



# RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

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

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Dan Murley brought back fond memories in reading his article about photographer (and father of Healdsburg Museum founder Edwin Langhart) S.E. Langhart - and he was always Mr. Langhart. He was very kind and helpful to a novice publisher/editor when I took over the Tribune in 1950. In those days we used cut film for the Graflex camera used by newspapers and Mr. Langhart was always ready to develop my film on a moment's notice. It took time and patience. No digitals or instants in those days. You will enjoy Dan's article about the man who "chronicled Healdsburg life behind the lens."

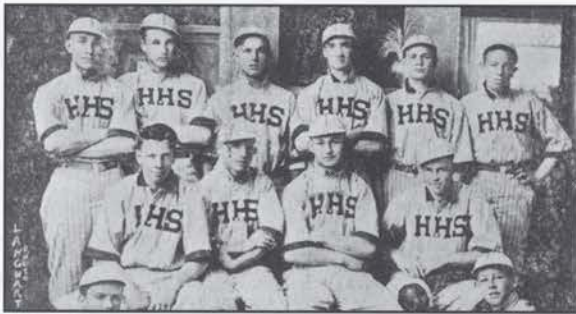
Another fascinating article is Holly Hoods' oral history with Barbara Baxter and Tom Baxter, *Life Among the Woolies: Sheep Ranching on the White Oak Ranch*, recounting life on a huge sheep ranch in the 1940's to 1980 when "the coyotes definitely put us out of the sheep business." The Baxters responses to Holly's questions brought to light a way of life that is long gone.

Charlotte Anderson continues with her two part series about carnivals and fiestas, this time covering the years from 1907 to 1950 when the theme of the fair emphasized Healdsburg's agricultural heritage. Charlotte meticulously recounts the various events of the years, the floats on the water, the advent of the automobile, the use of the radio in the 1930's and even the movies. A fun article and one we know you will enjoy.

Whitney Hopkins, who works with the Museum's many artifacts, this time brings a very interesting account of a Fraternal Benefit Society in her article, *Woodmen of the World: A Window into Fraternal Benefit Societies*. Brought to Healdsburg in 1897, the Woodmen of the World was an important part of Healdsburg's social and cultural life for many years. Well written and researched, Whitney brings to us another important phase of Healdsburg's colorful history.

So there we have it . . . the fascinating story of a very important business man, an oral history of life on a sheep ranch, carnivals and fiestas and through our artifacts an interesting account of fraternal benefit societies. We hope you enjoy this Autumn issue of the year 2005.

Arnold Santucci  
Editor



## 4. Woodmen of the World: A Window Into Fraternal Benefit Societies

by Whitney Hopkins

*Modeled after the Ancient Order of the United Workmen, the Woodmen of the World Society was first introduced in Healdsburg in 1897. Although no longer represented in Healdsburg, it had a long history locally. Today the Woodmen of the World has over 810,000 members in the United States, one of the largest fraternal benefit societies in the USA.*

## 7. Sequester E. Langhart: Capture the Moment

by Daniel F. Murley

*Continuing his series on family histories, Daniel Murley gives us a history of Healdsburg photographer Sequester E. Langhart, described as a "chronicler of Healdsburg life from behind the lens."*

## 10. Life Among the Woolies: Sheep Ranching on the White Oak Ranch

A Northern Sonoma County Oral History with Tom Baxter and Barbara Baxter.

Edited by Holly Hoods

*Recounted in this oral history is what life was like owning and operating a large sheep ranch from the 1940's to 1980 when "the coyotes very definitely put us out of the sheep business."*

## 15. Carnivals and Fiestas: 1907-1950

by Charlotte Anderson

*Charlotte Anderson continues her very thorough account of the various carnivals and fiestas held in Healdsburg over many, many years. Charlotte points out that "Many of Healdsburg's carnival/fiesta events were changed over the years, but the water events, land parades, sports and concerts remained consistent in various forms."*

# WOODMEN OF THE WORLD: A WINDOW INTO FRATERNAL BENEFIT SOCIETIES

by Whitney Hopkins

“Chop, chop, chop,  
Saw, saw, saw,  
We are Woodmen!  
Zip, Boom, Bah!”

The enthusiastic cheer of the “log rollers,” or Woodmen of the World (WOW), was first heard in Healdsburg in 1897. Recently the Healdsburg Museum received a donation from Wayne Goodrich (grandson and great-grandson of local Woodmen) of this fraternal society’s ritual regalia (including robe, hats, axe and chalice). Like other fraternal benefit organizations which became immensely popular in 19th and early 20th century America, Woodmen of the World promoted companionship, entertainment, community service, and the opportunity to come together to provide mutual aid. Founded in 1890 in Omaha, Nebraska, by Joseph Cullen Root, it was reported that Root’s idea for “Woodmen” came from a speech he heard about woodsmen clearing away forests to provide shelter for their families. Others speculated that Root visualized himself as the root that would grow into a shelter, protecting members from financial disaster. Today the organization is one of the largest fraternal benefit societies in the United States with more than 810,000 members.

Fraternal benefit organizations, resembling the English friendly societies that appeared in the 1500s, became mutual insurance societies of the working and middle classes by which they sought to aid each other in emergencies from sickness, death or other stresses. These societies based their model on the Ancient Order of United Workmen (AOUW) founded in 1868. Generally recognized as the first fraternal benefit society in the United States, AOUW was the first to offer a formal system of life insurance protection for its members, instead of the traditional “passing the hat” to collect funds when a member died. When members joined they paid to receive insurance certificates.

In May of 1897 Mr. George Rogers of Oakland, “an active worker in several fraternities”, delivered an address in Healdsburg’s



Healdsburg Woodmen of the World, Geyser Camp No. 370, circa 1940's

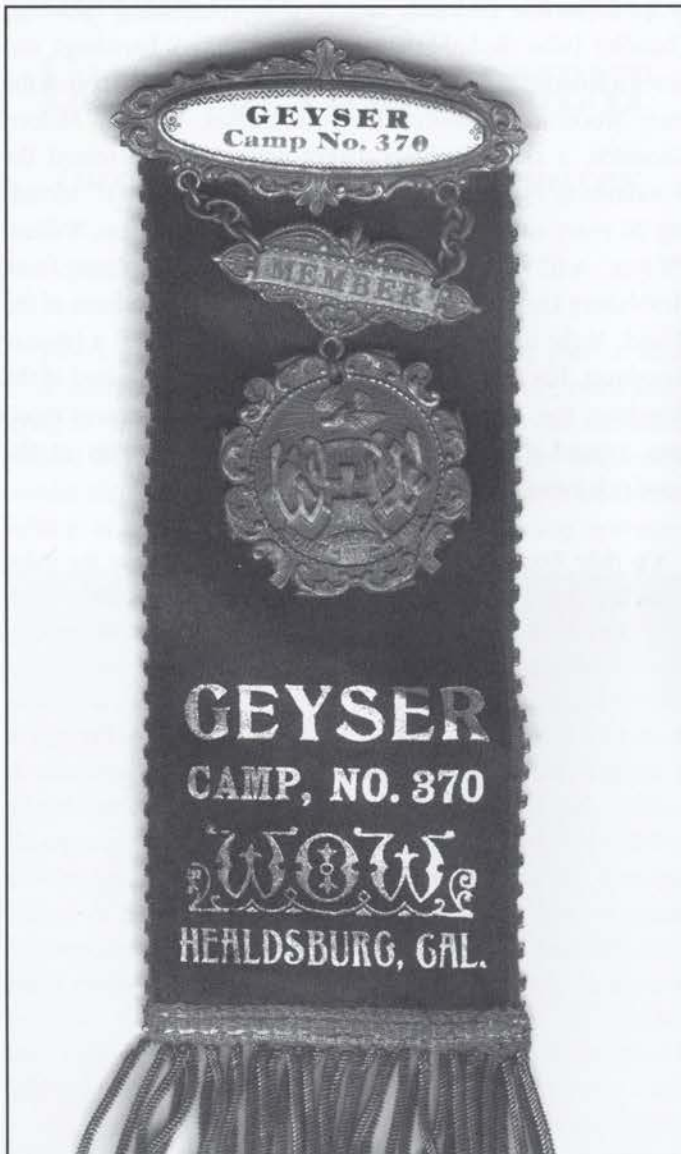
public courtroom on “Our Modern Fraternities” to all interested listeners. In his lecture Rogers focused on the importance of modern fraternal benefit societies in their ability to provide monetary aid in times of trouble, and contrasted their successes with the failures of for-profit “old-line” insurance companies. While Rogers paid tribute to all benefit societies, he highlighted the Woodmen of the World. In closing he put out a plea:

“Gentleman...if you are willing to come to us during your years of health and strength, if you will unselfishly turn into this great work your share of the moneys necessary to carry it on, if you are willing to go to the bedside of the sick, to watch through the long vigils of the night, and to smooth the pillow of the dying, then will we pledge to you the protection of 85,000 Woodmen...”

The week after Rogers’ speech, Healdsburg’s order of the Woodmen of the World, Geyser Camp # 370, was initiated. Well-known local businessmen, including F.W. Cooke (editor of the Healdsburg Tribune), C.D. Evans (pharmacist), and C.W. Weaver (doctor) lead the group. From its inception Healdsburg Woodmen came from all fields of employment ranging from lumbermen and farmers to doctors, judges, businessmen, and priests. Because women could not become official members until 1955, most lodges had a women’s auxiliary. In Healdsburg, women were active in the organization from the beginning. Membership in the organization quickly grew at both the local and the national level. By 1900, Healdsburg’s Geyser Camp had already initiated its hundredth member (and the organization had a total of \$219 million in life insurance from all of its lodges across the country). Geyserville was quick to establish its own branch, known as the Russian River Camp.

Following the objectives set forth by the society’s founder, Healdsburg’s members were formally insured by the national

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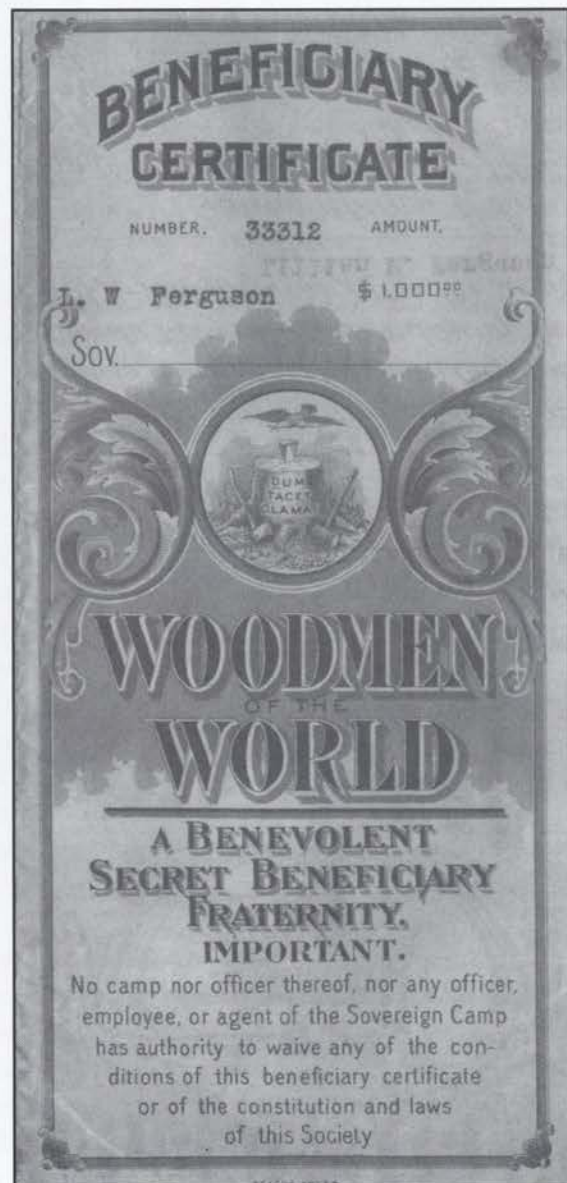
Woodmen of the World Geysers Camp Membership Ribbon, courtesy of Goodrich Family

organization but operated as a local lodge to perform memorial services for members, take care of one another in times of loss and other stresses, and organize entertainment for themselves and their community. Frequently the Geysers Camp of Healdsburg united with the Russian River Camp of Geyserville to plan and host events. These included a performance of the traveling Columbian Minstrels in 1900, a Fourth of July Picnic and Celebration with a parade, sports and dancing at Bosworth's Grove near Geyserville in 1906, and a radio concert held at the Healdsburg Grammar School auditorium in 1927. The Healdsburg camp, which never had its own building, held their meetings and events in various Healdsburg community halls, including Fox's Hall, the Masonic Hall, the Odd fellow's Hall, and the Women's Improvement Clubhouse. The Geyserville Camp elected to build its own hall in 1906.

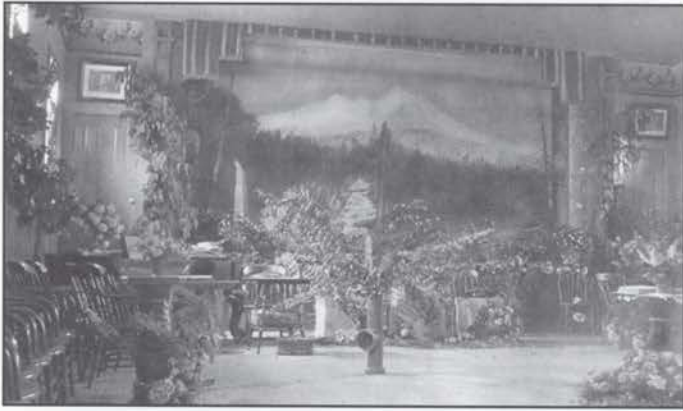
When Joseph Cullen Root founded Woodmen one of his objectives was to provide a decent burial for all members. Early Woodmen certificates provided for a death and a monument benefit. Gravestones were originally furnished to members free of charge (however during the 1920's the Society stopped providing stone markers to members when the cost increased and cemetery rules changed). The early Woodmen gravestones varied greatly, but a tree stump is one of the more common early gravestone designs. Several gravestones erected by the Woodmen can be seen in Healdsburg's Oak Mound Cemetery.

Root made a special effort to honor deceased Woodmen with the creation of Woodmen Memorial Day, celebrated on June 6. On this day each year the Camps of both Healdsburg and

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Woodmen of the World Beneficiary Certificate, 1917, courtesy of Phoenix Masons



Interior of Geyserville's Woodmen of the World Hall.

