LIVERMORE HERITAGE GUILD
Saving Yesterday For Tomorrow
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Livermore's Real Desperado

by Phil Bardsley

Joaquin Murrieta, Livermore's legendary outlaw … or was he?

I grew up in Livermore in the 1950s hearing about the notorious bandit and how he hid out from lawmen in the Livermore hills. I couldn't look at Brushy Peak without wondering where his camp had been. But in fact, the Livermore bandit was probably Murrieta's nephew, Procopio, not Murrieta himself. This article is an attempt both to set the historical record straight and to answer the question, who was Procopio?

Violence in the Wild West

First, it's important to understand California's climate of violence and injustice during the 1850s and 1860s. This description is not intended in any way to glorify or condone violence, or to stereotype any one group. Yet, it is useful to know how violence became normalized during that brief, lawless period.

Starting in 1849, the Gold Rush brought thousands of prospectors with a gleam of gold dust in their eye to California, and California officially became a state in 1850. The young state was not equipped to police the thousands of men from all over the world who were seeking their fortune in the Sierra foothills. At the same time, the new state government passed laws discriminating against foreign-born prospectors, such as charging them more for the rights to a mining claim. Robberies and violence became common. The perpetrators were both American miners, who may have felt it was their right to take the claims away from non-Americans, and Mexican miners who probably felt unjustly treated. And, with all that gold coming out of the hills, pure greed led to more robberies and violence as well. Violence became commonplace, and everyone carried a gun and a knife.

Joaquin Murrieta was one of the more notorious outlaws who preyed on the gold miners. A 2016 book, *Joaquin Murrieta* by Ray Iddings, containing an extensive collection of newspaper articles on Murrieta, places him in Southern California and the Sierra gold fields in various gangs from 1851 to 1853. His final reign of terror occurred in the first two months of 1853 shortly before he was killed by a lawman. None of these reports placed him in the Livermore area.



In contrast, Procopio, committed several well-documented acts of murder and larceny in the Livermore Valley in 1863, 1871, and 1878, and he served two prison terms in San Quentin. Although his name was well known and feared during his lifetime, he has not received nearly as much attention over the years as his uncle Murrieta has. So, who was Procopio, Livermore's real desperado?

Looking at this picture from his arrest in 1872, we might think he's a well-dressed, respectable gentleman. But the local newspapers at the time painted a completely different picture of this outlaw. The information below covering the first part of his life comes from an article in the *San Francisco Call Bulletin* published in 1871. The story is then picked up by a *San Jose Daily Mercury* article from 1878. Where the articles overlap, they don't always agree in the finer details, but the main stories match.

Procopio was born in Mexico around 1841. His given name has been reported as some combination of the names Tomaso, Rodundo, and Bustamante, as well as Procopio. His mother was reputed to be Joaquin Murrieta's older sister. His father was a *vaquero* (cowboy) who taught him the riding and roping skills he needed to become a vaquero himself. In 1853, the family moved to Los Angeles County. Joaquin Murrieta was reportedly killed the same year by a posse. He was 19 years old. The leader of the posse, Harry Love, then preserved Murrieta's head in a jug of alcohol and paraded it around California, showing it for $1 per view. This indignity may have helped propel Procopio, who was 12 at the time, into a life of crime. In fact, one of the aliases he adopted was Procopio Murrieta.

During the Gold Rush, starting in 1849, dozens of Mexican American bandits operated in California. The Livermore Valley, which was on the route between the gold fields and San Francisco, offered these bandits enticing opportunities. The local newspapers carried stories of their exploits, and names like Murrieta, Narciso Bojorques, Tiburcio Vasquez, Bartolo Sepulveda,

(Desperado, continued on page 4)

Center: Procopio at his arrest in 1872. Note that the inscription on the photo calls him "Thomas Rodundo alias Procopio." Photo: Wikipedia.

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Livermore Sanitarium

By Loretta Kaskey and Jennifer Tobin

Jennifer Tobin, the great granddaughter of Dr. John Robertson, the founder of the Livermore Sanitarium, has curated a collection of photos, images, and documentation on the once well-known institution to create a new Arcadia Press "Images in America" book.

Per the introduction we learn that "Dr. Robertson chose the small town of Livermore as the site of his sanitarium, due to its healthy climate and proximity to San Francisco, Oakland, and the Central Valley. In 1893 he acquired ten acres of land just south of the city limits, which already contained two buildings suitable for his needs; soon he expanded his compound with four cottages. His small staff included himself as superintendent, a second doctor, a female manager (matron) and a masseur and a masseuse. … Hammocks and reclining chairs under shade trees, as well as amusements such as carriage rides, picnics, croquet, and lawn tennis encouraged patients to spend much of their time outdoors. Indoor activities included a well-stocked library, billiards, and other games. Treatments included massage (with both male and female attendants on staff), various modes of bathing, and the application of low current electricity. … Robertson adhered to the philosophy of non-restraint; he also disapproved of controlling patients with drugs. Therefore, each patient had a full time nurse, who remained with the patient day and night."

The book should be available in 2027.



Above: Buggy rides into the neighboring countryside were also offered to patients at the sanitarium. Often Dr. Robertson himself took the helm (shown here with his wife Mary and daughters, Ruth and Marjorie). Photo courtesy of Jennifer Tobin.

Heritage Garden

By Loretta Kaskey

Marcel Proust wrote, *"Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom."* As this growing season comes to a close, I can't think of better words to describe the happy group who tend our Heritage Garden.

