



# RUSSIAN RIVER RECORDER

WINTER 2013 • ISSUE 119

An Official Publication of the Healdsburg Museum & Historical Society



*Healdsburg Plaza, 1908*

## **Life in Healdsburg One Hundred Years Ago**

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## In This Issue

**H**appy New Year! In this publication of the *Russian River Recorder* and in the new exhibit at the Healdsburg Museum, we highlight Healdsburg and the surrounding northern Sonoma County area one hundred years ago through historical artifacts, ephemera, photographs, newspaper articles and memoirs. The highly descriptive "Healdsburg: Queen of the Sotoyomes" is an overview, reprinted here from *The Santa Rosa Republican's 1912* Sonoma County profile. Written by the Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce, the rose-colored prose presents the industry, agriculture, population and scenic beauty of the Healdsburg area in the poetic promotional language of the era. A more down-to-earth depiction of Healdsburg is presented later in the issue by the late Shirley Truitt. Truitt, who lived in San Francisco most of his life, wrote about his childhood in the Healdsburg area in the early 1900s. We have transcribed his handwritten 1970 memoir.

I have written an article about the 1913 graduating class of the Healdsburg High School, based on information and photographs gleaned from the high school yearbook, *Ye Sotoyoman*, in the Museum's collection. In two informative articles, Assistant Curator Meredith Dreisback presents two century-old artifacts from the Museum collection: Rossaline Mason's ukulele and a Kodak Premo camera that

was cutting-edge technology in 1913. We also share some history about popular dance crazes of the 1910s.

This issue also focuses on architecture, presenting six Craftsman-style residences of the 1910s, all of which were featured in previous Healdsburg Historic Homes tours. These houses are still maintained in excellent condition one hundred years later.

Geyserville historian Ann Howard turns her attention to Dr. Frank Sohler, a prominent person in northern Sonoma County life a century ago. Using well-chosen photographs and with an eye for details of historic Geyserville, Ann shines a light on local medical practices of the 1910s.

We hope you enjoy this trip back in time through this *Russian River Recorder* and that it intrigues you to discover more by visiting the current exhibit, "Healdsburg: 100 Years Past and Present," on display January 30 – April 20, 2013.

Sincerely,  
Holly Hoods, Curator



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*The Official Publication of the  
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# Healdsburg, Queen of the Sotoyomes

## Description of Healdsburg 100 Years Ago

*reprinted from The Santa Rosa Press Democrat, 27 January 1912*

**Sonoma County's Third City in Size and Commercial Importance is Located in the Center of a Rich and Fertile Territory, Where Almost Everything Grows in Splendid Profusion.**

Healdsburg, Sonoma County's third city in point of population, is on the axis of four rich and productive valleys, and is the business center for their people. Alexander Valley is five miles to the north. Dry Creek Valley stretches fourteen miles to the west. Russian River Valley lies to the south and east, and still further east is Knight's Valley. All are tributary to Healdsburg. All these valleys are fertile and rich, thickly dotted with homes and cultivated to a high degree. From the valleys the foothills lead up to the mountains, greatest of which is Mount St. Helena. The acclivities are largely grazing lands, with many fine vineyards interspersed. The mountains are heavy with timber.

Healdsburg has a population of about 3,500 — all of which does not show in the United States census, for populous suburbs are outside the corporate limits, and are therefore not counted. But of course, these people properly belong to Healdsburg, and in time the corporate lines will no doubt be extended to include them. Healdsburg is 65 miles north of San Francisco and 16 miles north of Santa Rosa.



*Train on Bridge, 1910*

It is on the main line of the Northwestern Pacific railway, in the rich and fertile valley made by the confluence of the Russian River and Dry Creek. This land gives a natural drainage and a firm

foundation for buildings. The business houses of Healdsburg are principally of brick and concrete, and mostly of modern architecture and construction. The dwellings are chiefly constructed of wood; most of them are of modern design. The streets and roads are graveled; and are hard even under the winter rains. There are nearly five miles of cement sidewalks. Along most of these are shade trees, tropical in suggestion — magnolia, palm, poplar, eucalyptus and umbrella trees.



*Healdsburg Plaza, 1908*

In the City's center is the Plaza, after the old Mexican style, which is kept in green lawn throughout the year. It is surrounded by magnificent maple shade trees, while within it grow luxuriantly the palms of the tropics, oranges, lemons and beautiful roses that bloom through all the seasons.



*Sotyome Band, 1908*

During the summer, the Healdsburg Band gives concerts in the Plaza each Saturday evening, which are enjoyed by hundreds of the town and



country people, making a joyous gathering. This Healdsburg Band is celebrated as one of the best musical organizations to be found in any town of similar size anywhere in the United States. Its leader, Prof. D.C. Smith, having for many years been the bandmaster on the United States cruiser *Philadelphia*, and having held many other important positions of like character.



*Fitch Mountain surrounded by Russian River, 1907*

Healdsburg's mean elevation is 100 feet above sea level; its average rainfall is 43 inches annually; and its mean temperature is 63 degrees. Fitch Mountain, 800 feet high, rises in benches and acclivities from the banks of the Russian River, winding at its base.



*Valley view of prune tree orchard, 1914*

From every point of view may be seen a picturesque panorama of Nature's most beautiful blending—of valleys, of fruitage and wooded hills. Russian River itself lies at the eastern edge of town. Its banks are lined with flowers, cottonwood and alders. In spring, summer and autumn its waters are clear and limpid, running in ripples and then into deep pools abounding in bass and trout. In winter, it rushes a torrent from the mountains, carrying the alluvial sediment which it deposits over the land along its banks, making the fertility of the famed Russian River valley lands. Spring-fed streams run down the mountain sides to the valley lands. Along

these streams are groves of redwood and fir, of pepperwood and oaks, forming pretty dells for camping and outings. Away in the distance are the blue peaks of the Geyser range and Mount St. Helena, forming a background of wild and rugged beauty. In the early days, the valley about Healdsburg was given the name "Sotoyome Vale." Tradition varies as to this name's origin. Some say "Sotoyome" was the name of an Indian chief, while others declare that "Sotoyome Vale" means "Valley of Flowers." Either name might fit; for there were many Indians there in the early days, and not a few still live near there. Also there always were millions upon millions of lovely wildflowers in the Valley of Sotoyome. One may wade knee-deep in golden poppies, through fields of buttercups and blossoms, blue and red and white, painted by bright sunshine and kissed by soft winds from the south. Among the hills are all manner of flowering trees and shrubs, and late in the autumn the madrona and the holly make red the hillsides with their bright-colored berries. It is a land of kaleidoscopic changes of beauty.



