which appear before the leaves. White-flowered variants are in cultivation. It buds only once a year. Interesting note: The flowers have an agreeably acidic bite, and are eaten in mixed salad or made into fritters. The tree was frequently figured in the 16th and 17th century herbals.

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



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Valley Historical Society,

Greater Capay

Esparto Depot to be Restored to Life!

New owner, Maria McVarish, is working with locals to come up with a vision for its future...

<http://mnemictrain.files.wordpress.com/>

Visit this site: 2012/03/exhibitionposter_4cca.jpg

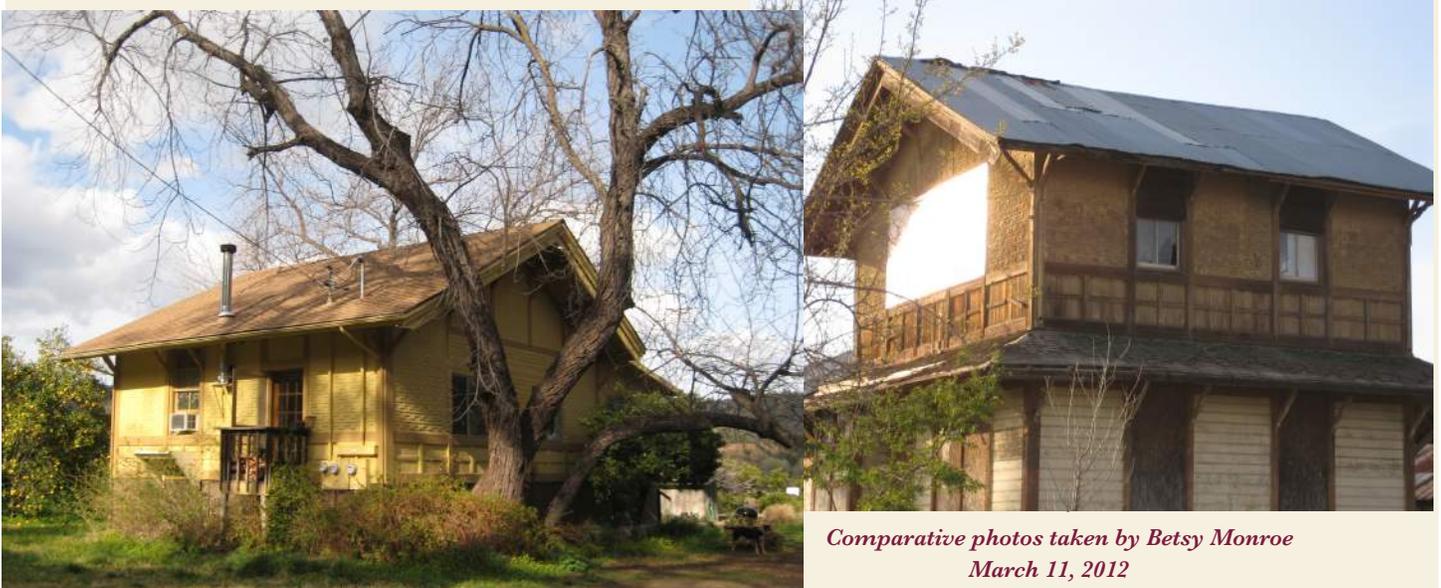


According to new owner, Architect Maria McVarish, there were only a few blueprints for the stations/depots [terms used interchangeably throughout this issue] on the Vaca Valley & Clear Lake line, explaining why so many of the stations are similar. Case in point, as seen below, the Rumsey and Esparto Depots were very similar: Karen Kane's house (below) now situated above Rumsey town, was once the top floor of the Rumsey station and "looks like the top of a Number 18 Standard Combination design of the Southern Pacific, just like the one in Esparto," (seen at right) says Maria. "Southern Pacific would select from pre-established standard designs for the stations/depots. Between 1878 and 1910, the Southern Pacific developed 26 different 'standard' designs for their station/depots and 'combinations'--probably referring to those including residences for the agent. The designs were updated and improved over the years, accounting for a large range of designs, but at any given time of expansion, the company would be selecting from only a handful of current standard designs, each appropriate for different needs: passengers, freight, package and money order or mail delivery, telegraph and Western Union, etc., and other circumstances of the new station.

At top, Esparto Depot, housing the Public Library through the 1970s.

Photo taken in 1970s courtesy of Meredith Stephens

NOTE: The Rumsey Depot top floor at bottom left (now a private home) and the Esparto Depot below still have their identical and distinctive siding shingles and scalloped eave supports seen below and on page 6.



*Comparative photos taken by Betsy Monroe
March 11, 2012*



Architect Maria McVarish has been trying to buy the Esparto Depot

since 2003. Having grown up in Marin and Yolo Counties, her family brought her to Esparto and the Capay Valley often, to buy local produce and to cool off in Cache Creek.

"I moved to the Bay Area to attend college and then graduate school at UC Berkeley (in Architecture and Visual Studies) and have more or less lived here since. I have a limited (focused) practice in architecture, specializing in reinventing and rehabilitating older, run-down places. I teach interdisciplinary design and seminars on different ways of thinking about space and materials.

I have been looking for a semi-industrial building to buy and develop in the Yolo County area for many years. The Esparto depot caught my eye while I was driving through in 2003. It had a 'sale pending' sign outside of it but I made enquiries to see if a back up offer might be welcome. I met Patricia Harrison, an Esparto realtor, that day and she showed me the Wyatt Building, which was rumored to be coming onto the market." After several failed attempts to purchase the depot, last spring she closed escrow. Today she and two colleagues are involving their art students in developing a plan for the restoration. For more information attend the event announced at: <http://mnemicttrain.com/sign-up-to-participate-in-the-engage-class/engage-building-narratives-class/>

Maria goes on, "California College of the Arts, where I teach design <http://design.cca.edu/graduate/faculty/show/mmcvarish> and theory <http://cca-viscrit.com/community/faculty/core-faculty/maria-mcvarish/> has an outstanding program called ENGAGE <http://www.cca.edu/academics/engage-at-cca> that brings CCA's art and design students together with communities who are interested in collaborating on community projects. This (Building Narratives) class was conceived by Melissa Martin and Alexis Petty and approved as an ENGAGE class by CCA's Center for Art and Public Life. Capay Valley Vision and I are the official community partners, but many residents of Esparto and Capay have become involved with the students and have helped them in their research on the past, present and future of the region in general and the depot, specifically.

We're hosting an exhibition and reception at the depot for the students' projects on Saturday, April 21, 2012, starting at 3 p.m.

