



RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

AUTUMN 1998 • ISSUE 62

An Official Publication of the Healdsburg Museum and Historical Society



From right on sidewalk - John Young and his son Thomas G. Young.
On hearse Harry Cummings and Elmer Ted Young

Of Death and Undertaking: Growth of the Profession in Healdsburg, 1850's - 1920's

by Marie Djordjevich

Page 6

The Grandest Home in Town

by June Maher Smith

Page 3

Under the Big Tent, 1914-1924: Bringing the Chautauqua to Healdsburg

by Holly Hoods

Page 9

Also in this issue:

Kiwanis: 75 Years of Service to the Youth of the Community, Page 11

Artifacts, Page 4



IN THIS ISSUE

In This Issue

The prior issues of the *Russian River Recorder* we have edited have had themes tied in with the changing exhibits - Early Wine Families, Women's Work, Development of the Commercial Market for Pomo Baskets, etc.

However this issue does not have a particular focus, except to chronicle Healdsburg's history. So the editorial committee decided our writers would write about a subject that had been in the "thought" stages. And I think they have come up with a most interesting issue.

June Maher Smith gives us the fascinating history of the beautiful Patchett mansion on Matheson, so well preserved by all its owners.

At the suggestion of long time museum member and booster, Alice Grove, Holly Hoods, our assistant curator, tells us about

the large-scale cultural festival, The Chautauqua that came to Healdsburg from 1914 to 1924, a most interesting account of an unusual event.

Our curator Marie Djordjevich has come up with a fascinating history of the funeral business in Healdsburg and how it developed into the industry as we know it today. As usual Marie has given us a very meticulous and well written essay. Marie also enlightens us about the artifacts pertaining to this industry.

The Kiwanis Club of Healdsburg this year is celebrating its 75th anniversary. Our article points out how, throughout the years, the Kiwanis Club has focused on helping the youth of our community.

Arnold Santucci
Editor

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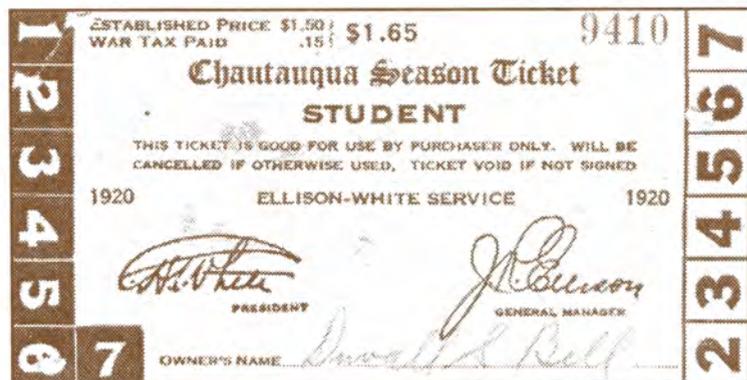
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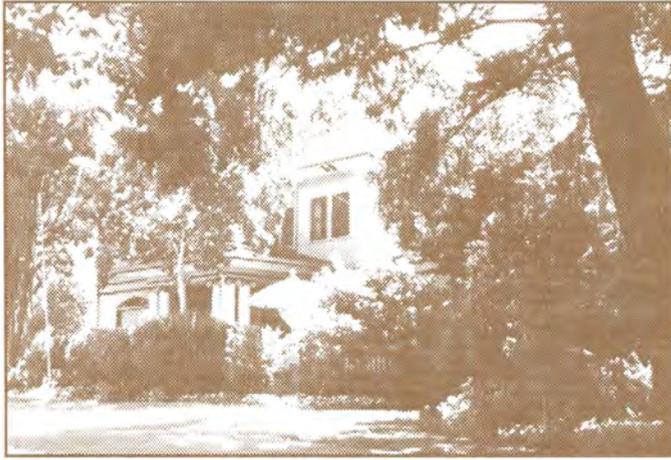
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CONTENTS

- 3 The Grandest Home in Town
By June Maher Smith
- 4 Artifacts
- 6 Of Death and Undertaking: Growth of the Profession in Healdsburg, 1850's-1920's
by Marie Djordjevich
- 9 Under the Big Tent, 1914-1924: Bringing the Chautauqua to Healdsburg
by Holly Hoods.
- 11 Kiwanis: 75 Years of Service to the Community
by Arnold Santucci





"The Grandest Home In Town"

by June Maher Smith

"The grandest home in town!" that is what Charles H. Patchett vowed to build in the year 1919. He and his wife, Rosella Hall Patchett, had just sold their 1600 acres of valuable farm land in Alexander Valley for over \$200,000 and they were ready to move into Healdsburg. Records indicate this still-lovely building at 410 Matheson Street was completed in 1921. It is now Holtzen Sunset Manor, a well-managed and well-maintained residential facility which retains the atmosphere of a splendid residence.

Corrie Isaacson and her daughter Karen Membrila recently gave me a tour of this gorgeous home and the garden, explaining in detail the original appearance and the changes that have been made where necessary. I greatly appreciate their cooperation.