*Healdsburg Grammar School, 1907*

Healdsburg has a splendid grammar school building of brick and stone, erected in 1907 at a cost of \$35,000. It has also a well-equipped high school, the large building being in commodious grounds, centrally located. The complete high school course is carried, and the school is accredited at both the universities. All of Healdsburg's schools are rated with the best.

The City of Healdsburg owns its light and water systems. The power for the plant comes from a mountain reservoir, fed by large springs. This power pumps the potable water into reservoirs from great wells—an abundant supply, pure and cold. The charges for water and lights are at a minimum



sufficient to meet maintenance charges and provide for extensions. Power is supplied to many electric meters all over the town.

Healdsburg has eight churches: Methodist-Episcopal and Methodist-Episcopal South; Presbyterian, Baptist, Christian, Catholic, Episcopal, and Advent. It also has many fraternal organizations, all prosperous. There are two banks and a public library of more than 3,000 volumes.



*Healdsburg City Hall, 1912*

The local Chamber of Commerce has an exhibit room in the handsome City Hall. Healdsburg has splendid stores, a theater, a public hall and several places of amusement. A Ladies' Improvement Club works for the city's adornment and improvement.



*Water Carnival, 1909*

A Water Carnival is given annually on Russian River, and is attended by thousands of people from near and far, who share in its sports and amusements. Within the city limits are three fruit canneries and three fruit-packing houses. During the harvest season these employ hundreds of hands and pay many thousands of dollars in wages. There are

several other packing houses near town, and several factories where cider and vinegar are made.



*Picking Grapes at Simi Vineyards, 1910*

Grapes are a leading crop of the lands near the town. Most of the foothill land is a loose, red soil that produces vintage of the highest grade. The wineries in this neighborhood carry cooerage for millions of gallons. Prunes, hops, apples, peaches, pears, apricots, cherries and plums are here at their best, and berries, tomatoes and garden vegetables of all sorts grow luxuriantly and yield profitably. Walnuts, olives and oranges are extensively grown.

The growing of livestock has always been a profitable industry on the hills above Healdsburg. Splendid beef is produced, for which there is always demand. Two clips of wool are taken from sheep each year. There are several well equipped creameries in the foothills. Back of the town are magnificent groves of redwood. Some of these are in their primeval condition, and have not yet felt the touch of the saw. There are also several sorts of hard-wood.



*Swimmers at Camp Rose, 1908*

Numerous resorts of great renown are near the town. Boating, bathing and fishing are among the attractions at these places, which draw thousands of tourists every year.





*The Healdsburg High School Class of 1913 (taken during their sophomore year)*

## Healdsburg High School Class of 1913

*by Holly Hoods*

The fourteen senior students in the graduating Healdsburg High School class of 1913 were an ambitious and talented group, bearers of the proud class motto, "We Will Find a Path or Make One." This class from a century ago, pictured above in their sophomore year, entered high school in 1909 as a class of twenty. Attending high school was a privilege—even a luxury—in 1913. Many farm families living in the area could not spare their children's labor at home to let them attend school. Even fewer rural families could afford to buy or rent a town residence to enable their child to attend the public high school in town. Located on Fitch Street (where Plaza Court is today) in an 1880s Italianate school building that originally housed the Seventh-Day Adventists' Healdsburg College, Healdsburg High School was a distance too far for most students to commute from the neighboring hills and valleys by horse and wagon. To get a high school education in the 1910s, students had to live or board in town.

Under the strict, yet kind, guidance of H.R. Bull, *Principal and Science Teacher*, and five other faculty members (C.H. Hinchey, *Commercial*; Miss

O. Larson, *English and Drawing*, Miss L. Kelley, *Latin and German*; Miss R. Studley, *Mathematics* and Miss E. Jarman, *History*), the students at Healdsburg High were educated to the best standards and practices of 100 years ago.

The high school yearbook, *Ye Sotoyoman*, was produced by all fourteen seniors and printed at the local newspaper's print shop. Preserved for posterity in the Healdsburg Museum archives, this 90-page paperback publication reveals a great deal about high school life and early 20<sup>th</sup> century education in Healdsburg a century ago. The name of the high school annual is "Sotoyoman," derived from "Sotoyome," a word of Latino/Native heritage that still held great resonance in this region in 1913. The city of Healdsburg is located within the historical boundaries of the former "Sotoyome Rancho." The Sotoyome Rancho, a 48,880 acre Mexican land grant, belonged to Captain Henry Fitch and his wife, Josefa Carrillo de Fitch in the 1840s. The name of the rancho was said to be inspired by the indigenous Native residents known as "Sotoyomi." This word "Sotoyome" was part of the cultural identity of



residents in 1900s Healdsburg. There was even a passionate, but brief grassroots campaign in 1900 to split Sonoma County in two at Santa Rosa. In this scenario, it was proposed that Healdsburg would become the County Seat of "Sotoyome County."

The racial composition of the Healdsburg High graduating class of 1913 was all white, with a student body composed of 8 boys and 6 girls (14 students in a town of approximately 3,500 residents). There was mention in the yearbook of the attrition of the student body from 20 to 14 students over the four years of high school, except to pay respects to two classmates who had died sophomore year, one from illness and one from an accident: Henry James Price and Harrison Wrenn.

Many of the last names of the graduating seniors are still familiar in this area today: Lewis Byington, Alfred McCutchan, Ernest Frelson, Lydon Mothorn, Charles Frost, Ruth Ingalls, Robert Plasberg, Elsie Emmerich, Elsie Parrott, Alma Shane, Katherine Jones, Margery Kent, Floyd Darby, Frieda Goodwin, Eva Hendricks, Mary Andrews and Albert Hoskinson. In the black and white oval senior class portraits, the girls all wear their hair up in fashionably wavy coils behind their tilted heads, with dreamy, demure half-smiles on their lips. The boys all wear nearly identical "uniforms" of respectability in their photos--large stiff white collars and ties; heads cocked with serious, distant gazes.



*Healdsburg High School Orchestra, 1913*

The yearbook for the class of 1913 presented several photos and excited descriptions of the new

school orchestra, the debating society, the senior class play and the successes of the track team. The senior students prided themselves in their musical, debating and sports accomplishments. They challenged the upcoming classes to continue their legacy of achievement in sports, drama, music and debate.