Geyserville visited the local cemeteries to remember former members, conduct services, and leave flowers. In 1906, for example, it was reported that on the morning of June 6, members of Healdsburg's Geysers Camp went to Alexander Valley and marched by drum corps to Beeson Cemetery. Meanwhile Geyserville's Russian River Camp conducted memorial services in Olive Hill Cemetery. That afternoon the two Camps united at the Christian Church in Healdsburg and by drum corps and uniform rank marched to Oak Mound Cemetery where they conducted a graveside service. These services often attracted the attention of other Healdsburg residents who came to the cemetery to witness the ceremonies.

In addition to their compassion, Woodmen in Healdsburg were known for their witty humor. This can be seen in November, 1898, when members of Geysers Camp and Russian River Camp organized a dinner party at Fox's Hall for members and their friends. The evening started out formally with music, recitations, and an address by Rev. Driver, the local Baptist pastor (who was also a Woodman), on the merits of the order. After these formalities the evening quickly became a hilarious competition. Men competed in a sewing contest, women in a nail-driving contest, and members of Healdsburg and Geyserville camps participated in a wood-sawing contest. The evening concluded with a banquet and the delivery of additional addresses by four ministers and enthusiastic members.

The Geysers Camp flourished through the first half of the 20th century. Allegiance to a fraternal organization such as Woodmen was often transferred from parent to child, sometimes verbally and other times quite literally with the gift of a fraternal pin, ritual item or outfit. Parents and their children often attended meetings together. This was the case for Wayne Goodrich's family. Wayne's great-great grandfather, Chandler B. Goodrich, a native of Maine, moved to California's Mother Lode about 1860 where

he switched from mining to blacksmithing. He brought his family to Geyserville in 1881, and then to Healdsburg. Although Chandler (who died shortly after Geysers Camp's founding) was never a Woodman, he sang with the Methodist church choir at the early Woodmen Memorial Day ceremonies. His son Milford Goodrich, a skilled cabinet maker and carpenter, joined the Woodmen in 1909 and was active until his death in 1947, including 20 years as the Geysers Camp Banker. Milford's son, William "Wayne", a 62 year employee of Stevens' Lumber Company (now Healdsburg Lumber) also became a member of Woodmen of the World. At the time of Wayne's death in 1985, he was a 60-year Woodman. His wife Annie (Austin) Goodrich was involved in the Woodmen too, traveling to the annual National Congress meetings around the country and hosting special events at the Goodrich home.

While Woodmen of the World has now died out at the lodge level in Healdsburg and Geyserville, the organization headquartered in Omaha, Nebraska, has managed to span three centuries. It remains strong as a modern financial services organization offering life and health insurance, annuities, investments and home mortgages. It is unique among fraternal benefit societies because of its longevity. After the AOUW introduced affordable life insurance to working class families, it is estimated that over 300 fraternal benefit societies blossomed in the late 1800's. Many societies were poorly managed and went bankrupt, while others died of old age as their members aged and new members could not be found to replace them. Woodmen of the World was successful as an organization because of its strong financial management and its mergers in the 1960's with a number of smaller fraternal benefit societies. Woodmen still has more than 2,000 active lodges across the United States where members continue to conduct volunteer projects that benefit individuals, families and communities.

#### Sources:

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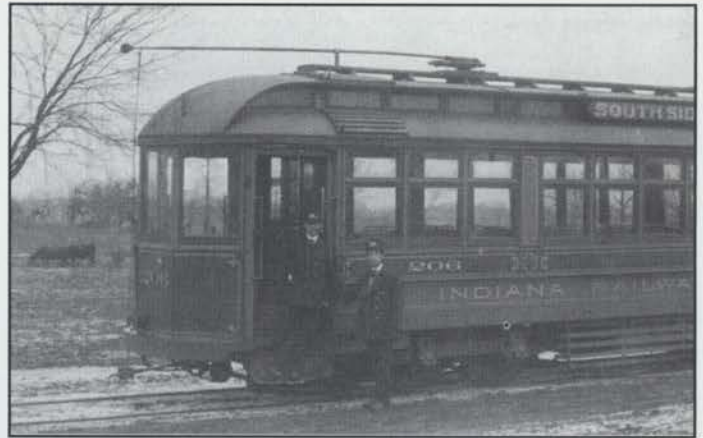
Woodmen of the World website: <http://www.woodmen.com/>

# SEQUESTER E. LANGHART: CAPTURE THE MOMENT

## *Images and Reminiscences*

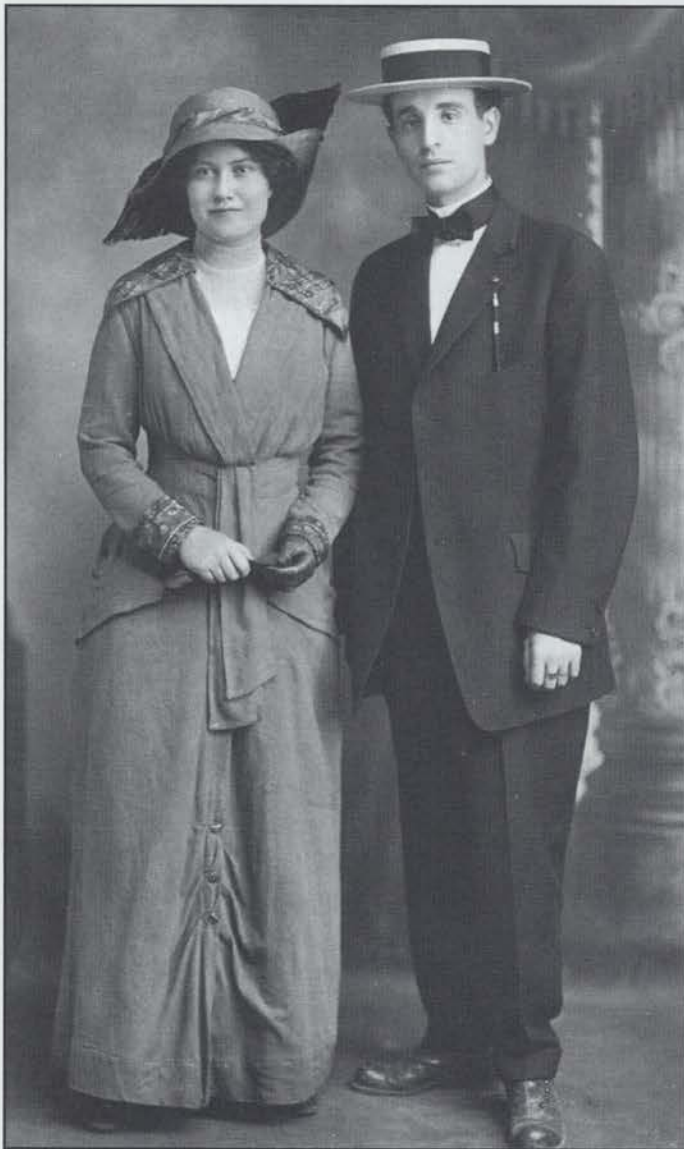
by Daniel F. Murley

There was a blinding bright flash and a large poof of white smoke and for a moment, as the air cleared, all looked about trying to see what had really happened. Suddenly the assembled realized that the photographer was smoldering. The magnesium powder that Sequester E. Langhart had used to achieve the correct lighting, or more importantly to intensely flash and stop movement



*Langhart on the job with the Indiana Street Railway, 1905*

of his subjects, was just a touch too much. What had started as a cute family photographic shoot had turned into a trip to the Healdsburg Hospital. This unfortunate occurrence hurt Mr. Langhart's pride more than his physical being, though he was to be seen in bandages about town for a couple of weeks. The always nattily dressed photographer continued to go about his business as a chronicler of Healdsburg life from behind the lens.



