

The Historic Stephens Family of Yolo County



**MOORE DAM AND
DITCH**



**LOCAL OAK TREES
LARGEST, OLDEST,
& VARIETIES**



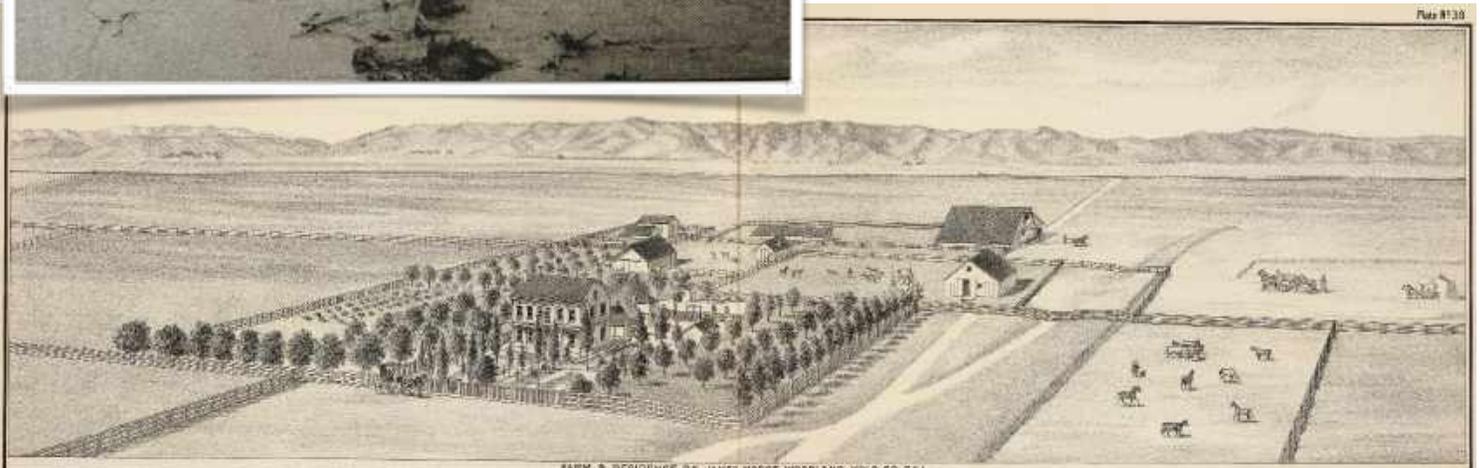
**ACORN
WOODPECKER
AND HIS ACORNS**



Moore Dam, continued from last Newsletter:

Built by James Moore, west of Woodland in Yolo County. Image at left was found at the Yolo County Archives: originally constructed by James Moore about 1856, this photo shows the dam in 1914. It washed out and was rebuilt in 1953 and in 1983 the district took it down and created a siphon under Cache Creek, diverting water to the south and into the Moore Ditch.

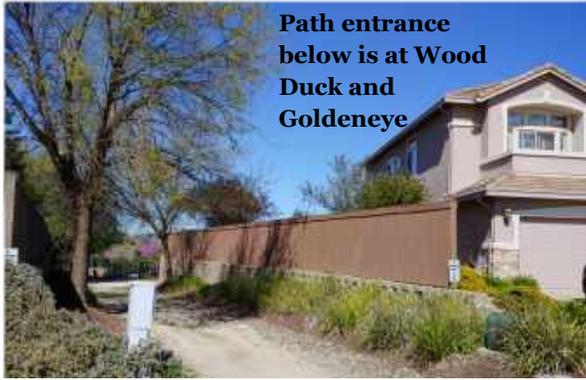
Image below of James Moore Homestead, was acquired from the Davis Rumsey Map Collection, www.davidrumsey.com. It appears in the *Yolo County Atlas of 1879*.