Presently the home exhibits most of its original features. Still impressive are the columns in front of the entrance with their ionic capitals and the similar columns supporting the roof of the port cochere at the side of the house. Brilliant leaded glass panels still stand on either side of the front door. The large front arched windows are stunning from both outside and inside. Similar windows grace the west wall and inside they all have the original bands of floral and leaf design wrought iron decor over the tops of the arches. The original chandeliers and wall scones, which were rescued from the basement and reinstalled, repeat the design.

The Patchetts wanted perfection and they got it. Walter Murray, whose carpenter father, Elmer Murray, worked on the home, says that after the beautiful inside staircase was first completed it wasn't just right. So it was torn out and rebuilt. All the detailed trim was done by hand and Walter's father told him the cost of building the home was \$50,000 - a lot of money for the early 1920s.

Philippine mahogany is used throughout the home for the door and window frames, the staircase, and wainscoting. The long fireplace mantle in the living room is walnut wood. Although some conversion of rooms has been necessary to provide privacy, it is easy to imagine the configuration of the original floor plan. The living room and the dining room, with ample space to serve dinner for 24 people, have been left in their original splendor. Also downstairs are a breakfast room, a guest room, and another front room with a fireplace. The latter was Mr. Patchett's den; nearby was a separate telephone alcove. The kitchen has been modernized but occupies the same space as it did originally. A porch ran across the entire back end of the house. The east end of the porch remains enclosed, as it was originally, and now serves as a light and sunny office. Some of the original wicker furniture is still in use on the front porch - a sofa, a rocker, a table and an ottoman. A side porch, now enclosed, led to the garage at the back of the house.

The master bedroom was upstairs with its private bath and his and her walk-in closets. Two more bedrooms, each with its own sink and cedar lined closet, occupied this floor together with another bathroom and a sewing room with built-in ironing board and drawers for fabrics.

Many of the trees planted by the Patchetts still shade the serene garden. These include camphor, African tulip, weeping cherry, guava, sweet olive, ginkgo, redbud, magnolia, and a huge avocado tree. A 1930 newspaper article describes the gardens: lawn in front and the rest in choice varieties of flowers. Fish ponds and an "old oaken bucket" hanging in a well were mentioned. Mrs. Patchett was said to have the largest collection of iris in the country. The well is still there and three fish ponds, one of which is now stocked with koi. There are still over 50 varieties of camellias in the gardens and many azaleas. Outside the kitchen door the Patchetts grew beautiful roses. As Margaret McConnell Stevenson says, her Aunt Rosa (Mrs. Patchett) had a "green thumb" and loved to garden.

Three aviaries on the ground house doves, pigeons and parakeets. A small cottage sits amid the gardens in back. Inez, the Patchett's cook, and her husband, their gardner, once lived here. Now it is a cozy two-bedroom unit with a living room and a large deck.

Following the Patchetts, the Scalione family lived in the home from the 1940s to 1952. Charles Scalione was a boy at that time, but he remembers that "big, beautiful home." He recalls the many oil paintings and tapestries that hung on the walls. He now has a couple of those paintings and a few pieces of the furniture in his own home. He had chores when his family lived in this home: he was the one who polished the woodwork inside and mowed the lawn and watered the yard outside. But it wasn't all work - he told me about playing "hockey" in the basement with his friends. Their equipment consisted of roller skates, a ball and brooms. They also enjoyed games of basket-

Please see page 4

ball in the backyard. The basement was a popular spot with Charles' sister, Theodora "Josephine" too. She had parties there when she was in high school. Charles remembers the fish ponds and the cement ducks, deer and squirrels placed near them. Mrs. Patchett's camellia greenhouse was still in the backyard then, along with a three-car garage.

In 1952 Mr. and Mrs. Chauncy Pettibone bought the property. They built the tin barn at the back of the lot so their sons would have a place to restore autos. Pettibone owned a lumber mill north of town.

Ada Holtzen bought the property in October 1962. (The previous tenant operated a nursing home there for about a year, making many undesirable changes in the house before going bankrupt). In December of 1962 Ada began remodeling and restoring this historic property. She opened her residential care home in August 1963, after extensive renovations to adapt the home to its new purpose. At the present time the home can accommodate up to 17 guests, mostly in private rooms. Four full and five half bathrooms and other special

features are available for the convenience of the residents.

In September of 1970 Ada sold the business to her daughter, Corrie Isaacson. Corrie and her daughter Karen have been co-administrators of the residence since 1976. Their motto "gracious living for the aging" describes their business philosophy. As we all can see, they have maintained the beauty of the "grandest home in town. ❀❀❀"

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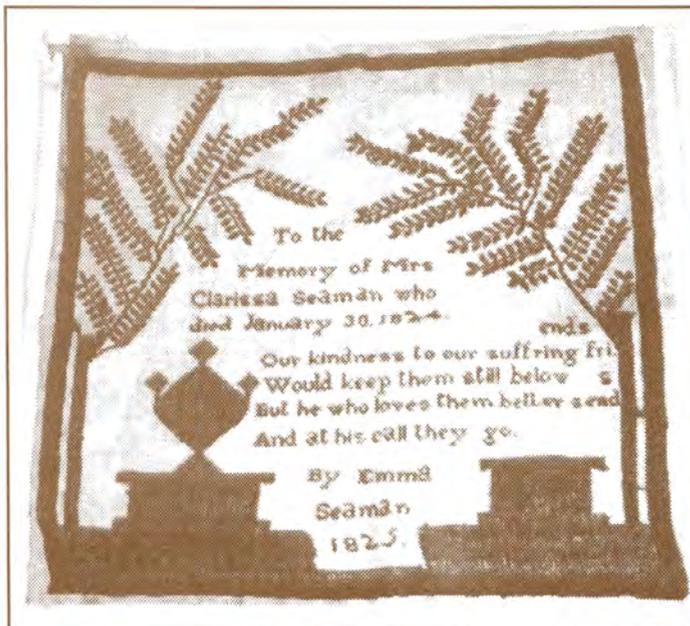
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ARTIFACTS

