



next door to the Ranch, have lunch on the patio, and tour the Ranch in the afternoon.

With this in mind, the committee went to work and now the pieces are all coming together. From the beginning, the committee has focused on four significant areas and made progress in each.

### **Building/Construction**

In October 2021, we contracted with Garavaglia Architecture, a prominent historical architect based in San Francisco. They have been guiding our work and in December 2023, the contract for them to prepare the Site Plan Design Review for the City was signed. The plan was always to dismantle the building on site, however, enter Phil Joy, a local house mover. Taking great interest in the project, he is now calculating how to move it in one piece, sans roof perhaps. If this is possible it would simplify many issues, reduce the overall cost, and shorten the timeline.

### **History and Curriculum**

Richard Finn has been busy researching the school and the town of Midway. His LARPD presentation on the subject was very well received. He has also compiled a list of almost all the Midway teachers. Sylvia Chatagnier is now a docent at Tassajara School, a one room schoolhouse program sponsored by the Museum of The San Ramon Valley, practicing to be a docent teacher at Midway. Tassajara has a third-grade program serving approximately 3000 children per year that is very similar to what we plan to have at Midway. The

(Midway School, continued on page 6)

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Last August this newsletter reported that we were “cautiously optimistic” about the City granting the Heritage Guild permission to move forward on the Midway project. Our patience was rewarded for, at the end of September, after a comprehensive meeting with City and LARPD staff, the City gave us the green light to proceed with the engineering and permitting stages for relocating the school to Hagemann Park. This was our signal to begin planning and fundraising in earnest, including launching a major capital campaign.

To put this project in perspective, the idea of moving Midway School to town has been in the dream stage since at least 2004. An architect’s drawing from that year by Tony Sarboraria shows the proposed location of the school in Hagemann Park. That drawing is still the one to which we refer. Only the trees have gotten larger.

In 2006, an LHG newsletter talked about “discovering” the school on the Mulqueeney Ranch and a meeting with the Mulqueeney family, Larry Mauch, and Barry Schrader. They also met with school and LARPD officials about preserving the building. The project was resurrected again in about 2010-2011

when considerable funds were collected. Each time the actual moving of the building was the main obstacle. However, each time a bit of money was also added to the restricted Midway fund.

In about 2019, the Mulqueeney family gave us the nudge we needed by asking LHG to move the building off their property! By that time, we had decided that if we couldn’t move the building as a whole, we would dismantle it on site and move it in pieces to town. In March 2020, the current committee formed with the firm intent to bring this project to fruition. From our perspective, bringing a historical building into town, and locating it next to a ranch of the same era, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, creates a tourist destination and community resource that will benefit Livermore for generations to come. The program offered by Midway School will augment the third-grade curriculum, currently consisting of HistoryMobile school-site field trips and downtown walking tours. Classes will spend a morning in the restored turn-of-the-century school doing lessons on slates with chalk and reading from McGuffey readers. Students will then go

# Heritage Garden and Landscapes at the Ranch

by Loretta Kaskey

Spring feels like a time when anything is possible. To borrow the line from Christina Rossetti’s poem, “There is no time like Spring, When life’s alive in everything.”

At the Ranch, much has been in bloom. The efforts of the Landscaping Crew under the supervision of Saundra Lormand and Karen Jefferson continue to delight the senses. I was lucky enough to see peach, plum, and apple blossoms. I love the pink and white blossoms from the Sierra Beauty apple tree in the orchard, as seen in these photos to the right.



The Heritage Garden volunteers have been working on sprucing up the paths that define the garden beds. This view shows the effect of the enhanced paths with the fava beans to the left, the newly planted pepper bed in the center, and the winter crop of onions on the right.



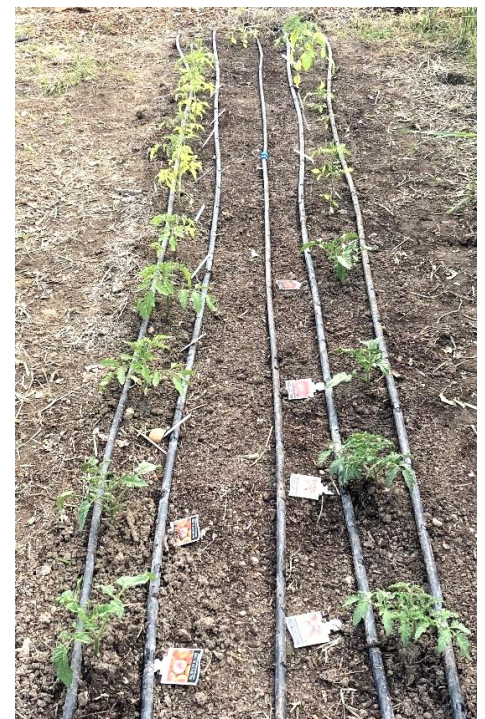
Hagemann bees captured pollinating fava or broad bean flowers. We will soon be harvesting this early spring legume. The foliage is also edible.

The tomato bed was recently planted. We will be working on placing our stakes and support structures for them. As well as planting other traditional summer vegetables like squash, zucchini, corn, and cucumbers. We look forward to sharing the summer growth with you in future newsletters or hope you can come see the garden at any of the Hagemann Ranch Open Houses.

The wisteria overhead on the pergola, Jerusalem Sage to the left, and a gorgeous grouping of white Calla lilies grace the front entry of the farmhouse.