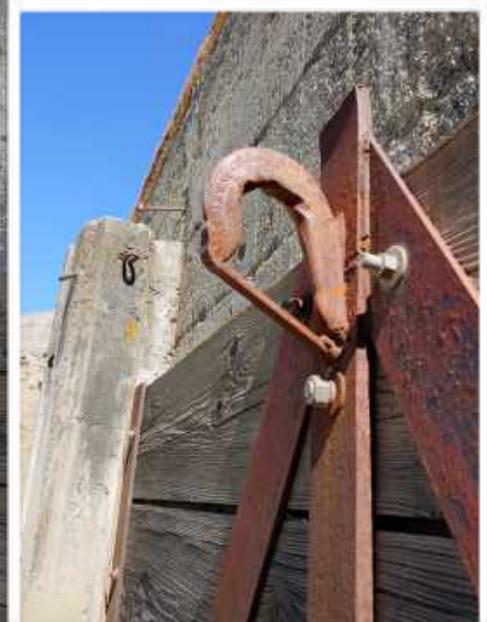
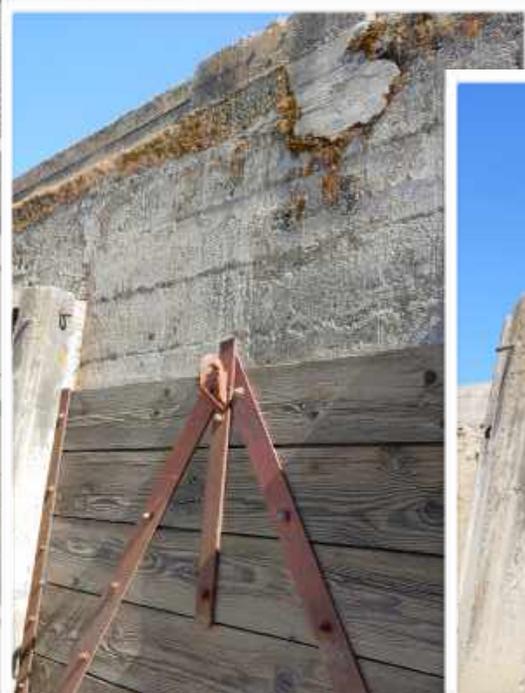
As explained in the last newsletter, Joe Farnham claimed the original dam was built in the 1850s as the local beaver would have done it: sticks and brush. “He soon had a pond of water high enough to gravity-feed 500 cfs of water into a newly dug canal called *Moore Ditch*—today called Moore Canal, which extended several miles to the south-easterly direction and terminated on his property,” seen in the etching above. “He constructed a system of lateral ditches from the Moore that followed the terrain ridges, allowing all the farmers in the area desiring surface water from Cache Creek to have use of it.” It would eventually be rebuilt as seen here. After his death, “his heirs sold to *Consolidated Water Company*, which later sold to *Yolo Water and Power Company*, which built a concrete dam with a redwood and iron flashboards system with spillways and a fish ladder to accommodate salmon and steelhead.”

Moore Dam is on private property, unavailable to visit, but you can walk along the historic Moore Ditch—but you have to find public access first, and that is not easy! In this collage, I show the entrance to a public path onto the Wind Wings Open Space Park—but there are no signs as such; see below. Drive through the subdivision and keep turning left: Gadwall to Wood Duck to Goldeneye.

Cross the wooden footbridge over Moore Ditch; walk straight ahead into the Park and on to Cache Creek, but you will notice to your right a historic water gate and iron fittings; and if you walk back toward the west, you will come to a concrete culvert with a sign that seems to read MOR 0104S; I checked with the county and, yes, this is Moore Ditch, today called Moore Canal.



Path entrance below is at Wood Duck and Goldeneye



A great read: *After the Gold Rush*, by David Vaught, about the Yolo County settlements of pioneers like James Moore in the 1850s; The Johns Hopkins University Press

Ag Education continues to be a focus at our Yolo County High Schools

Below is the new Green House Complex at Woodland High School seen from one of the Ag Department drones' photographs. Drones—like massive greenhouse complexes—have taken on an important role in Farming, so are part of the curricula, per WHS Ag Professor Eric Dyer.



Looking down on the back entrance. Notice the Desert Garden; one of four new biome gardens on campus integrated into the Ag Complex.
We need to note with special recognition those Ag teachers who paved the way for this Woodland facility: Dr. Luther Dubois, Mr. Paul Leathers, Mr. Floyd Blair and Mr. Lafe Kincaid, and many others.
Photo and text compliments of Eric Dyer.

I would be remiss if I didn't write something about the **COVID19 Pandemic** occurring right now—globally. As of April 1, 2020, The global count of cases near 1 million, a 5th of them in the US; 100-250,000 are projected to die in the US; we are *Sheltering-in-Place* to hold that number down; and according to the *Daily Democrat*, our own Public Health Officer Dr. Ron Chapman reported out: "Data released by the California Department of Public Health on Monday showed 5,763 positive cases and 135 deaths statewide. Locally, there are 25 confirmed cases as of Tuesday morning including one death," and went on to say, "we don't have the capacity to test everybody...If they have a cough and a fever at this point in time, it's assumed to be coronavirus, as our flu season is coming to an end." He noted that anyone experiencing flu-like symptoms needs to stay at home and self-isolate and clarified that there are currently no home tests for COVID-19 that have been approved by the Food and Drug Administration. By this date in California, nearly 1 million had filed for unemployment—by far a record. The Legislation and Administration had agreed to a "Stimulus" Package that included emergency funding for affected individuals and companies, greater even than that offered during the Great Depression. A National Emergency was declared as well as Shelter-in-Place orders by state. But through it all, along with brave Health Workers and Grocery Store Workers, our Farmers and Farm Workers continue their "Essential Work"—*on the Frontlines*, if you will, because feeding California is what farmers do. We are eternally grateful!