This summer, Ray Burton will help me stabilize the depot, in a first phase of construction work. The scope includes adding a new roof, completing the structural improvements that were started in the 90s, and priming and base-painting the exterior. So far, and provisionally, I envision the possibility of three or four different areas, or uses. I would like to restore the old station agent's quarters at the top of the tower so that I have a place to stay here while I'm working on it. The other areas that exist now are: the depot and its basement; the former waiting room, at the ground floor of the tower; and an interesting sort of in-between space (meaning between the waiting room and the depot) that seems to have been altered during the structural work in the 90s."



The Greater Capay Valley Historical Society was asked by Maria McVarish to conduct a walking tour of Esparto to orient art and design students helping to develop a plan for the depot's renovation. Below, Douglas Nareau helps Betsy Monroe (at right) with the tour. Note distinctive details of the siding and eave supports.



HISTORICAL NOTE:

"Frank E. Coates, the first depot agent in Esparto, received for coming to Esparto a half block--8 lots--in town. He first built a house for himself and later an identical house to rent or sell. The first house he built is the oldest house in the town of Esparto proper. The two houses are on Woodland Avenue, west of Yolo Avenue, between Orleans Street and Antelope Street. The older home is on the east side of the other, which has been damaged by fire." [from an article in *The Daily Democrat* called "Esparto History Cited" by John Gallardo (who won a high school history competition for his story), dated June 25, 1965]



Andy Smith was "Ma Bell" for the Capay Valley from 1948 to 1988, as sole owner and operator of Capay Valley Telephone System, Inc.

Capay Valley Telephone System, Inc.



Capay subscribers—There is no charge on calls to Guinda if you dial 941 for Guinda numbers.

CAPAY AREA

GUINDA AREA

H-60125

Andrew "Drew" or "Andy" Elmer Smith was born Feb. 26, 1922 in Guinda and was a life-long Yolo County resident. Mr. Smith was a 1940 graduate of Esparto High School and spent two years in the U.S. Navy. From 1948 through 1988, he was the owner of Capay Valley Telephone System Inc., and affectionately known locally as "Andy the one-man telephone company." He was also a life member of VFW Post No. 7143, American Legion, Fraternal Order of Eagles, 50-year member of Golden Sheaf National Grange--and, of course, a member of *Telephone Pioneers of America*.

Ok, how many of you have lived long enough to remember the old crank phones? And 10-22 person party-lines that lasted even longer than that? Well, I do! And I remember Andy Smith, a good friend of my Dad's and a similarly happy soul, living in the beautiful Capay Valley nearly all his life, and for most of that time, singlehandedly running the independent phone company for the whole valley.

As for my memory, growing up as pretty typical "farm kids" we were left along often and given strict instructions on what to do in an emergency--which included how to use the old crank phone and reach a switchboard operator!

Capay Valley Telephone System, Inc.

P.O. Box 7
Guinda, California

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Andrew E. Smith President
Willard F. Smith Vice-President
John F. Wallace, Jr. Secretary
Ernest H. Smith Assistant Treasurer
Presley O. Kent, Jr. Assistant Secretary
Andrew E. Smith Treasurer and Manager

HOURS OF OPERATING

CAPAY office dial 24 hours
GUINDA office
Weekdays 7:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M.
Sundays and Holidays 7:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon
Sundays and Holidays during
FIRE SEASON 7:00 A.M. to 9:00 P.M.
Holidays Observed
New Year's Day Washington's Birthday
Memorial Day Independence Day
Labor Day Admission Day
Armistice Day Thanksgiving
Christmas

Capay-Guinda Telephone Directory 1

EMERGENCY CALLS

FIRE — Capay Office
Dial 743 (Direct to Fire Station) or Dial 941 and ask Guinda operator for the Capay Valley Fire Truck at Guinda 9 Y 3 — or Dial "0" — Operator and ask for Esparto Stillwell 7-3300.

(Residents in our Capay district dial area are in two different fire districts. Check to see which fire district you are in and call the appropriate number above.)

FIRE — Guinda Office
Ring Operator and ask for Guinda 9 Y 3 stating that you wish to report a fire.
(After the 9:00 P.M. closing time of the GUINDA switchboard the fire truck may be reached from the Guinda pay telephone by asking for Capay 743.)

SHERIFF, Woodland, Calif. MOhawk 2-5401
Resident Deputy Keith Culley Stillwell 7-3767
Esparto, California

CONSTABLES Capay area Dial 713
Guinda Area ask Operator for 18 Y 2

HIGHWAY PATROL Emergencies only ZEnith 1-2000

AMBULANCE, Woodland MOhawk 2-1714

DOCTOR
Name Telephone Number
(Fill in above information immediately)

HOSPITALS, Woodland, California
Woodland Clinic Memorial MOhawk 2-3961
Yolo General Hospital MOhawk 2-2851

ELECTRIC FAILURES
(Weekdays — 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.)
Winters, California SYcomare 5-4575
(For emergency calls from 5:00 P.M. to 8:00 A.M. and on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays)
Vacaville, California Hickory 8-6500

2 Capay-Guinda Telephone Directory

WARNING

The California Penal Code Section 384 makes it a misdemeanor for any person who shall wilfully refuse to immediately relinquish a telephone party-line when informed that such line is needed for an emergency call to a fire department or police department or for medical aid or ambulance service. Also, any person who shall secure the use of a telephone party-line by falsely stating that such line is needed for an emergency call, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. "Emergency" means "a situation in which property or human life is in jeopardy and the prompt summoning of aid is essential."

TELEPHONE SERVICE CALLS

Capay District

Long Distance Calls Dial "0" Operator
Numbers not in Directory Dial "0" Operator
When a telephone is "Out of Order" Dial 941
(Give trouble report to Guinda Operator, not Woodland)
To report difficulty with local service Dial 941
To report difficulty with long distance service Dial "0" Operator
Telephone business matters (when you wish to order a telephone, have your telephone moved, or discuss your bill) Dial 941
and ask th Guinda Operator for the business office.

Guinda District

Report all trouble of any nature to the Guinda Operator.

See back of Directory for other Telephone suggestions

Old Guinda phonebook scans courtesy of Mike Bloom of Guinda.

There would be no “playing on the phone”: everyone knew your distinct ring and many could listen in on your conversation--and your light lit up the switchboard, so a kindly but stern voice would ask, “Which one of you Monroe kids is this?” But when you needed help, it was always there, very personal and generally very caring--don't ya all just miss those days?!

