

# Livermore Heritage Guild

*Saving Yesterday For Tomorrow*



P.O. Box 961, Livermore, Calif. 94551

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## An Abundance of Newspapers

Small town newspapers in the 19<sup>th</sup> century usually were made up of four pages: the first and fourth were made up of boilerplate (patent medicine cures, hair dye ads and often a serial novel). Page 2 was usually editorial matter and Page 3 was local news (births, marriages, and deaths) and ads of local merchants.

Livermore's first newspaper was the *Livermore Enterprise*, a weekly. The first issue came out in May 1874. The proprietors were George B. Shearer and Charles Leys. In December 1876, the partners closed the business.

William Pitt Bartlett came to Livermore in February 1877 and established the *Livermore Herald*, a weekly circulated on Saturdays. Bartlett was 21 years old. An activist by nature, one of Bartlett's first campaigns was for street signs. He argued, "Now that the streets have been named, how does a visitor know where he is without a street sign." In 1878, he advocated saving straw after the harvest and spreading it on the roads. (Prior to this, the farmers burned it.) In 1882, Bartlett acquired a boxcar-load of blue gum saplings, and gave them away to anyone who wanted starts. The next year, when the estimated population of Livermore was about 900, the *Herald's* paid weekly circulation

was 450 subscribers. Six years later Bartlett gave away black locust saplings. Many of those trees still grace the streets and roads around the community. Bartlett's generosity encouraged others to beautify the community. Bartlett's best-known contribution was his strong support of the budding Livermore Valley wine industry

Not much is known about a competitor newspaper, the *Livermore Valley Review*. The owner was W. B. Shearer. The paper was in business from 1882 to 1885.

*Continued on Page 4*

### In This Issue:

- President's Letter, p. 2
- New Book by Don Larsen, p. 3
- Auction News, p. 3
- Work on Bunshah Index, p. 5
- The Patriot Hour*, p. 6
- Calendar, p. 7
- Contact Us, p. 7
- Duarte Garage Projects, p. 8

## A Message from the President

February 28, 2008

Dear members,

In 1892 the Ancient Order of Foresters of America was well established in the United States and was in Livermore recruiting members. Claiming roots back to Robin Hood of Sherwood and the Ancient Order of Foresters in England and offering a form of insurance for times of need as well as assistance with burial expenses, the Foresters provided both fraternal and practical reasons for members to sign up. By August 1892, Court Livermore #77 of the Ancient Order of Foresters of America was formed and over time included mayors, marshals, doctors, and leading businessmen among its membership. By 1914 the organization was large enough to build a two-story meeting hall that still stands at the corner of Second and J Streets. The building's architect was Henry H. Meyers, who was also responsible for many Bay Area projects, such as the Posey Tube to Alameda, and many homes and buildings in Livermore, including the Veterans Memorial building and the old city jail.

It is probably this impressive building and the high profile of their membership, along with civic participation and benevolence, that helped the Livermore Foresters prosper as other Courts and fraternal organizations declined in the second half of the twentieth century. As local Foresters organizations from Danville, Pleasanton, and Tracy shrank, they joined or folded into the Livermore Foresters. Consolidations continued until in 2005 when the Livermore Foresters sold the their building; it was the last operating Foresters Hall in the United States.

With their appreciation of the qualities of Livermore and their pledge to "Promote virtue, increase knowledge," the Foresters have been good friends of the Heritage Guild. Today, if you are doing research in the History Center with a Sanborn map spread out next to a historical tax record, you are working at the same table the Foresters met at and donated to the Guild when they sold their building. If you have stopped by recently, you might have seen Cal State University intern Stephen Flaughter sitting in a Foresters chair at their table, rehousing the collection of Forester objects in archival materials so we can continue to interpret this part of Livermore's heritage for the intellectually curious today and tomorrow.