NOTE: as of April 12, 2020, globally over 1.8million cases & over 109,000 deaths; in US over 533,000 cases & over 20,000 deaths



The Flu Pandemic of 1918-1919: We politically-incorrectly called it *Spanish Flu*, not because it started there, but because while it ravaged Europe, Spain was hardest hit...it came across the Atlantic by cruise ship in Sept. 1918 and made its way to the West Coast...it came in 3 waves: Spring of 1918; deadliest in 2nd wave in Fall of 1918; and last in early 1919...; hardest hit on West Coast was SF, but it hit Woodland, and on Oct. 14, 1918, it was front page news on the Daily Democrat, wherein Dr Blevins warned people to stay inside and if they got symptoms, go to bed and stay there...we were still fighting in WWI in Europe, of course, so our soldiers were hard hit...obituaries of war casualties started appearing next to flu casualties...Drs and Nurses risked their lives and there was no medicine or vaccine...close to 200 Woodland residents died in a population near 4000, and 500,000 Americans died, and 20 million globally...worst pandemic since the plagues (thought today to be a flu) of the Middle Ages...all sound familiar?

Also in the news on April 1, 2020—sadly, none of this is an April Fools Joke: In a San Francisco Chronicle article by Kutris Alexander titled, **“California’s winter goes down as one of the driest, thin snowpack shows,”** he wrote, “When California snow surveyors trekked into the Sierra Nevada on Wednesday, they officially logged

this past winter as one of the driest in state history.” He says our Sierra snowpack is 53% of average for April 1; the “11th lowest in 71 years of record keeping.” So, while our reservoirs were filled in the last year, after our last *drought*, predictions are that we are in for yet another set of drought years.

1942-1962 Bracero Program — as I wrote in the last Newsletter, when the Japanese farm laborers were removed from California in 1942, it created yet another crisis: a *farm labor shortage* that had to be filled, so *The Bracero Program* was created. I was surprised how hard it was to find information on this program—obviously so important to Yolo County. Even at the Yolo County Archives, with a great deal of support from Archivist Heather Lanctot. But from the news articles she was able to find for me—primarily written in Central Valley newspapers, from Fresno to Bakersfield—I was able to piece this together: while the need for this program in 1942 was obvious and not so controversial, phasing it out was more so. Some, but not all, Japanese farmers and farm laborers had returned after WWII and internment, but neither they nor the other groups who had come to labor in their stead was enough. Many in government tried to force US citizens to *get off Welfare* that had been created during the Great Depression and to take up farm labor—but that presented many obstacles, of course. Not the least of which was the fact that people in politics are rarely farmers, and therefore do not understand the need for a *seasonal* workforce and the migratory nature of the work; nor the literally backbreaking nature of “stoop labor” and the fact that some people have perfected the skills for it, have the stature for it, and had the tenacity that was lacking in the unskilled. Because everyone *but* the farmers was beginning to worry about this influx of Mexicans that may not want to leave—and by the time WWII ended, all but farmers assumed there was less of a need—a movement started to try to end the program. Culled from several articles from the Fresno and Bakersfield papers, I pieced together the highlights such as this:

From some Bakersfield Californian articles, one in September 1964 titled “Problems admitted with farm labor,” they reveal details about the Bracero Act (PL 78) in 1951 and the General Immigration Act (PL414) and an attempt by Congress to pass a 5-year phase out of the 1942-1962 Bracero Program were ways to control the past problems with “wetbacks” from Mexico flooding over the border by hundreds of thousands in the 1940s and 50s. It went on to say that even with the new mechanization and unwilling, inexperienced, unemployed US citizens, “stoop labor” needs would not be met. Just as today, it went on to say, “political conservatives claimed that Welfare was the problem: cut off their welfare checks and they will either work or starve.” It didn’t work.

To put a local and personal face on the Bracero Program's effects in Yolo County, I reached out to some who I knew would have such memories: Rosendo Sanchez, for

one. He wrote for me: "My dad, Robert Sanchez, ran farm labor camps both in Esparto and Capay but neither was ever referred to as the Capay or Esparto Migrant Camp. The Capay camp was on the west end of Capay on Fred Vannucci's property. He actually owned the camp, but my Dad rented from him and actually operated the camp. The Esparto camp was located where the Dollar General store now sits.