*S.E. Langhart and his bride, Lora Aline Wilson, 1913*



*Sequester with Uncle Frank P. Ford, circa 1900*

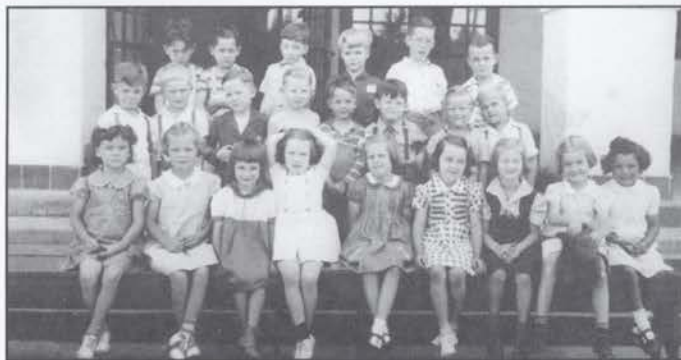
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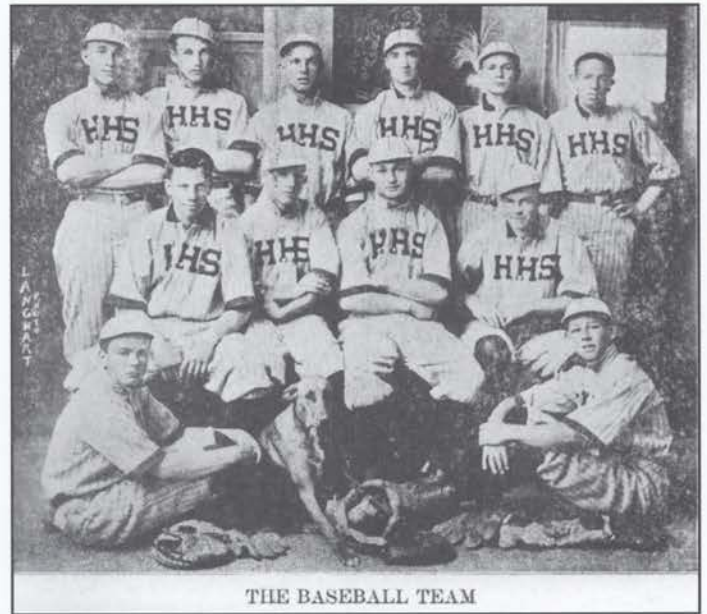
Sequester E. Langhart had come to Healdsburg in 1914 with his new bride Lora Arline from the Pomona area of Southern California. He had met and then married Miss Lora Arline Wilson, while making his living working in a photographic studio. Years before, he left the cold winters of Kendallville, Indiana,



and the mundane occupation of conductor on the Indiana Street Railway System and sought out the warmer climes and the lively social atmosphere of greater Los Angeles at the turn of the century. While a youth in Indiana, he had also acquired an interest and a degree of proficiency in the photographic arts. He more than likely honed his skills behind the camera and in the dark-



Healdsburg Kindergarten, 1942 (Langhart photo)

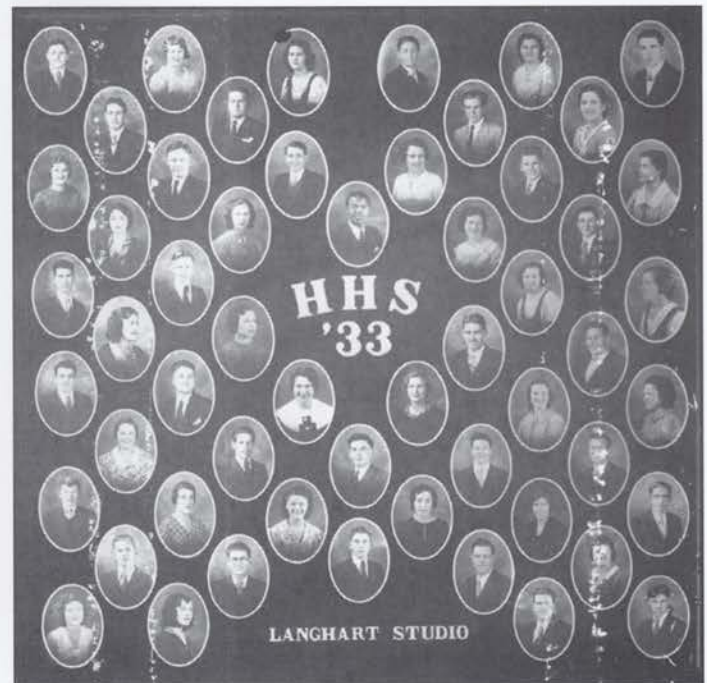


THE BASEBALL TEAM

Healdsburg High School baseball team, 1919

room working with his uncle Frank Ford who had operated a number of photographic studios from Kendallville to Kalamazoo. When they came to Healdsburg, Sequester and Arline purchased the already established business of Mooers' Photo Studio in the upstairs of the Kruse building on Matheson Street across from the Plaza. It was from this humble studio and from his home on Brown St. where Langhart worked his trade for nearly 50 years.

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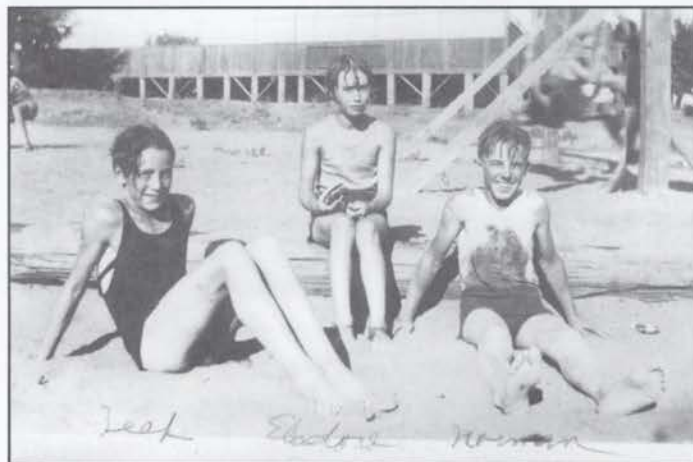




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Most memorable to many are his years of work photographing the students, teachers and particularly the sports teams of Healdsburg High School and also capturing the cherubic images of generations of Healdsburg Grammar School students. Besides the typical posed class pictures in front of the school buildings, S.E., or "Squeek" as he was affectionately known by a few, set up athletic teams in unique formations, often times in the shape of the letter "H" and many times with dogs and children and other interesting inclusions. He also took the photographs, developed the negatives, cut out oval face prints, pasted them artistically on a four foot by four foot painted plywood backing, and even painted in the "HHS" and the graduating year and then photographed that, thereby producing a memorable senior class composite to be scribbled upon by classmates.