When you do sit at the Foresters table, please take a moment to peek into the Bunshah Research Room. Through prodding from Terry Berry, our Collections Manager, and Office Manager Lydia Carpenter, I asked member Jon Barnard to look into getting new shelving for the Bunshah room. We had been making do with ill-fitting shelves, racks, and plasticware to house the books and records. We were over crowded and under organized. As Jon spoke to Garen McDonald of Ross McDonald Co., Garen noticed a quote from another shelving supplier and said, "I can't let you go to my competition. I'll donate the shelving." Ross McDonald Co. is here in Livermore and Garen wanted to support our mission. We are delighted that he chose to do so. Where mismatched short shelving once stood we now have professionally installed 10-foot-high library quality shelving on the north wall for extra storage. If you know Garen, give him a thank you, if you are looking for shelving, well, I can only say they did a great job for us.

When you, too, are feeling in the giving mood but are not quite sure how to proceed, we could certainly use two reasonably current computers to make machines available for docents, researchers, and staff. We need to get our collections cataloged on the computer, but often the existing computer has a waiting line as docents work on research requests from members, the general public, or the city. Providing this service is part of our mission, so another two machines would directly improve our capabilities.

Thanks for listening, and I hope to see you at my March history lecture about architectural styles and restoring and remodeling old houses.

Jeff Kaskey  
President

## Don Larsen and Two Books

You may know Don Larsen as an artist. You may know him as a teacher or perhaps as a home inspector. You may not know him as an author.

Long time Livermore resident, Don Larsen, has written two books. They are now available for purchase at the Heritage Guild History Center at the Carnegie Building on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street.

One is titled *I've Never Been an Old Man Before*. As Glenn Busset, a Kansas reporter, said about the book, "Don't let the title of this book mislead you. This book is not just for those who are 'approaching autumn,' but is a delightfully told, lively account of how a couple, married for nearly six decades, uses humor to get through the 'November years' of their lives."

I found the book fun to read, interesting and educational. And, to me, it is a love story. People of many different ages will enjoy Don's first book—and his second one as well.

The second book is about history – family history, towns' histories, and the tides of change that go through almost everything in life. This second of Don's books is *The Prairie Tides*. Kathy Bosworth, reviewer and author, had this to say about the book: "*The Prairie Tides* is a simple, uncomplicated walk back in time. Author Don Larsen shares his memories and anecdotal snipes from a past he can still feel in his soul. For readers wanting to feel like a part of the past and have some chuckles along the way, this one is for you."

Don says that he received a gift by writing the books. Don will soon be sharing this bit of insight and wisdom at one of the Heritage Guild's Lecture Series evenings later this year.

The History Center is open Wednesday through Sunday, 11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Call 449-9927 for more information about the books and the Lecture series.

-By Anna Siig

## Think Auction!

The Annual Auction is one of The Heritage Guild's major fundraisers and an important community event. The auction takes place every year at the end of May, and the Auction Team has met twice recently to prepare for the event.

Team members want to hear from auction attendees if you have any ideas or suggestions for the auction. (Contact the same people and phone numbers as in the paragraph below.) The team will meet again in March.

The auction crew accepts and picks up donations all year long. You can call Bill Junk at 447-4561 or Anna Siig at 447-5475 to arrange for pick up or delivery; or if you wish, you can deliver to the "Sort'nStore."

Please remember the Heritage Guild when you are cleaning out that hall closet, basement or garage. The team has also helped with clearing estates.

Help make the 2009 Auction another good one! Thank you for your continued support.



*Lynn Owens and his wife, Linda, are part of the auction Team. Lynn has acted as auctioneer for some 24 years. Linda helps spot bidders. Photo by Bill Nale.*



Newspapers. *Continued from Page 1*

Wilbur Still established the *Livermore Echo* in 1882 as competitor to the *Herald*. Thursday was the day the *Echo* was printed. The first location of the paper is not known, but in 1887 it was re-located in the old library building on First Street, and in October 1894, it moved into a new building just west of the IOOF hall. In 1904 Wilbur Still turned the newspaper over to his son, Elmer, who published it for the next 15 years.