Both the Capay and Esparto camps housed Mexican Bracero workers from 1959 thru 1962 to the best of my recollection and they were primarily used for the tomato harvest when tomatoes were picked by hand in 50 lb. lug boxes. Juvenal Peña and Juan Contreras partnered in growing tomatoes and contracted the laborers from my Dad. We provided the housing, meals and transportation to and from work. We had between 150-300 Braceros in each of those years and they came from various parts of Mexico. Some did not speak Spanish well at all, but rather local indigenous dialects; but there were always some interpreters available to get the Indian-Spanish-English connection working. They usually arrived in early July and some stayed until the last harvest in late September and early October. Very hard, grueling work, but just a very few could not make it. Most were less than 5'6" and 130 lbs. and would pick 75-125 boxes of tomatoes a day, 6 days a week, for up to 10-12 hours a day. They were paid by the box and it was tough work.

I worked for my Dad at the camp in a variety of jobs ranging from sweeping floors, waking the cooks in the morning to get breakfast started, serving meals, gassing up the trucks and busses, filling the water cans, delivering hot meals at lunchtime, driving trucks and busses—you name it, my Dad had me do it. I was pretty good at math so he made me the bookkeeper, too.

We did hire some of the migrant workers who lived at the Madison Migrant Camp and they would drive to the workplace on their own and some would come to the camp for the breakfast or dinner meal—all for \$.75 each meal. Other migrant farm workers lived out of their cars or groups rented shacks or small houses on some of the local farm properties. There was also a "hobo" band that made the rounds of the different harvests and ventured from harvest to harvest, and we often hired many of them to do much of the tomato and sugar beet field crop thinning and weeding, apricot and peach harvest in Winters, and the almond harvest in the Esparto-Capay Valley area.

I do remember Martin Monarrez was also a labor contractor, as well as Lincoln Martinez' dad. My dad stopped operating the Esparto camp and Monarrez took over that facility sometime after 1962. The Martinez camp was NE of Esparto near Cache Creek."

I also tracked down Ernie Lehman, whose parents Ike and Kay Lehman owned *Ike and Kay's Tavern*—now the *Road Trip Bar and Grill* in Capay—and here is what he recalled:

"I saw many new faces each year that would come into Ike and Kay's. I realized years later these were people who used to come and go because they followed the seasonal farm work. Whole families used to show up in the springtime and leave in the fall following work. I never understood it at the time, but a fair amount of people drifted into Capay just following farm work. In fact in the 50s and early 60s truckloads of labor workers from Mexico would show up in the spring and leave back to Mexico in the fall. They were called *Internationals*, by some. That's when I met Rocendo Sanchez, as his mom and dad owned and operated the labor camp in Capay. Internationals were very cool people, trying to make a better life for their families in Mexico by doing farm work in America. Mixed in with them were your down-and-out winos, etc. I'm guessing it was quite an operation, really, the migrant camps, as you had cooks, supply purchasing, transportation, scheduling, job procurement, payroll, etc. At some point in the early 60s the International just stopped coming, but you had your down-n-out winos, and your other migrant families, because the work went on. The Internationals were great and I missed them; I even played hide-and-seek with some of the younger ones with Rocendo and Mossey. The same workers often showed up each year; some migrant kids even went to Capay School with us for a few weeks or months each year."

And just as I was typesetting this newsletter, I get an email from Emma Heradia, EHS class '72:

"Hi! my name is Emma (Heradia) Ercila—I saw a picture of my grandfather in one of your articles. The article was on John Hatanaka; there's a picture of a tomato harvester and the man on this machine is named Theodore Melgoza; he worked for John for over 25 years, mostly irrigation. My grandfather passed away over 20 years ago. The wonderful memories remain in our hearts. I love your writing; one can relate to the experience of John and his family, especially when he was starting his farm. I enjoy reading historical article and books, especially when you're reading about a person or persons you knew. I met John and Toy Hatanaka as a child I would stay weekends with my grandparents, who lived there at Hatanaka farm. John was great with employees; he had a small duplex built for my grandparents and another worker. I also remember three other large buildings; one was a kitchen with large dining area for workers, looked like large army housing. The other two were used for sleeping, bathing and washing laundry. The cook lived in a tiny trailer, and I used to help her cut potatoes and run the flour tortilla machine. Wow, I could go on and on. I have such great memories. Thank you for bringing them back." *When I mentioned Emma's email to Toy and John, Toy says she recalls little Emma, and John said he mostly ran his own "camp" and remembered the family well. When needed, he also hired Bracero workers from men like Mr. Sanchez, but also had his own, regular workers like Mr. Melgoza.*

Capay Valley Oaks

Finding the oldest and largest and grandest...

Elizabeth Monroe - November 25, 2019

According to the guide for Western US from the Center for Urban Forest: a 40-year-old tree like

an Ash can intercept over 4,800 gallons of stormwater; remove 6 pounds of air pollution; and reduce energy costs, if shading a home, by 30 percent.