A few of the original paste-ups and many of the hastily auto-graphed composites exist in the Healdsburg Museum archives. Though he was known by almost all in town, there is no information found in any written record, here in Healdsburg or in the Midwest, to give the slightest hint of the source or origin of the name Sequester. With a father named John and a mother named Sarah, from whence came Sequester? Well, in the fourth or fifth century A.D. there was an author, Vibius Sequester, who studied early Roman poets such as Virgil and Ovid. How this midwestern couple chose or even found such a name remains a mystery. Of equal obscurity, is the reason why Sequester senior gave his first son this unusual name? Well, that name, which never daunted the senior, obviously didn't adversely affect the junior. He went on to become the famous Healdsburg City Clerk, who apparently inherited his father's penchant for recording events, and after years of careful collection and cataloging of artifacts, founded the Healdsburg Museum. Many Healdsburg residents will recall that Sequester Edwin Langhart Junior was affectionately known locally as "Zeke." Both "Squeek" and "Zeke," the pair who shared



Ed Langhart (Zeke) with sister Eladore and friend Norman on the beach, 1928.

SOTOYOMAN

Portraits Copying old Photographs Full Time Eastman Films	Commercial Work Kodak Finishing Identification Photos
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**Langhart**  
*Official School Photographer*

Phone 231J

Flash Lights View Work X-Ray Developing	Enlargements Oil Coloring Stamp Photos
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that unusual name, will long be remembered for their contributions to the chronicling of the town they called home.

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*Tom and Barbara Baxter marking sheep, 1966*

## LIFE AMONG THE WOOLIES:

### SHEEP RANCHING ON THE WHITE OAK RANCH

*A Northern Sonoma County Oral  
History with Tom Baxter  
and Barbara Baxter*

*Edited by Holly Hoods*

### Introduction

*Healdsburg Museum Research Curator Holly Hoods interviewed Thomas F. Baxter III ("Tom") and ex-wife Barbara Lyon Baxter in September 2005 at Barbara's home on a portion of the Baxters' former 8,000-acre sheep ranch. Born in Healdsburg March 28, 1926, Thomas F. Baxter III is the son of Thomas F. Baxter Jr. and Helen Hammer Baxter. Tom's grandfather, Thomas F. Baxter, purchased the Rockpile Road/Skaggs Springs area ranch in northern Sonoma County with a partner in about 1915. The White Oak Ranch-which includes the Moffet ranch- was one of the largest sheep ranches in*

*Sonoma County. Barbara, the daughter of Ray Blanchard Lyon and Carmen Seeman Lyon, was born April 19, 1925 in San Luis Obispo, California where her father was a Superior Court judge. She was a recent Stanford graduate when she came to Sonoma County "as a bride" in 1947, but the city girl took to the life of a sheep rancher as if she were born to it, like Tom. Tom and Barbara lived on what is now called Old Sawmill Campground on Lake Sonoma. They raised two daughters, Carmen (b. 1948) and Laura (b. 1950), and thousands of sheep on the White Oak Ranch. Eight hundred acres of Baxter property was preempted by the government and flooded by the Army Corps of Engineers to create Lake Sonoma in the early 1970s. The remaining 7,000+ acres were divided between Tom and Barbara in their 1992 divorce settlement, Tom being on the White Oak and Barbara being up on the Moffet. Tom was married to Laura Rest in 1994, but continues to share family, history and friendship with Barbara.*

### Baxter Ranch Beginnings

TFB: My grandfather is instrumental in the history of this ranch because he bought the ranch with a partner, Herbert Montgomery in about 1915. It was already a sheep ranch when they bought it from Cap Ornbaun. Montgomery wasn't a sheep man; he was an attorney for the Caterpillar Company when they were in Stockton. My grandfather was the general manager of the company and that was how they got together.

My grandfather grew up in Boston and he had a stock and bond trading business in Boston. In 1915 he came out to San Francisco to the Pan-Pacific Exposition - the World's Fair - he and my grandmother. My dad was 19 years old, his sister was a little older than he was, and there was a brother, younger. They all moved out because they liked what they saw in California.

My father wanted to farm. Actually he was a student at Harvard. He came out here, and my grandfather put him up there with Montgomery and just let him work. I remember my grandfather told my dad after he had worked here a couple of years that it was no good. (laughs) Not a good yield on the investment. He was wrong - well, we lived on it, but it was pretty tough during the Depression.

BLB: Your dad butchered lambs and sold them locally, right Tom? During the Depression?

TFB: He butchered lambs, sold them everywhere. He killed 'em on the ranch; sold them to people down at Dry Creek. If he butchered you a lamb, he cleaned it—ready to eat-for a dollar and a half. This happened in May and June. Lambs are at the best

*Continued on page 11*

*Continued from page 10*

about the first of June. He could butcher one in about 30 minutes, but we were actually in the wool business at the time. The sheep we raised were Merinos—bred for their wool and their gregarious instinct.

BLB: Merino sheep have the finest wool. They're known for their wool. When I first came here, wool was the moneymaker.

TFB: Merinos yield 8 or 9 pounds of wool. In World War I the wool was probably over a dollar a pound, but back in the Depression, wool was...well, you couldn't even sell it. Some people held it for three years and then took less than what they offered the first time: like ten cents a pound for wool. Barbara can verify that. She's got all the books. My dad kept his own books. You won't believe what the numbers were! My dad, I'd say he moved out to the ranch in 1922. He would have been 23 years old.

BLB: You were born in '26. He married [Helen] in '25.

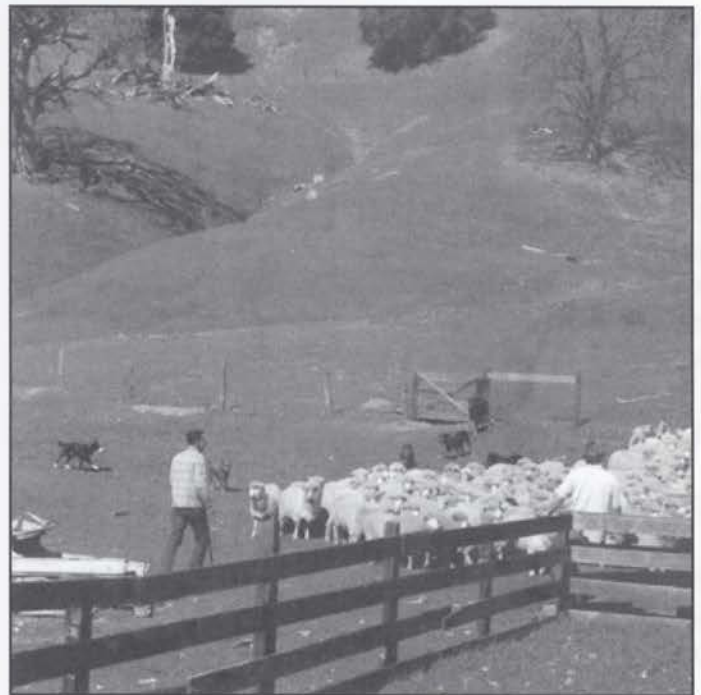
TFB: Right. He worked here a couple of years before he got married. I remember them telling me that the house that they built down there at the White Oak [Ranch] burned in 1929, but they rebuilt and that's where Barbara and I first lived. This was all the White Oak.