Bartlett sold the *Herald* in June 1891 to E. J. Livernash. Three months later, an early morning fire destroyed the *Herald* building. Livernash published the newspaper as a weekly until October 1896, when he sold it to W. R. Ellis. (Livernash must have been a first-class scoundrel. Even the *Echo* reported "he made a conspicuous failure to conduct a newspaper.") After he left Livermore, Livernash barely escaped a murder charge in Sonoma and had scrapes with the law in the Yukon, from where he quickly vanished.)

Two months after he bought the *Herald*, Ellis sold it.

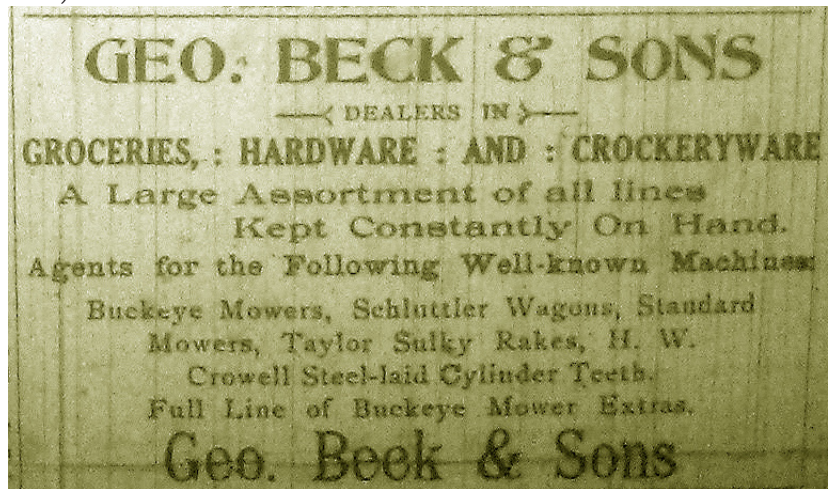
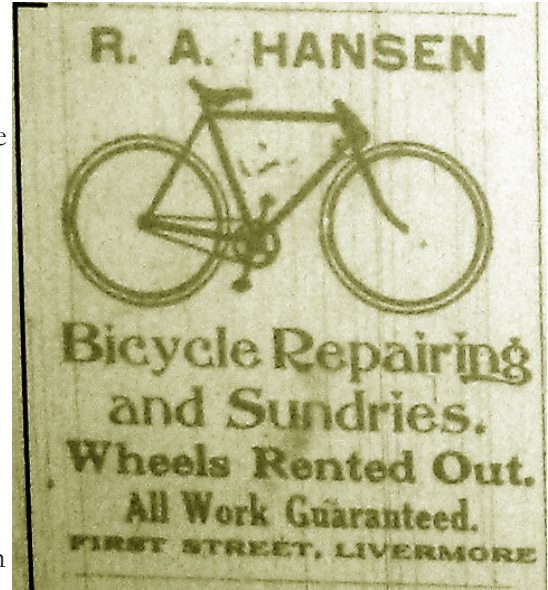
The new proprietors, Sherman Wright and H. F. Ellis, took over the *Herald* in December 1896. The partners also had planned to print the *Livermore Evening Daily Herald* for one month in December 1897. It was not a success: only one issue was printed.

In the late 1890s the *Echo* editor occasionally sniped at the *Herald* publishers, Wright and Ellis, pointing to 285 typographical errors in a recent edition, addressing them as "cheerful idiots" and calling the *Herald* the "Weakly Tin Whistle". Such innuendos may have hastened the sale of their newspaper to A. L. Henry.

Arthur L. Henry bought the *Livermore Herald* in July 1899. The next year he re-relocated the printing plant to the McLeod Building at First and Livermore Avenue between the bank on the corner and N. B. Dutcher's hardware store (now the location of the *Independent*), where it remained until the McLeod building was demolished in 1920.