*Healdsburg High School Track Team, 1913*

Several students wrote about the merriment and fun they had over the previous four years, culminating in the "Senior High Jinks" and "Jolly-Up." The High Jinks was a party for the senior girls hosted by Eva Hendricks that included a marshmallow roast in the fireplace, singing and impersonating their teachers ("We dressed as the faculty; who were good enough to lend us clothes in case we had none to suit."). The highlight of the year was their long-anticipated "Jolly-Up," ("Now of course you know that a Jolly-Up is where the girls come dressed in middies and the boys come in their shirt sleeves, talk about the fun, with no false curls and no fussy, frilly party dresses and no one to notice if you don't act just as dignified as you should and nothing to do but just to dance your fill and have as good a time as possible.") The photos in the book include not just people and scenes at school, but also views of the woods near Mill Creek, The Grammar School Building, the Carnegie Library Building, the Healdsburg Plaza, the First National Bank of Healdsburg and the interior of St. John's Catholic Church.

The 1913 yearbook presents an impressive collection of student poetry, creative writing, school songs, cartoons, drawings and many pages of jokes.





Sheet music covers for *The Bunny Hug*, *The Grizzly Bear* and *the Turkey Trot*

## Dance crazes of the 1910s

by Holly Hoods

Dance crazes swept through the United States in the 1910s, reaching Healdsburg in 1913. Ragtime music paired with a variety of animal-themed dances became a popular pastime of local young men and women, much to the disapproval of their elders (especially the female elders).

What was so scandalous about the dances of the era? Much of the dancing was done to the quick syncopated rhythms of ragtime music, popularized by black musicians. The “Turkey Trot” was a face-to-face dance, where the couple took one step on each beat of music. The man held the woman tightly around the waist and the dancers would sway side to side, going in a straight line around the floor, while occasionally flapping their arms. The “Bunny Hug” was also a face-to-face dance, which involved shaking and wiggling and “grinding” to slow blues music. The “Grizzly Bear” dance was named for the way bears hug each other. Dancers imitated the clumsy movements of a dancing bear, taking very heavy steps to the side with an exaggerated bending of the upper body from one side to the other. In these animal dances, the amount of contact, closeness of contact and the movement of the pelvic area determined the amount of obscenity.



*The Casino, 1914*

Efforts to outlaw close dancing in Healdsburg were unsuccessful. In fact, the Casino, a spacious dance hall set on the riverbank on Front Street between the two bridges, was built by A.W. Ewing in 1914. It attracted big crowds and thrived.

Sources:

Healdsburg Museum collection.

*Healdsburg Tribune*, 1913; 1914

*History of Popular Culture*, Addison, T.D. (1994)





*Couple doing the Grizzly Bear Dance*

## The “Rag” Must Go, City Dads So Petitioned

*reprinted from The Healdsburg Tribune, 6 November 1913*

*The Home School Club, The Women's Christian Temperance Union, Ladies' Aid of the First Baptist Church, Ladies' Aid of the Christian Church, The Ministerial Union, Ladies' Aid of the Presbyterian Church, Ladies' Aid of the Methodist Church and St. Paul's Ladies' Guild*

These organizations separately petitioned the Board of City Trustees Monday night to enact an ordinance abolishing the “rag” dance within the corporate limits of Healdsburg. Each petition, in varying phraseology, but with one meaning, held up the iniquity and demoralizing effect of the “rag.” When City Clerk Ed Eby had finished the task of reading the petitions, Mayor A.F. Stevens asked if anyone in the audience cared to address the Board on the subject.

One man, F.E. Mascherini, arose. “I have seen all kinds of dancing,” said Mr. Mascherini, “and the rag is pretty tough. It is unfit for young women, and I believe this Board should make an ordinance to comply with the petitions that have been presented.”

“I went over to the Theater one night with a friend,” said Trustee Joseph McMinn, “to get a look at the ‘rag.’ I did not see anything especially out of the way, although there was a fight there soon after I arrived. But I was convinced of one thing—the party

running the dance exercised very little control over the participants. Under proper supervision, these public dances may be all right, but they are not under proper direction now.”

“Of course, I am opposed to anything that has a tendency to harm the morals of the young people,” said Mayor Stevens, “but I believe this Board will have a pretty hard time trying to keep up with the changing styles of popular dancing—the “Turkey Trot,” the “Fish Wiggle,” and all the rest of them—and craft ordinances that will eliminate everything irregular. But I am willing to try.”

“Perhaps it would be a good plan for the members of the Board to go to dancing school to keep up with the times,” said Trustee McMinn. “Perhaps we could keep up with the styles of dancing and be qualified to sit as experts.”

“I believe we ought to pass an emergency ordinance and put a muzzle on the whole thing,” said Trustee Julius M. Alexander, who had not gotten the new dog ordinance out of mind. “I move that the Board take up this petition of the ladies at an adjourned meeting and try to draft an ordinance that will meet the case.”

So the Board will consider the “rag” at a meeting tonight. Clerk Eby was instructed to notify the petitioners accordingly.





*Kumalae Ukulele owned by Rossaline Mason*

## The Era of the Ukulele

*by Meredith Dreisback*

The early 20<sup>th</sup> Century was an era when the ukulele started to enjoy a great deal of popularity on the United States mainland, even spilling over here in Healdsburg. This ukulele belonged to Rossaline Mason and she was a member of the school's club.



*Healdsburg High School Ukulele Club, circa 1915*

In 1915 a group of girls from Healdsburg High School organized their own Ukulele Club to have fun and to learn to play the ukulele.

A label inside the ukulele (made from curly Hawaiian koa wood) indicates it is a Kumalae ukulele, a well-known ukulele made in Hawaii from 1911 to 1940. Jonah Kumalae set up a booth at the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco to showcase his finely crafted ukuleles and from there his business flourished. He produced anywhere from 300 to 600 ukuleles a month, often times offering them to tourists coming by ship to visit Hawaii.

If the ukulele bug has caught your interest, there are several opportunities to learn to play here in Sonoma County, including classes at the Windsor Community Center and at the Santa Rosa Junior College. You just might become the next Tiny Tim (who once owned a Kumalae ukulele).





*Kodak Premo Folding Cartridge Camera No. 3-A*

## Photographic Innovation: Kodak Premo

*by Meredith Dreisback*

This camera from the Museum collection was acquired in 1994. It is a Kodak Premo Folding Camera No. 3-A in a brown, imitation leather case. Kodak manufactured these cameras from 1906 to 1916, this one marked with a patent date of July 8, 1913.

Advertising information about this camera stated “the camera loads with standard N. C. Film Cartridges” assuring quality results. Loading, unloading and development of the film can be performed in daylight, eliminating the dark room. Specifications of the camera are: size of picture is 3 ¼ x 5 ½ inches; capacity is 10 exposures without reloading; the body is aluminum with an overall size of 1 ¾ x 4 5/16 x 9 5/16 inches weighing 28 oz. The lens is a 5-3/8 focus, the shutter a Kodak Ball Bearing.

