



RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

SPRING 2005 • ISSUE 88

An Official Publication of the Healdsburg Museum and Historical Society



Rose Ferrari Demostene Benson, 2002

2005 Pioneer Award

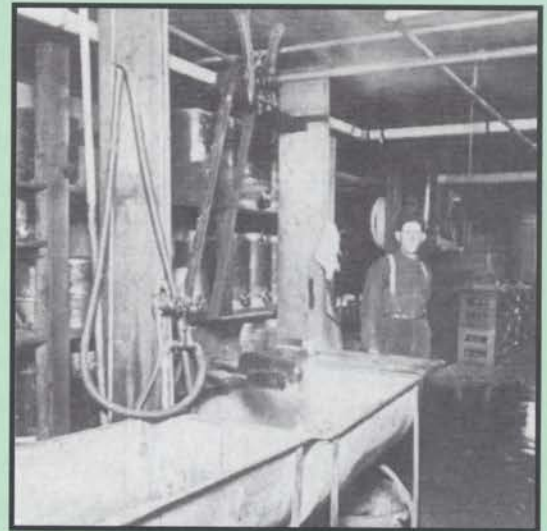
Rose Ferrari Demostene Benson

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George Day inside his Home Dairy, 1919

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RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

*The Official Publication of the Healdsburg
Museum and Historical Society*

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IN THIS ISSUE

In January of each year the editorial staff of the Russian River Recorder meets to discuss and plan the four quarterly issues for the coming year. This is the fun part, tossing ideas about and coming up with articles that, we hope, will enrich our history.

This year we are starting off with a profile written by our Research Curator Holly Hoods of a very enterprising man, George F. Day who helped build many commercial buildings in downtown Healdsburg as well as many homes and bungalows throughout the area and still being enjoyed. The family photos illustrating this very interesting article were shared with us by George Day's daughter, Evelyn Day Iversen, now 95 years old and still a Museum volunteer.

Our curator Dan Murley chose as his topic the recipient of the Museum's 2005 History Lives/Pioneer Award, a member of a prominent wine family, Rose Ferrari Demostene Benson. Dan's presentation shows us what it was like growing up in the early 20th century in a small town. In addition to her duties as wife and mother and business woman (Soda Rock Winery and Sausal Winery) she took time out of her busy schedule to be a charter member of the Soroptimist International Club of Healdsburg serving as its president and gave of her time and talents to the Healdsburg Museum, also serving as one of its early presidents.

Our faithful contributor to the Recorder, Charlotte Anderson, this time, diligently researching the material, gives us a fascinating account of two streets (street biographies she calls them) and how the changes came about over the years. We found the Plat Map filed by Harmon Heald most interesting.

Whitney Hopkins in her duties as the collection clerk comes across many artifacts hidden away and this time shares with us the specialty items - dishes, cups, ash trays - sold by Gunn and Ferguson Hardware during its 30 years in business.

And so we present our first edition for 2005. We hope that you will find it both interesting and informative.

Arnold Santucci
Editor

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RECORDER**

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Elizabeth Day and children in front of Day Home, 1915

4. Gunn and Ferguson's Healdsburg Dishware by Whitney Hopkins

In addition to carrying typical hardware, Gunn and Ferguson sold specialty items that they had made for their store such as ceramic dishes, cups, ash trays with painted scenes of well known Healdsburg locations.

5. Streets Biographies: Foss Street and Healdsburg Avenue - The Changes Over the Years

by Charlotte Anderson

Healdsburg Avenue, our main street since Healdsburg was founded and at one time known as West Street, and the short street which parallels it, Foss Street, both have interesting histories. Charlotte Anderson in her street biographies gives us an interesting and informative account of the changes over the years.

10. 2005 Pioneer Award: Rose Ferrari Demostene Benson, "A Rose by Any Other Name"

by Daniel Murley

In the interview with Rose Benson and her daughters, Dan Murley captures the history of Healdsburg through the eyes of a young women growing up in Healdsburg in the early years of the 20th Century. In March 2005 Mrs. Benson, a member of a prominent pioneer wine family, received the Healdsburg's Museum Pioneer Award, the seventh to be presented and the first to a woman.

14. One Fine Day: A Profile of the Enterprising George Day.

by Holly Hoods

An affectionate look at the builder/contractor who was instrumental in building a number of Healdsburg's attractive commercial structures as well as many beautiful bungalows still being enjoyed. And then, decided to start a new enterprise, a very successful dairy. Photos of the Day family were shared with us by George Day's daughter, 95 year old Evelyn Day Iversen.

ARTIFACTS: GUNN & FERGUSON'S HEALDSBURG DISHWARE

by Whitney Hopkins

Were you in the market for a stove, a wagon, a heater, a can of paint, an incubator, a plow, a windmill.....or a fine set of dishes and ash trays printed with scenes of Healdsburg?

One could have found all of this, and more, at Gunn & Ferguson hardware store - a mainstay for nearly thirty years on Powell Street (now Plaza Street) on the north side of the Healdsburg Plaza. When the second of the two original partners, John H. Gunn, finally retired and sold out his half of the partnership in 1918, the Healdsburg Tribune described Gunn & Ferguson as "a household word in northern Sonoma County...thought to be...as permanent...as Gibraltar."



and had a tire department.

