

2020 SUMMARY HAGEMANN RANCH REPORT

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Overview

The year of Covid was an interesting challenge for Hagemann Ranch. Neither the horses nor the landscaping were aware of the pandemic, weather continued its assault and branches fell this year much as they do every other. The ranch was closed to the public through most of the year, but volunteers from each of the site programs carried out what used to be called chores, now considered 'essential duties.' Horses needed to be fed, landscape needed watering, security was maintained.

Due to the range of essential duties among the various programs, the Livermore Heritage Guild continued to provide full service to the site, from the porta-potties to wifi. Sadly, this report will not say much about public events, but a number of tasks were moved forward to improve the site for the day when once again visitors can enjoy it.

The Guild coordinates chores, requirements and ongoing improvements on the site through monthly electronic meetings with all three non-profits operating on the site, as well as many more focused communications for repairs, supplies, and services. The site and its programs emerged from 2020 stronger and better resourced in spite of the challenges due to the amazing work of volunteers from each of the programs and their ability to quickly adapt to new ways of communicating and working. A predominate darkly comedic theme of the pandemic has been the hapless technical abilities of those thrust into zoom meetings and email task lists, but the program and project teams at Hagemann Ranch have been competent, resourceful and resilient in making sure that all needs of the site were met through a solid year of challenges in uncharted territory. This report is a short summary of the Guild's activity, but it is important to recognize the heroic efforts of members of each non-profit on the site to respond to the year no one expected.

We hope and expect that before the end of 2021 we will again be welcoming visitors to the site for events in each of the programs. We even more strongly believe, as we noted last year, that Hagemann Ranch will have an important role to play in re-establishing community experiences as our society slowly breaks back out of quarantine to rediscover their environment, and their community.

Public Outreach and Programs

Sundays At Hagemann

These events ended in February, and then a test event was held in September to try out a set of procedures for operation during the pandemic. Three groups were allowed to make reservations and with strict safety measures in place we conducted an open house constructed to avoid contact and clustered groups while still providing children's activities, informative tours and an opportunity to experience the site. While the event was a success and received high praise from the guests, the Guild determined, based on projected progress of the virus, that the risks outweighed our desire to conduct additional programs. It is our intent to restart programs in summer 2021, though no date is currently set. Both 4-H and Sunflower Hill have also been conducting limited programs for their clients, though there have been no additional events for the general public.

While we have not been able to bring the public on-site, we continue to feature Hagemann Ranch in articles in our newsletter as well as information and videos on our website. Much less than we would like, but this does help keep the Ranch fresh in the minds of Guild members and the interested community.

We do note in sadness the passing of our on-site historian, tractor restorer and Sundays At Hagemann blacksmith, Russ Bearrows. After over a year of struggling against severe medical challenges, Russ passed away this March. We anticipate continuing to present blacksmith demonstrations and many other parts of our program to which Russ contributed, but his knowledge, humor and spirit are missed every day. In the spirit of kindness some people would mention that actor Sam Elliot looked and spoke somewhat like Russ, but we feel that somewhat undersells Russ' charm and character.

Partner Programs

The Guild provides support to events and projects of our on-site partners. In 2020 many of these tasks were continuations of repairs, clean-up, infrastructure and general assistance. As noted, neither the horses nor the bees nor the vegetables nor sunflowers were aware of the pandemic and the site continued to support all related activities.

As low-density outdoor programs, both 4-H and the SFH garden have had a steady team of well-spaced participants and volunteers looking for safe activities.

4-H continues to develop, with horses, chickens, ducks, bees and goats. The ranching heritage of Livermore lives on in the hearts of volunteers and students in these programs. The 4-H program welcomed a filly and colt born to two of the program mares.

Sunflower Hill continued with staff and volunteers to cultivate and produce wholesome food which nourished those in need at every stage of the garden.

Neither partner program is focused on the heritage of the Hagemann site, but both have been excellent partners in preserving the site for both its experience and production in manners consistent with it's heritage purpose.