The price list at the time was:

Folding Cartridge Premo,	
Meniscus Achromatic	\$15.81
or with an R. R. Lens	\$19.17
Cartridge Premo Carrying Case	\$ 2.20
N. C. Film Cartridge, 10 Exposures	\$ .90
6 Exposures	\$ .55
Kodak Portrait Attachment	\$ .75

The advertising information went on to say “it is through a long perfected factory organization and production in large quantities, that cameras of such exceptional quality may be offered at such moderate prices.”

OUT-OF-DOORS DAYS

To the pleasure of being out-of-doors, a Premo adds the further pleasure of making pictures of all those things that make the out-of-doors worth while.

Your summer will be much pleasanter with a

# P R E M O

Light weight and compactness, ease of loading and operating, dependability is the fullest sense of the word — these are the qualities that distinguish the Premo camera; the qualities that make it the camera for you. Prices range from \$1.30 to \$120.00.

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Rochester Optical Division, Eastman Kodak Co., Rochester, N. Y.

*Advertisement for Kodak Premo*



# Life in Healdsburg One Hundred Years Ago

by Shirley M. Truitt

Written in 1970, the following passage was excerpted from the handwritten memoirs of Mr. Shirley Truitt who lived in Healdsburg in the early 1900s. Truitt was born in Healdsburg, grew up in San Francisco and became an engineer in heavy equipment construction.

For a while, when I was 10 years old, I lived on a farm at Healdsburg, Cal. with my aunt and uncle. We had no paved roads in the country or in the smaller towns. We drove to town each day to get our mail and the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat*, our newspaper. Everyone knew everyone.

The farmers worked long hours, usually from sunup to sundown. They ate three large meals each day.



*Muller's Beer Garden*

For recreation, they attended the various lodges such as the Masons, Odd Fellows, Knights of Pythias and the Grange in the smaller communities. On Saturday night, they would drive to Healdsburg and go to Muller's Beer Garden, have beer and pretzels and then attend the band concert at the plaza park. On Sunday they went to church or called on friends. People led a peaceful life.



*Minstrel Show at Truitt's Theater*

My Uncle Roland [Truitt] had a theatre and quite often a show would come to town. The circus would come every two or three years.



*The circus in town*

People did not buy from stores as we do now. The women on the various farms would can or bottle certain fruits and vegetables and trade with one another. One farmer would butcher a hog or a steer and all of us would share in it. Money was not used much except for taxes. We were not interested in politics until election time when politics was taken very seriously. They would have big bonfires and whoop it up for their candidate. I remember my father, who was a strong Democrat, going into a saloon and calling out any Republicans whom he would beat up. Frequently when he tried to take on too many, they would gang up on him.

We had no racial or religious problems in those days. There was only one Chinaman in town and his name was "Joe Wah Lee." I can still see him. Everyone liked him except me. I was afraid of him because of his dress and long queue! Due to the vineyards, there were many wineries and these were run by Italians. The Italians went to the Catholic Church. We had a Seventh-Day Advent Church and two or three Protestant churches. We had a number of Jews and we were all friends. Many a time, the Catholic priest had dinner with us, even though we were not Catholic. My mother was a Methodist, but my father kept away from all of the religions. The Rev. Stanton of the Methodist Church was often at



our house, as well as Lou Meyer, then Rabbi. There were no animosities; all were treated alike.

We also had many Indians living on the banks of the river. Dry Creek had many and the Russian River had large numbers. My father was the town teamster and when a cow or horse died for any reason at all my father would haul it out to the Indians. They would cut it up to eat and think Harry Truitt was a fine man!



*Picking up prunes*

I lived on a fruit farm. At prune time, we shook the trees and picked the prunes out of the dirt clods for 5 cents per box. It was hard work and it hurt your back and knees. I have made as much as \$1.50 for 10 hours work. In those days, you never picked a prune off the tree; it must be ripe enough to either fall off of its own accord or by shaking the tree. A wagon would come around and you would put your full box on the truck and take an empty box.



*Prunes drying in trays*

The prunes were taken to a dip of hot caustic soda. This softened the skin. They were then poured back into the box and taken out to the dry yard where were spread on trays for sun drying. In good weather, this required 4-6 days. Many a night, I had to get up with my uncle and grandfather when it rained and cover the trays to prevent the drying prunes from getting moldy and spoiling. For all this,

we had to sell our prunes to a monopoly, even in those days, and we received 5 cents per pound at best! Our peaches and apples were dried in much the same manner. Peaches and apples were picked off the trees and sold to the local canneries. In those days, you could walk along the creek below our farm and see hundreds of birds and animals, particularly deer. We could fish any place and hunt almost any time of the year.

There were no refrigerators or ice. You stored your food in a hole near the well or in a deep basement. We usually had a cow and two horses. We kept a buggy, a buckboard and a carriage at the barn. We raised our own hay and stored it in the loft above the barn. We did not have electricity in those days in the smaller communities. We used wood or coal for fuel. There was no piped gas; for lights we used candles and coal oil (kerosene). I remember when my father installed a large acetylene generator to furnish gas for the large house we lived in. Water was hauled up from a well by a bucket. There was no such thing as piped water. To furnish water for the horses and cows you had a windmill that pumped water into a tank. If this mill was near the house, you may have had water from the tank at your kitchen sink and inside toilet and bathtub if you had them. Toilets were the usual wood type built over a hole in the ground. We would pour lime over the hole once a week and when it filled up, cover it and move the toilet to another previously prepared hole. Taking a bath was a big problem as all water had to be heated in large 10 gallon wash tubs and then carried to a larger tub where you bathed, one after another in the same water. This performance was a once a week job and always on Saturday night.

The telephone was a curiosity. Business houses and private homes did not have a phone. There was one at the railroad station. In 1902, when my Uncle Frank died, my Aunt had to drive to the railroad station about 3 ½ miles to send a message by phone to my mother. She could only talk to Santa Rosa and the telephone operator there could call San Francisco. As my mother did not have a phone, the message was delivered to a grocery store at Oak and Laguna streets, who in turn went to my mother's place and told her. It was not until 1915 that I ever used a phone. People did not travel great distances in those days. The horse, bicycle and train, besides walking, afforded all transportation.