Pioneer Henry Osborn Ferguson crossed the plains from his native Indiana to California by ox team in 1849. Since 1857 he resided in the Healdsburg vicinity, first owning a farm in Alexander Valley. In the 1870's he went into the grocery business in Healdsburg, before returning to his farm for 10 years. John H. Gunn, a native of Illinois, arrived in Healdsburg around 1885 where he became manager in Ransom Powell's hardware store.



The partners were known to take great care in their extensive stock and equipment, and made every effort to stay ahead of the times. They continued to expand and improve the store over the years, hired a plumbing and tinning expert to assist customers,



Gunn and Ferguson Hardware Store, on Powell Street near the Plaza, circa 1900

Together in 1890, Gunn and Ferguson purchased Powell's hardware store from B.M. Jones, who had purchased it a year and a half earlier from Powell. (Gunn also worked in the hardware store under the Jones.)

In addition to carrying typical hardware offerings, Gunn & Ferguson sold specialty items that they had made just for their store. This included ceramic dishes, cups, and ash trays with printed scenes of well-known Healdsburg locations: the Plaza, the City Hall, the Grammar School on Tucker Street, and the railroad bridge crossing the Russian River into town. These pieces were produced in Germany, and then shipped to

Healdsburg for sale. The exact time period that they were manufactured is unknown. The Healdsburg Museum received these pieces from various donors over the years, including Lewis Lambert, Elaine (Swan) Olson, and Robert Voliva.

Have you seen any Healdsburg dishes around your house?



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STREETS



BIOGRAPHIES

FOSS STREET AND HEALDSBURG AVENUE: THE CHANGES OVER THE YEARS

by Charlotte Anderson

STREET BIOGRAPHIES: FOSS ST. AND HEALDSBURG AVE.

Healdsburg Avenue, known until September 1960 as West Street, began in the late 1840s as a short portion of the main artery for wagon trains from San Francisco north to Mendocino. Access across the Russian River was at first by ferry boat. The construction of the wagon bridge in 1870 and the railroad bridge in 1871 opened the town to the decade of its greatest growth.

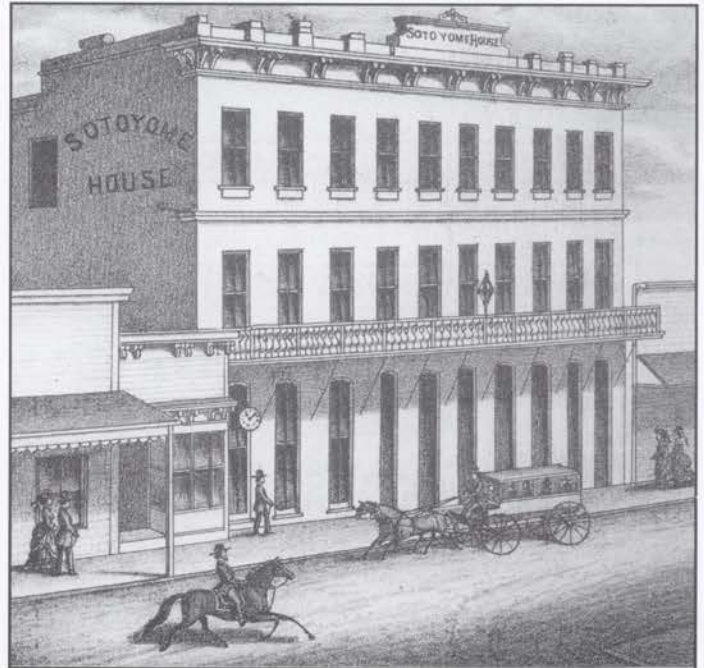
In the spring of 1851, Harmon Heald built a small cabin on the west side of the well-worn, heavily traveled, north-south "path" between San Francisco and the northern gold mines. By 1852, "Heald's Station" supplied the travelers, the surrounding settlers/squatters, and the local Native Americans.

Squire H.M. Willson came in June 1852. Wading across the river, he went to Heald's Station. (#11) Shortly after this, a blacksmith by the name of Morse put up a small shop. The third house in town was built by August Knaak who erected a small wheelwright shop (#12) next to the smithy. So with one store and two businesses, West Street was born!

The first buildings were often clapboard false front structures not built to last more than 10 or 20 years. The Oak trees, avoided easily by a thoughtful horse, were left in the middle of the street. The exceptions to these clapboard buildings were the brick buildings and the Union Hotel and Sotoyome House which were substantial structures built to last. By 1910, the 300 block of West Street had established its style.

Until 1915, it was necessary for travelers from the south to enter the town via Front Street to Mason, Haydon, or Tucker Street. In 1915, West Street was extended below Mill Street through the gardens of Antonio Passalacqua to connect with Bridge Street which came off the bridge along the later palm-lined Healdsburg Avenue.