Closer to the Heritage Garden, the Red Hot Poker plants (Kniphofia) or torch lilies stand majestically in front of the wash house/milk house.



Swiss Chard, Chinese Cabbage, broccoli, and broccolini from the last harvest of the winter vegetables.



All photos on this page by Loretta Kaskey.

# Hagemann Happenings

by Don Bartel and Barbara Soules



The bundle wagon is finished! This work of art sits proudly by the Red Barn, a wonderful example of farm machinery of the late 1800s. Its story is one of love, determination and skill.

It all started with Russ and Judy Bearrows. Every summer this couple could be found at the Alameda County Fair volunteering at the Agricultural Heritage Display. Russ often demonstrated his blacksmithing skills while Judy would display how to make brooms. They became very protective and fond of three farm wagons that were always on display nearby. However, after a few years the fair stopped keeping them in a covered space. Time and weather took their toll. The Bearrows finally were able to take them inside their display area but by that time, they had deteriorated considerably. In 2016, Russ and Judy left the fair and obtained permission to donate the wagons to Hagemann Ranch. All three rested peacefully in the area next to the barn until 2017 when Andrew Devita decided to restore the drayage wagon as an Eagle Scout project. That beautifully restored wagon, pulled by Auggie Hagemann's tractor, is now in local parades and takes guests on hayrides around the ranch.

It wasn't until 2023 that anyone considered working on another wagon.

The bundle wagon would require tremendous carpentry skills and determination, but our proven master carpenters, Phil Dean and Don Bartel were up for the challenge. As they describe it, it was essentially a pile of rotten wood on four wheels when they began. This year-long project began by removing the wooden bed from the wood chassis and deciding what pieces could be saved. Most of the iron pieces were salvageable but many of the wooden parts were fabricated using the original pieces as patterns. The wheels could not be saved, so new ones were manufactured by Hanson Wheel and Wagon Shop in South Dakota and installed on the newly painted and assembled chassis. Attempting to use the same method of construction that would have been used originally, they tackled the bed of the wagon. All the wood for this had to be fabricated, requiring a good deal of calculated guessing as to the final design. They had one picture to use as a guide. All the lumber used is Douglas Fir donated by Paul Johnson. Like a giant puzzle, they assembled the very large bed and sides of the wagon, painting each piece prior to putting it in place. The result is a very large, authentic farm wagon.

With its unique design, the bundle wagon served a very specific purpose at



harvesting time. A grain binder machine cut the wheat and bound it into individual bundles or sheaves. The bundles were then stacked into shocks in rows in the fields with the grain heads upright to keep them off the ground. At threshing time, a four-horse team would pull the bundle wagon through the field. The off side of this wagon was easily twice as high as the near side, which helped prevent the bundles from being pitched completely over and off the wagon.

The optimum procedure was to have four people working together. One drove the horses, one in the wagon stacked the bundles, and two on the low side pitched the bundles up and into the wagon using 3-tine pitchforks. The stacker in the wagon had a very specific way of positioning the bundles to avoid any loss. The fully loaded bundle wagon took the wheat to the thresher. Threshing was often a community affair, for only the richest farmers owned such a machine and they shared both the machine and labor with their neighbors.

On the side of this newly restored masterpiece is a beautiful, but quite expensive, plaque recognizing the team who worked on this project. Donations to offset that cost and to express appreciation for this significant restoration are welcome. Just donate to LHG with the memo line indicating it is for the wagon.

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**Above Left:** The finished bundle wagon in its restored condition complete with a rainbow to celebrate the miraculous restoration. Photo by Barbara Soules; **Above Right:** The "before" photo of the bundle wagon, a pile of rotten wood resting on four wheels. Photo by Don Bartel.

**DO YOU ENJOY  
WORKING WITH  
KIDS?**

**WE  
NEED  
YOU!**



**COORDINATOR NEEDED  
FOR GAMES/ACTIVITIES  
AT HAGEMANN RANCH  
OPEN HOUSE EVENTS!**

**COORDINATOR NEEDED  
FOR BUTTON MAKING  
TABLE AT HAGEMANN  
RANCH OPEN HOUSE  
EVENTS!**

To volunteer  
contact Barbara Soules  
**tbsoules@yahoo.com**

*Free, Family-Friendly Activities*

## Sundays at Hagemann Ranch

### Musical May

Music,  
Drama  
& Dance



**May 26, 2024, 1-5 pm**

*Joey T and Friends Band*

*Broadway Chorus*

**Hispanic Heritage Center presents:**

*Salsa Dancing with Luis Valverde*

*Flamenco Dancing – Sofia Guzman Juarez*

*Ongoing activities: Refreshments, Tours, Blacksmith Shop  
and Art Demonstrations*



*455 Olivina Ave., Livermore*

June 30—Cars & Engines

July 28 & August 25—Self Guided Walking Tours

September 29—Prairie School

October 27—Halloween

November 24—Holiday Celebration

[www.lhg.org](http://www.lhg.org)

## LONG RANGE WEATHER FORECAST FOR LIVERMORE, CA

May and June 2024

By Greg Pane - Livermore, California weather observer since 1976

Forecasts are for Livermore and apply to the overall climate region. Specific data forecasts are based on Livermore.

May - will be a breezy mild month with cold windy evenings at times. Rainfall will be above average, but no records are expected. Temperatures will be about a degree below normal for daytime highs and about normal for overnight lows. The predominant weather will be partly cloudy to sunny with breezy evenings. There will be two to four chances of rain during the month. The highest temperatures should be in the upper 80s to low 90s. The lowest temperatures will be during some cool clear nights in the first half of the month down in the low to mid 40s.

