



**THREE RIVERS  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

February  
2011

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Stop by our gift shop and you will find Thelma Crain's book along with other local authors in addition to a variety of history related books and gifts.

# Three Rivers Historical Times

## Our First Issue, First Story

(The following are excerpts from Thelma Crain's article that appeared in the first newsletter of the Society in February 1992)

### Sequoia Hall by Thelma Crain

Most "old-timers" of Three Rivers will recall with pleasant nostalgia the Sequoia Hall, known to many as "The Old Hall". This was the place where the town civic and social events occurred and through the years of its existence, it became an integral part of everyday events and lives.

Since there was no church building in town, each Sunday saw the righteous gathering here to worship and one can still imagine the strains of "When The Roll Is Called Up Yonder", wafting through the air and the ample voice of Professor Dean easily heard above the others. Each year, the annual Christmas Party was held here with Santa, fun and games, and a gift from the tree for each child in the community, usually followed by the swapping

of something more to one's liking.

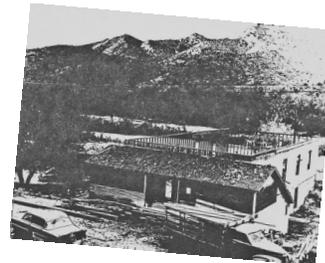
In those early years, one did not refer to the festivities at the end of the school term as "graduation", but rather proclaimed the "Last Day of School" celebration, which necessitated a new outfit and a program for the parents.

Perhaps the favorite and best remembered of the activities were the dances where singles and couples came to dance away the evening to the music of one of the local bands like the "Poison Oak Band" in the 1920's or in 1934 performers like Calva Stuart, Carney Franks, Slother Lutrell, Wesley Smith and others.

The dancing usually started at 8pm and continued until midnight when everyone gathered downstairs for homemade cake and coffee - no prepared cake mixes in

those days!

Sequoia Hall was the meeting place for the Woman's Club, box socials, Red Cross sewing, school programs, PTA and all manner of festivities.



Built in 1909 on a site donated by Charles Bahwell on the river

near the junction of Highway 198 and North Fork Drive.

The Sequoia Hall Association was incorporated in 1911 and in 1928 the building was raised to allow the construction of a kitchen and dining area on the lower level.

Eventually, it was found to be too expensive to bring the building up to code and so in 1955 a crew from the Woodlake Prison Camp was engaged to tear down the hall and haul the lumber to other county projects.

## Volunteers & Docents Needed

We really need our members and friends help at the Museum.

The summer season is coming up and we want to have our Museum open from 9am-5pm daily.

This means we need more helpers.

A docent is a person that watches over the museum and provides information to our visitors. It doesn't mean you have to be an expert on the history of our area or the National Parks.

As a docent we ask that you volunteer for at least two short 4 hour shifts per month or more. We will train you and provide written procedures for working with the visitors.

Celebrating  
20 years as a  
Society  
10 years in  
our Museum

## President's Corner

On March 9, 1991 at 9:30am at the Arts Center the first meeting of the 'Three Rivers Historical Society' was held.

On October 19, 2000 the Museum was opened. We're celebrating 20 years as a Society and now 10 years in our Museum. All I can say is *WOW!* As museums go that is remarkable.

The board of directors told me in February 2008 that I would be board president until May when a new slate of officers would be installed. Well, here it is February 2011 and I am still president. WHAT HAPPENED?

While I was not part of the beginning I feel really good about being part of it today.

From being open one or two days a week for a few hours to open seven days a week, acting as an official visitors center for the Three Rivers area and appointed an official weather station location by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

When I tell people that we are open everyday and the museum is run

entirely by volunteers, they can't believe it.

Rain last winter almost closed us down but we said, OH NO, buckled down and remodeled or maybe rebuilt our Museum and I think it is better than ever.

While our goal is to preserve our history for generations to come, it is also our objective to provide a place to preserve our history.

So, how do we do that? By getting involved and that can come in a variety of ways.

We have nine members on our board of directors, we could use two more.

We have over 200 members and with this newsletter we are reaching out to a lot of non member individuals, families and businesses to join us in preserving that history.

What would you like to see the museum doing? We are working within committees and on projects. These areas along with endowments, trusts, property donations and monthly donations all are a large part of museum life.

Finally I would like to

thank our board of directors and our volunteers who run our museum every day and are greeting people from around the world on our behalf. Some put in more hours than others but the hours don't matter. The key is they want to help and be involved.

Take a look at our events and projects information on the back page and if you would like to help just call or email us.