Between 1852 and 1857, Harmon Heald bought Rancho



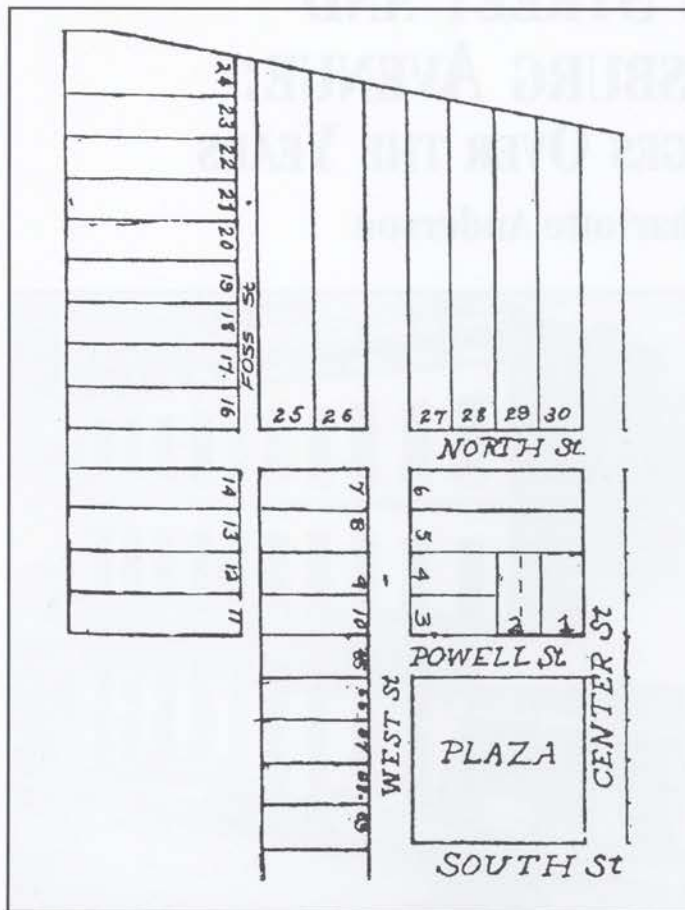
Sotoyome House, one of the three hotels on West Street in the 1870's

land at Josefa Fitch's public auctions. When his ownership became official, Heald subdivided and laid out 8 acres of land, filing a plat map August 10, 1857. Heald laid out the town on a north-south axis around a central plaza which he donated as well as lots for a school, cemetery, and churches to the community. The rest of the lots he sold for \$15 each.

The first 24 numbered lots formed an "L" shape from the north side of the Plaza, on Powell (Plaza) Street along West Street to North Street, and behind West Street—the western boundary of town—on Foss Street. Among some of the names on the lots were Bonham, McAfee, Barnes, Dow, Knaack, Morse, and Ireland.

In 1856, John W. Clack reached Healdsburg and bought a half interest in a livery stable. After settling in Healdsburg, Clack bought lots #9-12 and #19-24. He immersed himself in town

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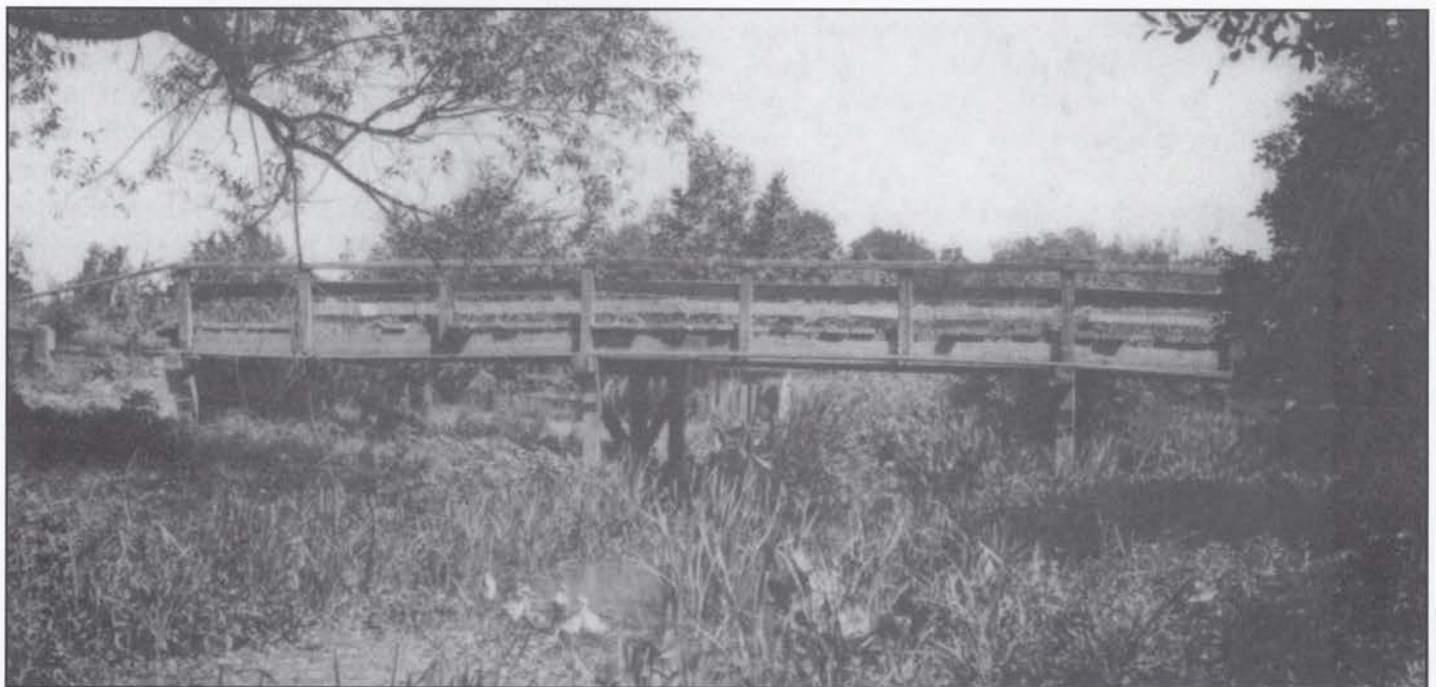
Part of the Plat Map filed by Harmon Heald, August 10, 1857.