# Century-Old Craftsman-Style Architecture: Highlights from Healdsburg Historic Homes Tours

by Holly Hoods

The history and character of a community can be seen in its architecture. Healdsburg is fortunate that so many of our historic residences have been retained and preserved. In the West, the most popular residential building trend of the 1910s and early 1920s was the Craftsman or California Bungalow style. Healdsburg was no exception. Queen Anne cottages had proliferated here at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, reflecting a growing middle-class housing boom. This Victorian style was highly embellished with lavish decorative millwork, verandas, complex rooflines and ornate detailing. By the early 1900s, popular tastes changed markedly, with new appreciation and preferences for handcrafted, high quality rusticity of Craftsman architecture over the visually exuberant Victorian architecture. The Craftsman style emphasized continuity with the outdoors through the incorporation of large porches and natural building materials into home designs. Architectural experts Robert Winter and Alexander Vertikoff distinguish true Craftsman Arts and Crafts architecture from Craftsman-style in their 2004 book *Craftsman Style*: *To a purist, the essential distinction is that a Craftsman house is unique, typically architect designed and artisan constructed, using the natural materials and flow demanded by the site and environment in which it is built. By contrast, a Craftsman-style house has many of the same design characteristics, but may well be a kit or stick-built by a developer using the same three plans over and over. The difference is in the handcrafted quality of the true Craftsman versus the stylistic elements that may be found in both.*

Character-defining elements of Craftsman-style include: exposed rafters, overhanging eaves, decorative braces, porches, columns that continue to ground level, broad-based porch pillars, low-pitched roofs and shed dormers. The primary bungalow contractors in Healdsburg were George Day, Ed Guillie, W.H. Chaney, William H. Bush and John Armstrong. The following local examples of their work were featured on home tours 2001-2011.



**807 Johnson Street**

**Peckham House, built 1916**

**Current owners: Merlin and Bev Griessert**

*On 2001 Homes tour*

The classic stucco Craftsman bungalow at 807 Johnson Street was built for Fred McConnell, Healdsburg City attorney, and his wife Gladys in 1916. The house, which cost \$1,200 to build, was one of five bungalows constructed on Johnson Street during 1915-16. The *Healdsburg Enterprise* praised Johnson Street as one of the most “desirable residence streets in Healdsburg” in 1916.

The McConnells resided in the house for only a few years before selling the residence to George and Stella (Green) Peckham, newcomers to Healdsburg, in 1919. George D. Peckham, born in Marysville in 1866, was a printer by trade. His wife, Stella, was the daughter of Warren and Stella (Morrison) Green. Her parents were devoted followers of Madam Emily Preston, a charismatic religious leader and medical practitioner who led a health-oriented religious community from 1885-1909, two miles northeast of Cloverdale. Stella was born and raised in the Preston colony, but chose not to live in Preston as an adult when she met and married George Peckham. The Peckhams had no children, so the two-bedroom bungalow on Johnson Street suited them perfectly. They lived in the home for the rest of their lives. George passed away in 1938; Stella in 1952. Stella’s brother Elisha sold the house to Paul and Ruth McCord, who owned it



through the 1960s. Paul McCord owned and operated Plaza Meat Market. The present owners of the house, Merlin and Bev Griessert, bought it in 1996 from Janet Del Fava and Tom Rohrsen.

The Griesserts have furnished and restored the house with sensitivity to the historic period. They restored the original oak floors in the living room and study, and between the living room and the dining room to conform to the original details. They removed two 1950s aluminum windows and completely remodeled the kitchen in 2000, restoring original trim details. They also extended a pergola over the back deck and planted five wisteria plants. The Griesserts credit Tom Rohrsen for the attractive landscaping that frames the house.

The feeling of horizontality that is commonly associated with bungalow architecture is enhanced by several features of the house: the single, low-pitched front gable roof that spans the width of the building; the spreading full-width front porch; and the wide windows with double bands of lights on the eastern and southern elevations. The classic features of this Healdsburg bungalow merited the building's inclusion in Paul Duchscherer and Douglas Keister's 1995 book, *The Bungalow: America's Arts and Crafts Home*.



**730 Johnson Street**  
**Petray/Tucker House, built 1915**  
**Current Owners: Mike and Sharon Cowley**  
*On 2008 Homes tour*

This stylish Craftsman home was constructed for James and Hattie Petray by George Day and William H. Bush, Healdsburg's most respected bungalow builders. According to the *Healdsburg Tribune*, the new Petray house boasted "every convenience of the modern home." This house made

local news in September 1916 when it survived a dramatic lightning strike. The bolt struck the rear of the building, tearing a big circular hole in the roof, splintering shingles and eaves on the south side. Inside the house, boards were cracked for several inches at every nail hole. Luckily no one was home at the time.

James Petray was elected County Sheriff in 1918. A few months later, June 1919, the Petrays sold the house, moving to Santa Rosa where Petray's office was located. The popular sheriff was shot and killed in December 1920 while attempting to help San Francisco police arrest three fugitive criminals. An outraged group of Petray's (Healdsburg) friends lynched the three men responsible for the sheriff's death. No one was ever prosecuted for the lynching.

The house has had very few owners. Harold and Mattie Tucker lived here from 1919 until the early 1940s. Harold worked as a car salesman. William John and Bruna Massoni bought the house from the Tuckers. W. J. Massoni was a "wineryman" at Scatena Winery. Florence Massoni inherited the house from her parents. In 2000, Michael and Sharon Cowley purchased the residence from Larry Schuster and Di Grohmann. Over the past three years, the Cowleys have built a new garage and completely remodeled the back of the house, adding a basement, wine cellar and porch. They hired architect Tom Reddy to design the new construction to be faithful to the original architecture. The Cowleys also added landscaping and a bocce ball court to enhance their enjoyment of the backyard. The original garage has been converted into a charming guest cottage.



**817 Johnson Street**  
**Dewey House, built 1915**  
**Current Owner: Elizabeth Candelario**  
*On 2003 Homes tour*



This house is one of two California bungalows built side by side on Johnson Street in 1915. Sierich "Si" Hilgerloh, owner of the White House Saloon, a popular Healdsburg bar, commissioned the houses in the early 1900s. Hilgerloh had one bungalow constructed for himself and his wife. Next door he had this house built as a wedding present for his daughter Helen and her new husband, Victor Dewey. Dewey was co-owner of the Golden Rule Cyclery Shop where he sold and repaired bicycles.

The construction of the two bungalows was part of a 1915 building boom that prompted the *Healdsburg Tribune* to declare Johnson Street "one of the finest residence streets in Healdsburg." The houses share a driveway leading to a common garage. The houses also contain some matching design elements, including rustic siding, gable roofs with knee braces, and flared edges on porch supports and window surrounds. The gentle pitch of the broad roof gable is repeated in the gabled roofline of the separate half-width front porch.