First, a thank-you to the soil and the water. Our beds were enriched with horse manure compost made right here on site, and the new plumbing in our irrigation system kept everything well-watered. Together they carried the garden through the summer heat, and it showed in the harvest.

Then there are the people. **Soraya Rawlings** has gardened alongside me the longest, and she watches over the pepper bed. She always knows when a poblano needs propping up and when a jalapeño is ready to pick, and our peppers are better for it.

Lauren Robbers brings enthusiasm to every work session and cheers on every bit of progress. This year it was our turn to cheer for her when she announced her



engagement to Colin. Colin has already done his part for the garden: he lent us his truck to collect our spring seedlings. Congratulations to them both!

Our newest member, **Olivia Draghi**, joined us with fresh ideas. She suggested dressing our paths with pine needles, and we all loved the result. The paths look neat and natural, and they suit a heritage garden well.

As the summer beds are cleared, the next season is already underway. Fava beans, peas, broccoli, cauliflower, and cabbage are in the ground, and wheat, oats, and barley are soon to follow. If you'd like to join us, we work Saturday mornings from 10 to noon at 455 Olivina Ave. There's always room for another pair of hands.

To quote an old children's nursery rhythm : "Oats, peas, beans, and barley grow!"



Center: Lauren and Soraya (outstanding in their fields!) with the tomato crop. **Above:** Olivia spreading pine needles in the path. Photos by Loretta Kaskey.

Wooden Cars to Wood In Cars

by Will Bolton

Almost none of human innovations appear fully formed, as if by magic; rather, they evolve from earlier practices, ideas, and devices. Cars and trucks - as we know them now - developed at the turn of the twentieth century from earlier conveyances, mostly pulled by horses and other work animals and mostly made of wood, as exemplified by the buggies and wagons at the Hagemann Ranch.

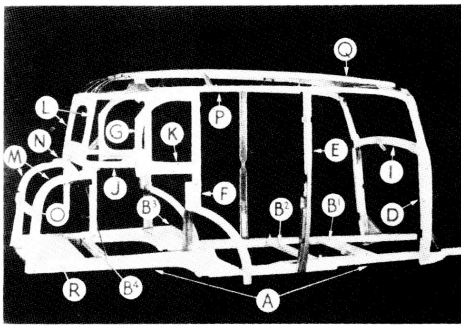
The industrial revolution provided both powerful engines suitable for heavy applications, for example, steam engines for ships and railroads, and more compact internal combustion engines suitable for doing tasks formerly done by work animals. For that transition, it was logical to substitute engines for teams of horses pulling wagons transporting goods (becoming trucks) and pulling carriages transporting people (becoming automobiles). Some established businesses did not survive this transition from horse to horsepower. For example, it's estimated that in the late 1800s there were 42 independent buggy whip manufacturers. The last buggy whip manufacturer – the H. M. Van Deusen Whip Company – made its last buggy whip in 1930. So, the old saying about "going the way of the buggy whip" literally happened to companies that didn't adapt. Of the estimated 13,000 businesses making carriages or associated items in the 1890s, a few did survive the transition. For example, Studebaker moved from being a highly regarded wagon manufacturer to producing automobiles until the 1960s. (Also see newsletter page 10 "Old Buggy…") Fisher Body had its origins in the horse-drawn custom coach body business, but by 1914 it was acknowledged as the world's largest manufacturer of automobile bodies. It's not a coincidence that into the 1980s when Fisher was making bodies the range of GM brands of cars,



the logo still featured an elegant horse-drawn carriage.

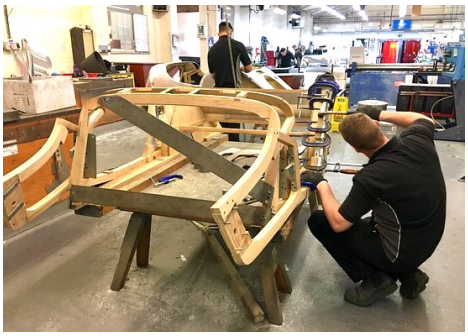
Wood is an amazing material: it is generally readily available, relatively strong and stiff, easily worked, and (at times) comparatively inexpensive. Wood's use for its structural properties goes back tens of thousands of years. By the 1800s, the industry for manufacturing wood products for a broad range of uses was well developed. It was natural that the earliest car bodies would be made of wood, often with coverings of leather, oiled cloth, or metal panels. The 1933-1936 Fisher Body Service Manual shows that the 1934 Buick 4-door sedan had an entirely wood body structure with stamped metal panels attached to the outside. However, in 1935 Fisher had transitioned to an all-steel structure with wood only used in selected places for attaching interior panels and upholstery. By the early 1950s, wood was no longer widely used as a structural material in cars. However, there was limited use of external wood trim, for example on several manufacturer's station wagons to evoke the style of an earlier era. Even in this limited use, real wood was replaced by plastic or metal trim simulating the appearance of wood that continued into the 1980s.

1934 Buick Sedan Wood Body Frame*



* Key to Proper Names of Wood Parts see page 8

Perhaps the last holdout for structural wood in cars is the Morgan Motor Company of Malvern Link, Worcestershire, UK. The chassis is of aluminum but Morgan uses an ash wood frame to support the body panels. Since Morgan's production of all models is less than 1,000 cars per year, this use of wood is more about craftsmanship and preserving tradition than having a significant impact on the auto industry.