June - will be warmer than the cool June of 2023, but cooler than many of the Junes of the past 15 years. Daytime temperatures should average one degree either side of normal. No rainfall is expected though there may be one threat that leads to a small amount. June does average .10 of an inch of rain despite the overall arid climate. The highest temperatures should be in the upper 90s, with the lowest daytime temperatures as low as an unseasonable 65 degrees. Junes can be erratic temperature-wise, and June 2024 looks like it will be more so than usual. Overnight lows should average normal to a little above (low in mid 50s).

## Collections Corner: Sickle Bar Mower

by Jeff Kaskey



“Fingers tend to disappear before you even know it.” (farmallclub.com). Yes, there are some disadvantages to the sickle bar mower, but Bob Wahrer’s discovery of this rock guard from a sickle bar mower started a process of discovery, not entirely related to missing digits. Bob “found” the guard at a yard sale, but was told that it was pulled from the ground very near Hagemann Ranch. That’s an invitation to do more digging.

For thousands of years, the manually wielded sickle or scythe had been mankind’s tool for harvesting grain and cutting any grassy or stalk-like growth. Sickles (curved blade near the hand) and scythes (arched blade at the end of a long stick) appear in images over 1000 years old, and are credited with speeding up mankind’s ability to build agricultural communities. As discussed in the August 2019 Guild newsletter, these devices are still available and occasionally used even today.

On that time scale, the sickle bar mower is quite new, with the invention credited to Obed Hussey of Cincinnati, in 1833. He improved on inventions attempting to mechanize the familiar manual process. Cyrus McCormick added additional improvements for his 1834 patent and by the mid 1840s, more patents produced the first commercial horse drawn sickle bar mowers. These look nothing like a



manual sickle; indeed they are more like a row of ground-hugging scissors. Nonetheless, the mowers are generally described as “sickle bars”, not scythes or scissors.

The transition to horse-powered harvesting created a significant agricultural milestone increasing a single person’s production by at least tenfold, compared to even a skilled scythe operator. This allowed a large conversion from grazing land to cultivated land. Suddenly hundreds of acres could be handled by an individual farmer to harvest more food for man and beast. And those beasts return the favor by powering even more harvesting, windrowing (collecting the cut grain into piles, or windrows), and hauling. Not coincidentally, the horse-powered hay press was invented around the time of the sickle bar mower and within less than 20 years, shortly before the Civil War, we have an immensely greater ability to produce, store, and distribute agricultural products to feed a growing nation.

By the early 1900s, names such as McCormick, Farmall, and Deering were combined under the International Harvester brand, and along with their main competitor John Deere, they had cranked out over a million sickle bar mowers. John Deere reported 72,000 in 1915 alone.

Tractors began to replace horses, further improving productivity, but the horse-powered version continued to be popular enough that the major manufacturers continued production well into the late 1940s, 100 years after their invention. Some agricultural writers opine that we would still have a much higher proportion of horse-powered farming, but with the end of WWII, the government provided stimulus to direct our ramped-up industrial production back to peacetime uses. So promoting tractors over horses was not just for farm

productivity, but also to keep our factories humming.

Beyond Bob’s discovery of the rock guard, we do have additional evidence that the sickle bar mower was used at Hagemann Ranch. As far as we can tell, the chain link fence around the site went up about 1965 when the surrounding property was sold off. So the discovery of a discarded sickle bar mower blade embedded in the bottom of the fence might be indicative. It has been there long enough that roots have captured one end of it, so sometime during Hagemann ownership, a sickle bar mower was being used and for some reason this blade was discarded. As an easier way of telling the story, we do have two examples of the horse-drawn sickle bar mower available to see on site. Given the grizzly note at the beginning, we have chosen to encase the displayed mower blade in protective plastic and will continue to advise against running with a bar full of scissors.

