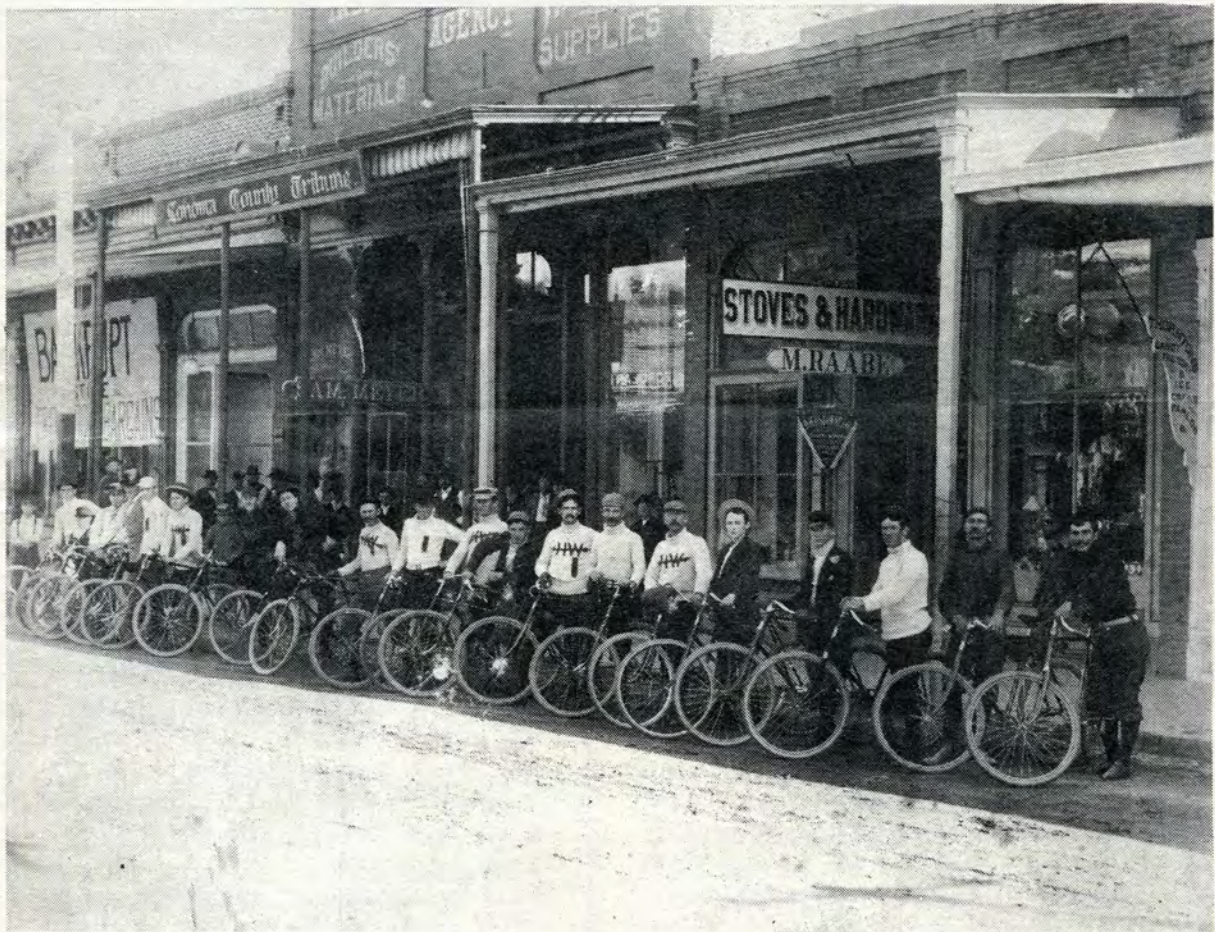


# RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

Spring, 1987

issue 32



The Healdsburg Wheelmen, West Street, September 22, 1895

## Transportation Part 2

Healdsburg Museum and Historical Society  
P.O. Box 952 Healdsburg, CA 95448

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## Editor's Desk

At long last we bring you "Transportation Part 2". It has been almost a year since our last issue, "Transportation Part 1", but our readers were warned! (see back cover this issue) Having covered roads, ferries, bridges, liveries, stage coach drivers, and early aviation in our last issue, we now turn our attention to the railroads, the bicycle craze of the 1890's, and the automobile.

When the first railroad came to town it was called the "San Francisco and North Pacific Railroad Company". The struggle to build that railroad is recounted in our first feature. A railroad through Dry Creek Valley? Well, it almost happened, several times. Find out why it didn't in Pat Schmidt's, "Dry Creek Express". Those cracker-jack sportingmen, the "Healdsburg Wheelmen, are once more cycling as fast as they can through Sonoma County in our third article. And our last feature charts Healdsburg's shy love affair with that most infernal of all machines - the auto.

Editor  
Headquarters

Hannah M. Clayborn  
Healdsburg Museum  
Edwin Langhart founder  
132 Matheson St.  
(707) 431-3325

Phone

# The Iron Horse Comes to Healdsburg

The Iron Horse certainly did not gallop to Healdsburg. In fact at one time it seemed as if he would never get here at all. Since the time that Charles Minturn, previously known as the "Ferryboat King", opened his three mile Petaluma and Haystack Railroad on August 1, 1864, Healdsburg citizens had been discussing the possibility of a railroad to Healdsburg. But at first they got only paper railroads.

In October, 1865, the Petaluma and Healdsburg Railroad Company was organized by C.W. Langdon of Santa Rosa, I.G. Wickersham of Petaluma, and John McMannis, merchant from Healdsburg. None of these men could raise enough capital for a locomotive, however, and the project ended in mutual recriminations.