At top is a healthy and stately Valley Oak found on the Full Belly Farm—or was this one at Circle K? We saw a lot of grand trees! At right is a really old one, less healthy and “stately” for age—but by far the largest, so far: 85” diameter! So, 7’1” side to side at about shoulder height. Cleveland Bellard, seen here, is the current owner of this property in Guinda—guarded by his Dingo-mix herd dogs, so one needs to have his permission to see and measure it. Quite grand!



Below, not the biggest, but the Grandest

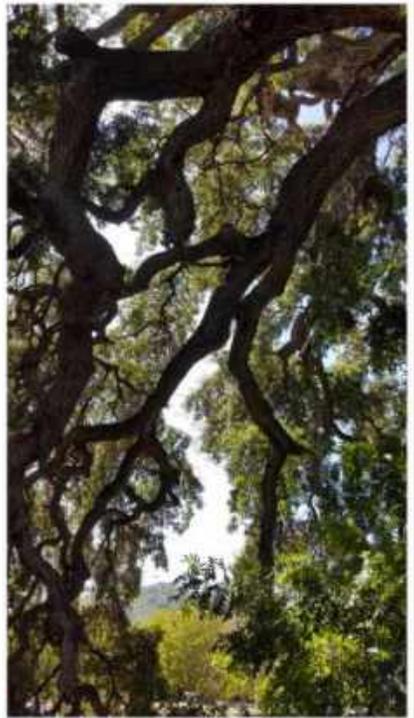
In addition to age and size there is *grandeur*—like the beautiful Valley Oak we found along Highway 16 just past the town of Rumsey; we dubbed it *The Rumsey Oak*



Not the largest, but certainly the most majestic: notice at left the health and structure inside the tree; and above, the healthy full foliage. On the next page, notice how the tree's branches interweave; and they even rested on the ground—classic good healthy behavior for such a grand Valley Oak.

"The Tree Nerds," as we dubbed ourselves, measured the trees of Capay Valley, September 20, 2019: Top photo, left is our *Rumsey Tree*

Gnarled like a Hobbit habitat, apparently the heavy limbs resting on the ground is a healthy sign in that they stabilize the very long and heavy limbs that are prone to breakage in Valley Oaks—not just *magical*, but *useful*.



Great close-up of the gnarly bark.

Outing organized and led by Rolf Frankenbach and David Wilkinson of the *Woodland Tree Foundation*, with help from Doctor Jaylee Tuil, recently getting her PhD from UC Davis for her Dissertation, titled "*A Historical Ecology of the Cache and Putah Creek Alluvial Plain in the Sacramento Valley of California.*" And help from: Jim Hiatt, Ken Trott and Elizabeth Monroe.

The Stephens Tobacco-Sheep Barn—no longer with us as of 2020. Why should we care? Just *an old tin barn* no longer being used, right?



Above right you can see the impressive cathedral effect inside this unique barn—all the better to dry tobacco, an experimental crop of the 1914-19 era, locally. It would later get sheep feeder troughs, seen just above, as the Stephens Brothers would become well-known for their sheep industry in western Yolo County. Above the troughs were expansive hay lofts.



Well, like a lot of our old abandoned barns and buildings in Yolo County, it *does* just look like *an old tin barn*—if we don't know the history behind it. As I wrote in the last Newsletter issue, on page 8, when I was notified it was about to be torn down as part of the Granite Construction Mining project north of Capay and Esparto, I did some research at the request of Duane Chamberlain, 5th District Supervisor. Sadly, we failed to keep it standing, but Granite has offered to *mitigate* its loss at their own expense with a shade structure built from its materials and to put up an historical sign they are letting me design—to include not only the history of this barn, but what it symbolized about our Pioneer Ag History.



As seen on the signs at left, *Fulton and Frank Lane intersected with County Road 87, just north of Esparto. Fulton and Frank were 2 sons of George Dickson Stephens*—who would have 13 children and divide his portion of the Stephens brothers’ 8000 acres between them. This parcel—where the barn sat—was primarily known in the 1900s for its sugar beets and sheep. Below, you can see looking west from the barn the 4-mile stretch of Capay Hills that was the 8000-acre hill-range of the neighboring Duncan Ranch—amassed in the 1850s by 2 other brothers, Wyatt and William Duncan. In the late 1800s, pioneers like the Stephens and Duncans began buying up parcels of the old Mexican land grants as they became available—in this area, mostly the Rancho Canada de Capay.

The Stephens Brothers, John D. and George D., were actual ‘49ers—making their way to Capay Valley in 1851, where they bought this particular parcel of the Mexican Land Grant *Rancho Canada de Capay*, among many other parcels, in 1851.