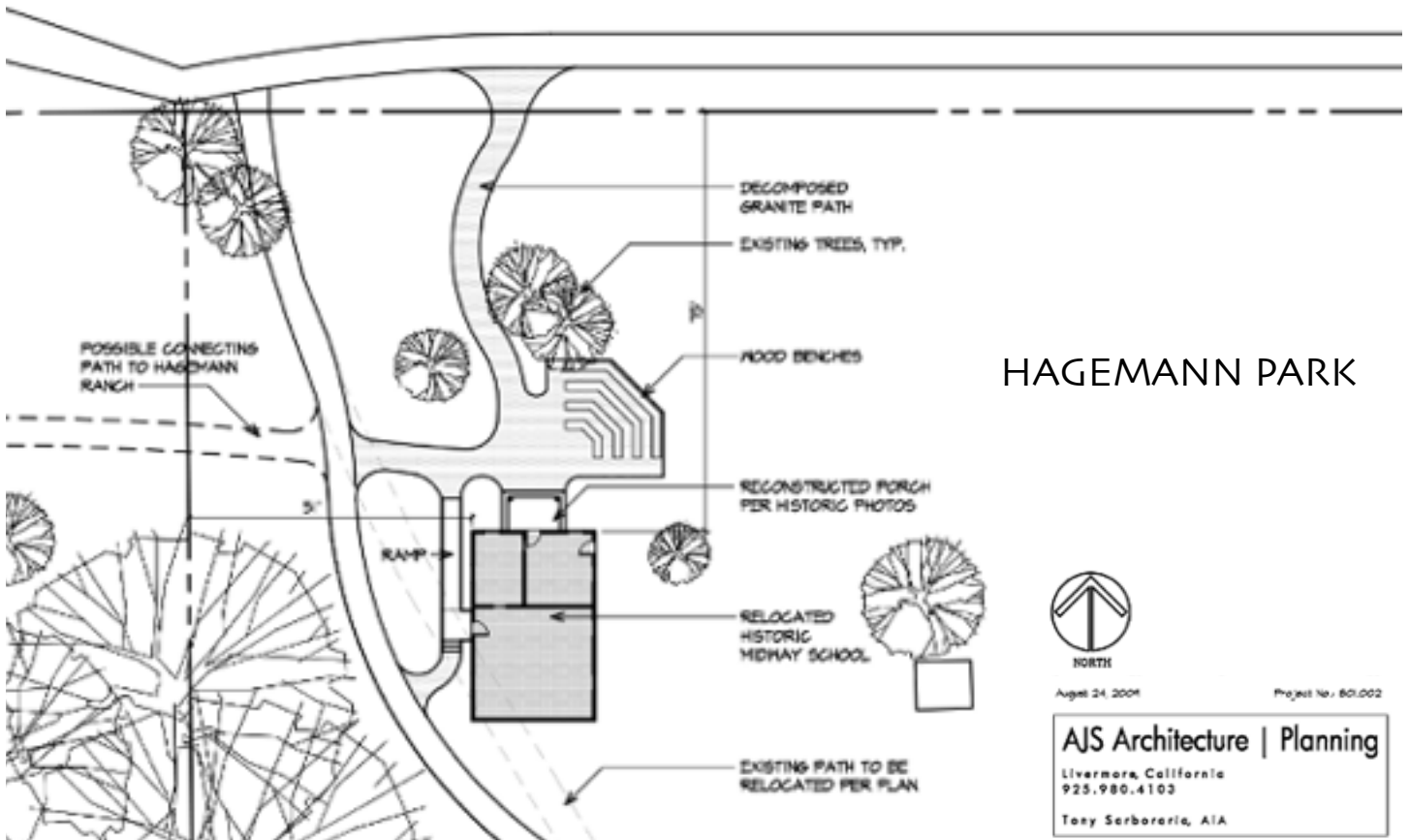


**Top Left:** Bob Wahrer's Sickle Bar Mower Rock Guard, dug in Livermore; **Top Right:** Sickle Mower Blade, captured in the roots next to our fence; **Above:** Hagemann Ranch Sickle Bar Mower. In operation, the tall vertical mower bar would lay flat. Photos by Jeff Kaskey.

# Midway School

(continued from page 1)

OLIVINA AVENUE



## HAGEMANN PARK

curricula from several one-room schoolhouse programs will serve as models for our program.

### Outreach

For the past couple of years, there has been a Midway Display at the Hagemann Ranch events. Will Bolton enhanced it by creating a scale model of the completed school and by making an exact replica of the sign that will eventually go above the porch roof saying, “Midway Public School”. When not at the Ranch, the Midway Display can be seen at the History Center. In the fall of 2022 and 2023, the focus of two of the Ranch open houses was Midway. Students donned bonnets and cowboy hats and attended lessons in a simulated one-room schoolhouse complete with slates and teachers in costume. Recess with Nikki and Bailey Pritchett followed. This mother and daughter team have been providing “Old Time Games” for guests at open houses for

several years. Their intent has always been to publicize Midway.

Last month, we met with the Coordinator of Community Engagement at the Livermore School District. She offered full support and cooperation for the project. After all, it is the third graders who will most benefit from this program.

### Funding

The Heritage Guild is totally responsible for funding this project which we expect to run around \$300,000. The Questers were the first organization to step up with a significant donation. They funded the removal of the school windows and their reconstruction by Doug Bering of Pleasanton. The finished window frames rest in the Ranch garage awaiting the installation of glass. Next, we received a Rotarian Foundation grant to cover the preliminary architect’s drawings and a grant from the Altamont Cruisers. Recently, we received a nice donation from the Ardenwood docents.

Now the concerted fund-raising effort begins with this announcement of a Capital Campaign. We welcome all offers of volunteer help and suggestions regarding funding. Stay tuned for more about our plans. It is going to take a team effort to reach our goal but knowing the reputation of the Heritage Guild there is no doubt we will succeed.



**Top:** Detail of architectural drawings of Midway School in Hagemann Park, 2004; **Above:** 1930 era photo of Midway School students. Photos courtesy of LHG.

## A Different Type of Wheel

by Will Bolton

With the collection of vehicles at the Duarte Garage, projects usually involve steering wheels, or wheels on fire trucks or Star automobiles. However, a recently completed project at the Duarte Garage involved a significantly different type of wheel – a foot-treadle powered grinding wheel. When the grinding wheel arrived at the Garage and where it came from are unknown. It was lurking menacingly, leaning against the back wall of the Garage. I say “menacingly” because the grinding stone is about 25 inches in diameter and 2 inches thick and probably weighs about 100 pounds. The wooden frame, which looks something like a saw horse, was so broken and rotted that the whole assembly couldn’t stand up by itself; it had to lean menacingly against something or fall over on someone. A year or so ago, while cleaning up and reorganizing the northwest corner of the Garage, we decided that - for safety - we had to do something with the grinding wheel. That’s the point at which it turned into a project.