Public opinion was split as to what route such a railway should take. Although everyone agreed that Healdsburg was the natural northern terminus, Petalumans and Vallejoans vied to carry the route through their cities. To insure a profitable outcome, a group of Petalumans adopted a charter for a company to build a railroad to Healdsburg with a branch to Bloomfield on December 26, 1867. The company was to be called the Sonoma County Railroad Company. A rival company led by John Frisbee, who had interests in both Healdsburg and Vallejo, was organized soon after. Both companies expected a subsidy of \$5,000 per mile from Sonoma County. Yet another company, the San Francisco and Humboldt Bay Railroad Company, was incorporated by Utah mine owner, General Patrick O'Conner on March 2, 1868. This was the most ambitious of the three companies. O'Conner, along with partners, Fred McCrellish, publisher of the San Francisco "Alta California" newspaper, and John McCauley, a promoter and lobbyist, envisioned a route from Sausalito to Humboldt Bay, and incorporated the company for \$8,600,000.

The State Legislature decreed that the matter of a subsidy for any of the companies would be decided by the voters and a colorful campaign began. Each company accused the other of knavery and every town in Sonoma County held rallies and listened to



San Francisco and North Pacific RR  
 Engine No. 7  
 the "Petaluma",  
 built: 1878 by  
 Grant Iron Works.  
 Henry Delano  
 Grant (Engineer)  
 in cab.

photo courtesy:  
 Alma Grant

public speakers. The Healdsburg "Democratic Standard" newspaper came out in favor of the Vallejo route endorsed by Frisbee, where it was thought they could connect to many more lines to other parts of the state. During town debates the Petaluma route supporters were accused of bringing their own cheering section to influence the town.

At the special election on May 12, 1868, both Santa Rosa and Healdsburg turned in large majorities for Frisbee's company, but the overall county vote (2095 to 1586) favored the Sonoma County Railroad, via Petaluma. But as long as a railroad - any railroad - came to Healdsburg, local citizens were content.

Petaluma held a "ground breaking" ceremony for the railroad on its main street on July 4th, but that was the beginning, and end, of construction under the Sonoma County Railroad Company. The Petaluma group soon transferred all their rights to General O'Conner and the San Francisco and Humbolt Bay Railroad Company. But even General O'Conner and his partners did not have all the cash that was needed for such a large project. They got the cash from a man named Asbury Harpending.

Harpending had gotten to California late, in 1857, but he seemed to have a knack for making money. Only a sixteen year old from Kentucky with five dollars in his pockets, he managed to make several hundred on board ship by auctioning off the purser's fruit supply, and arrived in San

Francisco with a respectable "stake". Soon after he took over a mining claim that several experienced miners had finally abandoned as worthless. Harpending dug a little deeper and struck gold. During the Civil War Harpending spent much time and money plotting to make California a Confederate state. Frustrated in these plans he went east, served for a short time at Shiloh, and was given a naval captain's command by Jefferson Davis. Harpending ended up as a prisoner on Alcatraz after being apprehended on a recently-purchased Confederate cruiser on San Francisco Bay. After being released he was broke, and fearing rearrest, he hid out in the foothills near Fresno. Here he incidentally struck another gold mine, netting \$800,000.

Harpending was busy buying up land parcels for the extension of Montgomery Street across Market along with banker William Ralston in 1868, when he was approached by Fred McCrellish of the San Francisco and Humbolt Bay Railroad Company. The enthusiastic young Harpending quickly bought out Gen. O'Conner and John McCauley's interests, and became 90% owner of the company. McCrellish was retained as a lobbyist for the project. With visions of Congressional land grants through the Eel River redwoods, Harpending soon began construction of the rails. He sent Gen. O'Conner to Washington to lobby for the grants, and set to work planning a suspension bridge across the Golden Gate.

Grading proceeded north of Petaluma through the fall and winter of 1868, but by early 1869 Harpending was running short of cash. Some Healdsburgers, suspicious of any pro-

ject emanating from Petaluma, called the construction "earth scratching", a vaccination to ward off a railroad. The local Republican newspaper, the "Russian River Flag", supported the company, predicting in its December 3, 1868 issue that,

"The coming of railroads [the Flag expected two] will open up to us a market for our inexhaustible supplies of white, black, and live oak, madronia, manzanita, laurel, pepperwood, fir, redwood, and other timber, thereby giving employment to a greatly increased population. Our people will be encouraged to enter more largely into grape culture for shipment to the older states, and every business and branch of industry will be quickened by the coming of the iron horses."

Construction was nearly to Santa Rosa when, in order to raise cash, Harpending and Ralston held a disastrous auction of the Montgomery Street lands. Setting the minimum bid too high, the land went to the shills. A few days later construction on the railroad stopped. When the Sonoma County Railroad Company had been turned over to the San Francisco and Humboldt Bay line, the Petalumans had made a stipulation that the Railroad must have 10 miles of track laid by November 16, 1869, or the rights would revert to the original holders. Three days before the deadline Harpending reorganized the Company under the name, San Francisco and North Pacific Railroad, and got another contract from the Sonoma County people.

Harpending was now considering a transcontinental railroad line and had secured control of another paper railway, the Oroville and Virginia City Railroad, towards the end of putting a line through the North Fork of the Feather River (the Central Pacific owned by the "Big Four" had gone over the Sierras). This idea did not please the Central Pacific owners, who exerted pressure through William Ralston, the banker that had backed construction of the Central Pacific.

It is impossible to say whether Harpending could have succeeded with his scheme. As it happened, Ralston was able to persuade him to sell, which he did, to Peter Donahue, owner of the San Francisco and San Jose Railroad. A few days before the sale in June, 1870, Sonoma County voters had agreed to a subsidy of \$5,000 per mile to the first company to complete 10 miles of track, also agreeing to issue \$25,000 in bonds to the California Pacific Railroad (which had 163

miles of track in northern California) upon completion of the first five miles from the Napa County line. There was a stipulation, however, that if the San Francisco and North Pacific railroad, or any other company were able to complete a railroad through the county, no bonds would be issued to the California Pacific.