-By Gary Drummond

*Ads from the 1909 Livermore Echo. See accompanying article "Work Continues on Bunshab Index" on facing page*



## Work Continues on Barbara Bunshah's Newspaper Index

Barbara Bunshah, who was the the Guild's History Center curator for many years after she retired from the Library, spent many years compiling an index of newspaper articles from the *Enterprise*, *Echo*, and *Herald*. The index for the *Herald*, 1899-1965, was copied to two CD's through a grant received by the Livermore Library. A hard copy of her indexes, through 2003 for the *Herald*, is available for use at the History Center in the Carnegie Building and at the Civic Center Library.

Barbara did all her work without the aid of a computer, typing in handwritten notes from the newspaper she was indexing. Shortly before she passed away, Barbara told me she would stop indexing at the end of 2006 as fewer articles specific to Livermore had appeared for some time in any of the current papers, the *Valley Times*, *Tri-Valley Herald* and the *Independent*.

There is more indexing that can be done to complete this invaluable database, including work on the *Tri-Valley Herald*, the *Valley Times*, and the *Independent* 2003 – 2006, the *Livermore Echo*, April 1909 – 1918, *Southern Alameda County News* circa 1930s – 1940s. The *Livermore Journal* circa 1920s – 1930s needs to be micro-filmed. Scanning and digitizing (OCR) of all existing hard copy indexes also needs to be done. (I have completed the *Enterprise* and the *Echo*.)

I have started indexing, using Microsoft Excel, the *Livermore Echo* from where Barbara left off – February of 1908. I just completed March 1909. Each weekly issue takes me about four hours. This time can be shortened by including less detail in each entry. I am currently accessing the *Echo* at the Civic Center Library. I take a photo of a microfilm reader screen with my digital camera, then download it onto my computer at home and transcribe into Excel.

Any one interested in participating in this project please contact me at phone 518-3489 or E-mail meekerdon@sbcglobal.net.

-By Don Meeker

Here are some samples of articles I found of interest in the *Livermore Echo*. Julius Paul Smith of the Olivina Vineyard died in 1904. His widow, Sara, continued to

operate the business. Notices relative to the property appeared in the *Livermore Echo* some four years later.

13 Aug 1908

### Notice to Vineyardists & Farmers.

I have decided to lease my property known as the **OLIVINA** comprising both VINEYARD and FARMING LANDS, in subdivisions. Terms will be made known on application to me at the OLIVINA, or by mail addressed to me at Livermore, Cal. This is a first-class opportunity for anyone who desires to rent Vineyard or Farming property. MRS. SARA B. SMITH, P. O. Box 729, Livermore, Cal.

08 Oct 1908

### Olivina Subdivided.

Mrs. J. P. Smith, proprietress of the Olivina Ranch, has had the property subdivided into smaller tracts and is preparing to build cottages on each tract. Madsen Bros. have the contract for building several of these cottages, along with barns, tank houses and other out-buildings.

05 Nov 1908

Mrs. S. B. Smith of the Olivina is filling an order from New York for eight carloads of wine, the first which was shipped this week.

03 Dec 1908

Mrs. J. P. Smith shipped a carload of wine to New York this week, and the Wetmore Bowen Co. a carload to their San Francisco headquarters.

10 Dec 1908

N. D. Dutcher & Son are installing four Aeromotor windmills and pumping outfits for Mrs. J. P. Smith

*Continued on Page 6*



## Gather around the Radio for *The Patriot*

The Patriot Hour with Montgomery C. Bellwether started by accident. As a longtime student at Las Positas, I'm nearing the end of my stay at our local community college and want to have a little fun before I go. A friend of mine urged me to get into this radio class, and at the last minute, I decided to give it a try.

Now, I should mention that I, like most LHG members, am quite the avid collector. My passion lies mostly with 78-rpm records, specifically those from the 1930s and 1940s.