The history of grinding as a means of processing foods or shaping materials goes back thousands of years. The earliest recorded use of a grinding stone as a hand-cranked wheel is in an illuminated manuscript dated around 830 AD. While early grinding wheels were turned by hand, the development of foot-powered grinding wheels with a foot pedal and crank appears in records in the late 1400s. Early grinding stones were made of natural rock, with sandstone being the most common. In the mid- to late-1800s, grinding wheels used corundum, a naturally occurring form of aluminum oxide, as an abrasive material. However, in the late 1800s the development of man-made aluminum oxide and silicon carbide dispersed in a bonding material and fired produced vitrified grinding wheels that were superior to natural stone. The grinding stone in the Garage wheel is so uniform that it is probably an example of a vitrified wheel. The basic configuration of the foot-powered, wood-framed grinding stone changed little for hundreds of years. Prior to rural electrification, the basic foot-powered grinding wheel could be found on



virtually every ranch or farm. Therefore, the grinding wheel at the Garage could have come from any of the ranches in the Livermore area.

We already knew that the grinding wheel wood frame was so badly deteriorated that we couldn’t depend on it for safe support of the grinding wheel. However, we wanted to save as much of the original wood frame as possible. We elected to build a structure to support the weight of the grinding stone with the original wood frame retained for authenticity, as we had done with the McCormick mower blade sharpener. In early 2023, Fred Deadrick volunteered to take the wood frame parts to his shop and prepare them for display. Tragically, he passed away in July 2023. Fred’s son, Tom, helped us to find the parts of Garage projects that Fred had been working on and return them to the Garage. Fred had trimmed off the completely unusable wood from the frame and had fabricated two replica

wood blocks for the support beams that were crucial for supporting the weight of the stone. Jay Morris took on the job of designing and fabricating a supporting frame for the display mounted on casters so we can easily move the heavy grinding wheel around the Garage. Many people have helped with this project: Fred Deadrick and Jay Morris did the bulk of the work with help from Tim Sage, Don Keech, Ralph Moir, and a few others. On March 30, 2024, we lifted the grinding wheel onto the display stand and declared the grinding wheel project completed...almost.

There remain some Mysteries at the Museum. The grinding stone has a steel axle with a crank on one side with a leather and wire link that looks like it

(Wheel, continued on page 8)

**Above:** (L-R) Jay Morris, Tim Sage, Will Bolton, and Don Keech with the restored grinding wheel display at the Garage. Photo by Susan Junk.

# YOU are Needed... At the Fair!

by Dottie Eberly



Be a volunteer at the Alameda County Fair any time, any day, Wednesdays – Sundays, and earn money for the Heritage Guild!

LHG is pleased to be one of the nonprofits partnering with the Alameda County Fair volunteer program. The Fair uses volunteers to monitor areas such as Small Animals, Amateur Gardens, Fine Arts, Education, and Hobby Buildings, or to work at the concerts or the race track. If you enjoy interacting with people and being a part of the energy and excitement of the fair, this is the place for you. Most volunteers come back year after year and count this among the highlights of their summer.

Volunteers are not paid directly for their time but instead earn \$7 per hour for the Heritage Guild. Last year only FOUR LHG people worked at the Fair yet still made \$423.50 for the Guild. It's easy, it's fun, and you're making money for

LHG all at the same time! Please join us!

All volunteers will be trained and will receive free admission to the Fair and parking for shift working days. Because most shifts are only four hours, volunteers can attend the Fair as a guest before or after their shift. As a bonus, volunteers receive two more admission tickets to the Fair to go back and enjoy the Fair on another day as a guest.

**Use the QR code on the left to create a volunteer account.** Once you have the account, you will automatically be notified when it is time to schedule your shifts. All this is done online and you will simply pick the dates/times and areas of interest. The Fair's staff tries to honor requests of friends to work together for a shift with most scheduling done on a "first come, first served" basis. Try it! Get that "Summer Feeling" on!

# Results of the Newsletter Vote

by Dottie Eberly

## Your Vote Counted!

The Livermore Heritage Guild Board asked for your opinion on moving the newsletter to an online format and the response was overwhelmingly in favor of continuing to mail a hard copy newsletter. At this time we will not be able to email newsletters to those who expressed that preference, but remember, the newsletter is always posted on our website.

The next goal will be to enhance the online version with expanded articles, links to other sites, and additional photos that didn't fit in the hard copy newsletter layout.

We're making sure to save all that we can of *yesterday for tomorrow!*



## Wheel

(continued from page 7)

originally went to the foot treadle. However, we haven't yet figured out how the foot treadle mounted on the frame. We used all the parts we had but we don't have a treadle board. We decided to go this far with the display and hope to find more information on

how the foot treadle might have been mounted. If anyone has any information about who might have brought the grinding wheel to the Garage or can help us figure out the foot treadle, please let us know.

**Right:** (L-R) Fred Deadrick and Don Keech with the grinding wheel frame. Photo by Will Bolton.





# More Interesting Midway School Teachers

by Richard Finn



In the last issue of the LHG Newsletter we wrote about two very interesting early Midway Public School teachers: Clara Hawley (she may have been the first Midway teacher and later married major landowner and businessman George Washington Patterson who was 31 years older than her) and Beatrice Bright (you may remember that in 1909 she went East and married Charles Bright, no relation, after never having met him except through sixteen months of correspondence).