Starting the Bank of Woodland and making their wealth in cattle, sheep and farming as the *Stephens Agriculture and Livestock Company*, they also started a water company in 1859, the Cottonwood or Capay Ditch Company, which eventually became the Clear Lake Water Company, to manage their own irrigation needs, but also that of other earlier pioneer farmers. They were on the cutting edge in farming and ranching practices and it would have been natural for them to take a risk on a unique crop like tobacco—and to build unique barns to that end. For a short time, tobacco was farmed by several local farmers, including the Greek Chiflakos Brothers who went so far as to start a cigarette company in the Bay Area. In addition to our famous, annual Almond Festival, locals also held more than one rice festival, and a tobacco festival in 1919—complete with music, picnicking and airplane rides, bringing 3000 people to the area. As it turned out, these crops were not well-suited to this area, and at the end of WWI were phased out—and the barns repurposed for sheep and grain. The history of this 100+-year-old barn represents many things: an industrious early pioneer family still farming in Yolo county; agricultural ingenuity and adaptability; and the importance of Cache Creek to Yolo County agriculture.

John and George Stephens were born in Missouri—like a good many local pioneers—to Joseph Stephens and Catherine Dickson. In total, Joseph would have 24 children with 2 wives, several of whom made their way to Yolo County. On August 6, 1849, brothers John Dickson and George Dickson Stephens arrived in Sacramento, California, with a party of mountaineers and trappers, having left Cooper County, Missouri in May. They worked as prospectors in different locations in the area, including Hangtown, earning around \$8.00 a day. They spent the winter of 1849-1850 in a cabin near the American River. That July, the brothers returned to Sacramento to purchase cattle and mules. They drove the stock west of Sacramento to the Berryessa land grant, Cañada de Capay, on the banks of the Cache Creek (known then as the Jesus-Maria River). George D. Stephens first married Laura Wilcoxson in 1872. She passed away in 1875 leaving 2 children: Kate and Jospeline. George then married Nannie Lucas in 1877 and they went on to have 11 children: John, Louise, Sarah, Margaret, Elizabeth, George, Fulton, Frank, Ben, Jack and Paul. While brother John D. focused on the bank and had one daughter while living in Woodland, George D. Stephens remained on the Stephens Oakdale Ranch near today’s Madison, running their ranching interests, until his death in 1901; at which time his estate was divided between his wife and 13 children. His oldest son, John L. Stephens, retained the Oakdale Ranch home, and passed it on to his son, John Dudley "Dud" Stephens, former 3-term Supervisor of Yolo County. The home is currently owned by Dud Stephens' son John D. Stephens, Jr. The Historic Oakdale Ranch is home to the second oldest working ranch in Yolo County to be owned and operated continuously by the same family—since 1852. [see pages 51-53 in *The History and Stories of the Capay Valley*, by Elizabeth Monroe; or Journal vol 3, pages 11-13 on greatercapayvalley.org under *Journals*]

So, it was not just an old tin barn, you see, but a symbol of early pioneer farmers to Yolo County—and while we were not able to save it, we hope to commemorate it with a historical sign under the shade offered by over-a-century old materials salvaged from the barn. It will be accessible on a public-access path between the Capay Open Space Park and the Esparto site—where we are trying to expedite getting a parking area and footpath access along what is currently referred to as the *Granite Esparto Trail*, along the north of Cache Creek, north of the town of Esparto; the sign to be situated near the barn’s old location.

There is a long history of mining for minerals on Cache Creek—so there is a history of controversy, too.

In researching the history of the Stephens Tobacco-Sheep Barn and this early Pioneer Family, I did some research on the mining history and on the promised restoration that would follow the current mining operations. One interesting article is quoted below: it was in 2007 and tried to show the promise of public-use regional Open Space Parks, etc., in a very favorable light. There are many news articles to access at the Yolo County Archives showing the controversy at the time—concerns like the loss of access to the creek; lowered water tables nearby; contamination of water; loss of Ag land, etc. But the mining licenses continued to flow, and this one concerning *Granite Construction Company* is just one of many—the one I focused on because it concerned the Stephens Historic Barn, and I am interested in the Capay Open Space Park because my own Duncan-Monroe family owned that parcel before selling it to *Cache Creek Aggregates*, who later sold to Granite Construction Co. [see *Capay Historical Resource Study, Granite Construction Co, 2001*]. So, herein I will give an overview of what the public has been promised and where all this mining and restoration is supposed to lead—with Public input and activism!

Cooperation was vital in birth of Yolo's new park - Sacramento Bee, The (CA)

- May 16, 2007 - page B1 — **Lakiesha McGhee, Bee Staff Writer** could be reached at (916) 321-1121 or lmcghee@sacbee.com.