Capay Area 3

Capay Area Subscribers

A	
Anderson Eric A	847
B	
Brackett Joe	961
C	
California State of	
Division of Forestry	746
Capay Tourist Court	891
Capay Valley Fire District	743
Capay Valley Telephone System, Inc.	941
Clara's Place	871
Clark Gilbert	957
Cline W G	713
Country Club	897
Cristler Michael G	761
Cristler Michael G Jr	768
D	
DeLaVergne Fred	982
Duncan May	762
Duncan Roy	764
E	
Eowan George F	951
Esparto Unified School District	
Capay School	791
F	
Faustman L Ada	730

4 Capay Area

G	
Garcia Sabas	986
Garrison Dan F	712
Gillitzer Elmer L	716
Goff A A	740
Gonzales Felipe	760
Gonzalez Philip	733
Gordon C M	747
Gottier Arthur W	971
Gray George A	781
H	
Han John	741
Harris W W	711
Henson J P	867
K	
Karn R D	749
Karn V J	742
Kennnitz J L	735
Kennnitz Richard V	737
Krebsbach Walter	701
Kutsuris Catherine	821
L	
Lamoree H E	777
Lindberg J Tom	744
Louie's Cavern	877
Lufkin Horace E	734
M	
McClary W W	745
Metzger Zane	887
Miguel Leon R	726
Monroe Tom J	771

When Andy Smith returned from the Navy and WWII, he paid \$6,500 for the existing Capay Valley phone service in 1948. At that time he had 83 customers on 6 lines--one of which had 22 people sharing one line! The basic rate was \$2 per month!

In an interviews for the *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* and the *Sacramento Bee* in the 1970s, Mr. Smith claimed he

Capay Valley was tiny, but not the smallest of California's 29 independent phone companies -- Bryan Telephone Co. had 16 phones! At that time, Pac Bell had 12 million costumers and 35 % of the state had no service.

then had 280 customers from Capay to Rumsey, and had had only 32 days of vacation in 28 years--but in some ways, every day was a vacation because he loved his work and life in the beautiful valley where he was born! The basic rate at that time was \$5.30. He was then applying for a federal loan to increase the size of his phone service--the valley population was growing and the lack of privacy was still an issue: People would use the pay phone in front of the Guinda phone company office for an real privacy! By now

the value of the company was over \$200,000--not bad for the lone-stockholder, who “had \$28 in my pocket” and borrowed \$1000 from an uncle for the down payment in 1948! The \$650,000 loan he sought in 1975 was to upgrade service for 500 numbers--all on private lines! At that point, Andy would have to finally hire another full-time employee. Until then, only full-timer, he had spend a couple of days each month preparing/mailling bills, and the rest of his time “looking after the system, installing phones, getting trees off lines, solving problems.” Smith is president, general manager, linesman, repairman--and everything else!

Guinda Area 11

T	
The Corner	25 W
Tolle Clarence	9 Y 13
Tompkins H W	19 M
Twomey Dominick P	28 Y 2
V	
Vallerga Rena	18 Y 5
Vieu T L	7 Y 14
Vose Daisy M	24 M
W	
Wallace C B	8 Y 22
Wallace John F	10 Y 2
Wallace John F Jr	9 Y 2
Wanshop Dwight	8 Y 12
Watkins Grace	9 Y 14
Wiltse Carl C	16 Y 12
Winter James G	10 Y 13

USING YOUR TELEPHONE

When dialing a telephone number let the dial return freely after each digit dialed. Forcing or retarding the return of the dial may result in a wrong number or damage to the equipment.

DO NOT let children play with the telephone. Please do not let the children tie up the lines with unnecessary calls. Be sure to hang up your receiver correctly after you are through talking as all telephones on your line will be out of order if you don't.

If your telephone receiver has a coiled cord on the receiver be sure that it does not hold up one end of the receiver when you hang up. This also puts your line out of order.

DO NOT pick up the receiver in the middle of a ring or ringing code. Let the ring complete, then answer.

12 General Information

CHANGES OR ERRORS IN DIRECTORIES

The Capay Valley Telephone System, Inc. assumes no liability whatever for damages arising from errors or omissions made in the preparation of this directory. However, the utmost care is used in listing all numbers correctly.

NOTICE TO ALL USERS OF THESE FACILITIES

Report all trouble promptly to the Guinda Operator. Capay customers dial 941. We keep a trouble record on all reports and will give you prompt attention as we possibly can.

If our service is not satisfactory to you, tell us; not others; they cannot help it, while we may be able to remedy it. This telephone directory is issued free of charge by, and remains the property of, the Telephone Company.

This Telephone Company does not undertake to deliver or transmit oral or written messages and will assume no responsibility for such service. Any person or employee who assists patrons in communications does so in each case solely as the individual representative of the patron.

CHARGES AND PAYMENT OF BILLS

Toll charges will be made against the owner of the telephone from which the call comes. IF YOU DO NOT WANT TO PAY FOR OTHER PEOPLE'S TALK DO NOT LET THEM USE YOUR TELEPHONE.

Do not allow non-subscribers to use the service. If you do, you are giving away something that does not belong to you. The time that you do not need the service belongs to some other patron on the line.

Statements for services, rentals and tolls are mailed out by the 1st of each month. Tolls listed go from the 21st of one month to the 20th of the following month -- one month in arrears. Service and equipment rental paid one month in advance.

All bills become due on the 1st of each month and are delinquent on the morning of the 15th of the same month. If any bill is not paid within 15 days from date of presentation service may be discontinued, in which event restoration will not be made until the bill has been paid.

“The Quilters” of the greater Capay Valley: a long tradition in many rural communities, Quilting Bees flourished here from the “Naomis” to the “Ruths” and beyond...



Oil portrait of the elder Naomi Club members by well-known local artist Barbara Fredericks in early 1950s. Featured from left: Margaret Hinkle, Beulah Beebe, Esther Taber, Edith Wanshop, Berry Vierra, Helene Rominger, and Eugenia Woods.

As reported by Meredith Stephens in a special feature for the *Daily Democrat Newspaper* in February 20, 1997, the Capay Valley Almond Festival that year was to be a showcase for the valley quilts. The Rumsey Hall and Opera House would display the early pioneer Janes family quilts of the “‘grande dame of valley quilting,’ Hattie Mae Janes, who quilted until she was 90.” She goes on to say, “The early-day spirit of the quilting bee is maintained by the Western Yolo Grange Quilt Group which meets once a week...Recently, the ladies decorated the Guinda Grange Hall with their quilts for a local couple’s wedding reception” and the quilt club was “currently working on a community quilt which will be raffled in the spring to fund Grange Hall improvements.” As per a long tradition, the Guinda quilts would be on display and for sale at the Grange Hall during the Almond Festival.