affairs and served four terms as Marshall. In 1871, on lot #19 "J.W. Clack completed a small residence north of the slough, on the west side, at a cost of \$500." [History of Sonoma County, p.230] This is the first mention of the structure still standing at 411 Foss Street! In 1876 Clack had his Sotoyome House built on lots #9 and 10 fronting on West Street while the back was on Foss Street which at that time was an "alley." Most of the businesses of the 300 block of West Street had storage and out buildings on the 300 block of Foss Street behind them.

In 1878, William C. Mason, having bought Clack's lots #19-24, "has been making some improvements on his house and about the premises, which add to its comfort and appearance. It is now one of the prettiest homes in Healdsburg." [ENTERPRISE, 20 May 1878, p.3 & 4]

Settlers came in rapidly, and the town began to assume shape and proportion until "after a period of 34 years (1886) it has assumed the dignity of a city with 2500 to 3000 inhabitants, a public pound, and a town council." [ENTERPRISE, 19 Feb 1887, p.1]

At this time, Foss Street was a little over two blocks long, running parallel to, and one block west of, West Street, north-south from South Street (Matheson) to the "city limits" (where Piper Street would have come in if Piper had extended across West Street). A number of stables as well as auxiliary services for horses, wagons, and their care were in the area.



Bridge over Foss Creek, late 1800's. Healdsburg Museum Collection.

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The section of Foss Street behind the 300 block of West Street has long been a source of contention. In 1906 an article appeared in the HEALDSBURG ENTERPRISE [28 Oct 1906, p.1:4] as follows: "The Enterprise would call the attention of our City Fathers and citizens of the town to the condition of one of our streets near the western boundary of this city. The short street running parallel with West Street but in the rear of our business houses has been used for years as an alley for the dumping of refuse from the warehouses and stores which are built back to it. There are many reasons why this short street should be cleaned up and put in good repair. It runs almost parallel with the railroad and makes a very dilapidated appearance, and gives a bad impression to the passing public who catch sight of our city from that point. It is a menace to our business houses from danger of fire that may be started from an accumulation of boxes and papers piled promiscuously along the street and from a sanitary standpoint it should be cleaned up. THE STREET SHOULD BE EXTENDED ON THE NORTH. (That referred to the part behind Redwood Market where Piper Street ends at West Street.) The street should be graded and made passable for traffic. The majority of property owners bordering on the street are willing to give a few feet more to the city to have it widened.

"If reconstructed as it should be, it will tend to have the back part of business blocks put in good order and built up as they



Foss Creek and walking bridge, 2005

should be. With a row of shade trees planted along each side, the street would become one of the pretty ones of our city and would become a much and needed thoroughfare instead of a disgrace to our city as it now is."

The northern extension never happened and that is why Foss Street today ends at Sanderson's car lot. The alley did get taken care of (80 years later!), and the 400 block of Foss Street was widened slightly.

The 1906 Earthquake caused considerable damage to the brick

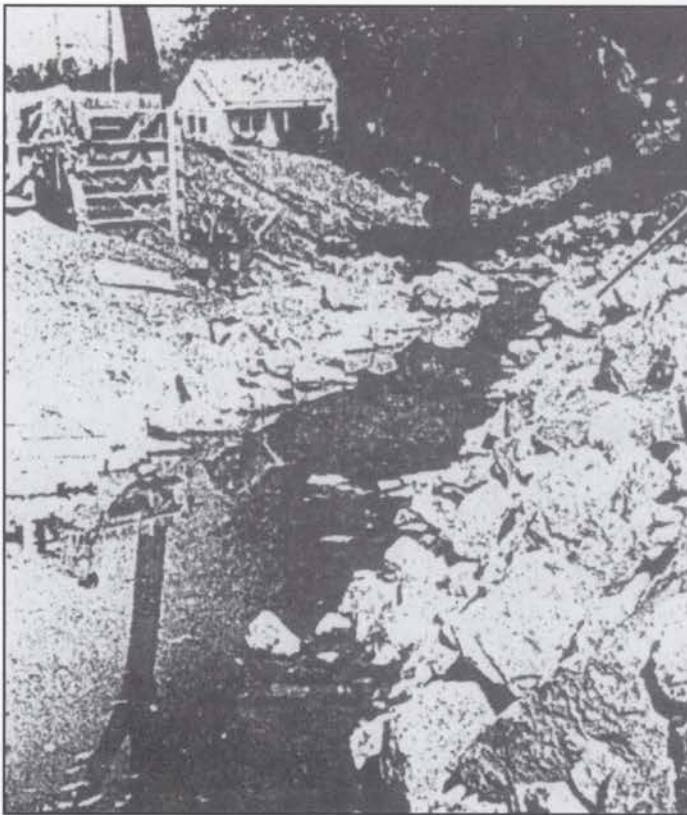


*"The Road Through Healdsburg, 1859, Shows a Fine Disregard for Traffic Hazards such as Trees in the Street."
Society of California Pioneers Collection Photograph.*