Memorial Mourning Pieces

Death is somewhat incomprehensible in many ways, and people have always tried to make some sense out of it and make it meaningful. One of the ways in which they did this in the 19th century was through the use of mourning objects.



Embroidered Memorial Sampler

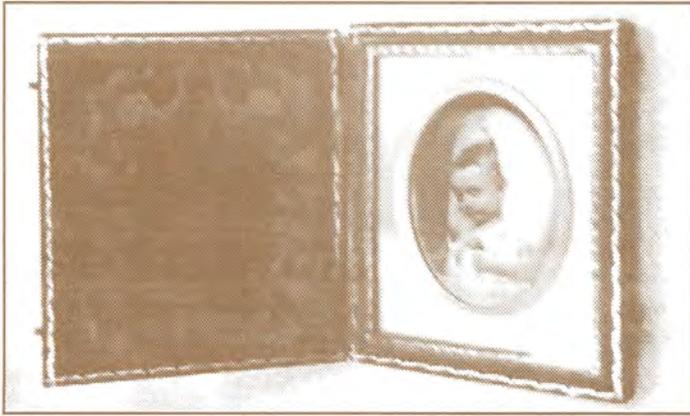
HMC #338-126

Gift of Nina Von Tillow

The memorial picture - painted or embroidered - was usually done by an educated upper class young woman who had been taught the skills of painting or needlework. These types of memorial objects were popular in the nineteenth century.

Please see page 5

ARTIFACTS



Daguerreotype

HMC #77.27.8

Gift of Helen Latimer

Also in vogue in the nineteenth century were memorial photographs and prints taken of the dead - of adults, but also especially of children. In that time, before the phenomenon of the camera and family photographs, these memorial prints were often the only tangible memory of the deceased.

Human Hair Ornaments

Wreaths

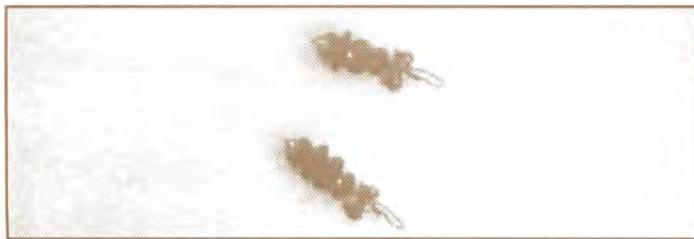
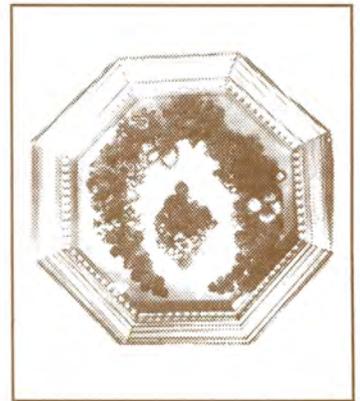
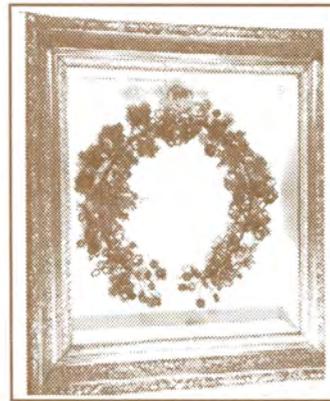
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Gift of Sharik Bookey

HMC #41.1

Gift of Annette Brown

The trend of making ornaments from human hair was started by Queen Victoria in the mid 1800s. Hair from both living and dead relatives was used in these objects. Hair was seen as an ideal material because it was slow to decay and was easily malleable. Human hair ornaments can be seen as both a memorial to the dead and mementos of the living.



Earrings of Maria McCauley

HMC #513-13

Gift of Sarah Lee Calhoun



Funeral Notices

HMC, various

Funeral notices, notifying people of the place, date and time of the funeral service, were almost always black bordered.



Located on Matheson Street next to Odd Fellows Hall

Of Death and Undertaking: Growth of the Profession in Healdsburg, 1850s-1920s

by Marie Djordjevich

Death, as the inevitable end to life, has been dealt with in various ways by different cultures throughout the centuries. In "frontier America" in the nineteenth century, of which Healdsburg was part, death was practical and part of everyday life. It was not a separate occurrence, needing a separate industry. That came later, towards the turn of the century, when embalming became standard practice, coffin-making became specialized, and the "funeral director" became common.

However, in the 19th century in most small towns, coffins were sold side by side with furniture. Cabinet makers made coffins along with household furniture, and furniture dealers offered undertaking services along with the coffins.