One former member of one of the most active groups, the Naomi Circle, Dolores (Storz) Stephens recently recalled that mostly their quilts were the tied kind, not “fine-stitched.” A member until the group disbanded in about 1972, Dolores has been the organist at the Esparto Countryside Community Church, where the group met, since 1948--a position she holds to this day! She explained that the “luncheon/work meetings were held every Monday and the quilts at one point sold for \$35 and were used to cover the cost of the church insurance.” Today, this lovely portrait of that groups’ elder members from the early 1950s hangs in the church basement/social hall.

Bill Rominger recalled recently that his grandmother, standing in the portrait threading yarn, was given this job as “yarn threader” in spite of her shaky hands, saying, “even with badly arthritic fingers and possibly a little Parkinson’s, could thread those needles first time, every time. She was blessed with 20/20 vision nearly up to her passing.”

After “the Naomis” disbanded, the tradition was still carried on by “Stitches in the Sticks” and the long-time “Ruth Circle”...and today?

Locals Reminisce about the Local Quilters--and other Old-Time Groups!

While researching for the article on the history of the Almond Festival, I stumbled onto the portrait of the Naomi Circle “Quilters” and began a new research project. Asking for memories of such groups led to some interesting stories:

As already mentioned, Bill Rominger and Dolores Stephens helped me with the background of the “Naomis”--as did the archived article by Meredith Stephens in the *Daily Democrat* in 1997. To that, Cindy Wanshop Boyer fondly recalled watching her grandmother (seen in the portrait) quilt while she ran around the room among the frames and quilters. She also recalled an interesting group meeting at the Guinda Grange Hall: “The Old-timers Group met every year at the Guinda Hall behind the General Store. I remember going every year with my Grandparents. The hall was packed full of elderly men in suspenders and beautiful aged women with rosy rouged cheeks...It was a potluck and I think my grandfather was well into his 90's when they stopped going. I'm not sure but I think a quilt was raffled off. I'll check with Mom on the name of that group as well. I think I started going to that when I was 5 or 6.” I loved her visual language--I can just see them, the suspended men and rosy cheeked women! This reminded me of times Cindy and I spent with her quilting grandmother at her home near Esparto--I was early fascinated by the fact that she used the scraps of gingham left from dresses she had lovingly made for Cindy and her sister Colleen. While my mother, Jean Monroe, taught my sister Cathy and me to sew at about 6 years old, she did not quilt--so I started collecting the scraps of fabric from all those dresses she made us--outfitting my Barbies at first, and years later used some in quilts I made with my own daughter, Samantha, along with fabric from dresses I completely hand-stitched for her! She and I displayed our first joint venture “my first quilt” when she was about 6 years old at the Marin County Fair--to “honorable mention”! I also recalled that my college roommate Cindy Wanshop had left one of her grandmother’s precious quilts in the trunk of my car all those years ago--and I caught up with her at a high school reunion decades later to finally return that treasure--and have somewhat regretted that ever since!

Others chimed in with memories of the local quilters in their lives, such as Nora Covington Jones whose grandmother quilted with “the Naomis,” and Nancy Holland, who said to Nora, “They always met in the basement of the Prebyterian church. Those ladies hardly ever missed. Nora, I remember your



Elizabeth “Betsy” Monroe, long-time quilter (wearing a hand-quilted jacket from an Oregon needle-worker), with her Almond Festival display table in Rumsey Hall for The Greater Capay Valley Historical Society, 2011.

Photo: courtesy of Todd Gettlemann & Rumsey Improvement Association.

grandmother so well. She and my great aunt that we called Nanny were very close friends.” And from Joy Campbell McKenzie, “My and Bill's grandmother (Helene Rominger) belonged to the “Naomi” circle... There were also other “circles” but none seemed as strong and survived as long as the Naomi group. I remember at one point my mom belonged to the ‘Priscilla’ circle--made up of ‘younger women’ [at the time]. I know that there was also a ‘Ruth’ circle...”

*This whole discussion turned into a treasure for me--like a quilt, lovingly pieced together by old friends! Thank you, everyone!
With love and gratitude, Betsy*



Local Color: Sheriff's Log

In the 6 volumes of this journal in 2011 I featured excerpts from the Memoirs of my grandfather, "Sunny Jim" Monroe, Yolo County Sheriff from 1911 until 1939--wild west times that read like an exciting Western novel! But having used up those stories that concerned the area I refer to as *greater Capay Valley*, I went looking for other exciting events from the late 1800s and early 1900s--from the Yolo County Archives, local newspapers, and other printed histories of the area. It was in those archives that I found the intriguing article on the biggest bootlegging bust in the nation that happened in Guinda [see volume 4 of this journal for 2011--copies are in the resource section of the Esparto Public Library--or subscribe or buy back issues!] And I found interesting the Sheriff Department scrapbooks from both my grandfather and his last undersheriff and eldest son, Forrest D. Monroe--who would follow him as sheriff for the next 32 years, making a Monroe Dynasty of 60 consecutive years as Yolo County Sheriff! I will be

drawing from those in future volumes, but for this one, I will reprint accounts from Ada Merhoff's priceless book, *Capay Valley The Land & The People 1846 - 1900*, since it is no longer in print and not widely available--though there are copies at the Esparto Public Library in the Resource section. [Sadly, too many copies "walked out the door" for them to be checked out any more I am told!] So, I thought I would bring some of her collected stories alive in this issue in this new *Sheriff's Log* feature. To narrow it down, I looked for stories of gun slinging in the Capay Valley itself, especially those that mentioned families I have covered in the past or will cover eventually.

Among the more important early families in the valley, Henry Rhodes stands out as a large land owner--more on that family later. His family sold off parcels over the early years [in today's Brooks area] and in 1862 sold to Cyrus and Vince Barnes, bachelor brothers who arrived from Kentucky with valuable American racehorse studs.

After disputes between the brothers, their land was divided into parcels including the "Alexander Farm," which remained thus, well into the 1900s. After this division of property, the family knew more turmoil [pg 40]: "July 1869 Cyrus was killed by Jim Marble in one of the valley's most famous killings--the result of liquor, bad tempers and insults. Vince Alexander's son Charles:

I recollect that at one Ball there were some hard cases there. One Jim Marble made an uncalled for remark to one of the young women, and my uncle Cyrus Barnes slapped his face for it. So the next day my uncle and a neighbor, E. Myers, went to Dog Town, and there met Marble again and they got into trouble again...Marble struck Barnes and my uncle got out his pocket knife. Marble ran behind a wagon, picked up a piece of timber and threw it and struck Barnes in the side. Barnes went and got on his horse and then said to him, 'I will go and get my gun and I will come back and kill you before the sun sets.'...Joe Wood was constable at the time and he gave Marble access to the blacksmith shop where he hid, so when my uncle returned, Marble shot him as he was



walking in the street. Of course he was acquitted.”