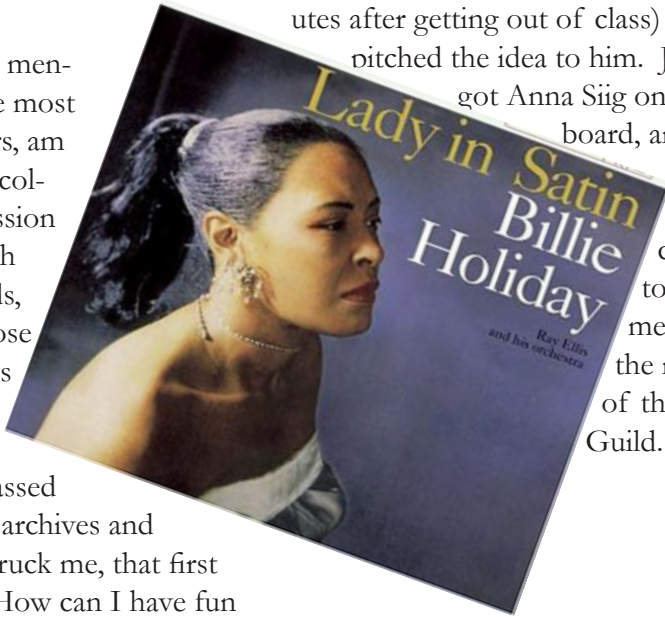
Over the years, I've amassed quite the little archives and the thought struck me, that first day in class, "How can I have fun with this? What can I do to entertain?"

Of course, I do listen to more modern music, but I realized that of the 40 plus kids in the room, I was likely the only one with a collection such as mine. I'd often used the "old time radio voice" to get laughs and smiles from folks at the shop (Panama Bay Coffee Co.), and I had a record player capable of transferring my collection to CDs.

The idea took shape, and the Patriot Hour was born. After learning I would need a sponsor to pay for broadcast fees, equipment maintenance, etc., I could think

of no better group than the Guild. The music and style of the program seemed something right up their alley, and I was eager to help get their image out to groups of folks who might not know much about the Guild.

As luck would have it, I ran into Jeff Kaskey (literally twenty minutes after getting out of class) and pitched the idea to him. Jeff got Anna Siig on-board, and the two decided to fund me in the name of the Guild.



The show runs 90 minutes, with commentary from my DJ persona "Montgomery C. Bellwether." I also am attempting to incorporate current events and news in the form of old style newsreels. The musical stylings of Dean Martin, Ella Fitzgerald, Al Jolson, Billie Holiday, Nat King Cole, Cole Porter, Bing Crosby, and countless others provide a glimpse into the dawn of the recording industry, and capture the essence of the era. Altogether, I feel it makes for a nice romp through a slice of Americana, providing entertainment for all ages.

The show is broadcast live on the internet at [www.radiolaspositas.com](http://www.radiolaspositas.com)

and streams through itunes under the "college radio" section.

Tune in Wednesdays from 5 pm to 6:30pm and lend an ear to *The Patriot Hour* with Montgomery C. Bellwether! You won't be disappointed!

- By Christopher "George" George

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**Bunshah** *Continued from Page 4*

on the Olivina, where tracts have recently been subdivided off and cottages erected.

4 Mar 1909 page 4 column 4

**AN OPEN LETTER.** TO PARTIES WHO DRIVE CATTLE THROUGH THE OLIVINA PASTURE LAND, DAY CREEK. I am greatly annoyed by persons driving their herds through my pasture lands. They do not ask the privilege to do so, but use my property as though it was their own natural drive-way. Will these parties who drive their cattle through my herd be so kind as to inform me when they are going to make drives, and thereby allow me to protect my cattle. If they do not I shall in the future seek some protection in the law.

Yours in disquiet,  
SARA B. SMITH.

## Calendar

**LHG Board Meeting.** Wednesday, March 4, 7 pm. Carnegie Building (Third and J Streets), downstairs. All welcome.

**Duarte Garage Open.** Sunday, March 15, 10-2 p.m. On the Old Lincoln Highway at the corner of Portola and L Streets, Livermore.