Pioneer Undertaking

Healdsburg's first undertaker was John (J.C.) Downing, who came to Healdsburg in 1857 with his wife Mary Jane, and three children - Ellen, Joseph Henry (J.H.), and Clarence. J.C. built a furniture and undertaking business which was situated on Center Street. J.C.'s son, Joseph Henry, joined him in the business until 1869, when he went east to study photography. He returned to Healdsburg and opened a studio on Center Street in the early 1870s. J.C. Downing died in 1875, but Healdsburg did not lack undertakers.



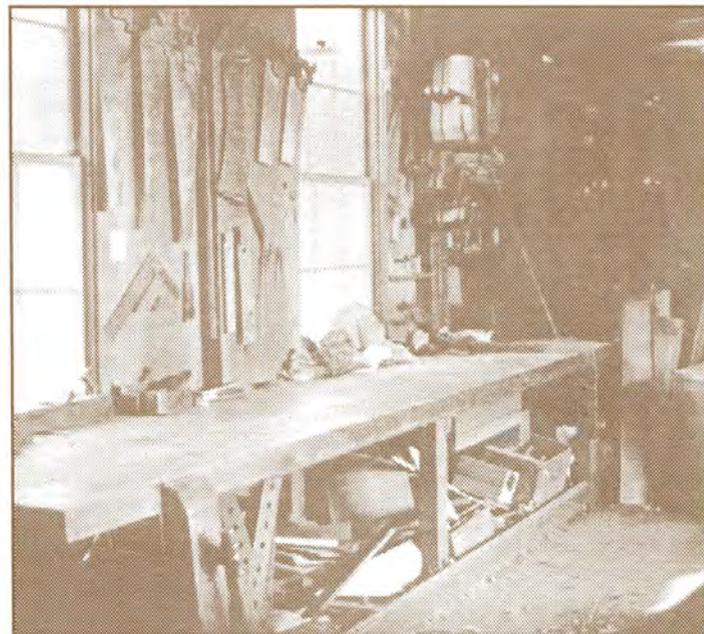
John Downing

John Young and Peter Grist opened a cabinet shop under the name Young and Grist in 1859, where they made and sold both furniture and coffins. By the 1890's Grant Cook had opened a furniture business and undertaking supplies store, which he operated until 1902 when he sold the business.

Rites and Rituals

In the 1800's funerals and the rituals surrounding them were social and familial. The body would lie "in state" at the family home in the parlor until the church or cemetery service. The undertaker was the furniture dealer who provided the coffin. At that time the coffin was usually hexagonal and vaguely body shaped (Pike) as opposed to the standard rectangular casket that became the norm after the turn of the century. The undertakers would offer very rudimentary and basic service: delivery of the coffin, and maybe transportation to the church or cemetery.

Transporting of the body and coffin involved wagon use, and usually the store's delivery wagon became the hearse for the occasion. The color of the horse told volumes: "If white horses pulled the wagon, the driver was delivering a patented wire-bottom bed of some other piece of household furniture; if the horses were black, people on the street were expected to remove their hats and pay proper respect to the dead person passing by" (LeBaron et al, 1985). Some furniture dealers/undertakers had an actual hearse, and in 1879 the *Healdsburg Enterprise* announced that Young and Grist built a room in their shop to house their hearses (whereas most undertakers at the time were furniture dealers first and undertakers second, Young and Grist - and all the following incarnations of Young - concentrated heavily and more and more on the undertaking aspect).



J. C. Downing's workshop

Please see page 7

Changing Times

By the time the century turned, the undertaking business was changing. As the frontier towns became more and more urban and houses became smaller, formal parlors were omitted from the architecture. Many furniture and coffin stores began adding or refitting existing space for a funeral parlor, which would take the place of the house parlor room where the body would lie. It also would create a space for services, as this *Healdsburg Enterprise* blurb conveys: "T. G. Young's new undertaking parlor being erected on West Matheson Street will be a one story brick, 40 x 60 feet. The room will be especially fitted up for every convenience in the undertaking line and will permit of the holding of funeral services in the building if at any time this may be desired" (HE May 13, 1905).

The profession of the funeral director was coming into being, and undertaking became a more formalized and advanced business. The



Renaldo
Jeffreys

hearse, oftentimes a delivery wagon or a closed carriage in early times, gradually became an ornamented vehicle, with plate glass sides so that mourners could see inside to the coffin. The coffins themselves evolved, becoming rectangular, and sometimes made of materials other than wood, i.e. guaranteed not-to-leak metal.

Healdsburg's undertakers began evolving as the profession evolved. Jeffreys and Sons, who had purchased the business from Grant Cook in 1902 and were located on the corner of North and West Streets in the Daly Building, incorporated for use

some newer equipment that the undertakers in larger cities were using in their businesses, i.e. the "National Burying Device" for lowering caskets into the grave (HE March 14, 1903).