In this article we will learn about two more interesting Midway School teachers. The first is Gladys Ann Freisman, known throughout her life as Ann Freisman. Ann was born in 1918 to Walter J. Freisman (1869-1931) and Irene A. McCahill (1878-1946). Midway School was Ann's first teaching job. She taught there from about 1938 to 1942. In 1942 she married Donald Robert Schofield (1914-1974). They had two children, Michael and Suzanne. The name Freisman will "ring a bell" with anyone who has lived in Livermore for any amount of time. They had one of the largest dairies in the tri-valley. The dairy site is now home to Crosswinds Church and Goodness Village on Freisman Road. Many of the children whose parents worked at the dairy attended Inman School

which was on the other side of what was then Highway 50. To get to the school they had to run across the highway. I understand that was a scary challenge. But there was another way to get to school. That was to crawl through a long culvert that went under the highway. You never knew what kind of spiders or animals might be in there. And of course, if it had been raining the culvert might be full of water. It is interesting that the Freismans came to Livermore from Ferndale up in Humboldt County. For reasons unknown to me, a large number of people moved back and forth or had relatives in Ferndale. Even today people from Livermore journey to Ferndale for an annual Danish event. The Livermore Sweet family and the Ferndale Sweet families are related and came from Nova Scotia. We need to learn more about the Ferndale/Livermore link and why it was. Ferndale is an interesting town. If you have not been there I think you will enjoy the visit. Many advances in the dairy industry took place in Ferndale.

The other teacher we highlight in this issue is Mildred Pritchard. We had been given information that a Mrs. Emelia Prichard was a Midway School teacher in the 1930s. However, as much as we searched, we could not find an Emelia Prichard in

the Bay Area who was a teacher in the 1920s-1940s. Then Jeff Kaskey came up with some old Midway School photographs. One showed a young Mildred Pritchard working a water pump in Midway. The first name is different but the surname is similar. With research, we concluded Mildred is the teacher we are interested in. Mildred Adella Pritchard was born in 1905 on the family ranch near Mount Lassen in Tehama County to Henry Norris Pritchard (Born 1871 in California – he was the first child of Civil War veteran Thomas J. Pritchard and Annie Eliza Turgon – Henry died in 1919) and teacher Ellen Grace Wright (1871-1936). Ellen was also born to California pioneers and her father Edmund Wright (1832-1920) was also a Civil War veteran. Mildred was the Midway Public School teacher from about 1927-1929. In 1932, she married Robert Jefferson Huddleston 1907-1963. They had three children: Robert, Ellen, and Mary. We do not know how old Mildred was when the photograph below was taken. Our guess is she was about 22, but she seems to look much younger. She went on to live a long life.



**Left:** (Gladys) Ann Freisman with some of her Midway Public School students, photo taken about 1940; **Above:** Midway Public School teacher Mildred Adella Pritchard about 1928 working the water pump at Midway School. Photos courtesy of Livermore Heritage Guild archives.

## Meet a Board Member: Jeff Kaskey

by Dottie Eberly



I'm struggling to find words of introduction to this issue's Meet a Board Member interviewee. Jeff Kaskey, our newly elected First Vice President, as well as long-time Collections Manager, has been a member of the Livermore Heritage Guild since 2003! And just because we are only now getting the opportunity to do an official introduction does not mean he's a shy, retiring sort of guy. Far from it.

Jeff says his interest in local history "comes genetically". His mother, Marjorie, was the president of their local historical society in Worthington, Ohio. He says that "during her tenure, a historic rectory was moved and saved, one of the two buildings that today make up their operating historic sites". His father, Baylen, was one of the founders of the Columbus Landmarks foundation, created to save the Union Station arch after the station itself was torn down.

He says his career is "typical geek". Starting an electrical engineering degree at Case Western Reserve University, he got "distracted" while working in the research labs on superconductors and lasers. A small electronics start-up company in Cleveland lured him away from the research labs and that was followed by a job offer at LLNL in 1981. He worked at the Lab for eight years, and bought a 1927 house in Livermore. Continuing to live in the house, he

wandered down to the Silicon Valley to work as an electrical engineer for companies such as Sun Microsystems, Intergraph, Rambus, and Applied Materials, in addition to several small start-up companies. While there, a couple of very important events happened.

One of Jeff's jobs had involved working on printed circuit board design with a guy named Joe Bishop. Joe, a member of the Livermore Heritage Guild, called Jeff one day in 2002 to ask if Jeff would take a look at their broken copier housed in the History Center at the Carnegie Building. Meanwhile, one day Jeff missed the shuttle bus that was to take him to the ACE train. So did a lovely young lady named Loretta. The bus only ran once an hour so they decided to stay and talk until the shuttle bus returned. The rest of that story is the delightful history of the two marrying, Jeff moving into Loretta's home, and selling his home to Joe Bishop.

Jeff fixed that broken copier, found that he knew several LHG members, and joined the Guild as it was emerging from a period of turbulence. LHG was just starting to get serious about archiving artifacts. Shelving had recently been purchased for the Harp Room and the Bunshah Room; the Past Perfect museum software program was new to LHG; and with the Model T restoration completed, there were musings about a 1920 Seagrave restoration. As we mentioned earlier, Jeff isn't a shy guy, and quickly became an involved member of LHG. By January 2008, he was LHG's president, about to lead the group through the biggest challenges the Guild had faced.