Colonel Peter Donahue moved in with amazing speed, putting 100 workers on the job. Unlike Harpending, Donahue would not use Chinese laborers, using mostly Irish workers instead. Donahue had built up the enormous Union Iron Works from a tent foundry in San Francisco where he had come to find gold in 1849. His foundry eventually turned out ships, mining machinery, and locomotives. Now he had progressed to building railroads. And build he did. By September, 1870, Petalumans actually rode on a working locomotive. At the end of October a beautiful yellow passenger coach, with "Lakeville" emblazoned on the side, hauled Petalumans to Santa Rosa amidst a champagne-drenched party. Soon two more coaches arrived, the "Santa Rosa" and the "Petaluma". Regular service between Petaluma and Santa Rosa began October 31, 1870. The terminal of the railroad was a brand new town built by Col. Donahue on Petaluma Creek, modestly named "Donahue".

But the California Pacific had not given up, and 100 Chinese laborers were busy trying to beat the S.F.N.P. through the county. Donahue rushed more men to Santa Rosa. The California Pacific added 200 more Chinese laborers. The race was on, and the California Pacific was soon covering a mile a day. All of the county cheered their favorite and set wagers. The "Russian River Flag" predicted glumly the inevitability of a buy-out by the California Pacific, and ultimately a take-over by the Central Pacific, as early as October 6, 1870. Their prediction came true.

Suddenly the race was over. Colonel Donahue had been convinced, once more by William Ralston, to sell out to Milton Slocumb Latham, owner of the California Pacific, one of the richest men in San Francisco, ex-governor, ex-senator, and head of the London and San Francisco Bank. Donahue, convinced that the California Pacific would always be a competitor, made a tidy sum on the sale on April 1, 1871, and as part of the deal agreed to finish the road to Russian River, using his own Irish laborers. The San Francisco and North Pacific now became the Petaluma and Humboldt division of the California Pacific.

On July 1, 1871, the Latham line was opened to Healdsburg. Actually, the first train run to Healdsburg was on June 24, 1871, consisting of a baggage car, smoking car, and two coaches. Strangely, no town celebration marked the long-awaited arrival of the Iron Horse. A railroad bridge was completed over the river in the fall of 1871, and a permanent depot building was completed by January 18, 1872.

And again, as the "Flag" had predicted, Milton Latham relinquished control of the California Pacific line to the Central Pacific Big Four by September, 1871. In a hurry to complete the line and win the county subsidy by the June 21, 1872 deadline, the Central Pacific opened passenger service to Cloverdale on March 15, 1872. J.G. Dow of Healdsburg, the first man to tame the route in 1849, was aboard the first train through.

To further confound Healdsburgers, the Central Pacific Big Four soon decided that the completed line would not help much with their long-range plans (only Governor Stanford showed an interest), and by January, 1873, the line was purchased for one million dollars by none other than Col. Peter Donahue!

But under any name, or owner, northern Sonoma County now had a railroad. Some towns were not so lucky. The town of Bloomfield, which had long been promised a line, was left out of the system completely, even the narrow gauge system of western Sonoma County, and its industry thereby dwindled. In 1884 the southern end of the line that came to be known as the Northwestern Pacific was extended to Tiburon, and later to Sausalito. In 1889 the line was extended north to Ukiah, and by 1914, to Eureka.



Healdsburg Depot, built in 1872, seen circa 1915. Northwestern Pacific train unidentified. (There was a locomotive built in 1883 at the Grant Iron Works named "Healdsburg". It was scrapped June 10, 1937.)

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# Dry Creek Express

by Pat Schmidt

"ALL ABOARD! ALL ABOARD! Bloch's, Lamberts's, Hendrick's, Cozzens Corner, and all points north!"<sup>1</sup> "All points north" might have been the destinations of Albion on the coast north of the mouth of the Navarro River or the town of Cleone north of Fort Bragg. A train running through Dry Creek Valley with stations with the names above? No, it never happened, but it almost became a fact.

Soon after the railroad came to Healdsburg in 1871, talk began about other proposed lines to be built in all directions. Various railroad companies vied for the opportunity to build these new lines. Until then, the only roads into and out of Healdsburg were muddy sinkholes in the winter and dusty ruts in the summer. All the freight coming into town prior to that had to be hauled in by wagon and travelers came by uncomfortable stage, in a wagon or buggy, or on horseback. People in the area at the time had watched the new "iron horse" being extended in the East, then the building of the transcontinental railroad, and finally northward, and at long last, to Healdsburg.

Because of the lumber mills that proliferated along the coast, a railroad had been built from Albion to the mill at Wendling (now Navarro on present Highway 128). The Northwestern Pacific Railroad proposed a line from Healdsburg, through Dry Creek Valley following on up Dry Creek to where it meets present day Highway 128, through Booneville and on to Navarro.

In the 1880's and 1890's plans went ahead for the line. In October, 1898 surveys were made and right-of-ways were purchased. But financial problems and various other problems delayed construction.

One major obstacle pertained to some of the landowners in Dry Creek Valley. The survey line for the road ran directly through most of the farms - in fact it bisected every parcel of land it crossed. This, of course, infuriated most of the farmers. Having to travel a half mile

or a mile down the road to a crossing in order to reach their own land near the creek was unthinkable to them. A group finally sued the railroad and received settlements. The owner of the railroad was so incensed that he vowed he would never sell the right-of-ways back to them. And he did not, though most landowners were able to negotiate and were able to buy back the right-of-way parcels in the early 1940's.

When the line between Willits and Fort Bragg was built in 1912, there was no necessity for a railroad up Dry Creek to haul lumber from the redwoods into Healdsburg. And, too, the advent of the automobile and trucks was by then making the railroads outmoded.