R. G. Cook's Furniture Store and Undertaking Parlor

Changing Hands

Healdsburg's furniture stores/undertaking businesses changed hands frequently in the later part of the nineteenth century and early part of the twentieth. Jeffreys and Sons, who after being on the forefront of undertaking innovations, sold the business to James Skee in 1903. Skee became a well respected furniture dealer, as well as undertaker. His undertaking parlor at the date of his start was described favorably: "the windows are filled with plants and ferns, and the room is well arranged for its purpose. Mr. Skee has an up to date establishment throughout" (HT Sept. 1, 1904). A few months later Skee, now established in Healdsburg, was highly touted: "As funeral director he ranks foremost in his profession" (HT Dec. 22, 1904). Skee's furniture/undertaking business was located in the bottom of the Odd Fellows building on West Street (now Healdsburg Avenue). He survived the 1906 earthquake, re-establishing himself and expanding at the same location after the trembler. Skee remained in the furniture and undertaking business in Healdsburg for several years, finally selling all his interests in 1924.

Clarence Curtis bought an undertaking business from James Skee in 1914 (Skee at one point had two businesses) and proceeded to establish himself as one of the town's eminent undertakers. Curtis was a graduate of the Hennesey School of Embalming and worked for the Golden Gate Undertaking Company in San Francisco. He also spent four years as Fresno County coroner, and then three years working in San Rafael. He opened new parlors in Healdsburg in November of 1914 on Powell Street (now Plaza Street). This was a state of the art place at the time: "The reception room is neatly furnished with couch, chairs, desk and telephone. The chapel has a seating capacity of nearly one hundred and is arranged to meet the needs of the funeral gathering. A ladies' dressing room adjoins the chapel. The furnishings throughout are attractive and modern. The morgue room is reached from the alley from the rear of the building. It is equipped with every convenience for its purpose. Altogether Mr. Curtis' rooms will doubtless come up to the best standard of the undertaking parlors of the large cities (HT Nov. 5, 1914).

Curtis also kept abreast of the new inventions and technologies that were advancing his profession, and as a result, was owner of the first Cadillac auto hearse in Northern Sonoma County. This was in August of 1918, and others soon followed suit.

Curtis' wife Ethel also had embalming and undertaking experience, and assisted her husband in the business. When Clarence died in March 1920 Ethel ran the business on her own for a few months. Unexpectedly she received an offer to buy from San Franciscan Mr. Nuttman. Nuttman wanted the business for his fourth son J. K. (all other three sons were in the undertaking business in the Bay Area). The offer came as a complete surprise to Ethel Curtis, and

Please see page 8

she sold and retired. Son J. K. Nuttman ran the parlor until March 1921, when he retired from the business and left for Santa Clara.

Embalming Matters

Clarence Curtis was an experienced and degreed embalmer, which became more the required background in the nineteenth century. The purpose of embalming was to halt or arrest the decay process of the body (so it could be laid out for a longer period of time). In the early part of the century refrigeration was tried, but by the 1880s the chemical procedures were perfected enough and the necessary techniques and equipment were available to keep a corpse on view for several days (Schlereth). The embalmers were also skilled at the public display of the body - closing the eyes and mouth, inserting false teeth if necessary, sewing the lips shut and tinting the face with cosmetics (Schlereth). By the turn of the century many undertakers were also experienced embalmers, or had one working for them (James Skee was assisted in his undertaking business by C. C. Chase, a degreed embalmer from New York City).

Young Endures

When Nuttman left Healdsburg and retired from the undertaking business, it was left to the Young family to remain as sole proprietors of this type of business in town. As mentioned earlier the Young firm was started back in 1859 when John Young and Peter Grist opened a furniture and undertaking business under the name of Young and Grist. Later, John's son Thomas became interested in the business, which then continued as John Young and Son for many years. After the death of John Young the business continued expanding under the tutelage of Thomas G. Young. When Thomas died in December of 1919 his widow continued the business for a month. It was then announced that son Fred Young "has resigned from his commission in the United States Government Air Service and returned to his boyhood home in Healdsburg where he will take charge of the undertaking business left by his father" (HT Feb. 11, 1920). Fred set about remodeling the mortuary parlors on West Matheson Street inside and out. Young died in 1943, but the parlors that bear his name still exist and function in Healdsburg today. ❀❀❀



Fred Young, photo taken in 1919

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John Young & Sons

FURNITURE DEALERS

UPHOLSTERERS AND GENERAL REPAIRING.

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**UNDERTAKERS and FUNERAL DIRECTORS.**

Please see page 9

## Under The Big Tent - 1914-1924: Bringing The Chautauqua to Healdsburg

by Holly Hoods

June 1914 is a significant date in the cultural history of Healdsburg. It was the year that Healdsburg proudly hosted the first Chautauqua in Sonoma County. Chautauquas were traveling educational and recreational assemblies that brought lectures, concerts and high-class novelties to rural areas. The inclusion of Healdsburg in the 1914 Chautauqua circuit distinguished it as one of only sixty "Chautauqua Cities" on the entire Pacific Coast that year.