Merhoff's book goes on to recount [pg 61-2]: “A sequel to the valley's well know murder of Cy Barnes outside Joel Wood's store in July 1869 occurred a year-and-one-half later and involved an Alexander relative who had come to Capay Valley as a small child in 1857. Malinda Alexander (Lindy), daughter of 'old Jim Alexander' was a niece of Cy Barnes and was also the 'young woman' to whom Jim Marbles insult had precipitated the brawl which ended in Cy's killing. Now in 1871 according to a relative's [Charles Alexander] letter, *Another time in Dogtown Marble started to bulley [sic] Vince Alexander, Malinda's half-brother--so they both started for their guns, were deterred by John Wood who then in turn was threatened by Marble. For whatever reason, Lindy Alexander is supposed to have announced that she 'would marry any man that would kill Jim Marble.'* So John Wood, 20 years older than she, shot Marble and married Lindy in Langville by Justice of the Peace E.E. Perkins on the day two weeks later when Marble died in the County Hospital at the age of 26.

“The **Yolo Democrat** of January 7, 1871:

Shooting at Capay City--On Tuesday morning last, James Marble was shot by a man named Wood at

Capay City, sometimes called Dogtown, and dangerously if not fatally wounded. The shooting was done with a Henry rifle. The ball entered the left lung in front, passed through the body and came out near the spine. Dr. Ross was sent for and attended the wounded man, remaining with him two days. The Dr. thinks Marble may recover, but it is somewhat doubtful.

And the following week:

'little hope is entertained of his recovery.'

John Davenport Wood was arrested, remained in custody during several court postponements and was acquitted in a jury trial that took two days in September 1872.”

And it doesn't stop there for the Barnes-Alexander and Wood families in the Dogtown area!

On page 60, Merhoff's book goes on:

“*There was another case. A man Tom Hays by name, a fine fellow and a man Hunter by name, owed him for work and refused to pay him. So Hays took the short way to collect it--he pulled his gun and Hunter jumped behind C.V. Fowler. Hays says, 'I'll shoot a hole through both of you.'* Fowler persuaded him not to shoot. Hunter got out a warrant for his arrest. Joel Wood, being constabule [sic] took George and Edmund Clark, his two brothers-in-law and started after him. They overtook Hays in a field up to my father's place

(Vince Alexander'). Wood ordered him to halt and lay down his arms. Hays refused to do it, but his pistol did not work so he threw it down and they got him. George Clark threatened to kick him in the face. Hays told him to do it and said 'I will dig out of the Woodland jail and come to your bedside at night and cut your throat.' They took him to jail and in about two days he was back...and they never came for him.

[Charles Alexander letter]

But the May 1871 Yolo Democrat stated:

Probably Murdered--The other day, Thomas Hays was discovered by Vincent Alexander in the Capay Valley and Clear Lake Road, quite dead, having been shot through the heart with a bullet. No clue to the murderer, if it was murder. The scene of the probable murder was just over the line in Lake County.”

So, even before my grandfather's time, the Wild West reigned in the Capay Valley! The Sheriff at that time was J.P. Bullock.

And, obviously, one of his constables was one of the earliest European pioneers, Joel Wood.



This just in: Rhino and Mastodon sightings in Capay Valley!

That's right, rhinos in the Capay Valley. Of course that was a while back, and people have been stumbling upon their fossils--as well as those of mastodons, saber-toothed tigers, giant sloths, and grizzly bears--ever since. You just have to know what to look for and what you have actually found! The Cache Creek beds are prime areas, as are any areas that have been uplifted or silt-filled over the centuries, like so many areas in this lovely and intriguing region, rich in geological--and paleontological--wonders!

Along with the nature photographs and information I have received from Jim Hiatt since I started this research and journal, I have gotten some interesting stories about the discovery of prehistoric animal fossils--and the rhinos in my back yard! Jim is descended from an early pioneer to this area, John Phineas Goodnow, the man who would dub the area north of Capay where I grew up *Hungry Hollow*. That being the case, Jim grew up (in Woodland) making weekly trips and summer stays at his grandparents' home here--combing the hills and creeks with his rock- and bone-hound father and brothers. As a result, the family has a collection of treasured, locally-found fossils--pictures of which Jim has loaned me for this article. In addition, he had some other locals' stories to tell.

Seems one of the most well-known recent fossil finds was in the 1990s when a paleontologist was doing contract work for the big PG&E gas pipeline that ran through Durst property in Hungry Hollow at the north end of CR85. Apparently, a complete skeleton of a rhine was recovered--much larger than those we know today. Seems, also, that this was not widely acknowledged. Seems the numerous rumored fossil finds along the Cache Creek bed in the course of mining for gravel have been pretty hush-hush, too. But enough locals have found, and gotten identified, fossils for it to be pretty certain there were many more...

In Jim's case, his father, Alvin Hiatt of Dunnigan, was always ready for a "treasure hunt" when he, wife Gayle and their three boys visited the Goodnow place. Having married Gayle Goodnow, granddaughter of Hungry Hollow's John Phineas Goodnow, Alvin grew to love the area and its geological--and paleontological--wonders!



Above: Mastodon vertebrae. Found by Alvin Hiatt about 50 years ago in Hungry Hollow; identified by UC Berkeley Paleontology

Department. Man's shoe is to give perspective on the size.

Below: Note the marrow seen fossilized inside the bone; a smaller animal's femur found at same site.



Photos courtesy of Jim Hiatt

The Goodnow Family of Capay Valley



At left: John Phineas and Ellen Elizabeth Goodnow and Ellen as an infant (1856). Below: Betsy and her husband Timothy Goodenough--they would join their son John P. in Hungry Hollow to live out their later years and join him, then, in changing their German surname to Goodnow.