## Good Neighbors

TFB: We had good neighbors all around; good neighbors are really important. Starting on Rockpile Road, Ed Thompson was there [on the west side of the road], Frank Ledford was there and where the Prusch ranch was - Cap Ornbaun owned that too. Prusch bought it from Ornbaun, but I guess Otis owned it first. And Duke Blair was our neighbor right down Skaggs Springs Road, a couple of miles from us, but he owned land clear out to the lookout at Annapolis. Frank Soule lived up the creek from us about a mile; my dad finally bought his place. Frank got old and moved to town about the time Barbara and I got married. He was a real individual. There was another guy that lived between Frank and us. His name was Ezra Burnham. We called him "Buck," he was a trapper. My dad leased part of the Wickersham—ran sheep on that for a few years. He liked raising sheep, and the sheep [business] was pretty good for a few years until the Depression. Then everything went down.

## One Sheep per Four Acres

TFB: What was it like on a sheep ranch? Well, the season starts in August. We'd have two or three hundred sheep in a pasture. You put the rams in the pasture in August and you start having lambs



*Tom working the sheep with dogs, 1974*

five months later. I only needed four rams to the hundred sheep. Barbara and I ran a couple of thousand sheep on our ranch; we had to. One sheep per four acres is what we figured. In New Zealand they run one sheep to the acre. They have the same kind of land, but it rains all the time, so they've got green grass all year. We fed the sheep cottonseed pellets about this time of year. There was still plenty of grass, but it's good to give protein supplements when they're making a lamb. Sheep are kind of like goats. They eat brush and leaves, not just grass. They keep the brush from taking over your ranch.

BLB: We bought rams wherever we could get them. The rams are very important to the wool you'd get and also for your market lambs. When I first came here to the ranch, Tom's father had all Merino rams and then later we used black-faced rams to produce market lambs.

## Shearing the Woolies

TFB: At shearing time, there was always a shearing crew of four men. They'd come and camp on the ranch. During my time, a lot of them came from Boonville. They had small ranches in Anderson Valley with sheep, but not enough to make a living at it. They went out a couple of months a year and sheared sheep. There was a sheep shed at the Moffet and one on the White Oak.

*Continued on page 12*

*Continued from page 11*

All the sheep on the ranch were sheared at one shed or the other. And after shearing, just turn the sheared sheep out and they'd go back to their home pasture. The next job after you sheared the sheep was to shift the lambs for sale. Also my dad would go out on his horse, and if he found some woolies that hadn't been shorn—that's what you call 'em: woolies - he'd put the dogs around them and stay out there all the rest of that day, shearing those woolies with hand shears. Anyway he'd tie [the fleeces] all up with wool twine, load 'em on his horse, and would come back with his horse just loaded down with fleeces piled all around him.

BLB: To tie up a fleece up is a special job and an art.

TFB: Barbara's good at it.

BLB: I can tie wool, but I had to learn it. You have to learn how to tie it in a tight bundle and it's hard to do. [Tom's father] Pa could tie a nice tight fleece; he had to get it on the horse.

TFB: (Demonstrating) You shear the belly out first, then you start up the neck; then just go right around the side of that sheep, leg down, going along one side, then go on the other side. I'm simplifying, but a real sheep shearer can do it in a very small number of blows - that's what they call each pass, it's a blow. A good sheep shearer doesn't overlap. They can shear a sheep in a couple of minutes. They shear 200 a day. Do the sheep fight? Oh yes, you have to hold 'em a certain way, that's the key. First you set 'em up on their butt so you're behind them. You squeeze them with your legs. The machine (electric sheep shearer) is hanging up here



*Sheep shearing 1975*



*Feeding sheep north side Moffett, 1971*

over your head—it's got a little gas engine and it's got a flexible shaft. To pull a sheep out of the pen, you grab one by the hind leg, tip it over, hold it there and start to take the belly off. The wool buyers don't really like the belly wool, because it's usually full of stickers. The best wool is all over the back. You'd shear once a year. More than that isn't good for the wool clip. They want a certain amount of length at the mill. If you shear them twice, you don't get that length for the fibers.

So after shearing a fleece, the wool tier would toss the fleece to somebody in the wool sack, who was tromping it down tight. The wool sack is seven feet long, three feet wide. It's up in a rack and it's got a steel ring that holds it. Barbara's done that too. When you're shearing sheep, you hire a crew. We hired a wool tier a lot of times, but we sacked our own.

BLB: I would do it sometimes . . . or Hay Petersen. The kids also used to love to get in there.

TFB: It sounds easy, but it's just like anything else: you have to know how to do it. You can stomp on the wool all day and it's not gonna stay in that bag. You have to go right down the edge, and the bag is burlap, and then the wool sticks to that burlap. You can put 300 pounds of wool in a sack if you get it right.

BLB: You have to keep going around the edges and pushing it in. A good wool tier can get a real tight sack. Hay Petersen was really good at tying the wool and sacking it.

TFB: The sheep shearers would be racing all the time. If they'd get to racing too much, they'd start to cut the sheep and you'd have to

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talk to them. Most of them were professional. What would they call a scratch? A scratch could be 3 inches long. If it was longer than that, it was a cut. So it got pretty bloody sometimes, but a real good sheep shearer would take care of his cutters by dressing the points so it will pick up the wool but not the skin.

BLB: You'd always have a needle, and sometimes you'd have to stitch 'em up if they got cut. A good sheep shearer doesn't cut them at all.

TFB: Machine shearing is quicker than hand shearing. It's like a barber shears; it can go as fast as you can push it. After they're shorn, they're just white, white skin. They're vulnerable. They'll die if it rains too much. That's why you'd shear your sheep in May, because most of the rain is behind you. You have to shear them ahead of the stickers and behind the rain. How do you do that? It's pretty hard. There's filaree in this country; and its stickers are one of the first things that you get in the wool, and it's pretty hard to get out.

## Tagging, Marking, Gathering, Hollering and Legging Out

TFB: In the Fall you tag your sheep. From May to October, the wool gets longer. Winter is coming; the grass is gonna be green and they're gonna start getting manure on their back end. Barbara was good at tagging sheep. We did this with a hand shears. Some people think we were crazy, but we could do it pretty satisfactorily.

BLB: We rode horseback all the time and always Tom had four or



*Barbara at top of White Oak from above fig tree, Spring 1972*



*Marking lambs 1974*

five dogs. We'd go out and gather the sheep by pastures and put them in corrals. Then we'd leg them out one by one and tag them. Shear around the butt. Clean around their eyes so they can see. A wooly sheep is pretty wooly everywhere. On this part of the ranch there were four fenced pastures: the south side, the north side, the east Moffet and the Sentiny. They each had gates and you could close the pastures off.

TFB: For instance, when you wanted to work your sheep, even just tagging them, you wouldn't get them all in, so you'd shut the gates up there and get 'em in pasture by pasture. You'd have to have somebody to help you tag 'em. After my dad died, Barbara did it. But the idea is to have a big corral and it progresses into smaller corrals. Then you've got 'em pretty tight. That's when you can just walk into a little wad of sheep and just leg one out. Give it a little twist and she's on her back. To mark the lambs, you have an alleyway to run the sheep and ewes together up this little alleyway; it's tapered in so they just go through there one at a time at the upper end. The boss is standing there and he's cutting them out so the lambs go this way and the ewes go that way. Then you've got all of the lambs in a little marking pen. You'd have a table and a helper would pick the lambs up and get the four legs together like this - (gestures).