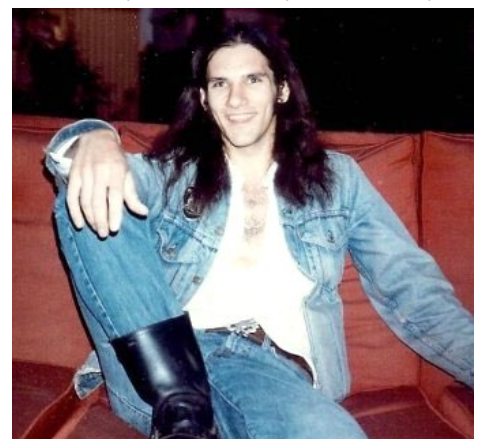
Under his leadership, the next ten years of LHG were among the busiest in the Guild's history. Updated archival practices to match that of other historical organizations were implemented; the Harp Room was organized to provide efficient artifact storage; docents became proficient users of Past Perfect software; the 1920 Seagrave was restored to gorgeous perfection; a newer RV had been donated and retrofitted to become the very popular HistoryMobile 2.0; and most unlikely of all historical society

accomplishments, LHG became the City's property manager for a ranch.

From 2015, when Jeff received that first phone call from the City hypothetically inquiring about LHG becoming ranch managers, to today, the Ranch has become a defining characteristic of today's Guild. And the never-ending work needed to restore and maintain the historical property gave Jeff a welcome break from his engineering "day job". Frequently, Jeff would get off the ACE train after work and head for the Ranch to shovel manure, train a horse, trim grass, fix a gate, or meet with kids to discuss potential Eagle Scout projects.

Luckily for us, sometime during the pandemic Jeff and Loretta purchased the LAST Factory in Livermore where they sell audio accessories. That gave Jeff a great excuse to forever end his commute on the ACE train and spend even more time in his happy place, Hagemann Ranch. But don't let his love of Hagemann Ranch fool you. Jeff has found time over the years to serve as Vice President of Livermore Cultural Arts Council, and for eight years on the City's Historic Preservation Commission. Today he is on the Board of both Livermore Valley Arts and the Livermore Lions Club. The Guild benefits in countless ways from the energy, talent, and people skills this not shy, or retiring sort of guy brings to LHG. We're looking forward to seeing what programs he puts in place as First Vice President.

**Above and Below:** Before and after photos of Jeff Kaskey. Photos courtesy of Jeff Kaskey.



# Livermore Graffiti

by Will Bolton



The development and perfection of the internal combustion engine had a profound impact on the world during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. It changed the way wars were fought. It created entire industries, employing large numbers of people around the globe. It increased the productivity of agriculture. Particularly in the US, more affordable automobiles brought far reaching impacts on society in terms of the ways cities were designed and the personal mobility they provided. This mobility - in turn - changed family structures through work patterns, independence of teenagers, and the willingness of families to move further from their traditional "roots" in search of employment or different environments. These vehicles also brought unprecedented problems, which we started to address in the last few decades. Each of these topics is the subject of whole fields of study, however, here I wanted to address a more light-hearted and local aspect of automobile culture.

The 1973 George Lucas's movie *American Graffiti* illustrated some aspects of the American embrace of the automobile. The movie was inspired by his memories of growing up in Modesto, in particular, the role of automobiles in the lives of teenagers: dating, cruising, mobility, independence, identity, hot rodding, and street racing. When I moved to Livermore in 1974, I observed that the elements of *American Graffiti*

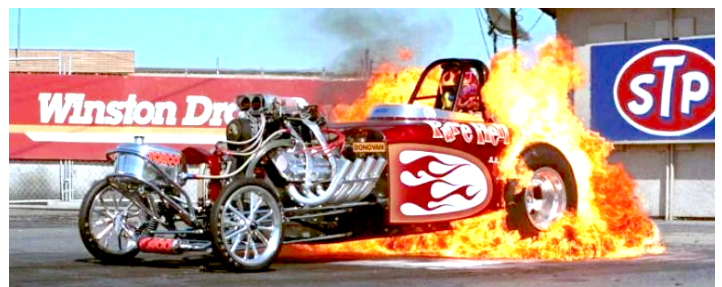
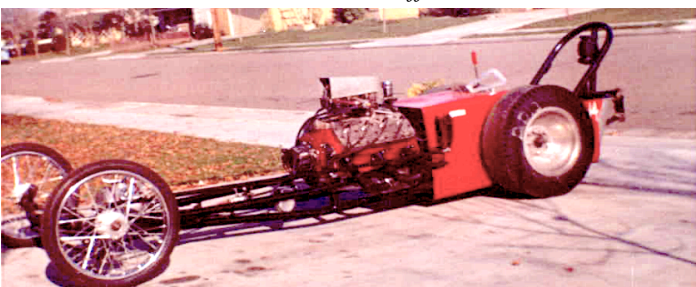
were also present in Livermore. The well-known Livermore cruise circuit up and down First Street was still in full swing. There were interesting cars around town, being driven in interesting ways. Through a good friend at work, Roger Busbee, I learned that there had also been a pretty serious drag racing scene in Livermore and that Roger himself had been in the middle of it. He grew up in Livermore and had been an active member of the Livermore Block Busters car club in the late 1950s into the 1960s. Roger was a great storyteller and had great stories to tell. Unfortunately, he passed away a few years ago, but I did get to hear some of his stories. For example, he told of a street race between a CHP patrol car and a Livermore hot rodder on Highway 50...this wasn't a pursuit of a speeder - it was a prearranged race to see if the hopped up car was faster than a CHP cruiser. Roger told another story about him and a couple of friends trying to blow up the engine of a car in the Sunken Gardens area of Livermore. He told yet another story about trying to stage a fiery car plunge off a "cliff" at Pigeon Pass. Spoiler alert: neither of these adventures worked out the way they do in the movies.