### The Chautauqua Movement

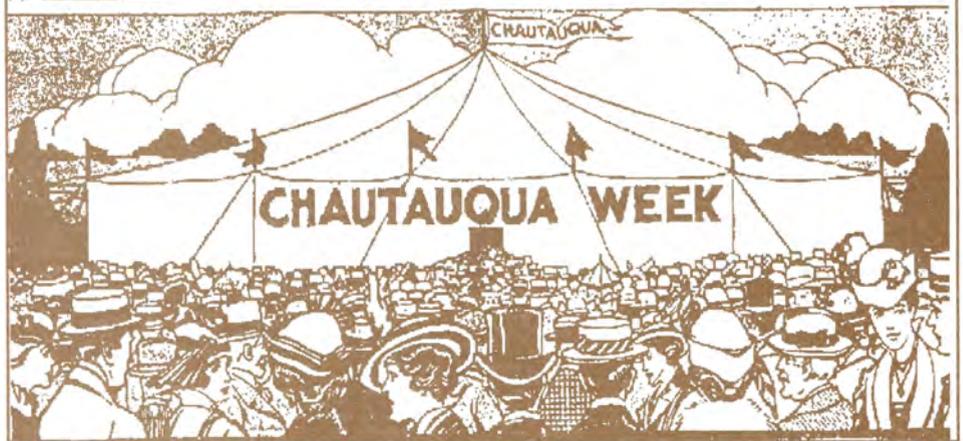
Chautauqua originated in 1874, at Lake Chautauqua in western New York, as a summer camp to train Sunday school teachers. Led by two Ohio Methodists, ecumenical in spirit, the project grew to include academic subjects, music, art and physical education at its home school grounds. Chautauqua introduced new concepts and ideas into American life, including university extension courses, civic opera associations, summer sessions, a university press, and organizations such as Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls. By 1880, the Chautauqua platform had established itself as a national forum for open discussion of public issues, international relations, literature and science. Music became increasingly important to the platform after the turn of the century.

### Hosting a Chautauqua

Bringing the large-scale cultural festival to Healdsburg was the vision of the Healdsburg Business Men's Association and the Chamber of Commerce. Under the forward-thinking leadership of W.E. Rathke, A.F. Stevens, J.A. McMinn, A.J. Gallaway, R.J. Williams, Julius M. Alexander, R.G. Cook, Eli Bush and J.H. Gunn, these business organiza-

# The Healdsburg Enterprise

HEALDSBURG, CALIFORNIA SATURDAY, MAY 23, 1914



tions paid the \$1,500 guaranty required by the Ellison-White Chautauqua System to engage the assembly. Business leaders also advertised the event at their places of business and sold blocks of season tickets.

### City Boosting

Ensuring the success of the six day summer festival was a city-wide effort. The two local newspapers enthusiastically advertised and boosted the event. The *Healdsburg Tribune* noted proudly, "It is a happy omen for our city that all of our people are united in this most laudable enterprise. The business men, the ministerial associations--in fact, all business, civic and religious associations have given the movement their hearty cooperation and endorsement.

Downtown merchants added Chautauqua pennants to the Flag Day decorations on their storefronts. All of them closed their businesses during the afternoons of Chautauqua Week.

The *Tribune* touted the Chautauqua as "the twentieth century's happiest offering in the way of entertainment, for while it makes one forget the dragging cares of everyday life, it reveals the glories of life that lie all

around us. No man or woman--no boy--no girl can attend a Chautauqua and not afterwards be more capably equipped for a successful and happy life. The *Healdsburg Enterprise* promised: "Nothing else, not even a circus, presents such variety."

### Preview Night

The Chautauqua offered special promotions to attract its audience, including a free preview night. The evening before the official opening of the festival, an estimated 600 people came to see "moving pictures of the progress of the Panama-Pacific Exposition and still pictures of the Exposition as it will look after it is completed." An equipment mix-up at the railroad prevented the big tent from arriving on time for the preview, but Healdsburg Chautauquans were unfazed. The crowd enjoyed the show under an open summer sky full of stars.

### Pioneer Day

Opening day of the event was celebrated as "Pioneer Day." Local elders were given free tickets to the Chautauqua, and recognized and honored in speeches given by city leaders. Children and Healdsburg High

Please see page 10

School students were offered season tickets at a special rate of one dollar. The season ticket was an excellent value itself. For \$2.50, an adult could see thirty entertainments during the six days, including ten lectures, ten popular concerts and ten novelties. Adult season tickets were transferable to any member of the family. Single admission prices varied from 25-35 cents for some lectures to 75 cents for a band concert.

### Family Entertainment

Families packed the big brown tent at the Healdsburg Chautauqua grounds, erected on the Clack lot on Center Street at Piper Street, next to the clubhouse of the Women's Improvement Club. For six days in a row, from 9:00 in the morning until 10 or 11:00 at night, the tent showcased a variety of entertainments for every taste. Among the featured performers were: "World lecturer, Dr. Peter McQueen"; "the Plantation Music of the Hann Jubilee Singers"; the Dunbar Singing Orchestra; Dr. Ng Poon Chew, "the Chinese Mark Twain"; and "Bronte, the smartest dog in the world."

### Healdsburg a Chautauqua Center

The 1914 Healdsburg Chautauqua was an indisputable success. The *Healdsburg Tribune* of June 25, 1914 crowed that "nothing heretofore brought to Healdsburg has commanded anything like such an outpouring of the people." A conservative estimate of the average daily attendance was 2,500, and the estimated total attendance for the six days' entertainment was 15,000 people.