BLB: Pick 'em up this way in a sitting position and take the hind legs and pull 'em up to the side of the head. Then you've got their tail and the nuts if they're a male. This is a pretty small lamb - a 10 pound or 15 pound lamb. Marking lambs is three procedures: castrating, ear marking and cutting the tails off.

TFB: At the time you castrate them, you also cut the tails off. Every

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*Lucy and Fitzroy gathering sheep 1970*

sheep has a long tail when it's born. The problem with having a long tail with wool on it is that it gets manure on it and urine, which is an invitation for blowflies. I'll bet you didn't know they cut the tail off. It's a bloody mess too. Everybody had some medicine that they put on it: fly repellent; we used KRS. But they stopped bleeding pretty fast.

BLB: And we'd also put our ear mark. The ears bleed a lot when you cut the ear mark. There's a lot of blood. Every rancher has their own special ear mark for the sheep. If you've got the sheep in a corral, you can spot a stray. Our ear mark was an upper half on the right, swallow fork on the left.

TFB: Merino sheep are a gregarious breed and their natural instinct is to go up to bed at the highest ground. So evening is the best time to gather them, because they're going for the bed ground. We'd come along the bottom of the pasture and holler the sheep up to the top, and then get the dogs around them before they got away, and then take them to the corral. So it really was pretty simple, I mean, unless they got away. . . (laughs)

## A Sheep's Got a System

TFB: Another way you could gather sheep was to go to their shade ground. Shade ground is different than a bed ground. A sheep's got a system; it does it every day. A cow, you don't know where it's gonna go; a cow just goes anywhere. A sheep goes to where there's a spring and shade under the trees close to a spring. And you can just go out with your dogs, if you've got pretty good dogs and they know what you're thinking, you don't have to tell them anything. They'll just get around the sheep.

BLB: What kind of dogs did we prefer? McNabs were the best:

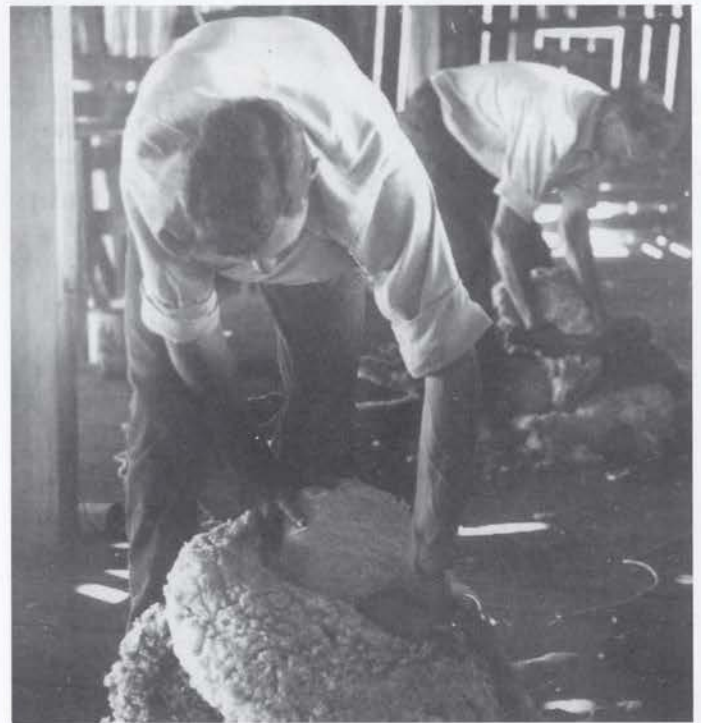
good with sheep and good pets. You'd be lost without dogs.

TFB: I didn't really train my dogs; I'd just take them out with other dogs and they would instinctively be good workers or not. I was a dog collector, but if something happened to one, I always had another one to step in. We'd keep sheep 7 or 8 years. Then we'd sell off old ewes to somebody down in Tomales or someplace else with nice grass, easy winters and they don't have to climb like they do around here; they could get a couple of more years out of them. That's the way we did it, we'd cull them. There was no use letting them die out on the ranch.

## End of Sheep Ranching

BLB: The coyotes very definitely are what put us out of the sheep business.

TFB: In 1980 I had a 50 percent lamb crop—that's pretty bad. That's not enough lambs to sell; you just can't justify it. Then everything we thought of to fight [coyotes], the environmentalists thought of and made it illegal. All you could do is shoot them. And you know how much wool is selling for now? Twelve cents a pound! You've got to pay the shearer, and the shearer won't take the wool. He can't sell it. It's too bad. Wool is a good product. But I had to get out. I sold my sheep all at once to a guy in Yolo County. But no doubt about it, before it went down, sheep ranching was a good life. I can't complain. I never saw a prune grower or grape grower I'd trade with.



*Tom (foreground) the left handed sheep shearer and his father Tom II, the traditional right handed shearer.*

# CARNIVALS & FAIRS

## 1907-1950

by Charlotte Anderson

Many of Healdsburg's carnival/fiesta events were changed over the years, but the water events, land parades, sports and concerts remained consistent in various forms. The Water Carnival of 1907 included the last ring spearing and Knighthood events which gave way to canoe jousting, water barrel races, boat races and swimming events. The Pacific Amateur Athletic Union was involved in swimming and the Outboard Motor Association of Northern California for boating races.

For the 1908 Water Carnival, 1000 picture post cards were printed for sale. The Queen, Winifred Meeker, presided over a two-day carnival. On Saturday, August 15, events included firemen's teams from Mill Valley, San Rafael, Petaluma and Healdsburg competing in hose cart races, a parade to the river, a grand water pageant (including Ed Snook's famous swan float), aquatic sports and dancing, a concert in the Plaza, and a grand electrical illumination (including lights around City Hall tower), fireworks, dancing and Squeedunks.

The 1909 Water Carnival was put on largely by the Ladies Improvement Club. On Friday, June 25, Miss Stella Lufkin was crowned as queen attended by Theo Brown, Kathleen Swisher, Marie Chaparri and Nina Luce. On Saturday, the 26th, there were "Field Day sports" at the Plaza in the morning. The talented Healdsburg High School competed with local firemen for prizes. Eddie Beeson competed in the 120 yd. and 220 yd. hurdles as well as the high jump and broad jump. Ralph Rose was in the 16 lb. shotput and 16 lb. hammer throw, and Fred Young was in the pole vault. There were five races, and the finale was a mile relay which was won by the Firemen, but they lost the "meet" to the High School 5 to 7. In the afternoon, there was a parade march to the river where the floats passed in review and there were swim races, boat races, and log rolling contests. "A feature of the afternoon was the leap of Mr. Marshall, handcuffed and bound, into the river at its deepest point, from which he emerged without injury other than a wetting." (*Tribune* 29 June 1909) As to the floats, there were many beautiful conceptions, but there was one "that challenged the memory and imagination of many people. In a boat lay the form of a beautiful blond, and standing over her was a tall erect figure dressed in black with a black mask. Many wondered about the scene, and finally a young lad offered the following interpretation: Several years ago the highwayman known as 'Black Bart' held up a stage near Cloverdale. He then made his way to the Russian River where he 'commandeered' a canoe being used by two men and a lady, took the large black ulster belonging to the lady, disguised himself with it, and compelled her to lie down in the canoe as if dead. He had the two men row him down the river to a point below Healdsburg where he released his captives, threw off his disguise and made his way to Grants station where he took the afternoon train to San Francisco, thus making his escape." (*Tribune* 2 July 1909) The spectators were amazed at this representation declaring it a "perfect picture that ought to take first place."