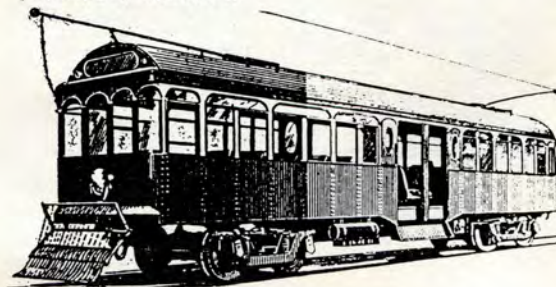
However dreams die hard, for in 1914 a new company, the Healdsburg Electric Railway asked the City Trustees to sell to the highest bidder a franchise to operate along West Street (now Healdsburg Ave.) from the Northwestern Pacific tracks to Powell Avenue. They stated "that the County Supervisors would probably grant the franchise for laying rails from the city limits of Healdsburg to the Mile House [Dry Creek Road and Healdsburg Ave.] and thence up Dry Creek Valley to intersect the road from Geyserville to Skaggs Springs [corner of Dry Creek and Canyon Roads]. State law required that tracks must be laid in the center of the street for a space of two feet on each side of the track. The life of the franchise is to be 50 years."

Even though similar electric railways were built in Petaluma and Santa Rosa, the Healdsburg Electric Railway, through Dry Creek Valley, never materialized. Oh, but wouldn't it be fun to be able to pack a lunch and your fishing pole and climb aboard for a day at the coast?

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"Healdsburg Tribune" Newspapers:  
5/11/1898; 5/28/1898; 12/12/02; 6/18/04;  
7/16/14; 8/20/14.



1. Lambert's: Dry Creek Store; Hendrick's: Canyon and Dry Creek Roads; Cozzens Corner: Dry Creek and Dutcher Creek Roads.

# The Healdsburg Wheelmen

It is difficult to imagine now, in an era of fancy sports cars, just how popular and racy the bicycle was in the 1890's. By 1899 there were 312 bicycle factories in the United States selling one million bicycles a year. In fact, so many people were spending money on bicycles that other manufacturers of entertainment items, such as piano makers, experienced a severe slump in sales. Daring young men and women (some of whom wore scandalous "bloomers"), middle aged folks, and just about anyone who could reach the pedals, wanted a bicycle, or a "Velocipede" as they were sometimes known.

The earliest ancestor of the bicycle did not have pedals. In 1816 two wheels were attached by a wooden bar and the rider mounted the bar and pushed himself along with his feet. This contraption was named the "Hobbyhorse". In 1840 Kirkpatrick MacMillan added cranks, driving rods, pedals, handlebars, a seat, and fancy armrests to the old hobbyhorse design, but it was not until the 1860's that bicycles were manufactured and sold in quantity. A Frenchman, Pierre Lallement added a rotary crank to the design and sold these to Parisians, christening his invention a "Velocipede". The Velocipede was later nicknamed the "boneshaker" however, partly due to its wooden wheels.

The first commercially successful American brand name bicycle was the "Columbia", manufactured by Colonel Albert A. Pope from about 1878 on. This looked much like the bicycle as we know it, and incorporated the ball bearing and coaster brake. Another innovation during this time was the "high-wheeler", a bicycle with a larger front wheel (up to 5' high) that went at faster speeds, but might have been nicknamed the "bonebreaker" for the rider's tendency to fall from such a height. Gradually further innovations, such as the addition of sprockets and solid rubber wheels, brought about the "safety bicycle" which most people were using by 1890.

It is difficult to tell how long Healdsburg cyclers were raising dust on northern Sonoma County roads before some were organized as the "Healdsburg Wheelmen" on April 10, 1895. The national parent organization, the League of American Wheelmen, had been around since 1881, when it had



started agitating for better American roads and initiated the "Century Ride" (50 miles going, 50 miles back). Some of the founding members of the Healdsburg Wheelmen were Ben H. Barnes, W.R. Haigh, J.E. Ewing, A.W. Garrett, J.D. Hassett, J.B. McCutchan, and J.J. Livernash, editor of the "Healdsburg Enterprise" newspaper.

On August 11, 1895 the Healdsburg Wheelmen had their first meet out at the old Matheson Park at the east end of Matheson Street. A reported crowd of 500 turned out to watch the strictly amateur cyclers avoid ruts and chuckholes on the track during eight breathtaking races. Local boy, Harvey Fuller, carried the day, winning the 1/8 mile, 1/4 mile, and 1/2 mile dashes, the latter in 1 minute 25 4/5 seconds. Ellis Decker, "a Healdsburg crackerjack", was too fast to race, but did an exhibition 1/2 mile in an astonishing 1 minute 6 4/5 seconds. The only sour note came when Lou Goldman was accused of deliberately throwing his race with Quim Sewell because he had bet heavily against himself before the race.

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The second Wheelmen meet, on September 8, 1895 drew 1,000 spectators. Not all of the races were speed matches. The "slow race" was won by the last man over the finish line, and was meant to show grace, agility, and control. Even the speed races were friendly, as older cyclers were often given handicaps of a few hundred yards head start. Some "Crackerjacks" were disqualified by the League as "professionals". All in all, they were good-natured meets with the thrilled spectators witnessing several spectacular falls by determined racers.

The third, and apparently final, Wheelman race was held on September 29, 1895. Frank Byne from San Jose, the Pacific Coast Speed Record Holder for the 1/2 mile (1:01), was on hand as an onlooker. The prize for the most graceful rider went to Jack Haigh, but he had stiff competition from male riders who came dressed as women or in comical costumes. The "Healdsburg Wheelmen" set a local record that day for the mile run at 1 minute 10 3/4 seconds. (The minute mile was finally broken by "Mile a Minute Murphy" who rode behind a Long Island Railroad train in 1899. He did the mile in 57 4/5 seconds.) The Healdsburg Tribune declared in its reporting of the event on October 3, 1895: "Healdsburg cyclers...manifest a spirit of enthusiasm which those cities [Santa Rosa and Petaluma] have yet to show." The paper did not claim riding superiority for Healdsburg cyclers, however.

Trouble came for the Healdsburg Wheelmen later that month when the League of American Wheelmen suspended local riders Charles Beard, Quim Sewell, Will Barnes, Harvey Fuller, Deventhal and others for taking part in the unsanctioned races. Regarding the suspensions the spokesman

for the local club told the press, "We don't care a rap..." and we "...will henceforth disregard and ignore entirely the dictations of the League." The Healdsburg Tribune stood behind the local Wheelmen, calling the League, "a despotic and imperious combination".