We continue to have our cross-park neighbor Trinity Church as an unofficial partner. We assisted installing some of their yard mulch and they continue to offer extra parking as needed. They say that good fences make good neighbors, but really, good neighbors make good neighbors.

In this year where we have less to say about official partners and programs, we should note that our residential neighbors have been excellent partners this year and every year. Families which border the Hagemann site have tolerated the occasional manure odor or late night neighing of horses and have provided security watch with tolerance and appreciation for ranch operations. The Guild cultivates and is fortunate to have appreciative neighbors on all sides.



Heritage Garden

The Heritage Garden was tended by Guild volunteers, students of the Granada Green Team, and Mothers and Daughters of the National Charity League. The garden produced modest harvests of wholesome food for families while continuing to demonstrate only items which would have been seen in a local garden from the 1860s to the 1930's. Some of the seed stocks originally from heritage seed banks are now planted completely from seeds collected in previous ranch harvests.

As it would have been in 1890, the garden is tilled with compost from Ranch clippings, dirt and manure, and we presume pollinated by the on-site 4-H bees. Neither the vegetables nor the weeds knew about Covid so our efforts were adapted for safe ongoing work, all under strict Covid safety protocols.



Special Events

There were no special events for the public this year beyond the single open-house test with full pandemic precautions. However a holiday light display spanning much of the entrance reminded the

public that the Hagemann Ranch site was active. Neighbors sought out Guild volunteers to note how pleased they were with the displayed holiday spirit.

Preservation, Restoration, Infrastructure

Basic Maintenance

As happens every year, there was a lot of maintenance in 2020, including replacement of fence boards, gate repairs, building stabilization, plumbing fixes and electrical repairs. The usage from each on-site group requires a steady cadence of repairs and we now have a couple of teams of repair volunteers. Each year sliding barn doors jump their tracks or old valves refuse to seal, and the sun beats down weathering everything. Loads of gravel were used to fill pools



during the winter rains and we are constantly pulling weeds, trimming trees, tending the

landscape, etc. TerraCare does tend to lawn mowing, and tree trimming for improved safety. But City resources were also strained by the pandemic. So the Guild also handled a few major safety chores, including contracting with Buena Vista Tree Service for extended height tree work to remove high broken branches such as the one dubbed “Widow Maker” shown here. Looking small in the distance, it was over 8 feet long. Beyond Widow Maker, Buena Vista also handled general trimming of the towering eucalyptus trees.

Perhaps a step above ‘basic’ maintenance, the horse arena lighting has been failing over the years since it was installed well over a decade ago. This year the Guild, intending to replace the bulbs, found that the lighting fixtures had leaked and corroded over the years, so all lighting was replaced with LED flood lighting. This allows outdoor 4-H programs to expand into darkness hours, an important consideration in the short days of winter.

Building Repairs

Major work on the house is mostly on hold until a plan is in place for the foundation, but windows and doors in the house as well as the Blacksmith Shop and Wash House / Milk House have been repaired by our skilled team of volunteers. All original wood has been reused as has all intact glass. The same team will also tackle the house front porch. In previous years a plywood board was used to cover the porch floor rotted boards, but this work will replace the original tongue and groove with nearly identical tongue and groove wood salvaged from the Southern Pacific Depot. As part of the process, recent porch posts, already rotting, will be replaced with replicas of the posts as seen in historic photos of the house, cut from salvaged historic redwood beams..

Work is also ongoing to repair many of the rotted and broken boards in the various barns. More of this work will be featured in the 2021 report as this work progresses. The Red Barn was finally cured of some weathered particle board panels, replaced with appropriate windows.