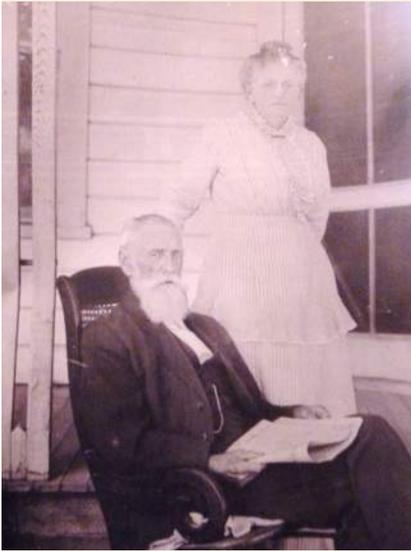
The early pioneer who named *Hungry Hollow* and helped make it a famous California wheat region was John Phineas Goodnow. In the portrait above, he is shown at about 43 years old [depending on whether you trust the census records of Warren County, New York, where he was born, stating 1830, or the Capay Cemetery headstone, stating 1832] with his second wife, 19 year old Ellen Elizabeth Nickell, whom he married in Capay in 1875. According to a delightfully written period narrative shared by his great grandson, Jim Hiatt: John P. was a son of Timothy and Betsy Goodnow, [in the great old portraits to the right], who “at ten years of age went with his parents to the undeveloped regions of the Mississippi Valley. There for 12 years he labored to clear the home place, helped to erect needed buildings, and aided planting and harvesting the crops, and proved a helpful factor in the improvement of the homestead. On starting out for himself in 1852 he joined a party of four young men desirous of crossing the plains. Each of the five purchased an ox-team and with such other equipment as the long journey demanded they left the civilization of the east for the unknown regions of the west, crossing deserts and plains and mountains, and streams, and finally landing at Hangtown, October 1, 1852. At that time Hangtown was in the height of its mining activity and the sight of so many enthusiastic miners was sufficient to arouse the ambition of the young ‘tenderfoot’ from the East. Soon he was prospecting for himself, but Dame Fortune in her horn of plenty seemed to have no golden nuggets for him, and after a time he abandoned the mines. In 1853, in the employ of a stock-raiser, he drove a herd of cattle into the Sacramento Valley, and while working on a ranch located two claims, but these he was obliged to abandon, as they proved to be parts of grants. Before the building of the railroads the freighting business was one of the most important occupations in California...so this is the occupation he turned to--like so many disappointed “miners” would do in California.





John Phineas finally makes it to Yolo County--and Settles in the Capay Valley

John Phineas first married an Ellen Freeland, September 22, 1859, in what was then Sonoma County, recounts great grandson Jim, *“and without anyone knowing what happened to her, he re-married another Ellen: at his new marriage to Ellen Nickell several years later, he did not know if his first wife Ellen was alive or dead. In 1860, after having purchased 10 horses, he began to haul stock for a living... He and Ellen Elizabeth Nickell were married in Capay in 1875. She was born in Missouri, and came to California with her father, J.J. Nickell, a veteran agriculturalist, who would reside in Yolo County, 4 miles west of Knights Landing...the proprietor of a well-improved and well-managed ranch that in its appointments compares favorably with any in the neighborhood. She and John Phineas had 5 children, 3 of whom survived beyond the age of ten. Jim points out that his grandfather Chester Melvin was the first, born in 1876, along with two daughters, Laura Pearl, and Daisy Mabel, and two other sons, William Newton and Raymond Edward, who both died of diphtheria at ages 8 and 9, respectively, a common and sometimes fatal disease of those times.*



Our John P. Goodnow, finally settled in this area in 1867 the owner and occupant of a ranch 3 1/2 miles north of Capay, in what is usually known as Hungry Hollow [read how he named it in volume 1]. In addition to this home place, consisting of 320 acres, he owns 300 acres in township #10, two miles southeast of the “Upper Place,” both sites being ideally well adapted for the raising of general farm products. The other tracts he owns are adapted for grazing purposes, rather than cultivation, and include 320 acres of timber and pasture land in the hills and seven hundred acres of similar land between Guinda and Rumsey in the Capay Valley. Over this wide area of pasture land cattle, horses and mules roam during the grazing season, and the raising of these kinds of stock forms, the owner's specialty.



Photos: Top left, elder Tim and Betsy Goodnow at “The Upper Place” in Hungry Hollow; left, their first son, “Chet,” on his 30-horse-power tracker, working the HH land he would keep and is still in the Goodnow-Hiatt family today; top right, Jim’s great-great grandparents Timothy and Betsy Anne showing their daughter-in-law, Ellen, old photos of their day [note mantel in background]; right, “Grandpa Chet” Goodnow “being silly” with a locally caught--and very large!--catfish...perhaps even caught in Goodnow Slough running through Hungry Hollow?! Grandsons Jim, Randy and David Hiatt frequently enjoy catfish together to this day!

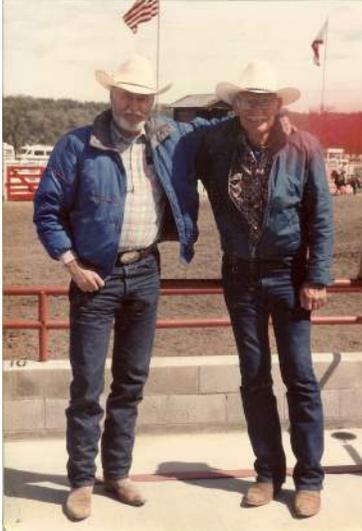


Remember Me...in loving memory of some we have known Page 19

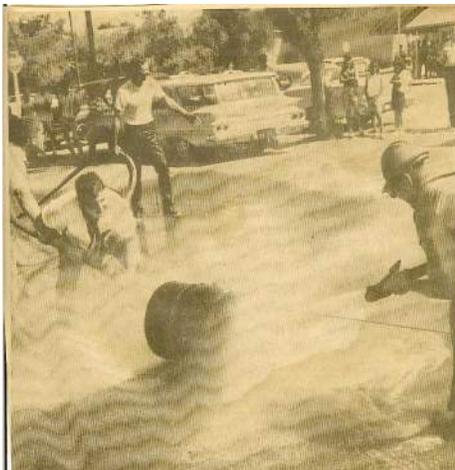
and will always cherish...

In Memory of all "real" Cowboys

the family and friends of Tom Monroe (far left; Nov. 1918-Feb. 2003) and Gene Rominger (near left; Nov. 1922-Jan. 2012) wish to honor and remember Gene Rominger and Alfred Hayes. *When we get to the other side of the last ridge, these cowboy buckaroo buddies will be there waiting, horses saddled and the dogs frisking excitedly about--we look forward to seeing them again!*



Above, with his buddy Tom Monroe in the 1990s, Gene once again attends the Stony Ford Rodeo. At right, in 1965, Gene assists the Madison Fire Department in a July 4th competition with Esparto Fire Dept. Gene is standing at the rear, holding the hose for Ron Groh and Bob Stephens; Freddy Lantz holds the hose for Esparto at the right.