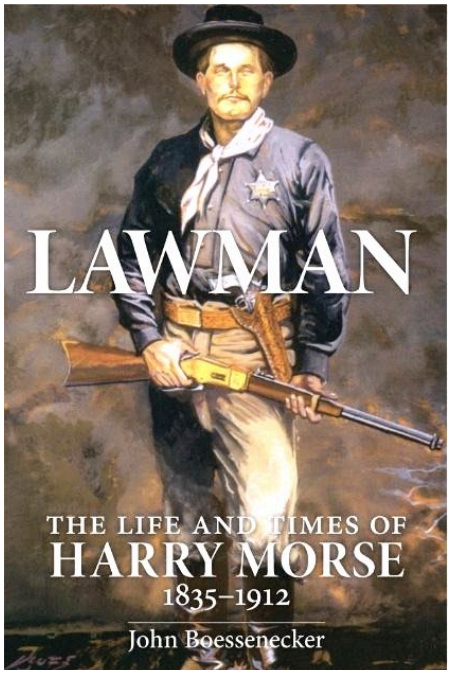
Wood structure was an integral part of the transition from animal-pulled transportation to the motor age. If you would like to learn more about how wood was used in car bodies, visit the Duarte Garage to examine the two 1920s Star automobiles and a display of 1925 Star door panels.



Bottom left: Fisher Body Company logo with its coach image. It was attached to "Good morning!" door sill plates (not shown) until 1995. **Center top:** 1930 Lincoln Coupe wood body frame built by the Judkins Coach Company. **Center left:** The Fisher Body Service Manual shows the wood body frame for a 4-door 1934 Buick sedan. **Above top:** Current Morgan sports cars being built with wood body frames. **Above:** 1932 Lincoln Judkins coupe. If you look closely at the wood frame shown in the photo at center top and the body of the completed car directly above, you can see the framing for the golf club door in the side of the body behind the passenger door. All photos courtesy of Will Bolton.

Desperado

(continued from page 1)



and Cipriano Ortega became well known to most Californians. The lawmen, like Sheriff Harry Morse of Alameda County, who went after the bandits, became regional heroes.

Procopio's Murderous Start

An 1871 article in the *San Francisco Call Bulletin* noted that Procopio "began to attract attention by his picturesque moral character" starting around 1861 or 1862. He came to be called "Red-Handed Dick" for his bloody crimes. The first crime that I found involving Procopio was the murder of John Rains, who owned Rancho Cucamonga in Southern California, in 1862. Rains had started the first commercial winery in California and was a prominent businessman and socialite. An accomplice of Procopio claimed that they and several others were offered $500 to murder Rains. Procopio was detained but released for lack of evidence. He went north to the Livermore Valley, where he joined a gang of bandits led by Narciso Bojorques.

Procopio was next arrested for murdering the Golding family on their ranch in Corral Hollow east of Livermore early in 1863. As the *Bulletin* reported, the Goldings "had a misunderstanding with a ferocious Mexican named Chano Ortego [probably Cipriano Ortega] about some money and incurred his hatred. Soon afterward, the whole family were murdered, the house was burned to the ground, and a vaquero in its employ was found hanging to a tree on the premises, dead." An eyewitness accused Procopio's gang. "Suspicion rested on Ortego, Procopio, Narciso Bojorquez, and a fourth party, whose name escaped our memory, and they were arrested and tried. Ortego proved an alibi, and the whole party were discharged for want of sufficient proof." (While the eyewitness would have provided enough evidence for conviction, the authorities, suspecting he was complicit, had already hanged him by the time they captured Procopio's gang.)

Later in 1863, Procopio was finally convicted, not for murder but for stealing cattle. The cattle belonged to Richard Pope, an early rancher in the area south of Livermore where Del Valle Regional Park is today. The bandits drove the cattle to Alvarado (now part of Union City) where he struck a deal to sell the cattle to a butcher. A constable from San Leandro named D.O. Wood tracked Procopio there and attempted to arrest him at the butcher's home. The *Bulletin* reports that, "Wood stepped into the apartment, covered him with his revolver, and ordered him to hold up his hands. He surrendered at once. As Wood put up his six-shooter to get out a pair of handcuffs, Procopio quickly drew his own pistol, shot and wounded the officer, escaped into the street, and ran swiftly toward the bridge."

A band of armed townspeople chased and cornered Procopio on the bridge. The bandit jumped into the creek, held his pistol between his teeth, swam to the other side, and ran into a salt marsh. A gunfight ensued, and the bandit was forced to give up when he ran out of bullets. At his trial, Procopio accepted all the blame, which saved his accomplice, Narciso Bojorques, from prison. Procopio was sentenced to nine years in San Quentin. Alameda County Sheriff Harry Morse visited Procopio in San Quentin, studying the prisoner's features. The sheriff wanted to be sure he could identify Procopio after he had served his term.

While Procopio was in prison, the Bulletin wrote that Narciso Bojorques, "continued his course of robbery and murder.... Among other atrocities, Narciso shot and wounded a butcher named John Gunnel, of Alisal, now Pleasanton, and robbed him of $200." Sherrif Harry Morse tracked Bojorques until in 1866 he was able to get a warrant for Bojorques' arrest. He then cornered the bandit at Foscalini's store in Sunol Valley. A few shots were fired. Bojorques was wounded in the side, but escaped into the chaparral. Morse traced his trail of blood the next day but was unable to find the bandit. Bojorques made his way to Copperopolis, in the foothills east of Stockton, where he was killed in a barroom quarrel by a fellow desperado named "One-eyed Jack" Williams.