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buildings in Healdsburg. The bricks used in the 19th Century construction of the downtown buildings are made of sand and clay and not kiln-fired and are therefore susceptible to deterioration due to water. The buildings that were "repaired" after the '06 quake used the fallen bricks which were put back using the same materials. The wooden buildings, of course, survived. So, it wasn't until the fire which consumed the Plaza Hotel in 1978 was extinguished and the remains razed that the extent of the deterioration of the brick buildings was realized. "With the structurally weak buildings all leaning on one another, removal of the hotel had 'a semi-domino effect' on the other buildings. Lacking any substantial steel framework, the 1890s era buildings consist of four brick walls with little more than wooden floors holding them together. Each building is leaning on the other. The southward tilt of Monte's Auto Parts building wall (on West Matheson) is visible evidence of the worsening problem. In damp weather, brick material can be scraped away with a fingernail on the walls exposed by the hotel's demolition. In some parts of the buildings, the lime grout used to lay the bricks has disappeared, leaving bricks merely stacked in a pile!" [TRIBUNE, 8 Feb 1980, p. A4:1] Ironically, it was this removal that helped prompt the city officials to launch an "abatement process."



Foss Creek gets 900 tons of rock to transform the streambed. October 20, 1986. Healdsburg Tribune photo.



411 Foss Street in the 1970's. Healdsburg Museum Collection.

"Abatement proceedings" were voted in on Feb. 4, 1980, and letters were sent to all involved, including major holders, The Healdsburg Plaza Company and the Lewis Norton Estate. In the letter, property owners were given 60 days to respond with a plan to demolish the building/s themselves, repair the building/s, or do nothing. Most of the owners did nothing, but the buildings were slowly vacated.

On 15 September 1982, it was announced in the TRIBUNE that "the city intends to consolidate all the land between Healdsburg Avenue and the railroad tracks from West Matheson to West North Street into a single six-acre parcel. The Plaza's west side will then be developed as a hotel retail complex complete with parking facilities by a private developer. To get the entire 6 acres, the city must buy the Deas land from Foss Street to the railroad tracks on the north side of West Matheson and buy up the Arctic Circle lease at West North and Healdsburg Avenue."

It wasn't until 1986 that things finally got under way with Phase I of Barry Swenson's retail-office complex which was to front on Healdsburg Avenue with a temporary parking lot on the corner of North Street and Healdsburg Avenue (sans Arctic Circle!) The second phase would be built when the first was 80 % leased. "When it's done, the project will have transformed the dusty, forlorn West Plaza redevelopment site into an oasis of green lawns, and walkways, a large parking lot and a fountain cascading into a manicured Foss Creek, transformed from drainage ditch to year-round

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Foss Street walkway and park, 2005. Photo by Charlotte Anderson

waterway.” [TRIBUNE, 20 Aug 1986, pg. A-4, Editorial]

The city, in improving Foss Creek, installed three bridges that went from the newly landscaped “Foss Street” to the new parking lot which was finished in time for the 1986 holiday shoppers. So, as Foss Street between Matheson and North Streets was effectively eliminated as a street, the only driving portion left was the one block north of North Street ending at Sanderson’s car lot.

Today (2005) on the 400 block of Foss Street, the “Clack house” still remains. It has undergone renovations, but its structural integrity remains. In the 1920s Mario Scalione bought lots #19-24. (see original plat map) He built a home on #24, now 435 Foss Street, and in the 1940s the Scalione family had that house plus the one at 429 Foss Street where Charles Scalione, Sr., and family resided. In the 1940s, 411 Foss Street was occupied by Steve and Lucy Smith and Lucy’s Uncle Manuel “Hummingbird” Cordova, the Native American runner.

In the 1970s, 411 Foss Street housed Scalione Realty run by Charles Scalione, Jr. Charlie was back in his old stomping grounds and recalled that he and his friends had fun in a “pond on Foss Street by the tracks where the Duchamp Hotel now is.”

Now in 2005, 411 Foss Street houses a graphics business. The rest of the west side of Foss Street has 435 privately owned, 429 is owned by a CPA, and the Duchamps Hotel and cottages are at 421.

In 1875, there were three hotels, the Plaza Hotel, the Union Hotel, and the Sotoyome House, in the 300 block of West Street and one home plus livery stables and assorted horse and wagon-related businesses in the 400 block of Foss Street.

In 2005, there are again three hotels in Healdsburg (plus four motels and over a dozen Bed & Breakfasts): the Hotel Healdsburg on Healdsburg Avenue, the LeMars on North Street at the corner of Foss Street, and the Duchamps Hotel and cottages on Foss Street. The Foss Street businesses are much more varied today: a CPA, a web page designer, financial services, a seamstress, heating and cooling, and French nails! The buildings are new and the streets are paved, but the idea of Healdsburg as a destination “playground” with provided services is still here! We’ve come a long way, baby!

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PIONEER



AWARD

2005 PIONEER AWARD

ROSE FERRARI DEMOSTENE BENSON: A ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME

by Daniel Murley

The following remembrances of her early life in Healdsburg, Berkeley and Westside Road were excerpted from discussions with Rose and her two daughters, Peachie and Cindy at the Healdsburg Museum and at Rose's home in Healdsburg. In these memories, we see the history of Healdsburg through the eyes of a young woman growing up in a small Northern California town in the early years of the 20th century.