Helen and Victor Dewey moved into the house next door after the death of her parents in the early 1920s. The Deweys rented their own house to the Boos family. Attorney Herman Boos and his wife Edith lived at 817 Johnson for seven years, beginning in 1923. Their daughter Marie was born at home that very year. Now 80 years old, Marie has become friendly with the current owner and will be present on the day of the tour. The house has changed little since Marie was a child.

In 1936, the Deweys sold the house to Robert Hassett. Robert, the son of a pioneer Healdsburg family, was a Railway Express agent in Healdsburg for 20 years. His job was to meet the train, coordinate freight shipments and deliver the day's mail to the post office. Robert and his wife Gwendelene raised a son in the Johnson Street house and spent the rest of their lives there. Elizabeth Candelario, the current owner, bought the property from Alan Hassett, his son. She is only the third owner! Elizabeth has restored the house's original bungalow features, including wood floors throughout; double-hung sash windows; and beautiful built-in wooden bookcases and cabinets. She has added several landscape features, including the showpiece fountain in the backyard and a row of grape vines that discretely camouflage the children's

play equipment. Elizabeth has maintained the integrity of the 1915 house, while adding a few touches to update and personalize it.



**438 Matheson Street,  
Scatena Bungalow, built 1914  
Current owners: Ken and Diane Wilson  
On 2004 Homes tour**

The prominent Craftsman bungalow at the southwest corner of Matheson and University streets was built in 1914 for Walter and Eliza Storey of San Francisco. Storey, a former Fitch Mountain pigeon farmer, hired local contractor, Ed Guillie, to build the house for \$4,000. The *Healdsburg Tribune* described the floor plan of the attractive bungalow, nearly completed in April 1914, as: "a story and a half, with six rooms on the main floor. The upper floor will contain a sleeping porch, bath and two rooms. In the basement will be a summer kitchen, two rooms and a tool shed."

The design of this home followed the Craftsman concept of using structural elements for decorative interest. The house has a recessed, full-width front porch and an open-gabled roof with a centrally-placed, double-gabled dormer. It contains several unusual features, including the use of simulated tusk tenons on the porch columns and double barge rafters.

Despite having a residence built to their specifications, the Storeys did not keep the Matheson Street bungalow long. In 1919, they sold the property to Silvestrio Scatena. Scatena was an Italian immigrant who had come to San Francisco in 1880 at the age of sixteen. He became a successful grape grower and winemaker in Sonoma County. Scatena moved to the Healdsburg area with other family members in the early 1900s, and became a



naturalized citizen in 1905. The Roma Wine Company, founded by the Scatena family, grew into one of the largest wineries in the state before Prohibition.

Silvestrio Scatena lived in the Matheson Street house with his wife, Amelia, and their unmarried adult sons for the next 30 years, until her death in 1943 and his death in 1949. The house remained in the Scatena family for 84 years, through three generations, including ownership by the Masinis and Selzles. Ken and Diane Wilson, the current owners, bought the property from Silvestrio's great-granddaughter's estate in 2003. Like the Scatenas, the Wilsons as owners of several area boutique wineries are grape growers and winemakers. They bought the house because of its convenient in-town location—good for their three teens—and because they admired its Craftsman detailing. The Wilsons have not changed the exterior, but do plan to fence the backyard to make it more private and usable. They have repainted the interior walls, and have converted a first floor bedroom into a family room. Ken and Diane also removed linoleum and carpet, revealing lovely oak and fir floors throughout the house.



**337 Matheson Street**

**Miller/Demostene House, built 1912-13**

**Current owners: Martin Dreiling and Deborah Hall**

*On 2011 Homes tour*

This grand residence is a contributing building to Healdsburg's Matheson Street Historic District. John Armstrong, a carpenter from Wisconsin, constructed the two-story vernacular house for banker Joseph Hotchkiss Miller and his bride, the former Stella Harmon, a teacher. This folk

house was Armstrong's vernacular interpretation of early Craftsman architecture. "Vernacular" describes buildings constructed by amateur carpenters, often using plan books from architectural offices, trade magazines or "how to build your own home" publications. The character-defining features of the residence include: the side-gabled roof, exposed rafter tails, narrow lapped siding and asymmetrical fenestration (irregular window placement), emphasized by the shutters. The only projection from the otherwise flat façade is a gabled portico, supported by squared posts on a solid balustrade. Inside, the Craftsman character is evident in the clinker brick fireplace, the sumptuous wood paneling, wainscoting, built-in cabinets and shelves.

Manuele and Julia Demostene bought the Miller property in 1933. At the time, the Demostenes owned a fruit ranch on upper Bailhache Avenue. Like other locals who could afford it, the Demostenes maintained a "country house" and this "town house," which was convenient with kids attending high school in town. Manuele Demostene died in 1952. When Julia passed away 11 years later, their son, Leo, inherited the house. Leo's daughter, Peachie (Rosalee), purchased the property from his estate in 1974, residing here for over 30 years. Norm Dunlavy joined her when they wed in 1991.

Current owners, Martin Dreiling, an architect and town planner, and Deborah Hall, a school principal, purchased the property in 2006, becoming only the third family to own it since 1912. They liked the house's location near downtown, the proximity to Deborah's workplace, and the large lot with opportunity for gardening, workshop space and in-law unit potential. Martin and Deborah have focused on rehabilitating the site prior to doing any substantial work on the structure. They replaced the front lawn with edible landscaping and a historically-appropriate partial fence. They removed asphalt paving, a tennis court (formerly used for practice by the Healdsburg High School tennis team), converting to a small-scale urban farm. They have added about 20 trees to the property, including a small redwood grove.





**Dennes House**

**328 Grant Street, built 1913**

**Owner: Gina Riner, 2004**

*On 2004 Homes tour*

**(Update: David Jones, Current owner, 2013)**

The redwood bungalow at 328 Grant Street is one of the finest examples of Craftsman architecture in Healdsburg. When it was constructed for J. Ralph Williams, a cashier at Healdsburg National Bank, the house was front-page news in the *Healdsburg Tribune*. Built by local contractor George Day in three months, between April and June of 1913, the bungalow contained five rooms and was “arranged in accord with the latest ideas for the housewife’s convenience and comfort”. The latest ideas included a cooler in the kitchen, a pie safe, a chute to the basement, and a pass-through between the kitchen and dining room. The interior also featured characteristic Craftsman details, such as built-in bookcases, cabinets, firewood boxes, and a window seat. The exterior of the residence is distinguished by a full-width recessed front porch under the main gable, with tapered columns atop clinker brick pedestals.