Second Crime Spree

Procopio was released from prison in March, 1871 and returned to the Livermore Valley. Two months later he stole cows from John Arnett in the Sunol Valley. Arnett and two lawmen traced the cows to a notorious fence named Juan Camargo in Livermore. They put Camargo in jail in Pleasanton, but a band of citizens pulled Camargo out and hung him until he confessed and fingered Procopio. But by that time, the bandit had moved on to Monterey County where he committed a string of stagecoach robberies with Tiburcio Vasquez. The *Bulletin* stated that Procopio's "ambition is to become more notorious if possible than his uncle, Joaquin Muriatta— to out-Herod Herod."

Procopio and Vasquez then took a year off to spend their money in Mexico. In 1872, they took a steamer to San Francisco. Vasquez disappeared into the hills, but Procopio remained in the city. Sheriff Harry Morse was tracking

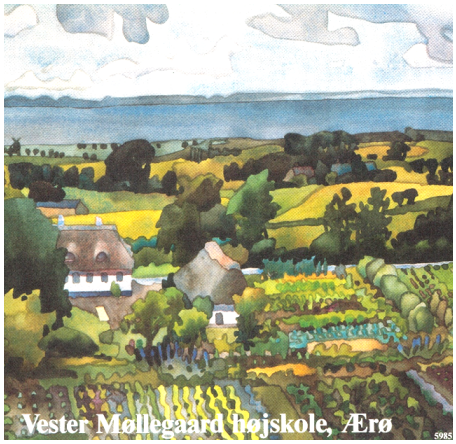
(Desperado, continued on page 6)

Above left: Book about Sheriff Harry Morse by John Boessenecker, University of Oklahoma Press. 2022.

Danish Windmills and Yellow Walls

By Carolyn Lord

In 1985 I traveled with my husband, Rob Anglin through Denmark. We visited Aarhus, Roskilde, Faaborg, Copenhagen, and we brought our watercolors to paint on the picturesque Baltic island of Ærø. We stayed at Vester Møllegaard Højskole at the northwest end of the island, and I painted this view of thatched roof buildings, bio-dynamic gardens, and the sea.

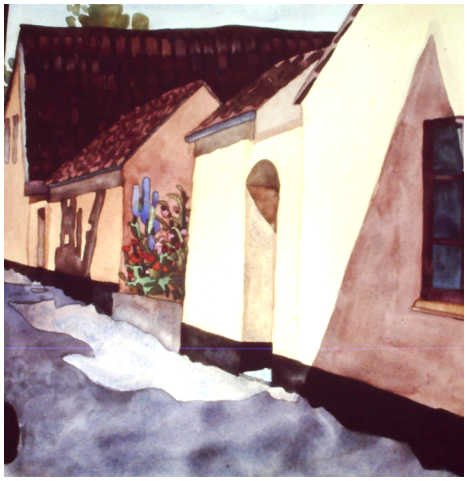


Rob was a member of the Livermore Rotary Club, which means attending weekly meetings, even while traveling. We drove the length of Ærø to Marstal and attended their Rotary Club meeting. We assumed that no one could have possibly heard of Livermore. Ha! Many of these Danish Rotarians had been to Livermore because of the Marstal-based company that was designing and installing wind turbines along the Altamont Pass! Decades later, I still think of our Danish trip when I drive past the wind turbines that are a defining feature of Livermore's landscape.





We also spent a day in Ærøskøbing which has cobblestone streets lined with historic buildings, the oldest from 1645. Enchanted, I painted tile-roofed houses with their yellow, orange, and white walls, and distinctive black trim. Historically, Black Pine Tar was used to waterproof and protect building foundations and the wood half-timbering from moisture, fungi, and insects, and it is also a decorative element that continues to define Danish buildings.



In 2019, I did paintings of Livermore's iconic Groth Brothers automotive that was on First, between L and M Streets. The yellow walls and black foundation brought back memories of "Ærøskøbing Alley".

Curious, I did some internet research and learned that one of the earliest buildings on the site was a 1914 fireproof livery stable. In 1934 it was renamed Fireproof Garage by Theodore Groth (1902-1969) and his business partner. I also learned that Theodore Groth's Danish father Hans R. Groth (1867-1961) was born on,… the island of Ærø! Was the use of

Top left: 1985 "Vester Mollegaard" watercolor, 15" x 22"; **Bottom left:** 2016 "Grant Line Trailer", oil, 16" x 20", Jess Ranch Road at I-580; **Top:** 2019 "Garage Bays at Groth Brothers" oil, 8" x 10", M Street; **Bottom Center:** 1985 **"**Ærøskøbing Alley", watercolor, 15" x 22", Denmark. All paintings and photos by Carolyn Lord.

Windmills

(continued from page 5)

yellow and black a visual clue to the Groth family's Danish heritage?

Records show that Danes started arriving in the Livermore Valley in the 1870s; the Livermore Danish Lodge was first organized in 1892; and at the corner of Second and N Streets Dania Hall was built in 1911. It has Neo-Classic architectural elements: pilasters, arched pediment façade and aside from its white and green trim, the building is painted,… yellow!

In addition, names provide clues of the Danish in Livermore: Charlotte Way, Christensen Middle School, Hansen Road, Holmes Street, Jensen Tract, and May Nissen Park.

I remember a sidewalk-conversation I had with Anna Siig (1938-2025). Anna was born into a Danish speaking family in Reno; she moved to Livermore and was one of the Founding Members of Livermore Heritage Guild. My interest was piqued when she flew her red and white Danish flag to welcome her visiting Danish relatives. I told Anna that I had been to Denmark, including Ærø, and she brightened up and told me more of the historic Livermore connection! Eligible bachelors from Ærø would emigrate to Livermore, much to the consternation of the marriageable young women left behind! I've since learned that Ærø was part of the Schlesweig-Holstein region that flip-flopped for centuries between Germany, Denmark and their various allies. Without a clear allegiance, many men would migrate to avoid the military draft and to seek better economic opportunities.