Milk House / Wash House

One of the original structures on the site, dating to the earliest construction of Martin Mendenhall around 1869, is the Milk House, which soon had an addition, the Wash House. We clumsily refer to the structure as the Milk House / Wash House. Over the decades the shingles fell apart, asphalt sheets were installed, they crumbled and by the time the Guild was on site, the structure was covered with layers of decaying tarps. The west wall had fallen out and rot consumed much of the remaining structure. The Guild's volunteers, principally the First Presbyterian crew, took this on in 2019 and finished in 2020, shoring the foundation, restoring walls and rotten rafters, returning the roof to original shingle and even rebuilding the windows. As always, the goal is not to create a new building, but for the structure to look as it would on a typical day during the site's period of significance. As much original wood as

could be salvaged was reused, and patches were done with tin panels as the conscientious farmer would have done in his time.

H Barn Roof

The east shed roof slope of the H Barn roof has been in poor shape likely for decades, but in the last two years wind storms really took a toll and panels lifted and bent and rain entered at the many large rust holes as well. The central and west slopes had been replaced prior to City ownership of the site. Perhaps the east slope was in the best condition at the time and was skipped for economic reasons, though we do not really know. In any case, major roofing is not a volunteer job, so the Guild contracted with Rod and Wes Clark Roofing to have the east slope replaced with corrugated metal to match the top and west slopes.

Inspired by the Historic site, Rod and Wes Clark Roofing went to great lengths to make sure the



new panels blend well with the original. A light stain was brushed on the interior side of the roof panels to dull the new shine, and where new wood needed to replace old, they darkened the wood to reduce the jarring appearance of the white wood. In our first rain of the season a few of the new nail spots leaked and they came right out to patch things up. The roof is now good for many decades and maybe another century.

Donations

Part of administering and presenting the historic site is soliciting and accepting donations which are consistent with the site's mission. Foremost in the mission is our ability to immerse visitors in an environment from the time of Livermore's founding and early development. Objects are an important piece of the visitor experience. Especially those that evoke comparisons to modern items. In 2020 many house, kitchen and workshop items were received and accessioned when appropriate to the site's period of significance. A team from the National Charity League helped immensely with the accessioning.



Front Gate Eagle Scout Project

Delays compounded delays for this project and 2020 was gone before getting permission, reviews and permits to build the front gate originally proposed in 2019. 2021 has the Scout and his team preparing to execute and we are excited to finally see it built. At the same time, our history of successful Scout projects is driving additional interest in such projects. We are currently in discussions with three aspiring Eagle Scouts. Scout programs are not funded through the Scouts so the Guild contributes to each Scout project. As with each of the funded projects on site, the return on investment is excellent, as the investment in materials leverages a delivered project.



Administration

Volunteers

An important part of administering the site is recruiting and organizing volunteers so 2020 was quite a challenge to continue with all the site tasks while prioritizing safety. Initially only the smallest core of volunteers were allowed on site. As the Guild put together guidelines, some volunteers worked in family groups (the NCL teams shown above are mother/daughter teams), other tasks were divided up so tasks happened at a distance and on different days. We do not like having volunteers working alone on the site either, so a careful balance was kept throughout the year. The Guild is blessed by a team of volunteers not only committed to the work they do but equally committed to supporting each other in and out of their Guild activities.

Security

The on-site caretaker, active volunteer programs, vigilant neighbors, a network of cameras and probably some luck have been instrumental in keeping the site safe. A few of us are signed up to get Ring alerts each day and fortunately we mostly see horses and birds along with volunteer activity.

We stepped up our fire security with a monitored wireless fire alarm system. Though fire alarms do not prevent fires, the hope is to make sure that any fire does not spread and improves our odds of saving structures.