Rose was born to Abele and Mansuetta Ferrari, both recent arrivals from Italy, in Healdsburg on September 7th or 8th 1912. "I was actually born on the 7th but it was late in the evening so at my Baptism my mother told them I was born on the 8th. She later straightened that out. I was born on the 7th." Some of her earliest remembrances of "old Healdsburg were going down to the Plaza on Saturday nights to listen to the Lytton band concerts with her family, friends and neighbors. She recalled the gaiety and interaction with other children, however the highlight of such evenings was not the music but the eventual trip to Cheney's Ice Cream Parlor where all would enjoy a summer night treat, "would you believe it, a five cent ice cream cone". From her home on West Street, Rose would walk to Healdsburg Elementary School and in doing so would skip across the Plaza as a shortcut to school. Around the grassy tree-dotted square Rose remembered the businesses of Romeo Cerri's feed store, S.E. Langhart's photography studio with its narrow winding stairway, Nelligan's feed store, "there were lots of feed stores around in those days, there were still plenty of horses and livestock in town", and Garrett's hardware with its mud floor in the basement, "they had everything but I didn't like going downstairs, it was always muddy and damp down there". None of these businesses remain in the downtown area today.

When she was enrolled at Healdsburg Elementary she spoke only Italian and she was in fine company as many of her fellow students who also came from first generation Italian homes also spoke "Italiano". "The first word of English I was able to say was 'sky', 'cielo' in Italian." I was so proud, I remember coming home to mama and pointing upward, gesturing and saying, 'sky, sky'. Mama actually tried to pronounce it but she didn't really get it right". Such was the humble beginning in Rose's language acquisition for Rose was to learn many more words in many languages as foreign languages became one of her lifelong studies.



The Abele Ferrari Family. First row, left, Vera, Abele and Rose. Top row, Mansuetta and Inez. Circa 1923

She speaks five languages. "Well, one can not really speak Latin." While at school in Healdsburg the children would always gather after school at the rectory at St. John's Catholic Church to play Bocce with the parish priest. Placed on top of the object ball was a jellybean and the child who was able to make contact and knock the candy off the ball received that prize. Rose got to be pretty good at Bocce. "I always went home with my share of dusty candy in my pocket." She also enjoyed the evening gatherings of her sisters, the Cerri kids, Walter Murray and other neighborhood friends on unpaved West Street where enthusiastic games of "Kick-the-Can" and "Run Sheep Run" entertained all, until as shadows faded and the street lights were lighted, the voices of her mother and other parents beckoned the children home for the night. At home, Rose, Rena, Vera and Inez would help their mother with all the household chores and when she was able she loved to crochet. "We used fine threads and made some beautiful pillow slips. I must have made hundreds of Afghans for friends and family and for raffles at the church and school." Some of her best

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pieces remain in the family today.

In the 1920's the Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce took on a number of civic projects designed to enhance the image of the growing population and popularity of the town both as a Russian River resort area and a desirable place to live. One of the projects was the planting of date palm trees along Healdsburg Avenue lining the thoroughfare as an inviting if not "exotic" concourse into the center of town and the Plaza downtown. The local Campfire Girls adopted the project and it was their task to keep the new plantings healthy and growing. Rose and her father took the assignment quite seriously and they would load up their vehicle, an old Overland, early every Saturday morning with five gallon buckets of water and tend to the trees planted along the road between the River Bridge and town. The success of their efforts can still be seen in the tall trees that remain and are immortalized in old postcards of Healdsburg.

Youthful memories include exciting trips outside of Healdsburg also. Many times the family would pack up for the day and head out on the treacherous, winding, "very bumpy", one lane road to the Geysers. Even though the terrain was rough and tough and the environment harsh, "...we wore dresses, not jeans when we went on a trip...that was just the way it was done. Why some times that old Overland would get stuck in the mud or in a deep rut and all of us would get out and push to get it rolling again." Yes, the trips were fun and adventurous but her father actually worked out there for a time. As Rose puts it, "He was one of the men who worked hard and long to harness the power of the Geysers." While there on an outing, as Abele would be working on pipes



1924 Overland



Rose Benson, confirmation Day, 1923

and machinery, a favorite pastime for mama and the girls was trying to boil an egg in the steaming fumaroles. "Well it never worked. I don't think we ever got a hard boiled egg no matter how many times we tried." When Papa had some time off the family would head the other direction from Healdsburg and drive to the coast, usually near Jenner for some time at the beach. The families would gather and build beach fires and while the men went out to secure surf-fish and pry abalone from the rocks or gather mussels, Rose and her sisters would play in the sand and explore the rocky coastline. "The abalone was excellent. It was sliced and pounded and delicious when cooked over the fire. After the meal, we'd gather around the fire and the older folks would drink some wine and we'd all tell stories and just enjoy the coast and the ocean."