The Healdsburg Wheelmen continued on until at least April, 1896 when they were entertained by the Santa Rosa Wheelmen. The trip down to dinner at the Occidental Hotel was leisurely, because of several ladies in the crowd. The "Imperial Bikers" of San Francisco were also guests of the Santa Rosans.

Although the organized Wheelmen may not have lasted long in Healdsburg, it is certain that bicycle riding remained a popular mode of transportation and recreation here throughout the 1890's. The bicycle craze faded in the United States after 1900, due mainly to the popularity of the automobile. Between 1900 and 1905 three-fourths of all bicycle manufacturers went out of business. The popularity of cycling made a comeback in the 1930's, but sales were not up to their 1890's levels until 1940. The generations raised with the automobile rediscovered the fun and economy of pushing pedals and bicycles became virtually a rite of passage for children. Few things, after all, are remembered more fondly than our first bikes.

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4/11/1895 p.1; 8/15/1895 p.1; 9/12/1895 p.1;  
10/3/1895 p.1; 10/24/1895 p.1; 2/20/1896 p.1;  
4/23/1896 p.1.

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## Major Phillips, a Remembrance

As most of you know, a great friend of the museum, Major Phillips, died last fall. Those few of you who did not know him personally might know him through his article "Dry Creek Memories" in the summer, 1985 issue of the "Recorder", wherein he recounts his early life.

Major's biography has been related elsewhere, but it is important to note how singularly essential this kind, elderly gentleman was to the museum. Besides being both a museum trustee and charter member of the historical society, Major was the greatest

supporter the museum had after Edwin Langhart's death in 1979. Major, who perhaps knew better than anyone what Mr. Langhart hoped and wanted for the City's museum, carried out those wishes with great faithfulness. Major spent a great deal of his time, energy, and optimism on the museum, especially in times of adversity. He was a friend indeed. I only wish he could have lived to see the museum's final move to the Carnegie Library building.

It is quite safe to say that the museum will never be the same without him, and we all miss him greatly. At times we still expect him to walk through the door, smiling no matter what the occasion, saying simply, "Hiya."



# Those Infernal Machines

Oh, fateful day, July 15, 1900, that the citizens of Healdsburg could finally count among their ranks something marvelous - an owner of an automobile! The editor of the "Healdsburg Tribune" declared that "Healdsburg may now be said to be a strictly up-to-date town..." because of the efforts of lumbermill owner W.T. Albertson, who rode the first resident auto into the dirt streets of downtown that sunny Sunday morning. Albertson had purchased the four horse power machine, manufactured in Newton, Massachusetts, in San Francisco, crossed with it on the ferry to Sausalito, and started out from there at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday morning, July 14. Coming through Mill Valley he came up a very steep grade which, "...tested the capacity of the machine thoroughly..." but soon "...lost himself..." further on and had to stop overnight in Santa Rosa.

The first Healdsburg automobile, it was proudly boasted, could propel itself up to 40 miles per hour, but road conditions limited it to 10 or 15 miles per hour. The visionary Mr. Albertson paid \$950 for the machine, which he was sure, "...would come into general use in the not too distant future." To be ready for that future he planned to equip his lumbermill for making automobile repairs and to "...give instruction in their care and manipulation."

On July 25, 1907, the City Trustees found the proliferation of self-propelled vehicles warranted the setting of a speed limit of 10 miles per hour, although they had originally wanted an 8 mile per hour limit.

Eight years after the first permanent auto combusted its way into town, it had inspired enough brethren to cause the organization of the "Autoists". On Sunday, June 14, 1908, a heavy traffic of horseless carriages warmed the highway on the way to Bosworth's Grove in Geyserville. "Every variety of machine was represented, from the wheezy little out-of-date coffee grinder to the luxurious and noiseless seven passenger touring car". The local newspaper estimated the astounding worth of the assembled autos at \$150,000. A barbeque was the reward for the travelers, and the object of the first gathering was declared to be the "...improving of the highways threading the county ...not alone for automobiles, but for every



First local auto owner, W. T. Albertson in his horseless carriage, July, 1900.

traveler, footman, wagon, and bicycle...for the auto was not here to occupy the road alone, the horse had his rights to the high way and he should share the good road with the machine." Such generous sentiment brought a round of applause from the humans present.

Those who could not afford an auto themselves were delighted with the inauguration of the local "auto stage" between the Plaza Hotel in Healdsburg and Calistoga on July 7, 1913. Owner F.M. McKeever of Kight's Valley, whose son, J.C. McKeever served as driver, charged only \$4.00 round trip. Unfortunately, an accident on this route and the failure of the McKeever's to obtain a mail contract from the postal department caused the closing of the line by October that same year.

Meanwhile R.T. Bruce was having more luck with his Stanley Steamer, running tourists and residents from Healdsburg to the Geysers. This run was also begun in 1913. Just one year later C.N. Thomas was promoting the sale of stock for a county-wide autobus network, the Sonoma County Transportation Company, centered in Santa Rosa. By the fall Healdsburg and Cloverdale were joined by an extension of that company. Fare from Santa Rosa to Healdsburg was 80¢, and the fare from Healdsburg to Cloverdale was 60¢.

But 1914 was a year for competition in not-so-mass transit in Sonoma County. On Christmas eve of that year it was reported that "...a big, red, twenty passenger car..." bearing the name "Indiana" had slipped into Healdsburg with passengers aboard. Reported to be a make of auto entirely new in California the wheels were solid rubber like a motor truck, and the body rode on "springs that afford the ease of riding on pneumatic tires..." Its operator was M. Chappel.



Proud owners of "Cole" cars gather in front of the old Sotoyome Hotel on West Street (now Healdsburg Ave.) Note unpaved streets and horse manure in foreground.