Earlier this year we returned to Denmark and learned more about its history, architecture, and art. When I see the landscape paintings by Danish artist Vilhelm Hammershøi (1864–1916) they remind me of North Livermore Avenue as it passes Hartford and May School Roads.

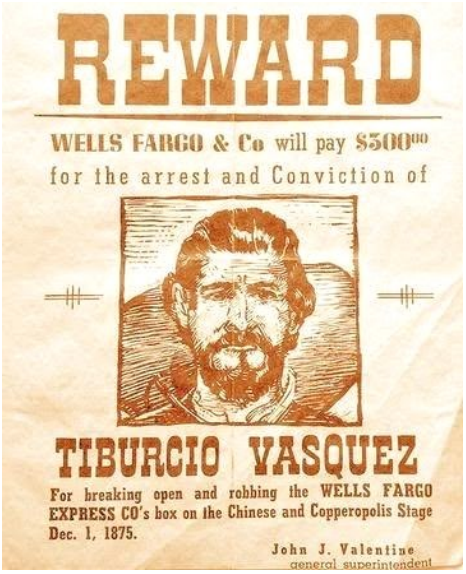
I wonder what the Danish emigres thought of Livermore, when they arrived more than a century ago. Did the Livermore Valley remind them of Denmark?



Above: 1892, Vilhelm Hammershøi, landscape from Kongevejen, north of Copenhagen, oil on canvas.

Desperado

(continued from page 4)



Procopio and arrested him. Morse hoped to convict Procopio as an accomplice in the murder of a Frenchman in Pleasanton, a crime for which Bartolo Sepulveda was serving a life sentence. Lacking sufficient evidence for a murder trial, however, Morse sent Procopio to prison for grand larceny. After Procopio was released in late 1877, the *San Jose Daily Mercury* described him as "one of the worst desperadoes that California has produced." It continued: "Procopio is regarded as even a more dangerous man than Vasquez. He possesses greater physical strength, is more blood-thirsty and revengeful, and is fully as cunning."

Last Crime in Livermore

Procopio was so dangerous that he began avoiding arrest, apparently because people were afraid to confront him. One crime happened in Livermore, where he returned after his 1877 release from San Quentin. In an argument in the settlement called "Mexico" (where the Rock House is now on Portola Avenue near North L Street), he shot a man but wasn't pursued. He then continued his crime spree in the San Joaquin Valley. The last documented crime involving Procopio in California took place in Hanford in 1878. He outsmarted five lawmen who tried to arrest him while he was in bed, and he even killed one of them. It's unclear what became of Procopio after the Hanford murder. He was reported in Arizona and in Mexico, but no official records seem to exist.

Why has Joaquin Murrieta's notoriety eclipsed Procopio's? The main reason is a best-selling novel about Murrieta, published in 1854, only a year after his death. The timely fictional account, called *The Life and Adventures of Joaquin Murieta* by John Rollin Ridge, cast him as a hero. He was not only avenging the personal wrongs done to him by the white American settlers, but was acting on behalf of all Mexicans who had recently lost their social standing in California. Murrieta's true motivation appeared to be far closer to greed than a noble cause, but his fictional image caught on and gave rise to the legends of avengers like Zorro and Batman. Meanwhile, Procopio's name, and the mayhem he brought to Livermore, have been all but lost to history.

Left: Wanted poster from 1875 for Tiburcio Vasquez, source unknown, Facebook, Mojave Desert.

Hagemann Happenings

by Barbara Soules

The saying goes "It takes a village to raise a child". The same sentiment applies to Hagemann Ranch. It takes a large team of dedicated, dependable volunteers, each with their unique skills and passions to care for and keep all the ranch activities going. Sunflower Hill and 4-H each have their armies of volunteers who tend to their garden and animals. There are also about thirty enthusiastic volunteers who regularly help at the monthly open houses. But here I would like to focus on several of the "behind the scenes" folks whose time and efforts make a difference for all of us. I think it is important to ponder the fact that the Heritage Guld has no paid staff. We operate three, soon to be four, physical, and one traveling museum and have many additional events and activities which are all run by volunteers! We are always looking for new people to help out, so if you are so inclined, please contact the Guild.

If the ranch looks lovely and welcoming each time you visit, please thank John Slover and Peter LaFreniere. Three mornings a week these fellows come in to mow the lawns, weed, water plants, trim trees, rake leaves and fix whatever needs fixing. John is often there several other days tending to animals and gardens. Both also work at open houses on set-up and tear down which Peter leads. Their service is clearly invaluable.

If you have visited lately, you may have noticed that the goats are calmer, not so demanding and quieter. These three ladies, Lucy, Ethel and Oreo, needed some training and socialization. This assistance came in the form of consistent, patient work by three volunteers.



Finch Cunningham visits the ranch once each week after school to put leashes on the goats and walk them around. They thrive on the attention and extra exercise and the chance to eat something fresh and green. Their loyalty and consistency has paid off in more well-behaved animals.

Jazz and her daughter Tai have been visiting every week for the last year and a half with the goal of helping the goats feel more comfortable around people. Each goat has a distinct personality. Oreo was and still is quite skittish but now welcomes pets and a leash. Lucy is very motivated and Tai has taught her several tricks. Ethel is definitely the boss and the most stubborn. Their growth has been very rewarding to Jazz and Tai.