One trip that neither Rose nor her mother would not quickly forget was a day's adventure to the McCutcheon hop ranch to pick hops. Rose was about 6 years old and her mother and other

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Hop pickers near Healdsburg, circa 1910.

women from the neighborhood would be driven to the hop fields by their husbands and dropped off for a day to earn a little cash picking hops. "It was hot, nasty business", recalls Rose. One day while all were diligently stripping hop clusters from the tall plants, Rose wandered off. It soon became evident to her that in the maze of twenty-foot tall rows of hops that she was truly lost. She wandered about and when she found the Russian River she got some bearing but still could not find the main group of pickers. The sun was lowering in the west and her fear increased. So too did her mother's panic increase. Before long the story of the lost girl had spread and the shortening of the daylight hours caused concern to all. Finally a large figure appeared to Rose through the hop rows. It was Torquio Galiardo. Rose ran and he hoisted her up on his shoulder and carried her toward the camp. "I was sitting on his right shoulder and I had my arms wrapped around his neck so tightly, I thought I might cut off his air. When I saw my mother I wasn't sure how she would react. She was so happy to see me that she hugged me and kissed me repeatedly." Everyone was frantic and fearful that the little girl might have wandered to the river and possibly drowned. Everyone on the ranch was out looking for her and all rejoiced at her safe return. "I never did pick hops again", Rose remarked.

Another more pleasant memory of her youth in the cheerful lively Italian enclave in Healdsburg was the story of the time when "Mario Scalione, my father's partner in the Healdsburg Machine Shop, enlisted our assistance in making wine. I think I was about 7 or 8 years old and in second or third grade. He saw a group of us playing while returning from school and hollered over, calling for us to join him across the street. He shepherded us to wash our feet and then put all of us to jumping up and down and stomping his grapes in what was like an old water trough. He got his grapes stomped and we all had a fun. We never did get all that purple grape juice off of us even after washing up before going home and mama was always furious that we had stained our starched white dresses."

Her time at Healdsburg Grammar and Healdsburg High School was well spent and enjoyable and prepared her well for her acceptance into the University of California, Berkeley. "I was one of only a few children and the only local girl to go to Cal. I got all 'A's' in high school and was ready to go to Berkeley. I think Sequester Langhart also went to Cal that year." That year was 1931 and in her freshman year at U.C. Berkeley among her other pursuits, Rose was a reporter for the "Daily Cal" newspaper. "I enjoyed that very



Rose Ferrari, UC Berkeley 1934.

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much but I really didn't like interviewing some of the crabby old professors." Rose graduated in 1934 with a major in Spanish, a minor in Italian and many fond memories of four years of intellectual and social growth.

When she returned to her quaint hometown of Healdsburg she was hired as "The" teacher for the one room Lafayette School on Westside Road. The young college graduate with her degree in Languages from Cal found the country school a challenge to more than just her academic and instructional skills. "Miss Ferrari" found that many of her students came from backgrounds similar to her own in that many were the children of Italian immigrants and spoke only Italian at home. Rose met the challenge with her multi-lingual capabilities and despite an emphasis on English in the classroom Rose was able to instruct and communicate in many varied ways, both in and outside the classroom. When the children frequently had to chase their baseballs down the hill from in back of the school Rose decided to build a backstop. Having no budget for such things (in fact essentially no budget at all), Rose commissioned her class to gather chicken wire from wherever they could appropriate such material and they wove together a curiously constructed barricade. Rose described it as "kind of patchwork quilt" and I imagine it as a design to rival that of Christo's "Running Fence" to be titled, "Blended Backstop" or "Chimeric Chickenwire". Regardless, it was successful and while setting the posts for the wire, Rose mixed and poured the concrete. She

enlisted the help of the upper grade boys and actually had them stand for hours holding the posts upright in the hardening concrete. When I mentioned that she could have fashioned a form to hold the posts steady and still, she wryly quipped, "Well I'll call on you the next time I pour concrete".

The accomplishments of Rose and her family are noteworthy and numerous but this glimpse into her early life and the early days of the Healdsburg community may bring some insight into the development of the character of each.

In March 2005, Rose received the Healdsburg Museum's Pioneer Award. This honor is given to a member of the community who has significantly contributed to the history of Healdsburg and Northern California. Rose was the first woman to receive this award.

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ONE FINE DAY: A PROFILE OF THE ENTERPRISING GEORGE F. DAY

by Holly Hoods

Builder of Healdsburg

Today the historic buildings of Healdsburg are one of the City's most appealing features, yet most of the local architects and contractors responsible for creating them have gone largely unrecognized. One contractor who deserves particular mention is the talented George F. Day, who worked as a contractor in the area from approximately 1906-1918. He built all types of buildings, but specialized in meticulously constructed bungalows, the majority of which still stand today. Many of Healdsburg, Alexander Valley and Dry Creek's finest bungalows are his work, including the Craftsman home at 328 Grant Street, presently owned and cherished by Gina Riner. This Day house earned the HM&HS Historic Preservation Award earlier this year.

Family Man

George was born in Sunol, Alameda County, in 1880 to Albert and Celia (Abbrott) Day. One of six children, George became the sole support of his family at the age of 20, after his father's death in 1900. He learned the building and contracting trade, and soon started working as a contractor and carpenter. George moved to Healdsburg from the Bay Area in 1906, just after the San Francisco Earthquake. In September 1906, he married Elizabeth ("Lizzie") Dicke, the daughter of Joseph and Elizabeth Dicke of Healdsburg. The Days moved into a charming hip-roof cottage that George built at 528 College Street. Daughter Evelyn was born in 1909. Albert arrived 14 months later. Daughter



George and Elizabeth Day at Barrell Springs.