C.F., Mabel, and Emmett Phillips in first car.

photo courtesy:  
Pat Schmidt

1914 was also the year that saw the first taxi in town, run by Ted Baisden, and the first recorded auto theft. In December, 1914 thieves managed to abscond with a brand new 1914 Overland car from L.W. Hiatt's Garage and Sales agency. A few miles north of Santa Rosa the thieves swerved off the slender road and plowed into the mud. Fence rails could not pry the car loose as it was stuck up to its axles, and so they abandoned it. Hiatt made the best of the situation when his car was returned announcing to the press that "Those men know the qualities of the Overland car and were willing to take mighty desperate chances in their efforts to get one."

W.S. Mathew Jr. gave the Healdsburg to Calistoga run another try in 1916, and a former veterinarian, Mr. Wilson, established service between Skaggs Springs Resort and Santa Rosa that same year.

The increase in local automobiles was perhaps best illustrated by Healdsburg's first parking problems in the downtown area. The Board of Trustees decided, on March 29, 1917, to adopt a system used by Sacramento and Oakland to park cars in the middle of the street, so as not to block downtown storefronts. The City Trustees also added slightly to the auto congestion, however, by purchasing a Ford for city use in July, 1917, for \$487.70

J.F. Birch, the owner of the fleet of autobuses that now ran from Santa Rosa to Healdsburg, bought out his competitor, A. Dunham, along with Dunham's big Studebakers, also in 1917. In 1919 he added a "big 18-passenger Packard" autobus.

Near World War I prospective auto buyers in Healdsburg could choose between many auto brands: Cole, Standardize Car, Detroit, Witchita Truck, Imp Cycle Car, Ford, Cadillac, Chevrolet, Evans, Columbia, Dort, Maxwell, Buick, or Kissel. "Auto row is getting bigger every day," noted the Healdsburg Tribune on October 16, 1919. Gasoline could be had for 22¢ per gallon in that year.

But the most telling sign of the coming importance of the automobile to the Healdsburg economy, came in April, 1920, when the Chamber of Commerce secured a lease on a portion of the Luce Tract at the east end of Matheson Street for a free auto campground. To encourage motorists to come to Healdsburg the camp offered free water and low-cost fuel. Thus began attempts to lure the automotive tourist trade, that persists to the present day.

#### SOURCES:

"Healdsburg Enterprise" Newspapers:  
6/16/14 p.8; 1/20/17 p.5; 12/29/17 p.1;  
4/17/20.

"Healdsburg Tribune" Newspapers:  
7/19/00 p.1; 6/20/07 p.2; 7/25/07 p.1;  
6/18/08 p.1; 7/10/13 p.1; 10/2/13 p.1;  
5/14/14 p.1; 8/6/14 p. 1; 11/12/14 p.1;  
10/29/14; 12/24/14 p.1; 5/4/16 p.1;  
12/28/16 p.4; 3/29/17 p.1; 5/10/17 p.1;  
7/19/17 p.1; 8/7/19 p.8; Diamond Jubilee  
Edition 8/26/40 p.9.

# Healdsburg Historical Society update/update/update

## Progress:

### Carnegie Library Restoration Project

APPROXIMATELY \$105,000 HAS BEEN SECURED TOWARDS THE RESTORATION OF THE CARNEGIE LIBRARY FOR A MUSEUM, WITH A TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST ESTIMATE OF APPROXIMATELY \$275,000. THE MONEY THAT IS SECURED REPRESENTS \$65,500 IN FEDERAL GRANTS THROUGH STATE AGENCIES, \$10,000 IN GENERAL FUNDS (EXPENDED FOR ENGINEER'S REPORT), AND THE REST THROUGH PRIVATE DONATION TO THE MUSEUM BUILDING FUND OR THE HEALDSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

THREE OTHER GRANT SOURCES HAVE BEEN APPLIED FOR: COMMUNITY BLOCK GRANT FUNDS, A SECOND FEDERAL GRANT THROUGH THE STATE OFFICE OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION, AND SONOMA COUNTY LANDSMARKS. OF THE THREE THE FIRST FUNDING SOURCE APPEARS PROMISING AND COULD ADD ABOUT \$70,000 TO THE TOTAL. THIS STILL LEAVES US FAR SHORT OF OUR GOAL FOR BUILDING RESTORATION, AND DOES NOT INCLUDE THE MONEY NEEDED FOR INTERIOR FURNITURE, SUCH AS DISPLAY CASES ETC.

THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT PRIVATE FUNDRAISING WILL BE NECESSARY TO COMPLETE THE PROJECT. THE HEALDSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY WILL TAKE THE LEAD IN SUCH FUNDRAISING, BUT WE WILL NEED BOTH THE SUPPORT OF OUR MEMBERS AND THE SUPPORT OF OTHER LOCAL CLUBS AND ORGANIZATIONS.

RECENTLY AN ARCHITECTURAL FIRM, "ARCHITECTURAL RESOURCES INC." WAS HIRED BY THE CITY TO DRAW UP PLANS FOR THE PROPOSED RESTORATION. THIS IS THE FIRST STEP TOWARDS SEEING THE PROJECT COMPLETED, BUT THERE ARE MANY MORE STEPS TO THE REALIZATION OF OUR GOAL - A PERMANENT FACILITY FOR THE HEALDSBURG MUSEUM, EDWIN LANGHART FOUNDER.

# Healdsburg Historical Society update/update/update

## brainstorming and strategy meeting planned

MARK YOUR CALENDERS! THE MUSEUM IS HOSTING A BRAINSTORMING SESSION FOR ALL CURRENT - AND POTENTIAL - VOLUNTEERS, MEMBERS, ETC. THIS IS A VERY INFORMAL SESSION TO LAY OUT A STRATEGY FOR FUNDRAISING AND OTHER MUSEUM AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY EVENTS AND PUBLICATIONS. WE WANT A TOTAL REORGANIZATION AND WE NEED YOUR IDEAS, ENERGY, HELP, AND MOST OF ALL YOUR BODY, AT THE HEALDSBURG SENIOR CENTER, 133 MATHESON ST. AT 7:00 P.M. ON TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 1987. NOW IS WHEN WE NEED YOU!