WATER BATTLE — Madison county fire departments & county health at the Stony Ford Rodeo

Gene Rominger was one of our first and most helpful and supportive member-subscribers--and friends!! He will be forever missed and loved!
Betsy Monroe, editor-writer



Alfred Hayes

-- we honor and remember a life

well-lived:

May 1920--Jan. 2012



Go to: greatercapayvalley.org to watch their oral history memorial videos

Turkey Vultures or Buzzards

cleaning up after us...

A common sight in this area, the vulture is harmless, though can look frightening and act intimidating. They do not kill, but are purely *scavengers*, doing an important job of cleaning up the carrion as it begins to rot--they cannot digest it any other way! BUT lore has it, if you upset them in flight, they regurgitate on your head!

And according to good ol' Wikipedia:

The Turkey Vulture is a bird found throughout most of the Americas. It is also known in some North American regions as the turkey buzzard (or just buzzard). It's a scavenger and feeds almost exclusively on carrion, finding its food using its keen eyes and sense of smell, flying low enough to detect the gasses produced by the beginnings of the process of decay in dead animals. In flight, it uses thermals to move through the air, flapping its wings infrequently. It roosts in large community groups. Lacking a syrinx—the vocal organ of birds—its only vocalizations are grunts or low hisses. It nests in caves, hollow trees, or thickets. Each year it generally raises two chicks, which it feeds by regurgitation. It has very few natural predators. In the United States of America, the vulture receives legal protection under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Turkey_Vulture



Hungry Hollow's own 5th-generation descendant Jim Hiatt is an amateur 'birder' and photographer in the Capay Valley, whose great grandfather named this area *Hungry Hollow*. Jim shared the pictures, information and stories on the next two pages with us. Recently looking for Redbud to photograph[see page 23], and knowing there was a "Redbud as big as an almond tree just before you get to the Boy Scout Cabin," up the Capay Valley on Cache Creek, he came upon this sight: "There were about 10 or so Turkey Vultures (Buzzards) [Cathartes aura; Page 155 of *Birds of North America*; cited on page 2 of this journal] sitting on fenceposts and one on the ground...There was a roadkill doe, and a fresh one, so they didn't want to move--enough for way more than 10 vultures, as the doe was sizable. They let me drive, slipping the clutch, up to within 30 feet of them before one or two flew a short distance away. With the full 8X snapped away with my camera, I got some lovely ones--keepers, in that normally they just won't let you get this close. Very first couple pix show something they do on colder mornings--they will spread their wings out as shown to soak up more of the sun's warmth."





...more birds common to the area: similar Curlew and White-Faced Ibis

Our own amateur 'birder' of Hungry Hollow, Jim Hiatt, shared these pictures, information and stories, too:

“**The Curlew** in these photos are feeding on bugs that come out of our barley ground as it is being irrigated. [See page 222 of *Birds of North America*; the scientific name is *Numenius americanus*]. They are pretty much year-round here, and especially during farming season will follow the irrigation cycles of alfalfa and whatever else is being irrigated. From the air, since they fly high enough to see the ‘blue-ness’ and ‘shimmery-ness’ of distant fields under water, they go there until irrigation is done, then go on to the next field. Another species much like them, except for a completely brown and iridescent blackish color, is the ‘White-Faced Ibis’ [*Plegadis chihi*, page 128 of *Birds of North America*]. They are frequently found together feeding in the same field and are entirely tolerant of each other. The Curlew is a brownish bird that, like the Ibises, has a ‘decurved’ bill, meaning curving downward, and are pretty much the same size.

Three generations back, Grandpa Chet used to shoot these for the family table. These birds feed very close to each other, and you might be able to ‘ground-sluice’ them, as the old-timers put it, and harvest 10-15 birds with one shot, thus economizing on shotgun shell cost. This was especially during Depression times. Whatever ‘dunderhead’ ever thought up the term ‘White Faced Ibis’ should have had his eyes tested again. There just ain't no white *FACE* [tongue in cheek], just a small white ring around the eye.”



White-faced Ibis: “This species breeds colonially in marshes, usually nesting in bushes or low trees. Its breeding range extends from the western USA south through Mexico,” and parts of South America. Its winter range extends from southern California and Louisiana south to include the rest of its breeding range.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White-faced_Ibis

White-faced ibis *Plegadis chihi*

Identification Tips:

Length: 19 inches Wingspan: 37 inches

Sexes similar

Medium-sized long-legged long-necked wader

Bill long, dark gray, and decurved

Holds neck extended in flight

<http://www.mbr-pwrc.usgs.gov/id/framlst/i1870id.html>



Photos here are from herein listed on-line sites: above is non-breeding plumage and to right breeding plumage.

Vaca Valley & Clear Lake Railroad Route



At left: a train comes into Capay from Esparto, heading toward the agent-less, one-story depot, which was at the far west end of town, then. Later, the station was moved to its current location on Highway 16 at Country Road 85 [now a private home, see page 2]; its odd angle is due to an older RR spur going northwest to Cache Creek to pick up gravel from the Duncan Ranch. The main tracks continued straight out of town, while the main street [which is Highway 16, now] jogs to the left, over the Winters canal. The depots in Guinda and Rumsey were also built in 1888.



Clockwise from directly above: Guinda's new 1-story station with townspeople, 1888; photo of the Cadenassa Section Boss House [or perhaps tool house, speculates Henry Bender] as it later appeared in 1974; the Guinda Hotel, which was built in 1893 opposite the depot, as it appeared in 1974--alas, no longer standing! Note the original hotel sign on the small outbuilding to its right.

*The end of the line...
the tracks never make it beyond Rumsey.*

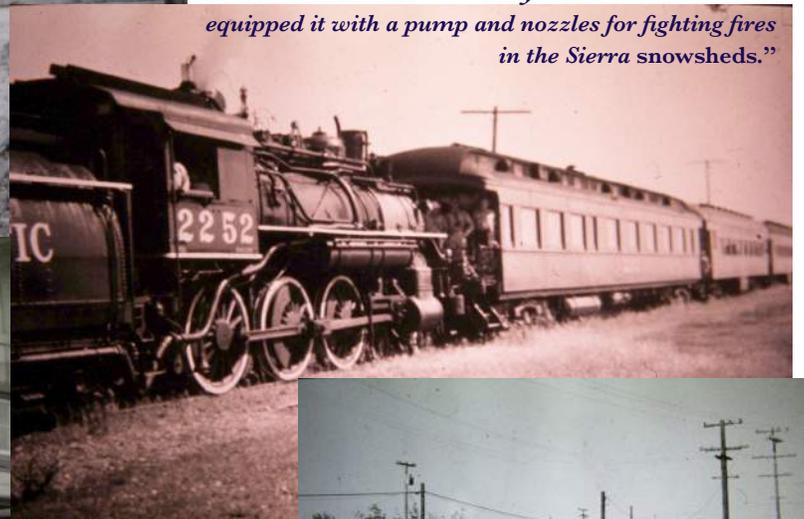


Above: people on a suspension bridge in Rumsey about 1888. Right: Rumsey's 2-story Depot, far right, with the manually operated turntable, railroad siding and section house seen in the distance. The RR company also built a 23-room hotel, far left--believing that the tracks would one day go on to Clear Lake!