George Ackerman, a Shell Oil Company manager, bought the property from J. Ralph Williams in 1919. George and his wife, Isabel, lived here until 1921, when George was transferred to Stockton. They sold the residence to R.R. “Pat” Dennes, a banker, who moved into the house with Bess, his new bride. The Denneses raised two children at 328 Grant Street and lived together here for 60 years. Bess died in 1981; Pat died in 1986.

The house was rented from 1987-2001. The current owner came to buy it through pure serendipity. Giovanna “Gina” Riner, an international marketing consultant living in Oakland, noticed the

house while visiting friends across the street. When she admired it, she learned that it was about to go on the market. Four days later, Gina owned the house! Since moving in, she has painted it in traditional Craftsman color schemes. The floors—quarter-sawn oak with walnut inlay—have been refinished for the first time.

Gina values her home for its history and character, and is committed to keeping it original. She has delved into the history of the Dennes house through extensive research at the Healdsburg Museum and interviews with friends and family of the former residents. She cherishes the personal details of her house’s past, such as Pat Dennes making bootleg liquor in the basement during Prohibition, and a tabby cat named Mousey residing here for 31 years. Bess Dennes, a gardening enthusiast, had a maze of boxwood hedges in the lower back yard. Gina is working to restore the garden. The large lot retains many of Bess’s plantings, including camellias, roses and a plumbago bush, staples of Craftsman gardens.

*The Healdsburg chapter of the American Association of University Women (AAUW) sponsors a Healdsburg homes tour as its main fundraiser each year. All proceeds from the tours support local education, with a sizeable portion presented to the Healdsburg Education Foundation and scholarships awarded to re-entry women pursuing college degrees. In recent years, contemporary homes have been added to the historic homes on the tours. This year’s 23<sup>rd</sup> Healdsburg Homes Tour will be held May 5, 2013.*





*Dr. Frank E. Sohler, 1920s*

## **Dr. Frank E. Sohler Practicing Medicine One Hundred Years Ago** *by Ann Howard*

Dr. Frank E. Sohler was a physician and surgeon in Geyserville from 1907 until 1918 when he moved his family and his practice to Healdsburg.

Frank Ernest Sohler was born on April 16, 1881, in Red Lake Falls, Minnesota, the son of Xaver and Lena (Reuss) Solher. Xaver Sohler was a native of Bavaria and came to the United States at the age of nineteen where he followed his trade as a millwright; Lena (Reuss) Sohler was a native of Germany. In 1892, Xaver brought his family to Lake County, California. They are buried in Kelseyville, California.

Frank E. Solher was eleven years old when he came to California. He completed his public school education, and entered Lakeport Academy in Lake

County where he enjoyed bicycle racing and graduated in 1899. He attended Leland Stanford University and graduated in 1903. Determined to devote his life to practicing medicine, he entered Cooper Medical College, then located at Webster and Sacramento Streets in San Francisco, and graduated in 1906. He published "Splenic Anaemia" that year. (Cooper Medical College and its property were gifted to Stanford University in 1908 for the purpose of establishing the Stanford Medical College. Cooper Medical College ceased to exist by 1912.)

Dr. Sohler was an intern in the French Hospital at San Francisco for a year during the San Francisco earthquake of 1906 and assisted during a typhoid outbreak. He and Luella May Bremner met



at Stanford where she graduated in 1905. They were married on February 2, 1907, in the old Methodist Church in Santa Rosa. Luella was born August 7, 1884, in Santa Rosa, the daughter of Dana Boardman and Mary Jane (Hillman) Bremner, natives of Maine. Dana was a blacksmith by profession.



*Sohler Residence from 1907-1913*

Dr. Sohler moved his family to Geyserville in 1907 where he was engaged in general practice for eleven years. He and Luella were the parents of Frank E. Sohler, Jr., born Nov 8, 1907, and Ruth A. Sohler born February 4, 1911. He was a typical country doctor with his office in his home. The family lived first at the north end of town. The home is thought to have been built in 1904 by local carpenter A. G. Leigh for Mary "Etta" (Bosworth) Hale. Dr. Sohler is certain to have purchased the home in 1907 when he began his practice as physician and surgeon in Geyserville. The home is located at the north end of town on Main Street (now 21421 Geyserville Avenue) just south of the Elementary School.

During his tenure in Geyserville, Dr. Sohler typically combined business with pleasure making house calls on a bicycle or by horse and buggy. He covered the entire countryside from Geyserville to the coast and many miles to the north.



*Residence and office of Dr. Frank E. Sohler from 1913-1918*

In 1913, Dr. Sohler had the bungalow-style home built on Main Street (now 21110 Geyserville Avenue) and closer to the center of downtown Geyserville. The house had a separate entrance on the left side of the front porch into what was Dr. Sohler's waiting room. From there a patient would pass through an interior door into the examination room with a fireplace.

Dr. Sohler's widowed mother and his younger brother, William, were thought to have lived across the street. From 1912 to 1917, William ran the Sohler Brothers Pharmacy in the Drug Store located half a block away.

*"WANTED - A DRUG STORE,"* begged the *Geyserville Gazette* dated February 3, 1899. With *"a population of over 400...in one of the most healthful sections...yet people do get sick and need medicine. We have a fine physician [Dr. T. F. Taylor]...but we are about nine miles from the nearest drug store. In an emergency or extremity the patient might die before the necessary remedy could be procured. There is absolutely no risk in an investment of this kind here. Who will be the first to erect a building - it need be neither large nor expensive - in which prescriptions may be compounded and where other necessities from this line may be obtained, a bonanza for an experienced druggist with a little capital!"*

Early in November of 1901, the residence of Stamer and Feldmeyer located in the center of town and dating back to 1857 when it was a public house for travelers, burned to the ground in the second major fire in Geyserville. In 1902, Bernard Feldmeyer built a long, one-story brick building offering five spaces for businesses to occupy. Sometime after 1907 when Dr. Sohler arrived in Geyserville, he opened the Drug Store which occupied the southern-most space next to the alley at the junction of Depot Street (now Highway 128.)

Also in 1902, Louis K. Liggett, a drug store magnate, persuaded 40 independent drug stores to invest \$4,000 in a retailer's cooperative called United Drug Stores, which sold products under the *Rexall* name.

After World War I, the cooperative established a franchise arrangement whereby independently owned retail outlets adopted the *Rexall* trade name and sold *Rexall* products. The company was based in Boston, in an area now occupied by Northeastern University.





