

# Do You Remember?

By Anne Homan  
Livermore City Historian



## Responses from Some Readers

This is the fourth of these columns that I have written. Just as I learned through teaching that the teacher always learns from his/her student, so the writer of a newspaper column learns from his/her readers. Thanks to all of you who have responded.

Rich Buckley wrote about his family's early connections with Yosemite. His grandfather Tom Buckley spent many summers camping in the park with his sons. In the 1930s his parents' home in Livermore was a "hotel" for Native Americans who came all the way down from Yosemite to be treated by Dr. Degnan. Rich said, "Dad used to tell us a story about his father sending him on a trail from where they were camping on Glacier Point to the valley floor. Dad said he'd jog down the mountain to fetch fresh bread (from Degnan's) and scamper back up. None of us believed his story until we read your article."

Anne Longmuir also wrote about Dr. Degnan: "I was pleasantly surprised when thumbing through the recent paper I spied my grandmother's maiden name. I read your article about Dr. John Degnan's time in Livermore. He was my great-uncle. . . . Over the years I heard many stories about Yosemite, the Degnan family and Dr. John but your research and article were new things

that I didn't know."

My column on the Hagemann Ranch triggered a response from Christine Ariizumi. She has lived in the same house for 43 years. It shares a fence line with the ranch. "We have thoroughly enjoyed having the ranch behind us. We were worried sick when the developer purchased the land and it went on the market. . . . Fortunately, all turned out well for those of us who want to keep some of the 'old' around. It is an anchor that holds together the Valley's past and present and should be used as a teaching tool for the citizens of Livermore and their children who think we are just a suburb of the Bay Area's larger towns."

Keith Duffus wrote all the way from Ohio. He started working for the Hagemanns in 1972 when he was 12 years old and continued for two years during the summers. "Mr. Hagemann and his mother would have me do simple chores. The highlight of working there was lunch time. They would always serve me a summer sausage sandwich. They made their own summer sausage, and it was wonderful. I am now 52 and I can still remember those sandwiches like it was yesterday. The experience of working for them was more than just the food. It was starting early, working hard and people treating each other

with respect."

I wrote two columns on chickens. I had asked Ashley Ruzicka about her chickens, but she was so busy that she did not get her information to me in time. "I raise bantam Partridge Wyandottes, large and bantam Golden Laced Wyandottes, a bantam White Faced Black Spanish, a large Rhode Island Red, a large Black Maran, and a bantam White Silkie." In all, she has ten chickens and one Mandarin duck. This past summer with her bantam Spanish, she won Best of Class, Best Bantam, and Reserve (second place) of Show at the Alameda County Fair.

Carolyn Hunt wrote, "I enjoy your historical articles. I'm amazed at how you keep coming up with such interesting material! Some aren't especially interesting to me personally, such as last week's article on the Foscaldas, whom I'd never heard of, until WHOA! I read that Simon and his wife lived in the house I lived in when I first came to Livermore in 1963!"

In one of my columns on the year 1913, I mentioned a KisselKar—a make of car I had never heard of. A friend put me in touch with Lynn Kissel, who lived in Livermore until recently and owns two KisselKars. He invited me for a ride through downtown Livermore in his



Anne Homan poses with the KisselKar. Photo by Lynn Kissel

beautifully restored 1914 KisselKar 40 touring car, one of only four left. He had to use hand signals for his turns. He worried about young drivers who would probably not understand what he was doing. The big car attracted a good deal of attention. I had a great time!

William Lokke came to Livermore as "a fresh wide-eyed Minnesota college graduate" to join the Lab in June 1957. He caught a Greyhound Bus to Livermore, where he and his trunks were "dumped behind the Lutz Hotel into a 110-degree" day. The ho-

tel clerk took him upstairs to his room, "directly over the wheezing bus." The only way he could get any fresh air in the room was to open the window, but that let in all the bus exhaust fumes. Needless to say, he was glad when the Lab housing office found him other quarters a week later.

In the 1970s and 1980s, Rick Sanders worked at La Rochelle's restaurant in Pleasanton and served both Masud Mehran and his son, Alex. "During the Iran hostage crisis, I remember his being verbally harassed by local business men for being Iranian; however, he

ALWAYS held his head up high and maintained his dignity and the respectfulness we as servers had known him for. I am glad to know he is still doing well."

Brett Gregory started working at the Livermore Airport in 1992 and knew Dan Lee. "Whenever he was at the airport he was smiling. You could tell it was his passion. Your article was a fitting tribute to a man who made a difference that we all still benefit from today." (Readers can reach me at [am50homan@yahoo.com](mailto:am50homan@yahoo.com).)