It seems that the Block Busters had about 20 to 25 members. The members pursued their interest in cars in different ways. Some had street rods or cruising cars, others were involved in serious drag strip competition, and some did both. Bill Junk, previous curator of the Duarte Garage, owned 33 cars, each interesting or modified in one way or another, but all were basically street cars. In contrast, Roger Busbee built and raced a "sling shot" dragster with the driver sitting behind the engine at the very rear of the car. Two of the most widely known members of the Block

Busters were Rich Guasco (his dad had the Santa Rita wrecking yard in Pleasanton) and Fred Cerruti (his dad had the Quality Auto Parts store on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Livermore), both of whom built AA/Fuel Altered front engine dragsters. As if these dragsters weren't inherently dangerous enough, they ran on nitromethane, which produces over twice the horsepower of gasoline. To put the performance of these cars in perspective, if you had been cruising Livermore's First Street in 1967 in Rich Guasco's "Pure Hell" dragster and "stomped on the loud pedal" next to the flag pole, you would pass M Street 7 seconds later going 200 miles per hour.

This only scratches the surface of the Block Buster stories and other aspects of the hot rod culture in Livermore. For example, there is the story about when Roger Busbee used his dragster to "cut the ribbon" when a section of the 580/680 overpass was opened near Dublin in 1967. For several years, we have been collecting artifacts, stories, and photos for a future Block Busters car club display at the Duarte Garage. We currently have Fred Cerruti's Block Busters club jacket and one of Roger Busbee's Block Busters trophies on display. The future Block Buster's display, and possibly future Newsletter items, will tell more of the story of "Livermore Graffiti."

**Above:** (L to R) Block Busters Jim Young, Bob Fornaciari, LPD Chief Johnny Michelis, Officer Frank Lewis, Block Buster liaison in 1955 with Bob Fornaciari's 1931 Ford roadster. Photo credit unknown; **Below Left:** an early photo of Roger's dragster when it had a Ford flathead V-8 engine - later replaced by a Chevy small block. Photo by Roger Busbee; **Below Right:** Rich Guasco's Pure Hell dragster still providing excitement and danger in more recent nostalgia drag racing. Photo credit unknown.



# Welcome New and Renewing Members!

## January - March 2024

<p><b>Life</b></p> <p>Christopher Carrano Jennifer Darrell</p> <p><b>Patron</b></p> <p>Phil Bardsley Muriel Dean Philip Dean</p> <p><b>Sponsor</b></p> <p>Sandy Clark Cherie Hethershaw Saundra Lormand Lillian Marciel</p>	<p><b>Sponsor (cont.)</b></p> <p>Carol Silva Mark Weise</p> <p><b>Individual</b></p> <p>Suzanne Clark Anna Cross - NEW Jessica Dennis - NEW</p> <p><b>Household</b></p> <p>Cindy Anderson Rich &amp; Susan Canfield Fred Gertier William Mohler David &amp; Alice Quinn</p>	<p><b>Senior</b></p> <p>Jonathan Clark - NEW Marilyn Fraser Richard Hanan Donald Keech Owen Parker - NEW Carol Stoker - NEW Marie Timmer Kathleen Young</p>
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## In Appreciation

<p><b>In Memory of</b></p> <p>Marjorie Bischofberger by Shirley Anderson Florence Gordon by Shirley Anderson Bonnie Hughes by Dona Blackmore Kevin Drake by Dona Blackmore Ben Green by Dona Blackmore</p>	<p><b>Donations</b></p> <p>Saundra Lormand Donald Keech</p>
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## LHG Events Calendar

Date	Time	Event	Place
Wed. May 8	7pm	LHG Board Meeting	Virtual Meeting
Sat. May 18	9:30am-noon	Workday: Hagemann Ranch	Hagemann Ranch
Sun. May 19	10am-2pm	Duarte Garage Open House	Duarte Garage
Sun. May 26	1pm-5pm	Sundays at Hagemann Ranch: Musical May, Music, Drama and Dance	Hagemann Ranch
Wed. June 12	7pm	LHG Board Meeting	Virtual Meeting
Sun. June 16	10am-2pm	Duarte Garage Open House	Duarte Garage
Sat. June 22	9:30am-noon	Workday: Hagemann Ranch	Hagemann Ranch
Sun. June 30	1pm-5pm	Sundays at Hagemann Ranch: Cars and Engines	Hagemann Ranch
Wed. July 10	7pm	LHG Board Meeting	Virtual Meeting
Sat. July 20	9:30am - noon	Workday: Hagemann Ranch	Hagemann Ranch
Sun. July 21	10am-2pm	Duarte Garage Open House	Duarte Garage
Sun. July 28	1pm-5pm	Sundays at Hagemann Ranch: Self-guided walking tours	Hagemann Ranch

**If you have not heard about our various events, then maybe we don't have your email. Please update us at [lhg@lhg.org](mailto: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

Hours for the History Center are varied at this time. Please call ahead or check the website for updated information as it becomes available.  
[www.lhg.org](http://www.lhg.org)

Annual membership dues are: Individual \$25.00, Household \$35.00, Senior (age 62+) \$15.00, Student \$15.00, Sponsor \$75.00 and Patron \$150.00. Life (Individual) \$500.00 memberships are also available. Please make checks payable to "LHG."

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Platinum  
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2024

**Candid.**