*Dr. Sohler's Drug Store in 1911. His name is on the small sign projecting out above the bench with his auto parked in front. He was said to have been fond of Franklin autos.*



*Interior of Dr. Sohler's Drug Store in Geyserville. Notice the date of 1911 on the license hanging from shelf in upper right hand corner of the photograph.*



*Geyserville Drug Store about 1915. Certain to be William Sohler standing in the doorway. Notice the Rexall sign below the center window.*



*The label reads "Geyserville Pharmacy, Sohler Bros., Geyserville, Cal. No. 9479, Dr. S, 5 ½ quart of hot water & use as directed. 2/18/12" (February 18, 1912). This label helps prove that Sohler brothers, Frank and William, jointly owned the Geyserville Pharmacy.*



*Apothecary jars like the ones on the upper left shelves in the photo of Dr. Sohler's Drug Store; from author's home town, Ida Grove, Iowa.*



*Tiny vials from the Geyserville Pharmacy, Registry No. 12178.*

Only 2 ½" tall by ½" in diameter with tiny cork stoppers, the typed label on one bottle reads "Oil of Cinnamon" and the other "Oil of Clove." Both still contain a little of the fragrant oils. If the tiny little vials of fragrant oils date from the Sohler Brothers' Geyserville Pharmacy in the 1910s, one hundred years ago. How amazing they survived!



Harvey Rose was born April 1, 1911. When I visited with him before he died at the age of 97, he was not able to see the photographs I had hoped he could identify, so I happened to describe this one. "There is a man standing in front of the Drug Store." Harvey quickly explained that it was Dr. Sohler's brother who ran the Drug Store. "When I was a little boy, I broke my collar bone. I remember Dr. Sohler well -- he pulled off the tape!"

*"William Sohler and Fred Baruch returned the first of the week from an exciting visit to San Francisco. The boys said they had some time for rubes [country bumpkins]." (Geyserville Gazette March 19, 1915).*

During his early practice, Dr. Sohler was given a set of black leather saddlebags, patent date 1871, from a physician who had practiced in Cloverdale, California, in the 1860s-1870s. Dr. Frank Sohler, Jr., who practiced in Geyserville and Cloverdale, later donated the saddle bags to the Oregon Health & Science University.

During WWI, William A. Sohler enlisted in 1917 for two years as a Hospital Sergeant, Medical Doctor, in a General Hospital, so he had left town. The Bank of Geyserville moved into the space in 1917 with Dr. Sohler as a Director, then later other businesses.

On November 1, 1918, Dr. Sohler moved his family to Healdsburg "to practice and built up a large and representative following throughout the community. Able, conscientious and sympathetic, he gained a splendid reputation as a careful and accurate diagnostician."

Vincent Colombano was born January 9, 1919, to Eligio and Angela (Mellana) Colombano at Asti. His older brother Louis, age four at the time, remembered that his baby brother was delivered by Dr. Frank E. Sohler who had traveled from Healdsburg. Dr. Sohler performed Vince's physical before he entered the military in January, 1942. Vince and his wife Anita (Gargini) Colombano live in Healdsburg, and he celebrated his 94<sup>th</sup> birthday this year. Lou will celebrate his 98<sup>th</sup> birthday on February 17, 2013.

Pauline Moody was born on January 14, 1919, to John Logan Moody and Daisy Belle (Eslick) Moody. A premature baby too frail to be delivered on the family's Geyserville ranch, Pauline entered the world in Healdsburg's first hospital which was

located in a wing of Dr. J. Walter Seawell's home at 211 North Street. Dr. Frank E. Sohler attended her birth. When she attained a weight of four pounds, her parents were allowed to take her home, where, according to Pauline's account, she was "kept warm in the oven." Pauline married Norman H. Ray in 1939, and died at age 93 on February 8, 2012.

*"You can still see the place Healdsburg District Hospital began life in 1905. It was in the right wing of the home of Dr. J. Walter Seawell at 211 North Street -- now the Camellia Inn. It was called Healdsburg General Hospital then, and a doctor's visit cost \$2. Dr. Seawell and his partner, Dr. Frank E. Sohler, were hard-working, dedicated, and innovative physicians who insisted on the best equipment and the latest medical technology for their north county hospital. This, along with the sunshine and fresh air, attracted first-rate skilled staff to the hospital." Dr. Sohler could easily walk to work from his home across the street.*

In 1918, Dr. Frank and Mrs. Luella Sohler purchased the Kruse cottage in Healdsburg at the corner of Fitch and North Streets, two blocks north of the Healdsburg Museum. Their former home at 226 North St. was included in the 2009 Healdsburg Historic Homes Tour.

*In 1925, "Dr. F. E. Sohler is the possessor of a fine new Franklin coupe, the new model taking the place of the one which has served the doctor so faithfully. The Sohler family [is] "sold" to the Franklin cars, as Mrs. Sohler drives a Franklin sedan." (Healdsburg Tribune, May 1925)*

*"Dr. F. E. Sohler wrecked his new Franklin coupe just below Petaluma en route home from Alameda and was temporarily knocked unconscious. The machine was towed to Petaluma, while the doctor returned home on the bus." (Healdsburg Enterprise, December 31, 1925)*

Dr. Frank E. Sohler died on December 29, 1946, and Luella (Bremner) Sohler died on December 24, 1960.

Frank E. Sohler, Jr., also a graduate of Stanford University, became a doctor and practiced in Geyserville and Cloverdale in the 1930s. He married Virginia Munsey on June 29, 1935. He earned the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in US Army. Frank died on October 26, 1997, and is interred in Arlington National Cemetery, VA.



Frank E. Sohler, Jr., also a graduate of Stanford University, became a doctor and practiced in Geyserville and Cloverdale in the 1930s. He married Virginia Munsey on June 29, 1935. He earned the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in US Army. Frank died on October 26, 1997, and is interred in Arlington National Cemetery, VA.

Ruth Sohler graduated from Nursing School in San Diego in 1937 and married Leland H. Dibble on August 22, 1937. She died April 20, 2006. The Ruth Sohler Dibble Nursing Scholarship was established in her name and is awarded at the Santa Rosa Junior College.

Dr. Frank E. Sohler, Sr., practiced medicine in Healdsburg for 40 years becoming a respected physician and surgeon, delivering babies through three generations. As later noted by his daughter, Ruth Sohler Dibble, "Though he was ill with a heart condition seventeen years preceding his death, it is a high tribute to his character that he continued in his calm dignified manner to take care of his patients until the day he died."

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