According to research by Meredith Stephens, "The last excursion train used the RR tracks in early 1940. [see photos below]. As trains became increasingly less profitable, and the automobile made the passenger train an anachronism, it was decided to abandon the section between Capay and Rumsey on April 15, 1934. The section to Esparto was abandoned on July 10, 1941, except for freight, which continued until 1975, at which point the tracks were removed--about 100 years after they first reached Yolo County."

At Left: C Excursion train, the last to leave Madison [note Karlstad Supply Store in background]. Below, according to Henry Bender: "This train was the April 16, 1950 Pacific Coast Chapter, Railway & Locomotive Historical Society excursion to Esparto. No. 2252 was a Class T-1 Ten-Wheeler built by Cooke in 1897. SP had equipped it with a pump and nozzles for fighting fires in the Sierra snowsheds."



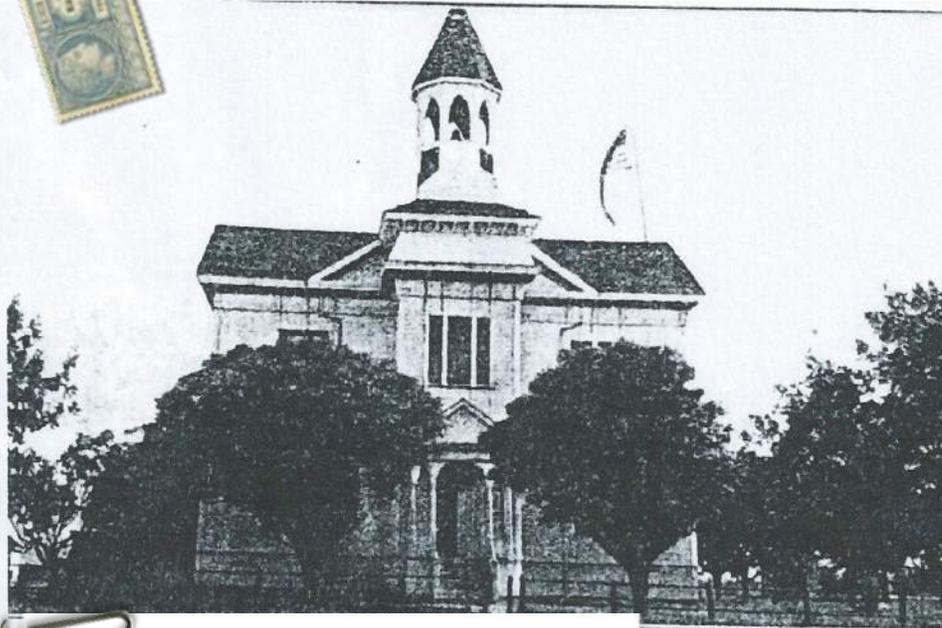
At left and right: Winters Depot being torn down on October 27, 1967--a local farmer wrapped a chain around it and with his tractor, just pulled...





The *DAWN* Yearbook for Esparto High School, printed the picture below of the original 2-story “Esparto grammar school,” built in the summer of 1891, that would be “secured and equipped for use of the high school...” the feature explained. In the fall of 1892 the first term of high school opened here, in the new *Esparto Union High School District*, which encompassed 15 grammar school districts and much of western Yolo at “three hundred and twenty square miles.” In 1892 The Esparto High School was the second high school in Yolo County to open (after Winters High School). There was only one teacher the first two years, but a second was added in the third year, and soon afterwards the school became accredited under the leadership of its principal, Miss R.M. Thompson.

School photo and information courtesy of Fulton Stephens



FROM:
**THE GREATER CAPAY VALLEY
 HISTORICAL SOCIETY**
 PO Box 442
 Esparto, CA 95627

CAPAY VALLEY

March 2012

Volume 7

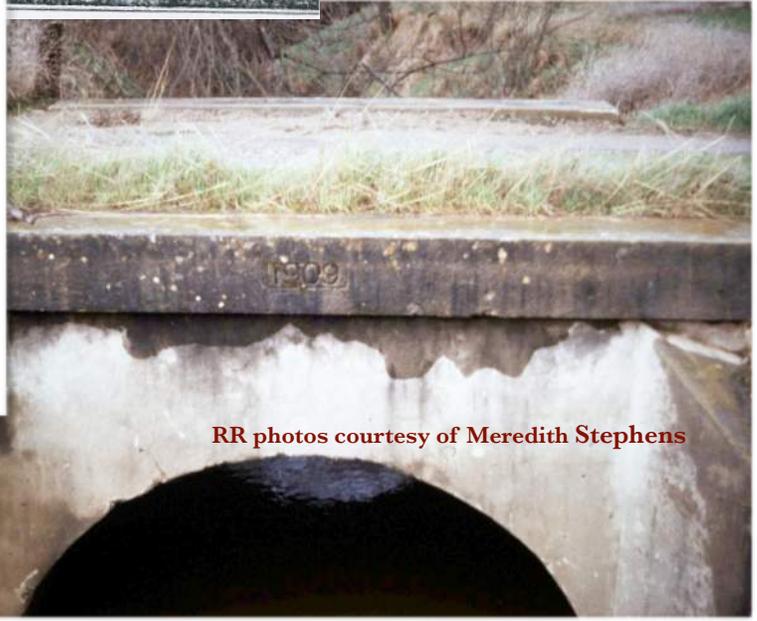
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Below: the last trains have pulled out...by 1975 the last tracks between Winters and Madison (2 pix, bottom left) were removed. Vestiges like the 1909 concrete Capay Valley RR bridge below are all that are left--along with the being-restored Esparto Depot and BZ Bees Capay Depot at Highway 16 & CR 85.



RR photos courtesy of Meredith Stephens