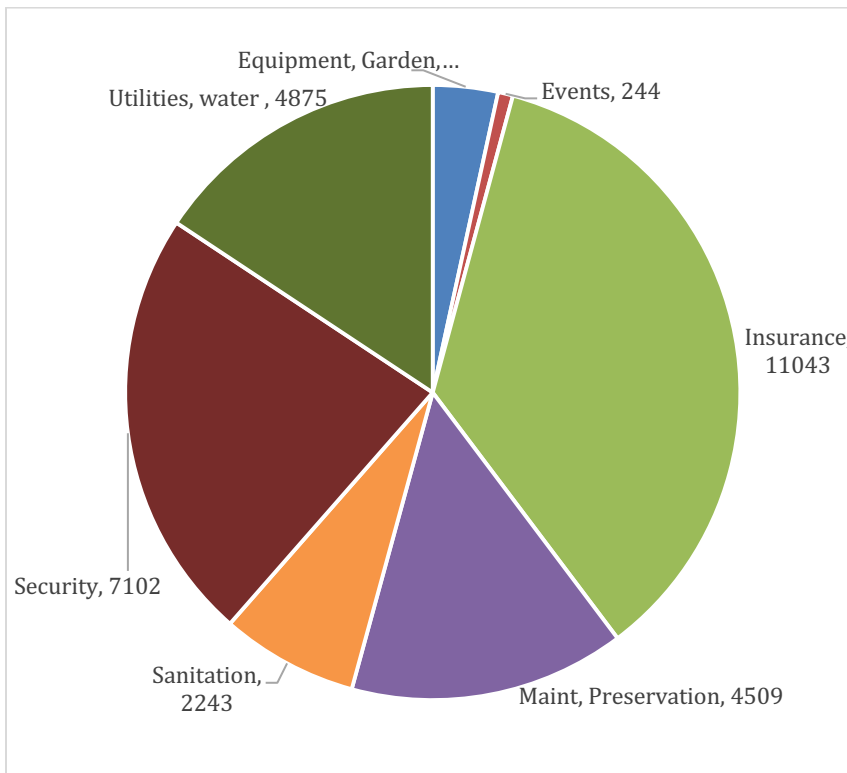
Utilities, Services

The Heritage Guild manages all utilities and services for the Hagemann Ranch site. Although water is delivered by our on-site well, this creates a significant electricity bill to supply the gardens and animals, even as other electrical usage has fallen due to our increased installation of energy saving lighting. The site has wifi which serves the on-site groups, and also allows for security access. Services include monitored fire alarms, HoneyBucket outhouse, trash and bottled water.

2020 Expenditures

The annual expenses for the site, managed through the Guild Board as well as a Hagemann committee, cover the recurring liabilities of utilities and services, as well as the costs for infrastructure and programs. Program costs and materials often come from within Guild programs and resources and so are not budget items for the ranch, though of course each supports the other. As with every year, and every project the Guild does, our largest expenditure is of volunteer time and talent. We are fortunate to draw on the skills of historians, engineers, mechanics, teachers, planners, artists, tradespeople, and passionate volunteers of all stripes. With volunteer time valued by Independent Sector at over \$31/hr, the Guild's management of volunteers has delivered over \$100,000 worth of in-kind value towards improving the Hagemann site.

Though mentioned in this report, the H Barn roof was paid in early 2021 so that \$11,500 expenditure is not shown in the following summary pie-chart. Notable in the chart is the Covid-minimized Events cost, and a large Security cost for the capital installation of the wireless fire alarms. .



2021 Projected Activity

Corona Virus continues to influence program activities, but we have significant projects moving along. The electrical service project was significantly delayed but permits are approved for work this year. The front gate Eagle Scout project will be completed and other Eagle Scout projects are in the works.

Additional tree work and building structural repairs are expected, as well as some significant retaining wall work, otherwise the projects of 2021 are generally continuation from 2020.

Next Steps

Professional Service Work

Upgrade electrical service entrance to the site

Infrastructure

Continue (non-foundation) house restoration (windows, doors, trim, siding...).

Repairs and painting Red Barn

Creation of a small museum space for artifact displays

Retaining wall repairs along Olivina

Fence slat replacement

Continue collection, restoration and exhibit of artifacts

Major Tree trimming (eucalyptus mitigation)

Interpretive Aspects

Restarting **Sundays At Hagemann** events when safe to do so

Interpretive general map and signage

Walking tour guide

Increased web presence

Informative collateral for off-site information and fund raising

Hagemann Ranch Vision Statement:

Hagemann Ranch, where

Heritage is shared, interpreted and preserved

Hope is nurtured and hearts are opened

Harmony reigns