The *Tribune* helped stir up the civic pride to adopt the Chautauqua as an annual Healdsburg event. In a June 25, 1914 editorial, the newspaper proclaimed, "Santa Rosa has her Rose Carnival, Petaluma her Poultry Show, Sebastopol her Apple Festival and Cloverdale her Citrus Fair. What shall Healdsburg have? Let us make Healdsburg the Chautauqua Center of Sonoma County!"

Healdsburg enjoyed the distinction of being a Chautauqua City for the next ten years. In 1915, a group of fifty public-spirited citizens formed a Chautauqua association to put up the guaranty money to host the event, easing the burden of the Business Men's Association, and launching the Chautauqua as an annual Healdsburg tradition. Neighboring cities Santa Rosa and Petaluma got on the Chautauqua bandwagon themselves after 1916. The last year the circuit came to Sonoma County was in Santa Rosa in 1927.

### Alice Grove Remembers

Alice Bowers Grove was seven years old in 1924, the last year of Healdsburg's Chautauqua. She remembers how rare and exciting it was to have the live performances visit Healdsburg. Alice attended the Chautauqua with her mother, who impressed the importance of the traveling event upon the young girl. "Mother made me understand that it was educational and cultural," Alice recalled. "She realized that Healdsburg was a small town and she realized the value of taking advantage of it." Inspired by the fond memories of Alice Grove, this article salutes the history of Healdsburg's decade as a Chautauqua City. ❀❀❀

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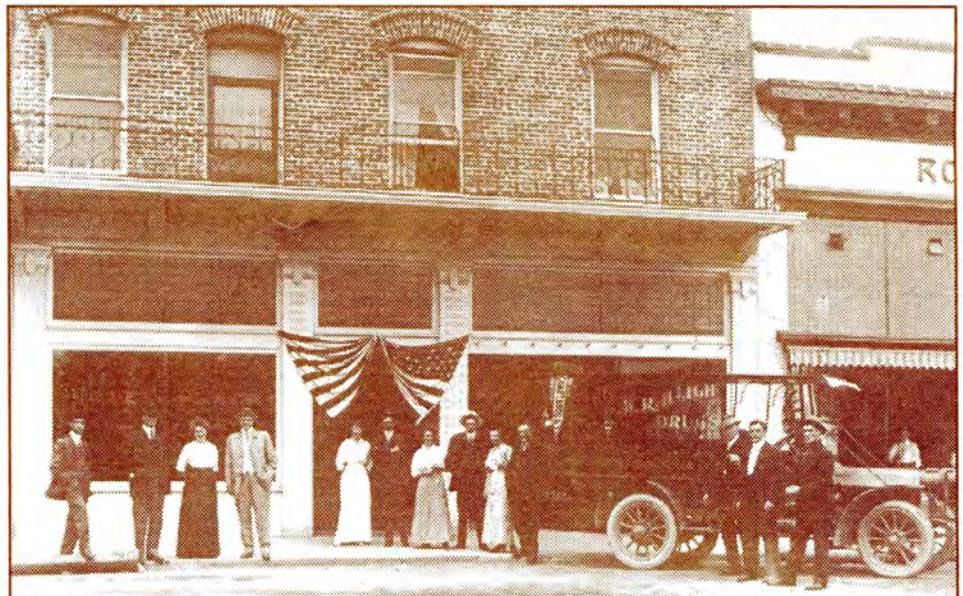
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Healdsburg Museum "Chautauqua" ephemera file. Student season ticket courtesy of Duval Bell.

Holly Hoods interview with Alice Bowers Grove, September 20, 1998.

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Chautauqua Boosters in front of the Plaza Hotel circa 1915

# Kiwanis : 75 Years of Service to the Youth of the Community

by Arnold Santucci

Since it was chartered 75 years ago on November 3 with 60 members, the Healdsburg Kiwanis Club has devoted its time, fundraising efforts and energy in helping the youth of the community.

Earl Osborn, president in 1947, a member for over 50 years, points out that the Healdsburg Kiwanis Club has had "hundreds of community service projects since 1923." And throughout that history the organizations devoted to the community's youth, have been recipients of the Kiwanis Club's largess. The scouts, Healdsburg Boys Club (now Healdsburg Boys and Girls Club), 4-H, FFA, AFS Exchange Student program, the Salvation Army's Boys and Girls Home at Lytton, scholarships for graduating high school seniors, throughout the years received the support of the Kiwanis Club.

In his history of the club Osborn pays special attention to the club's involvement at the Salvation Army's Home for Boys and Girls.

Osborn says that "one of the most worthwhile youth groups that the Kiwanis Club ever had the pleasure of working with, and assisting in various projects, was the Salvation Army Home for Boys and Girls at Lytton."

Osborn recalls that one of the first projects of the Kiwanis Club, after it was organized in 1923, was to finance a trip to Sacramento for the outstanding Lytton Home Band which was competing in a state contest. The same year Kiwanis started a Boy Scout troop number 24 at Lytton and supplied the scout master.

The next 30 years the Kiwanis Club carried on many projects at Lytton, Osborn recalls, including sponsoring an annual dinner and program for the children at Lytton at Christmas time.

Money was always donated for some project needed for the children -- a registered bull was given to the dairy project; calves were purchased for the children in the 4-H program. A 4-H Fair was sponsored by Kiwanis and trophies donated. A large project was carried out when a Kiwanis



*Kiwanis Club program at American Legion Hall, circa 1930*

member donated lumber and materials to build a large craft shop. Year after year Kiwanis purchased athletic equipment for use at Lytton, plus instruments for a drum and bugle corps.