41-acre stretch along Cache Creek will open to the public this fall, allowing visitors to play among purple needlegrass, wild monkey flowers and elderberry. A groundbreaking today marks the start of construction at Capay Open Space Park, north of Cache Creek outside the rural community of Esparto. Several years of planning involved a gravel mining company deeding the land to Yolo County. "This park is a result of a lot of collaboration between public and private partners that is finally coming to fruition," said Mariko Yamada, chairwoman of the Yolo County Board of Supervisors. The land for the park was dedicated in 2004 to Yolo County by Granite Construction Co., which operates an adjacent gravel mine. The company has a mining compact with the county that provides a 30-year permit to mine for gravel in Yolo County if the company develops plans to restore the land. Some of the restored land must be designated for public open space. Ultimately, Capay Open Space Park will include 250 acres dedicated to the county by Granite Construction as it completes its mining operations, said Ben Adamo, Granite Construction plant operations coordinator. The next 50 acres will be dedicated in about nine years to provide a man-made lake at the park, Adamo said. Bulldozers, scrapers and a clamshell dredge will continue to mine for gravel nearby. "We are looking forward to having the park adjacent to our mining," Adamo said. "It's a good opportunity to show how we go about our business." During a recent visit to the park, the sounds of drilling could be heard from the mines as a jack rabbit darted across the vast open land. A variety of birds, including blue herring and ducks, were spotted near the creek. County park officials said plans include constructing picnic areas and hiking trails, enhancing native vegetation and removing non-native plants. The idea is to make natural assets accessible to residents nearby and visitors from afar, said Scott Lines, county principal park planner. "Mom can grab the kids, hop on a county bus and walk over to the park," Lines said. "You can get your feet wet in the creek without fear of being washed away." Yamada said the park represents the county's commitment to preserve open space, despite development pressures. The \$615,000 project is funded partly by funds from Propositions 40 and 50, passed by voters for river parkway and habitat restoration. Additional funding includes fees paid by local gravel producers and a separate \$30,000 donation from Granite Construction, county officials said.

Construction of Capay Open Space Park was scheduled to be complete in October, 2007.

Where: 15603 County Road 85, north of Capay and Cache Creek

Contacts at the time were: Yolo County Parks and Natural Resources Management Division, (530) 666-8029

My notes about the above article: 1) the so-called *lake*, due at about 2013, is nothing but an off-limits gravel pit as of 2020. The *Cache Creek Parkway Plan* glorifies it as a swimming and boating-type lake, but admits it may never be such a feature, depending on summer water tables each year. It is more likely to be a wetlands area for birds—and it is up to the county to decide what to do with it. 2) The gravel operators also admit they do not welcome/allow people near their operations—it is not safe. And, 3) *Mom cannot easily grab the kids and walk from the Capay bus stop*, she will have to drive to the park itself—there is no safe walking path from the town of Capay where the *Yolo Bus* stops.

In the fall of 2019, you could still walk to the end of the current Capay Open Space Park and see in the distance the Stephens Tobacco-Sheep Barn sitting right in the middle of the gravel mining area—as seen, below, across several gravel pits created by past mining; pits that are promised to be “restored” either as farm land, or to public-access open space and lakes.



Above, you see what an active mining site leaves behind. Below, you see what such a site can become: A wetlands habitat—similar to what it used to be before farming and mining changed the landscape.

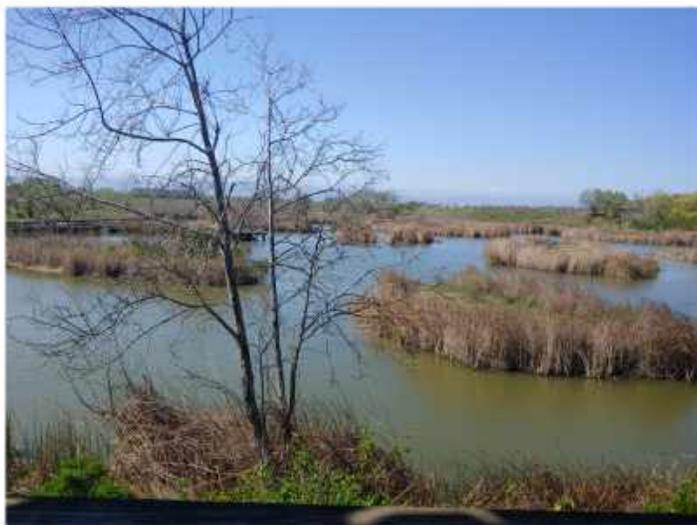
Cache Creek Parkway

Plan*—Ever heard of it? I hadn’t either. But I borrowed a copy of this 2018 plan which covers the 14.5 miles of lower Cache Creek from the Capay Dam to the town of Yolo—and it is a fascinating read. One I fully intend to learn more about as I get involved in helping the county stand behind truly implementing it. Some of it is what I call *smoke and mirrors*, glossed-up by people who do not actually *know and love* this river we call Cache Creek, its environs and nature and history—and importance to the people who actually live on and use it.

As I continue to study this *Parkway Plan*, I will write more in the next issues—stay tuned!

