

Yolo County Historical Society



MAY 2016

Prez Says:

Well Spring is finally here and our schoolhouse program is going to be in full swing.

What fun to see the third graders experience school in the 1890's. They are so joyful and the teachers are very appreciative. There are very few programs out there that are free. Your membership contributions enable us to offer this program at no cost. Many thanks to you.

We had scheduled a presentation on May 29 at the Woodland Public Library. Unfortunately, it is Memorial Day weekend, so we are cancelling it. I will give the same program in the fall.

Our **final major event of the year is our annual meeting. Please keep Thursday, June 16 open. We are meeting again at the Woodland Public Library Leake Room at 5:30.** We will begin with dinner, have a short meeting and then listen to David Wilkinson talk about the amazing architecture of Woodland. During our meeting, we will also have presentations from the Hatti Weber Museum, Winters History Project and the Yolo County Archives.

It's fun and exciting and enables all of us to have dinner and enjoy our fellow historians. Rumsey Bridge and the County Courthouse are still on our radar screens. Hopefully we will have updates on these two issues.

Remember, as always....

History Rules!
Kathy Harryman,
President



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If you know of any business that would like to join our support list, contact me. Businesses pay \$50.00 per year for advertising.



SOUNDS: A distinctive noise; A conveyed impression; implication

By Carol Rose

My ability to hear conversations with clarity is leaving me. Certain notes sung or played never reach my inner ear. All tones seem to be muted.

“Huh?”

“What did you say?”

“I’m sorry but I didn’t hear that last bit.”

“Could you please turn up the volume.”

Not a blockage be, nor an earwax build-up. “So sorry to report”, the audiologist said, “Just an

age-related hearing loss". That may be the case, but certain distinctive sounds still seem to catch my attention.

The wind that roars through the out-of-sight tops of the fir trees, whipping the branches into a cataclysmic frenzy--that's number one.

Number two is the wail of an infant suddenly awakened by an empty stomach or a full diaper.

And speaking of kids, here's number three. A burst through the front door, books carelessly tossed on the table, the opening of the frig door, familiar sounds to any mother, punctuated by the routine phrase, "I'm home, Mom."

Number four has me out in the yard as I turn to dodge the mosquito gearing up his buzz as it starts a kamikaze dive into the exposed flesh of my neck.

And now the last sound. I've stepped outside to get the evening paper. Suddenly from across the street or down the block come the strains of a Johnny Mathis song. "Chances are my composure kinda slips the moment that your lips meet mine." I strain to hear those enchanting words. "In the magic of moonlight, when you sigh hold me close.....". His ethereal voice tugs at the very essence of my soul as I remember the slow dances of my courtship, each move choreographed, each touch warm and skillful. Old John sure can sing.

This last sound is etched on my heart and no hearing loss can ever erase the sense of emotion accompanying memories of this special melody remembered.

There are other sounds, too, sharing our lives with us in Woodland, California. You might say they are endemic to our locale.

As young parents of four, we lived in the northeast section of town, close to the railroad tracks. When we first moved there in the fall of 1962, it took many months to realize the Shasta

Daylight passenger train was not routed through our bathroom and under the bed. Eventually we could tell time based on the arrival and dispatching of the various rail cars. My mother and father visited many times from Portland, Oregon, coming into Davis sometime around 6:30 in the morning. When I heard the far off wail of the pproaching train, it was time to roll out of bed. As it sped along towards the northern boundary of the city, I would hurriedly throw on anything that resembled clothing. As it rumbled across Kentucky Avenue, I'd hopefully hit all the corners of my mouth with a dollop of Listerine. Within seconds it bulleted down the tracks that parallel East Street and I knew it was time to wake up the husband and kids, put out the cereal, grab my purse, jump in the station wagon, and leisurely drive to Davis. I was always one to sleep until the last minute. Why get there too early?

Another sound that always brings back a distinct memory is one that happened at the same house by the same tracks. Maybe this sound could be heard twelve months of the year, but for me it was strictly a late at night, summer sound. I shared it with no one but the night bugs and moths that skittered beneath the yard lights. They would swoop by the thousands acting as if they were each vying for some position of importance. Just a bug thing, I guess.

Hardly a breath of a breeze, but once in a while, there would be a shimmer, a slight movement in my birch trees. The quiver would catch in the corner of my eye. Maybe the stir of the air was only my imagination, I'd query to myself.

In spite of the darkness, it was hot and dry. The weatherman on the Channel 3 eleven o'clock news had reported it was still ninety-two degrees! And wasn't that just like the Sacramento valley--the valley of tomatoes and corn, rice and honeydew melons.

There it is, clearly, above the click of the crickets, mingling with the laughter from the

neighbor's kitchen, the comfort and lullaby sound of the rice dryers. The drone and hum of those never-tiring, always-turning, churning rice dryers. What warehouseman worth his grain has not turned his ear upward to capture that song of the harvest floating above our town.

Today, thirty-five years later, I still go out on my patio late at night and listen for those rice dryers from across town. It reminds me of a simpler time during the evolution of my family, when we had time to listen as we loved. Ah, yes, to reminisce and use these sounds of our life as a means of transportation to an earlier time.



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Dated Material

Vision Statement *The Yolo County Historical Society strives to preserve, protect and acknowledge the diverse history of Yolo County through education, communication and advocacy*