## historical potluck

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY HAS ALMOST 400 MEMBERS, AND WE'VE NEVER MET HALF OF YOU. SO A PURELY SOCIAL OCCASION IS PLANNED - AN HISTORICAL POTLUCK DINNER. (A WHAT?) YES, THAT'S RIGHT, DIG UP OLD AUNTIE MEG'S IRISH STEW RECIPE, OR MAMA'S MARVELOUS MACARONI SURPRISE RECIPE, AND BRING THE RESULTS DOWN TO THE HEALDSBURG SENIOR CENTER, 133 MATHESON STREET ON TUESDAY, MARCH 24, 1987 AT 6:30 P.M. A PRIZE WILL BE OFFERED FOR THE MOST ORIGINAL RECIPE, AND THE WINNER WILL ALSO HAVE THEIR MASTERPIECE RECIPE PUBLISHED IN THE NEXT "RECORDER". WE'LL SHOW THOSE "NEW CALIFORNIA CUISINE"-ISTS WHAT'S COOKING.

## spring faire on the plaza

THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, ALONG WITH SEVERAL LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, ARE PUTTING ON A LIVELY "SPRING FAIRE" APRIL 3 THROUGH APRIL 5. THIS IS AN EVENT GEARED MAINLY AT LOCALS, AND PROMISES TO BE GREAT FUN. ON FRIDAY APRIL 3 THERE WILL BE A SIDEWALK SALE AND ART AUCTION. ON SATURDAY A WHOLE HOST OF CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES, CONCERT, FASHION SHOW, "BIZARRE" AUCTION, AND THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S HISTORIC HOME TOUR IN HORSE AND BUGGIES AND CHILDREN'S HAYRIDE ARE PLANNED. ON SUNDAY THERE IS ALSO A HOST OF ACTIVITIES PLANNED. A FUTURE FLYER WILL GIVE DETAILS ON TIMES AND LOCATIONS, BUT RIGHT NOW WE NEED VOLUNTEERS TO HELP WITH THE HISTORIC HOME TOURS, AN HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOOTH AT THE PLAZA AND SEVERAL OTHER THINGS. IF YOU HAVE A FEW SPARE HOURS ON SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 1987 PLEASE CALL HANNAH AT 431-3325.

## county museums get together on transportation

A VERY LARGE EXHIBIT ON THE THEME, "TRANSPORTATION IN SONOMA COUNTY", IS IN PLANNING. THIS EXHIBIT WILL BE A COOPERATIVE EFFORT BETWEEN FIVE SONOMA COUNTY MUSEUMS, INCLUDING THE HEALDSBURG MUSEUM. EACH MUSEUM WILL BE INTERPRETING A DIFFERENT ASPECT OF THAT ONE GENERAL THEME, AND WE WILL BE POOLING OUR RESOURCES FOR ADVERTISING, ETC. THE HEALDSBURG MUSEUM WILL BE SHOWING, "PATHFINDERS AND PEDAL PUSHERS: HIKING AND CYCLING IN SONOMA COUNTY". THE SONOMA DEPOT MUSEUM WILL HAVE AN EXHIBIT ON THE SOUTH COUNTY RAILROADS; THE CLOVERDALE MUSEUM WILL BE SHOWING DIARAMAS AND MODELS OF THE NORTHWESTERN PACIFIC RAILROAD; THE PETALUMA MUSEUM WILL BE COVERING RIVER TRANSPORTATION; AND THE SONOMA COUNTY MUSEUM WILL BE EXHIBITING MOTORCYCLES, AUTO-MOBILE CULTURE, AND TRANSPORTATION IN AGRICULTURE.

THE EXHIBITS ARE SCHEDULED TO OPEN AT THESE FIVE MUSEUMS IN EARLY JULY. THE HEALDSBURG MUSEUM IS LOOKING FOR ANTIQUE CYCLING AND HIKING ARTIFACTS (BIKES, WALKING STICKS, PHOTOS, ETC.), AND THE OTHER MUSEUMS ARE LOOKING FOR LOAN ARTIFACTS FOR THEIR SUBJECTS. IF YOU HAVE RELEVANT MATERIAL PHONE HANNAH AT 431-3325.

## limited supply of new publications

THE ARMY CORPS HAS JUST PUBLISHED TWO NEW PAMPHLETS ON THE HISTORY OF THE NATIVE PEOPLES OF THE LAKE SONOMA AREA. ENTERTAINING AND EDUCATIONAL, THESE PAMPHLETS ARE FREE TO HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERS. MIHILAKAWNA AND MAKAHMO POMO: THE PEOPLE OF LAKE SONOMA, BY VERA MAE FREDRICKSON AND DAVID W. PERI; AND GONE, BUT NOT FORGOTTEN, HISTORICAL GLIMPSES OF THE LAKE SONOMA AREA, BY ADRIAN AND MARY PRAETZELLIS. CONTACT: MARY PRAETZELLIS, 705 MADISON ST., SANTA ROSA, CA 95401.

## at other museums

**Luther Burbank Home & Gardens**  
Santa Rosa & Sonoma Aves., S.R. 576-5115.  
~~Closed for the season until the first week of~~  
April. Gardens open daily.  
The home of Luther Burbank from 1884-1906, restored carriage house, and gardens. Gift shop.

**Church of One Tree/Ripley Memorial Museum**  
N. end of Julliard Park, S.R. 576-5233. W-Sun., 11-4. Closed for the season until March 1.  
Permanent exhibits on the history of the Church of One Tree and on Robert Ripley.

**Jesse Peter Memorial Museum**  
SRJC Campus, 1501 Mendocino Ave., S.R. 527-4479. M-F, 12-4.  
"From Straw Into Gold," featuring the SCHS Basketry Collection continues through February. The book, *From Straw Into Gold*, documenting that collection, is now in its second printing. The price is \$11.00; all sales benefit the Museum.