The projects for the Healdsburg area were many and varied during the years. In his detailed report Osborn enumerated many of these projects:

1924: Sponsored a variety show in the old Liberty Theatre to raise money for the Healdsburg Community Chest - a welfare fund for needy families. Frank Corrick who was to serve as Kiwanis president in 1926 was the master of ceremonies.

1930: Raised money for needy families in Healdsburg.

1931: The main project was contributing money, food and clothing to needy families in the Healdsburg area due to the Depression. Sponsored a Boy Scout troop as well as Camp Fire Girls.

1934: Financed the milk program at the Elementary School. All children in the lower grades received milk in mid-morning. Began work on the new scout camp, Camp Rosenberg, on Mill Creek.

1935: Donated and distributed Christmas baskets to the needy at Christmas time. Purchased several musical instruments for students at the high school.

1939: Purchased eye glasses for several needy children, a program that was continued for the

next 25 years.

1940: Paid for dental work for a needy child. Established a student loan fund at the high school. Purchased mechanical drawing sets for high school students. Sponsored Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls.

1941: Paid for dental work for 12 needy children. Helped to finance the Red Cross Swimming Program. Distributed 55 Christmas baskets to needy families.

For the next three years the club devoted some of its efforts in helping with the war effort by buying 40 kits for servicemen, starting a war bond campaign in Healdsburg with the club purchasing a \$100 bond, starting a community cannery at the high school with the Kiwanis Club loaning the funds to start the cannery and underwriting any monthly losses; purchased radios for servicemen in hospitals and donated funds for a Hospitality House for servicemen. In addition, the club established a loan fund at the high school donating \$725. During this period the club sponsored a March of Dimes campaign, headed Boys Scouts and Camp Fire Girls fund drives, sponsored the formation of a Boys Athletic Club and bought equipment for the Boys Club. A work day was held for Kiwanis members at the Camp Fire Girls Camp Mayacama.

In 1950 the club sent four boys to the national jamboree at Valley Forge, Pennsylvania at a cost of \$375. Also this year the club organized

*Please see page 12*

Continued from page 9

the Explorer Scout Troop and gave \$500 for a drum and bugle corps.

Throughout the years the club used its fundraising efforts to assist youth groups. In 1965 the club financed the cost of the senior breakfast at the high school during graduation week and two years later the club donated \$800 to help finance the cost of a new football scoreboard at Recreation Park.

In 1971 and 1972 significant financial contributions were made for recreation areas in Healdsburg. \$2800 was donated to purchase playground equipment for the Byron Gibbs Park on Prentice Drive and \$5800 was donated for new bleacher seats and a baseball scoreboard at Recreation Park. In 1978 the club donated \$2800 to the Healdsburg playground fund.

Throughout its 75 year history the Kiwanis Club, today still focusing on helping the youth of the community, used a number of methods to raise funds for their projects - pancake breakfasts, Christmas tree sales, white elephant sales, Hole In One contests and the latest, the Fitch Mountain Foot Race.

### How did Kiwanis come to Healdsburg ?

Nathan Combs, district attorney in Napa County and a member of the Napa Kiwanis

Club, and Frank Kean, the state organizer for Kiwanis, traveled to Healdsburg in the early part of June, 1923 to tell the story of Kiwanis. Joe Miller, George Imrie, Dr. Julian Wright and Fred Young met with Combs and Kean in the Fred Young Mortuary. On June 25 fifteen members of the Napa Kiwanis Club met with a larger group of Healdsburg business and professional men and four days later at a third meeting the following permanent officers were elected: Joseph Miller, president; George Imrie, vice-president; Charles Comstock, secretary; Mike Cummings, district trustee and George Hayes, treasurer. There were 60 charter members representing the business and professional communities of Healdsburg.

The Kiwanis Club has met in only five locations in its 75 years. The first meeting place was the Plaza Hotel on West Street (now Healdsburg Avenue), 1923-1924; American Legion Hall on Center Street where the Healdsburg Center is now located, 1924-1958; St. Paul's Episcopal Hall, Matheson Street, 1958-1971; Federated Church Hall (now St. John's Hall), 1971-1980; and since then at the Villa Chanticleer Annex.

The members of the American Legion Auxiliary started to cater the luncheons in 1914 and have continued to do so to this day.

The Healdsburg Club in its long time tenure



Ed Langhart, left, Museum founder, and Francis Passalacqua, preparing for Kiwanis pancake breakfast, circa 1964

has sponsored seven other clubs in the North Bay area - Santa Rosa in 1925 (Fred McConnell, president); Eureka, 1926 (Edward Quinn, president); Ukiah, 1948 (Ernest Frandsen, president); Geyserville, 1952 (Fred Martin, president); Clear Lake, 1962 (Dr. Thomas Beahm, president); Windsor, 1991 (John Brandt, president).

The Kiwanis motto is "We Build" and throughout its long history the Healdsburg Club has lived up to this challenge by providing leadership and the help - financial as well as man hours - for the youth of the community. ❀❀❀

### Sources:

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