Ann joined the family in 1913.

A Busy Contractor

Shortly after arriving in Healdsburg, George formed a partnership with Ed Guillie, another local contractor. Guillie and Day were partners until 1913. George then began working with W.H. Bush. Notable Day and Co. residential buildings included Fred Warner's two-storey Craftsman at 5055 Westside Road and the Black bungalow at 2419 Yoakim Bridge Road (now owned by Paul Rued). Probably the most impressive of the commercial buildings was the Farmers and Mechanics Bank (later First National Bank), built in 1908 at 119 Plaza St, the northwest corner of Center and Plaza Streets, today the home of "Art and All That Jazz"

George's contracting partnership with W.H. Bush lasted for five years. When Bush

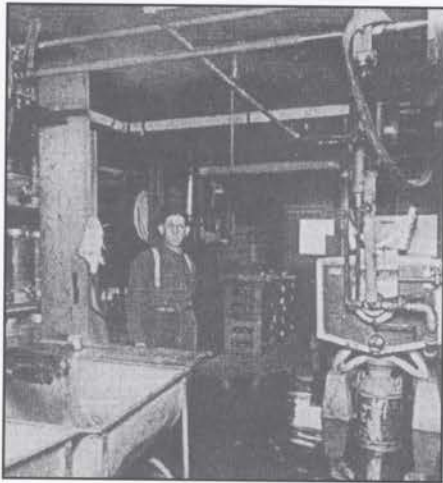
retired, George planned to continue the business, but ended up soon leaving contracting in order to focus on his dairy business full-time.

The Home Dairy

The Home Dairy was started in 1915, literally at the Days' home at 528 College Street, (today the residence of Paul Pugh). The dairy began modestly with five cows in the Days' backyard. In the early days, Lizzie milked the cows and ran the dairy, while George did contracting and carpentry work. The children, Evelyn and Albert, helped in the business, delivering the milk around the neighborhood. The milk was originally sold in cans and later in bottles, delivered by a refrigerated truck. Evelyn Day Iversen, now 95, recalls making milk deliveries at the age of 12. "I never milked the cows, though," she laughs. Evelyn describes her father as easygoing and gentle. She recalled, "He was never one to give orders. If he wanted us to work in the garden, he would say things like, "Those vegetables would sure grow better if they weren't surrounded by weeds."

In 1919, George purchased the 1.5-acre Fox property on Mill Street. He promptly remodeled the existing house and moved the dairy operations to the new location. There they pasteurized, bottled and delivered 130 gallons of milk daily. Milk was purchased from three ranches: the Gambetta north of town, the Azevedo on Limerick Lane, and the Calhoun on Eastside Road.

Continued on page 15



George Day inside Home Dairy, 1919.

The business continued to grow and prosper despite tragedy. In September 1924, without warning, Lizzie Day died. The young wife and mother was killed by a blood clot at the age of 36. Supported by the love of the community, the Days carried on. George met and married Lois Van Deveere, a widow, who became a loving stepmother to the Day children. George and Lois were married in Santa Rosa in 1926.

Entrepreneur on Mill St.

Over the next 20 years, George transformed the corner of Mill Street and Healdsburg Avenue. The Home Dairy flourished, despite competition from J. Lee Hoy's Sanitary Dairy nearby, another successful family business. Always the innovator, George Day developed several additional enterprises at the new location. An ice machine was added to the plant, capable of manufacturing one ton of ice per day. The business was renamed the "Healdsburg Home Dairy and Ice Works." A store and ice cream shop were also built.

Another addition to the property was the construction of the Healdsburg Auto Camp, also operated by the Days. The camp had everything to suit the motoring tourist, including eighteen cottages with

kitchenettes and bathrooms, and space to set up tents. In 2005, ten of the original 18 cottages still stand at 147 Healdsburg Avenue, which was then the Redwood Highway. Though they were never built to be permanent dwellings, the tiny buildings today serve as rental studio cottages.

In 1937, George added a coffee shop and restaurant to his Mill Street empire. The building, at 149 Healdsburg Avenue, for years housed the Heidelberg Café. Despite or perhaps because of—the success of their many businesses, the Days were ready



Elizabeth Day at Home Dairy, 1915.

for retirement by the late 1930s. In 1939, the Home Dairy was sold to George Kramer, a former partner of George Day's. The ice and ice cream business continued from this location for a few more years.

In 1944, George sold their home, auto camp and store at the corner of Mill Street and Old Redwood Highway to Clyde Hollingsworth of Oakland. During George's retirement years, he enjoyed spending time with his family, and was active in Kiwanis and the Knights of Pythias. His grandson, Neil Iversen, has saved his carpentry tools, and has shared some with the great-grandchildren. George Day died in 1970, at the age of 90, but his legacy lives on in the architecture and the hearts of his family.



Built for \$3500 in 1916, the Paul Rued House at 2415 Yoakim Bridge Road is one of George Day's signature bungalows. Healdsburg Museum photo.



George Day Home and Home Dairy at 90 Mill Street, 1920. Langhart Photo courtesy of Evelyn Day Iversen

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View of the Plaza and City Hall, Healdsburg, California, circa 1910



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