The update on the Midway project often mentions that thirty of the vintage desks have been restored. The skilled carpenters behind that project are Don Bartel along with help from Phil Dean, Don Frey, Rose Marie Bartel, and Michael McCarty. These folks sneak into the ranch and quietly produce fabulous restorations. The desks were all sanded and oiled to perfection and looked lovely in the model Midway School at the last open house. Don and Phil are the team responsible for the restoration of several historic buildings on the ranch, including the deluxe chicken coop. Pay special attention to it next time you visit to appreciate their amazing handiwork.

Each monthly open house requires a different postcard for publicity. The lovely graphic artist behind this project is Linda Roberts. I send her the information and she creates an eye-catching, clever design every time. Her reliability and creativity are greatly appreciated.

Having animals on property requires having someone on site at night. The ranch caretaker is Brian Odell who lives in the RV on site. He monitors the cameras and security system and is the first one to note any unusual occurrences, such as escaped horses. Electricity updates and fence building are also his specialties.



Outside groups also contribute to the upkeep of the ranch. Every September a large group of volunteers descend to scrape and paint fences as part of the City Community Service Day. Their work always makes a big difference in the ranch's appearance.

The next Sunday at Hagemann will be the Holiday Celebration. In addition to Santa, the Diwali display, pinata and Spanish dancers, there is a wonderful group of artists and crafters scheduled to come. Please do some holiday shopping with us on Sunday, November 29th.

Bottom Left: Finch Cunningham with Lucy. Photo by Synthia Cunningham **Above:** Family painting fence at Community Service Day. Photo by Barbara Soules.



Midway School Project

by Barbara Soules

By the time you receive this newsletter the Livermore City Council will have met on October 26th. On the agenda for that meeting are two crucial items regarding Midway School. One is the signing of the lease giving the Heritage Guild 3100 sq. ft. of property on Hagemann Park and the second is recognition of the State's waiver of the Surplus Land Act. If the outcomes of both items are positive, contractors will be able to begin work at both Hagemann Park and Mulqueeney Ranch. The school will be moved soon after.

Civil engineers are also beginning to survey the park site and soon they will stake where the building will be located. The first physical evidence that this is really happening is the new construction gate between the park and ranch near the Red Barn that was built by JPA Landscape and Construction Inc. The owner of this company is Chris Drossulis and he donated his services! We are incredibly grateful!

There was a huge pile of historic bricks in front of the gate which would prevent any vehicles from going through. Therefore, we arranged a service project with Scout Troop 939 to move the bricks. In an hour they accomplished what would have taken us half a day!



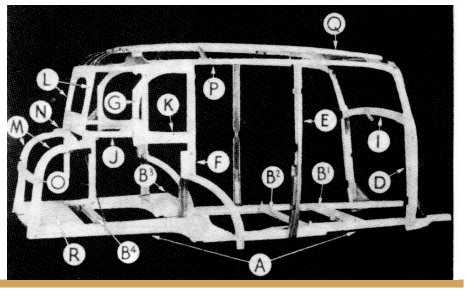
Above: Model of Midway School at Hagemann Ranch Sept. 27th open house. Note refinished desks. Photos by Barbara Soules.

Wooden Cars

(continued from page 3)

Fisher Body Manual
Sedan Wood Parts Key

(A) Main Side Sill and Pickup Assembly
(B1, B2, B3, B4) Main Sill Cross Bars
(C) Rear End Sill (on some bodies)
(D) Front Body Pillar
(E) Center Body Pillar Assembly (with metal panel)
(F) Rear Body Hinge Pillar
(G) Rear Quarter Pillar
(H) Windshield Header Trim Board (not shown)
(I) Windshield Lower Cross Bar
(J) Rear Belt Rail
(K) Rear Quarter Belt Bar
(L) Back Window Frame
(M) Trunk Opening Side Rail
(N) Trunk Opening Hinge Bar
(O) Trunk Opening Lock Bar
(P) Roof Side Rail
(Q) Roof Crown Rail
(R) Trunk Floor Board



Share your Awesomeness!

We know that Heritage Guild members are some of the most interesting people around, and we recently got additional validation. The Guild was approached by Ben Lewis, founder and CEO of Engage As You Age, a 16-year-old organization that provides social interaction for seniors who may have physical or cognitive impairments. The engagement is provided by Activity Specialists, smart and social people who enjoy spending some time sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm. Ben thought that description sounded a lot like our members, so we chatted a bit about how the fit might work. While not looking specifically for history enthusiasts, he reasoned that people interested in local history were likely to be people with knowledge, experience and a pleasure in sharing stories. Their speciality could be a background in engineering, cooking, architecture or art, but most important is an interest in engaging with seniors in our community.

Activity Specialists do get paid, but Ben noted that this is part time work and a goal is to keep this accessible to families of seniors, so the real reward is the enjoyment of new conversations and relationships, with a modest paycheck as a nice perk.

The Guild has no formal relationship with Ben's company, but his project sounded like something that would interest our members. And if one of you signs up and determines that a client has some interesting local history they would like to share, the Guild would love to have that resulting oral history. To learn more, go to EngageAsYouAge.com or email blewis@engageasyouage.com. Let us know how it works out.