**History Talk.** Wednesday, March 18, 7:30 pm. (Doors open at 7) Own an older home? Jeff Kaskey will share information on architectural styles and restoring and remodeling that old house. (rescheduled) Livermore Civic Center Library, 1188 S. Livermore Ave. Light refreshments.

**LHG Board Meeting.** Wednesday, April 1, 7 pm. Carnegie Building (Third and J Streets), downstairs. All welcome.

**History Talk.** Wednesday April 15, 7:30 pm. (Doors open at 7) "Livermore through Elliott Dopking's Eyes," presented, with photos, by Susan Dopking Canfield. Livermore Civic Center Library, 1188 S. Livermore Ave. Light refreshments.

**Duarte Garage Open.** Sunday, April 19, 10-2 pm On the Old Lincoln Highway at the corner of Portola and L Streets, Livermore.

**Newsletter Mailing.** Saturday, April 25, 11:30. Carnegie Building, Third and J Streets. Help get the newsletter ready for mailing. Call Maxine at 925-447-7401 or just drop in.

**LHG Board Meeting.** Wednesday, May 6, 7 pm. Carnegie Building (Third and J streets), downstairs. All welcome.

**LHG Auction.** Saturday, May 24. Save the date.

## Notes

**Some ways you can help**

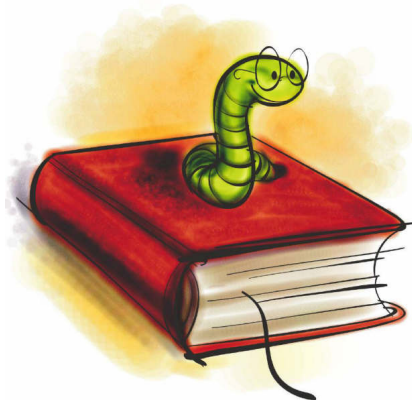
The Guild needs a couple of additional servicable computers to help researchers and docents with cataloging and locating materials. See the president's letter, Page 2.

The Bunshah Index is being expanded. We could use help going through old newspapers and listing articles. It's a great way to learn more about Livermore's history. See article on the Bunshah index on Page 5.

A group gathers to fold and label the newsletter for mailing every two months. The conversation generally turns to Livermore history, and members have a chance to get to know each other. It's a good way to participate if you have limited time. See time and place in the Calendar at the left.

**Drop in at the History Center**

The Guild's History Center, located in the Carnegie Building at 3rd and J Streets is open Wednesday through Sunday from 11:30 to 4. Drop in to see the current exhibits, talk with the docent or do research. And don't forget the gift shop. In addition to Don Larsen's books, many great books about Livermore and its history are available.



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*The Livermore Heritage Guild newsletter is published six times per year. Contact the newsletter editor with comments or suggestions for articles.*

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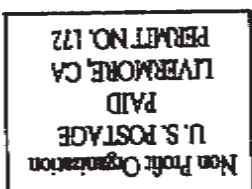
**Mast Head Photo:** Darrow's Bakery Ice Cream & Coffee Parlor at 2136 First Street between J and K Streets on the north side of First Street. The *Livermore Echo* building is to the far right. The building, erected in 1878, housed Livermore's first library. It was torn down in 1931.

## Visit the Duarte Garage

The Guild has many exciting projects at the Duarte Garage on the old Lincoln Highway. Some painting and restoration has just been done on the Garage. The cottage will soon get a “tune up” too.

Come by the Garage at Portola and Pine and North L on the third Sunday each month (except May and December) and see the restored Model T fire car, the Mack fire truck and the on going restoration of the Seagrave fire truck! Hours for the open Garage days are 10 am to 2 pm

*Above, the Duarte Garage around 1970. (Notice the pickup beside the building.) To the right, the Garage in 2008. Guild projects over the years have restored the garage to its original look. 2008 photo by Bill Nale*



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HERITAGE  
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