*a product of the 1996 *Cache Creek Area Plan* (CCAP); comprised of *Off Channel Mining Plan* and *Cache Creek Resources Management Plan*

Jan T. Lowrey Cache Creek Nature Preserve and the Cache Creek Conservancy, wherein Yolo County and the gravel mining operations supported the creation of wetlands to encourage wildlife: Teichert Aggregates mined for gravel, mortar sand, etc, and then helped the county turn the “pits” into this wetland, seen directly below at left. [turn north onto 94B off of Highway 16; then left/west onto CR 20; read pages 75-76 in *The History and Stories of the Capay Valley*, or Journal vol 4, pages 15-16 at greatercapayvalley.org under **Journals**]



In the photo directly below, in the distance you see the Granite Construction site northwest of Esparto Bridge; from this point you can see the fairly natural path of the creek bed in the dry March of 2020. **Important note:** Mining does not take place in the creek bed, but no closer than 200 feet to the north.



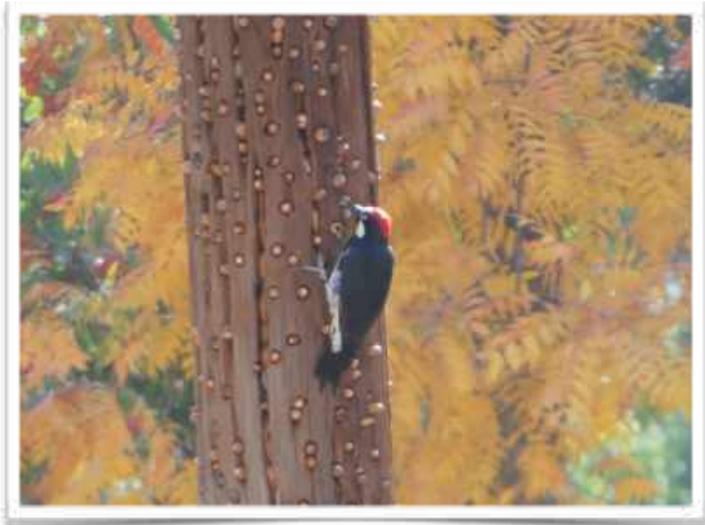
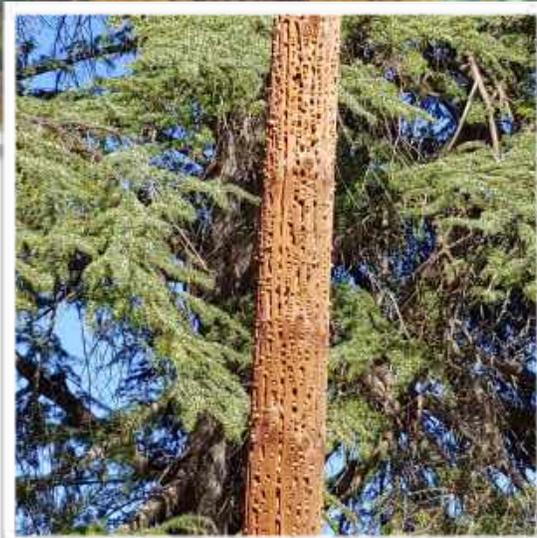
Eventually—in 20-30 years—there will be public-access paths tying Capay Open Space Park to all the other sites. But sooner than that, we are pushing for the opening of shorter paths, like the one between Capay and Esparto sites, along the north side of the creek as seen at right.

Asked about the *California Acorn Woodpecker* and his interest in our local birds, Jim Hiatt sent this with these new photos:

*Acorn Woodpecker
at work*

I still remember from my 1976 class in Ornithology, taught by Miklos Deserios Francis Udvardy, born in Hungary, and who emigrated to America when their neighbor to the north—Russia—came down to "liberate" them. He learned English upon arriving... lots of humorous things about him, including mispronunciation of English words that were so cute. As they don't accent syllables in Slavic languages, the word peripheries ended up as "Perri-ferries,"--and 44 years later I still remember those things with a chuckle. He was likely my favorite professor; and of all I had, one of perhaps the two or three best Bird Professors in the world.

'Twas either my 2nd or 3rd midterm when I had a question on the Social Habits and Interrelationships of the Acorn Woodpecker, as he'd spent some time on that matter...It's the California Acorn Woodpecker we're speaking of here, and 'tis a worthy subject to learn from.



**Greater Capay Valley
Historical Society;**

**416 Lincoln Ave.,
Woodland, CA 95695**

TO:

This page, three shots taken by our Capay Valley Birdman, Jim Hiatt: 2 of an Acorn Woodpecker; and 1 of the iconic post at the western end of the historic Capay Cemetery where thousands of acorns have been stashed for who knows how long.