**Cloverdale Historical Museum.**  
215 N. Cloverdale Blvd., Cloverdale. 894-2246, 894-2067. Tu-F, 10-3.  
The century old Isaac E. Shaw House, made of local brick, has one room arranged as an old-time general store.

**Petaluma Historical Library & Museum**  
4th & B Sts., Petaluma. 778-4398. Th-M, 1-4.  
An exhibit on fans, opening in early January, will continue through March.

**Sonoma County Museum**  
425 7th St., S.R. 579-1500. W-Sun., 11-4.  
"Paintings by Anise Guarnieri," will continue through January.  
"Treasures From the Sierra Madre," a major exhibit of objects and photographs from the daily life of the Tarahumara and Mayo Indians of Northwestern Mexico, collected by Eugene Boudreau, a geologist and Sonoma County author, opens January 24th with a Members' Reception for Mr. Boudreau.

**Sonoma Depot Park Museum**  
270 1st St. W., Sonoma, one blk. N. of the Plaza. 938-9765., W-Sun., 1-4:30.  
An exhibit relating to this year's theme, "Sonoma's Heritage," is depicted by a reproduction of a one-room school, Mrs. Holz's Millery Shop (circa 1900), a pioneer kitchen, and a Victorian parlor with many paintings of that era. Permanent exhibits include a home chapel typical of those used on early California ranchos and an exhibit of miniature farm machinery.



# Museum News

# Historical Society Notes

## ALL SETTLED IN

The museum is happily set up in its new store front quarters at 132 MATHESON STREET, directly across the street from our old location. Many thanks to those who helped with the remodeling and setting up, especially: Ben Collins, Bob Haviland, Cecil Lotspeich, John Barrett, Felix Lafon, Bob Jones, Charlie Scalione, and Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Freeman.

## NOW SHOWING

Through May 16, the museum will be showing, "Movers and Shakers: Power and Providence in Nineteenth Century Healdsburg". This exhibit examines the personalities and groups that shaped Healdsburg, its economy, politics, and quality of life.

## LOOKING AHEAD

on May 17 the museum will be closing down to prepare for the opening of our new exhibit on transportation. In cooperation with four other county museums we be setting up an exhibit on one part of early transportation in Sonoma County. The Healdsburg Museum will be showing: "Pathfinders and Pedal Pushers, the History of Hiking and Cycling in Sonoma County. (SEE FLYER INSERT THIS ISSUE FOR MORE DETAILS). The exhibit will open June 2, 1987.

## ARTIFACT DONORS TO MUSEUM

Gordon Wistron	Jack Trotter
April McDonald	G. Donald Hughes
Robert Hill	Alice Burgett
Martha Witcosky	Major Phillips
Bob & June Jones	Pat Schmidt
Mike Barnes	Eleanore Wilson
June Smith	Clarice Sullivan Est.
Barbara Ashbaugh	Marie Sparks
Dr. Frank Wilson	Fredella Levey
R.L. Metzger	Eloise Liston
Roy Lowe	Yvonne Dado
Fern Naber	Maud Cummings
Nina Rose Estate	Mildred Gagliardo
Rose Pordon	Charlie Scalione
Century 21	Bank of America,
Cecil Petray	Healdsburg Branch

MUSEUM: 132 MATHESON ST.  
PHONE: 431-3325  
HOURS: TUES.-SAT. 12 TO 5 P.M.

## ACTIVITIES

The one-day Christmas toy exhibit at Madrona Manor Inn on December 20th, was a great success. Hundreds of toy lovers showed up to see vintage toys and dolls. We thank John and Carol Muir, owners of the beautiful Victorian Inn, for graciously opening their establishment for this good cause. Thanks also to all who helped put the event together, especially all those who loaned antique toys. The Carnegie Library Restoration fund netted about \$1,260.

## NEW OFFICERS

The new 1987 Society officers are:  
President.....Carol Muir  
Vice President.....Verna Lafon  
Recording Sect'y.....Clyda Ritz  
Corresping Sect'y.....Fern Naber  
Treasurer.....Nancy Citro  
Directors.....Francis Branern  
Bill Caldwell  
Phillip Smith

## In Memoriam

We acknowledge with regret the following members who have passed away.

Maud Barnard	Major S. Phillips
Paul Crabb	Roy Pitts
Lydia Gandygear	Jess Ratchford
Elva Grant	Nina Rose
Ewen Bassett	McLean Small
Lauretta Wright	

## LIFE MEMBERS

Congratulations and thanks to our new life members who have contributed \$350 to the Society:

Cleone Stevens Tilley	Fern Naber
Bertha Vranna	Rena Phillips

## MEMORIAL DONATIONS

Carmel Bottini for:  
Charles and Kate Byington  
Bob & June Jones; Bernice & Bill Auradou for  
Elva Grant  
June & Temple Smith, Elizabeth Cary for:  
Major Phillips  
Dr. & Mrs. Byron Olson, Don & Pat Schmidt fo  
Americo Rafanelli

SEE BACK OF THIS PAGE.....

"SO, WHERE'S MY 'RECORDER'?"

From letters and comments we have received we know that you enjoy the "Russian River Recorder". Last year we were unable to produce the usual number of issues due to many things, but mostly LACK OF HELP IN PUTTING THE RECORDER TOGETHER. We badly need people to write or do research for this publication, typing, lay-out, and mailing. We know there are closet Shakespeares out there who enjoy local history. Give us a call at 431-3325!

MEMBERSHIP

Your response to our annual dues reminder has been very gratifying, not only in a monetary way but in the great support and interest in plans being made for our permanent home in the Carnegie Library and the enthusiasm of everyone in getting the job done. We especially thank those who gave "extra" donations this year and sustaining members.

But if you have forgotten to pay you 1987 dues, please send them to:

Healdsburg Historical Society  
P.O. Box 952

Healdsburg, CA 95448

THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

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