In 1911 and 1912 people of the town were talking about "the Festival habit—don't lose it!" There was "stock" offered and sold to erect a pavilion for a festival. A name was chosen, "Healdsburg Harvest Fair." A huge "fund raiser" was held at the residence and grounds of A.F. Stevens.

However, it all bogged down and no fair was held in 1912!

In the summer of 1916, the Business Men's Association proposed having street dancing, or Mardi Gras amusement, on Saturday evenings after the band concerts on those nights. These would take the place of one single celebration. The first Mardi Gras was held on June 24, 1916, on Center Street between Matheson and Powell (now Plaza) Streets, following the Saturday night concert in the Plaza. Also in 1916, there were 4th of July boat races, swimming races, high and fancy diving on the river, and dancing at the Sotoyome Lodge and Pavilion which gave amusement to local people.

World War I channeled the Healdsburg citizens' thoughts, activities, and money into war efforts. It wasn't until 1923 that the American Legion made plans for a fete to mark the completion of the harvest season.

In the remaining years of the 1920s, Healdsburg did not have any festivals. However, in 1925, 1926, and 1927 there were huge 4th of July celebrations. The first of these, in 1925, had a queen, Virginia Sodini, who presided over a Grand Ball at the American Legion Clubhouse on the first evening. On July 4th there was a grand parade, the reading of the Declaration of Independence, and an oration by the Honorable Emmet Seawell of the California Supreme Court. "At 1 p.m. Arthur Starbuck took his plane into the air with 'Daredevil Walker' and his parachute aboard. Walker jumped out over the river and landed safely at the golf links." There were water sports—swimming, diving, and even a water polo game. In the evening the "royal and horrible parade was put on by the Awful Order of the Old and Ancient Squeedunks. The parade was a howling success with everything in it from male 'hulu hulu' dancers to two wheeler automobiles. One entry was an ancient hearse containing pre-Volstead barrels and another was an automobile that would rear back on its hind wheels whenever desired." Later that day "the ancient automobile race was held on Matheson Street and won by Dr. Swisher in his pre-historic Reo." After dark there was "a splendid display of fireworks."

Also in 1925, on August 20, "a crowd of 2000 witnessed the first annual Healdsburg one-mile swimming race." The beautiful \$450 silver loving cup was won by Carl Stevenson from Stanford University in a time of 17 minutes 43 seconds. Ben Zunino of Healdsburg "covered himself with glory by coming in 11th out of 45 swimmers."

In 1927, there were 22 entrants for the Fitch Mt. Marathon, including 3 Sotoyome Indians: Fleet Elk, Humming Bird and Mad Wolf. The 5.6 mile race was won by Manuel Cordova (Humming Bird) in 35 minutes and 22 seconds.

In 1931 was the first "annual" Russian River Pageant and Fiesta. (There were only two!) It was held in June and the queen was Lena Massoni. The events included the Fitch Mt. Marathon won by Leland (Clipper) Smith

Exciting innovations this year included the turning on of the NEW "Russian River Resorts" electric sign at West and Matheson, broadcasting the Fiesta on the radio every day, a Traveling Amplifying "Station" (an automobile) furnished by Standard Oil Company, and the night events illuminated by "powerful searchlights."

The 2nd (and last) annual Russian River Fiesta was a modified one, due to strained finances, put on by the Chamber of Commerce. One of the highlights of the Fiesta was a Screen Test in the Plaza where local girls vied for honors. In the competition were Thelma Scatena, Lena Massoni, Margaret Buchignani, Eleanor Giorgi, Lorraine Cottini, Norma Massoni and Gertrude Tate. The films were shown at the Plaza Theater the following week, together with scenes of other events in the Fiesta.

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1937 began the first of the Healdsburg Harvest Festivals. These festivals were held over the Labor Day weekend and were consistent in some of the usual activities, but each year had some special event featured. In 1937 these events included tryouts for radio talent to appear on KSRO, Santa Rosa, "Voice of the Redwood Empire" in two weeks, a hole-in-one contest at the golf course, and a bathing beauty contest.

The "usual" events began with a parade of the Queen along with old-time buggies, surreys, and old automobiles. Queen Eva Rafanelli was escorted to her throne on the American Legion auditorium stage. After the coronation, the carnival concessions opened. The Fitch Mt. Marathon under the sponsorship of the PAAU attracted 17 of the most notable runners in the state. Only 19 seconds behind the San Francisco winner of the 6 1/4 mile course was local boy Leland (Clipper) Smith. In the afternoon water sports began with the high dive off the bridge followed by 8 swimming races and canoe jousting. At 3 p.m. Ralph Davidson and Lloyd Anderson did a "duet dive" from the top of the bridge, and concluding the afternoon Lloyd made a 75-foot dive "with slow motion pictures taken." The last day of the Festival began at the river with motorboat races: family runabout class, hydroplane class (won by Ernest Demostene), and the class C Racing runabout.

The Healdsburg Harvest Festival of 1939 began the trend toward a more agricultural event with agricultural exhibits, a Wedgewood Cooking School, Antique Glass and Dishware Exhibit in addition to the Carnival, the parade, the water events, band concerts, and the coronation of Queen Norma Barrett at the Coronation Ball. The very special event this year was the sacred ceremonial "fire-eating devil chasing dance" of the greater Pomo Indian tribe which was performed two different nights, only the second time in 27 years that the Pomos have consented to perform for "outsiders."

The 4th annual Harvest Festival was celebrated as a "centennial" in 1940, as Cyrus Alexander arrived in the area 100 years previously. The queen was Louise Giubilo and she presided over new events such as a drama, "The Drunkard," performed two nights at the Legion Hall, and the highlight -"a parade on Russian river of illuminated and decorated floats, boats, canoes and other craft." It was a grand spectacle, "bringing back remembrance of water carnivals of other days on Lake Sotoyome."

Running from August 28 through September 1, 1941, the 5th annual Harvest Festival had as its "Queen" Hollywood's "Television Baby," 11-year-old Miranda Allen. In keeping with this, movies were shown at the Plaza theater each night and a play, "Under the Gaslights," was performed three times at the Legion Hall. Also being offered were a rodeo, a soap box derby, bowling, roller skating, horseshoe pitching, agricultural exhibits, the carnival, the hole-in-one contest, and the swimming and motor boat races. Then to cap it all off was the night boat/float show! FIFTY-SIX boats and floats participated in the only night boat parade and show in Northern California which was described as "beauty beyond the description of man!" It truly exceeded all expectations of organizer and chairman Louis Galeazzi.

Festivals and festivities were again put on hold as World War II events and commitments held priority. Thus it wasn't until 1950 that Healdsburg once again held another fair, this one belonging to the Future Farmers of America who began a legacy of fairs and parades which continues to the present day.

SOURCE: Issues of the *Healdsburg Tribune*, 1907-1950.



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