Thanks for listening

Tom Marshall



Living History Day 2010

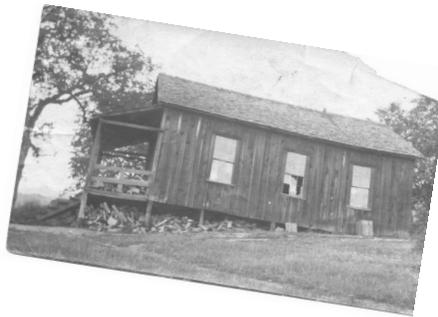
Do you know these folks?

## Three Rivers First School

*Taken from the Society newsletter, March 1995.....*

The first school in Three Rivers was officially established in 1873, although some 'old-timers' claimed the date was actually in the 1860's. It was called Cove School and is the earliest school mentioned in the records of Tulare County. It was built originally as a log cabin and located on a flat piece of land on the South Fork, about 1/2 mile above the old South Fork Bridge crossing. This area is now known as Cherokee Oaks, although at the time it was called Cherokee Flat. For many years, a stone chimney marked the spot where the school had been, until development of the area removed any trace of this landmark.

The students who attended school at this location must have had a great desire to do so, for in order to get there, most of them had to ford the South Fork by one means or another, since there were no bridges at the time. According to an account by the late Grace Alles, the old school register from that time recorded the following; "February 6th, 7th, 8th, 11th and 12th, lost on account of rain and high water.



## Team Goes On Backing Spree

*Taken from the Visalia Times Delta, April 16, 1926.....*

A work mare belonging to C.L. Taylor of Three Rivers, hitched with another to a sled carrying a spray outfit, 'bit off more than she could chew' when she nipped at a fly on her neck, caught a piece of the harness in her mouth and couldn't let go. Immediately a lively time began. With head held down to her body the mare started backing, dragging the other horse with her. They backed over the sled, knocked off the spray barrel, tumbled down Conrad Alles who was driving, and continued until exhausted. Then the men got the harness out of the mare's mouth and cleared up the wreckage.

## Future Plans For 2011 And Beyond

- ◆ Developing a Native-American Village beside our building.
- ◆ Repair and upgrade the very popular Koi pond.
- ◆ Replace outdated computers to maintain archival records/photos.
- ◆ Develop and publish a Community Cookbook.
- ◆ Set up 'Outings' to locations throughout California for 1-3 day durations.
- ◆ Update the display cabinets and remodel the gift shop.
- ◆ Maintain enough funds, on a monthly basis, for operating expenses
- ◆ Payoff our loan that was required to repair our building

# Coming Events, Committee Work and Projects

Jan/Feb		Membership renewal and promotion months.
Apr	1	Summer hours for museum starts, 9:00am to 5:00pm daily
	7-10	JazzAffair. Jazz memorabilia on display in Museum all four days.
	21-24	Lions Team Roping Museum volunteers will have a booth at the Lions Arena, Friday, Saturday, Sunday
May	7-8	Redbud Arts & Crafts Festival, sponsored by the Three Rivers Arts Alliance. Museum volunteers will have a booth at the Lions Arena, Saturday, Sunday
Jun	8*	Annual member meeting.
Jul	16	Hot Dog Festival at the Museum Joint fundraiser for Volunteer Firefighters and the Museum.
Aug	27*	Appraisal Faire at the Museum
Sep	*	Fundraising Dinner at the Museum
Oct	1	Winter hours for museum starts, 9:00am to 3:00pm daily
	15	Living History Day. Celebrating the connection between Native-Americans and first settlers in 1800's
Nov	19	Holiday Bazaar, sponsored by the Senior League Museum volunteers will have a booth at the Memorial Building
Dec	17	Community Caroling. Hopefully not rained out this year, 5pm-7pm



*\* date for event is tentative at this time.*

- ◆ The Board of Directors meet monthly at 9am on the second Tuesday of the month. Members of the Society are welcome to attend. If you have something you wish to bring to the attention of the board email or call your request to attend.
- ◆ We have committee's throughout the year and are always looking for help. If you would like to help in one of the following email or call us and we will put you in touch with the committee chairperson.
 

RedBud Arts & Crafts Festival -May	Dinner at the Museum-Sep
Hot Dog Festival-Jul	Living History Day-Oct
Appraisal Faire -Aug	Holiday Bazaar-Nov
Community Caroling-Dec	
- ◆ Projects are another area that you may have an interest in;
 

Community Cook Book	Grant Writing
Museum/Visitor Center Docents	Fundraising
Publicity	Archive Record Keeping
- ◆

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