Collections - Hidden Under the Barrels

by Jeff Kaskey



Outfitting the historic Hagemann Ranch house is one of the slow side projects we poke at when interesting objects become available. We have dressers, trunks, a cream separator (nearly restored!) and a stove, but we also have to turn down many items that are old, but not necessarily relevant. So when our renowned local musician Matt Finders asked if we were interested in artifacts he was clearing out that came from his grandfather, I was cautiously interested. A couple of items were more appropriate for our annual auction, but he hooked me with an old double-barreled shotgun. An item we had not considered, but would have absolutely belonged in the Mendenhall and Hagemann households.

To determine if his particular item was appropriate, we needed some understanding of its date and availability. And so the digging began.

From outward appearances this seemed like a good candidate. It is a percussion cap gun, the successor to the flintlock, but obsoleted by cartridge weapons. These guns were still muzzle loaded, and this one includes the ram rod mounted beneath the barrel. Rather than a pan of powder ignited by a flint, the charge gets ignited by a small, external cap struck by the hammer. Fidgety by today's standards, if you were upgrading from a flintlock this would have been dramatically more efficient and reliable.

This mechanism also is useful for dating the weapon. Percussion cap guns were displacing flintlocks by the 1830s and were fading out with the introduction of cartridge weapons from the 1860s to 1880s. So it is certainly an appropriate age for the ranch house.

Learning more was a challenge. This firearm curiously shows not a single manufacturer mark on the metal or the wood. Similar plain weapons were commonly imported from England and Europe in bulk to be sold under local brands as inexpensive utilitarian tools, but we wanted to try to narrow down the origin.

Removing the barrel is a sneaky little maneuver of slipping out a flat piece of springy metal called a wedge-key which captures a rigid loop below the barrel into the wood stock by sliding in from the side. Releasing the wedge-key revealed a whole collection of marks on the hidden face of the barrel, most of them indecipherable, but a few that help tell the shotgun's story. A circle containing the letters E, L and G tell us the gun was proof tested in the steel city of Liege, Belgium, though it doesn't confirm the city of the guns' manufacture. A star in the symbol puts the proof testing no earlier than 1846. An 18 stamped in the barrel may suggest that this is a 12 gauge (~18mm). Then there are a whole series of numbers and symbols which are currently a mystery. 4598 appears to be stamped, as does DT. Some graphic shapes and other unrecognizable characters may eventually tell us more about the actual manufacturer.

This particular donation from Matt is interesting. Besides some patina of age and wear, the stock was split badly enough that two metal plates are screwed in to hold it all together. This is exactly the sort of repair we expect from our frontier ranchers and shows up again and again in the Mendenhall / Hagemann house. So for now we get to add a well used roughly maintained utility weapon that likely stood near the kitchen door to attend to poaching coyotes, venison on the hoof or even an occasional grizzly bear. With its accompanying cleaning rods also in the donation, Matt's double barreled shotgun merits a nice display location at the ranch.



Above: Side view of double-barreled shotgun..
Right: Close up of marks on the shotgun barrel. Photos by Jeff Kaskey.

New Exhibits in the History Center

by Harry Briley

Two new exhibits in the History Center appear for the last half of 2026 (but were not ready for the last newsletter). The main display covers Dry-Land farming in the late-1800s Tri-Valley. It is called dry-land because only crops that survived the hot summer draughts would grow in our former cattle-grazing scrubland valley. It was mostly hay for cattle and horses, but includes swatches of fields for wheat and barley.

The fields over time yielded to housing going from Isabel Blvd all the way east to Greenville Road (and up into the Patterson Pass hills). One square-mile ranch "out in the country" became the site of the Livermore Naval Aviation Station that now hosts LLNL at the end of East Avenue.

Representative photos in the exhibit portray the gradual shift from horse-drawn equipment to modern beet diggers. A monitor screen sitting next to the exhibit presents a continuous slideshow of other historic photos from our archival files that compliment this Dry-Land Farming exhibit.

Both exhibits run through December
at the History Center
2155 Third Street
Thursday - Saturday 11:30am-4:00pm
and first two Sundays of the month
10:00am-2:00pm





The west exhibit celebrates Muwekma Ohlone and fall activities of local Native American tribes. I invited Tina Hensen to be the guest exhibitor with regional artifacts. As Program Specialist for the Tri-Valley Native American Center (TVNAC), she manages a room-sized museum for students at Lawrence Elementary School at 2451 Portola Avenue, Room 25.

The TVNAC is also open to the public as a small Native American History Museum and Library, and classes may schedule a field trip.

The TVNAC offers Cultural Studies for Kindergarten through 12th grade and Native American Powwow Dancing. The Powwow dance group is made up of local Native students who are champion Powwow dancers. Support services are free to Native American families who file the necessary paperwork (ED 506 Form).

The TVNAC works collaboratively with the Livermore, Pleasanton, Dublin, and Castro Valley school districts.

Center top: Dry Land Farming Exhibit
Left: Muwekma Ohlone Exhibit
Photos by Harry Briley.

Old Buggy, New Information

by Harry Briley



After our August, 2026, front page article on the "Doctor's Buggy" was published, we discovered the manufacturer's brass nameplate on the rear axle. "The Izzer" was trademarked 1/8/1895 by Studebaker Brothers Manufacturing Company for Izzer brand Buggies, Surries, and Phaetons The Izzer name thus ranged from 1895 to the last one in 1919 (when Studebaker discontinued all buggy manufacturing). This buggy was a light phaeton or gig, typically two-seater, with elegant lines and a high seat. Its name "Izzer" reflected modernity.

Above: Photo of brass nameplate
Photo by Susan Junk.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT !

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1ST ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE INCREASING TO HELP SUPPORT OUR ONGOING PROGRAMS AND PRESERVATION EFFORTS, AND WE ARE INTRODUCING CONVENIENT NEW MULTI-YEAR OPTIONS!

- *STUDENT & SENIOR (AGE 62+): ANNUAL RATES INCREASE FROM $15 TO $20, WITH A NEW TWO-YEAR DISCOUNTED RATE OF $35.*
- *INDIVIDUAL (ALL OTHERS NOT SENIORS OR STUDENTS): ANNUAL RATES INCREASE FROM $25 TO $30, WITH A NEW TWO-YEAR DISCOUNTED RATE OF $55.*
- *SPONSOR & PATRON: RATES REMAIN UNCHANGED AT $75 AND $150, RESPECTIVELY.*

LOCK IN YOUR CURRENT RATE TODAY!

YOU CAN EASILY BEAT THIS RATE INCREASE BY RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR ONE OR MORE YEARS BEFORE DECEMBER 31ST. REGARDLESS OF WHEN YOUR CURRENT MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES, EARLY RENEWALS WILL AUTOMATICALLY EXTEND FROM YOUR EXISTING EXPIRATION DATE—GIVING YOU UNINTERRUPTED ACCESS AND SAVING YOU FROM ANNUAL RENEWAL REMINDERS.

👉 *READY TO RENEW? VISIT WWW.LHG.ORG AND CLICK JOIN/RENEW.*



Date	Time	Event	Place
Saturday, Nov. 7	10am-11:30am	Annual General Meeting	Duarte Garage
Wednesday, Nov. 11	7pm	LHG Board Meeting	Virtual Meeting
Sunday, Nov. 15	10am-2pm	Duarte Garage Open House	Duarte Garage
Saturday, Nov. 21	9:30am-12pm	Workday: Hagemann Ranch	Hagemann Ranch
Sunday, Nov.29	1-5pm	Sundays at Hagemann: Holiday Celebration	Hagemann Ranch
Wednesday, Dec. 9	7pm	LHG Board Meeting	Virtual Meeting
Wednesday, Jan 13	7pm	LHG Board Meeting	Virtual Meeting
Sunday, Jan. 17	10am-2pm	Duarte Garage Open House	Duarte Garage
Saturday, Jan. 23	9:30am-12pm	Workday: Hagemann Ranch	Hagemann Ranch
Wednesday, Jan. 27	7pm	Talk: History of Lincoln Highway	Main Library
Sunday, Jan. 31	1-5pm	Sundays at Hagemann: Self-Guided Walking Tour	Hagemann Ranch
Wednesday, Feb. 10	7pm	LHG Board Meeting	Virtual Meeting

Welcome New and Renewing Members! July - September 2026

Life
Peggy Kervin

Patron
Sylvia Chatagnier
Richard and Wanda Finn
Donald and Linda Milanese

Sponsor
Jim Arnold
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Gardner
Jeff Kaskey
Vickie Leary
Siobhan O'Malley
Carol Stoker

Household
Susan and Rich Canfield
Mark and Judy Eckart
Margret Fazio & Richard Hurtz
Fred Gertler & Amy Rabinovitz
John Grondalski
Wes Nelson

Individual
Janis Ardley - NEW
Jessica Dennis
Renata Dowdakin
Susan Finn - NEW
Bill Flower
Sadique Ali Koothumadan - NEW
Kathy Lee

Senior
Shirley Anderson
Dona Blackmore
Kathryn Braun
Lou Caputo
Bill Cervenka
Carolyn Cordrey
Sheri Ann Dante
John Dill
Joann Douk
Mary Dyer - NEW
Dottie Eberly
Tom Eberly
Madelynne Farber
Norma Foss
Don Franklin – NEW
Rickie Friedli/Giono
Diane Gandolfo
Kathy Martinez
Opal Mendenhall
William Rudolph – NEW
Barbara Resendez – NEW
David Rubright – NEW
Stacy Rubright -NEW
Carol Sampson
Mark Sampson
Pamela Seites – NEW
Marie Timmer
Marla Vega – NEW
Sue Vincent
Joanne Volponi

In Appreciation

General Fund Donations
Alameda County Fair Association
Bill Flower
Norma Foss
Marcus Libkind
Aleida Socarras
Vine Cinema

Shirley Anderson
In memory of Arleen Wood

Donations for Hagemann Ranch
Nithilan Krishnakumar

Donations for Midway Museum Project
Arts Commission of Alameda County
Harry Briley
Sally Nunes
Lynn and Joan Seppala

Kenneth and Mary Workman
In memory of Andrea Loyd

Fred Gertler
In memory of Anna Siig

If you have not heard about our various events, then maybe we don't have your email. Please update us at lhg@lhg.org and we'll let you know about all the heritage happenings!

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The Livermore Heritage Guild newsletter is an official publication of the Livermore Heritage Guild. Contact the newsletter editor with comments or suggestions.

The Livermore Heritage Guild History Center is located in the historic 1911 Carnegie Library building at 2155 Third Street.
925-449-9927

Please call ahead for hours or check the website for updated information.
www.lhg.org

Annual membership dues are: Student or Senior (age 62+) $15, Individual $25, Sponsor $75, Patron $150
Life (one person) $500

2027 Dues Increase
Senior/Student 1yr.-$20, 2yrs. - $35
Individual 1yr.- $30, 2 yrs. - $55
all other categories remain the same as 2026
Renew memberships online: www.lhg.org
hit the JOIN/RENEW button
Please make any checks payable to "LHG."
Livermore Heritage Guild
P.O. Box 961
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