

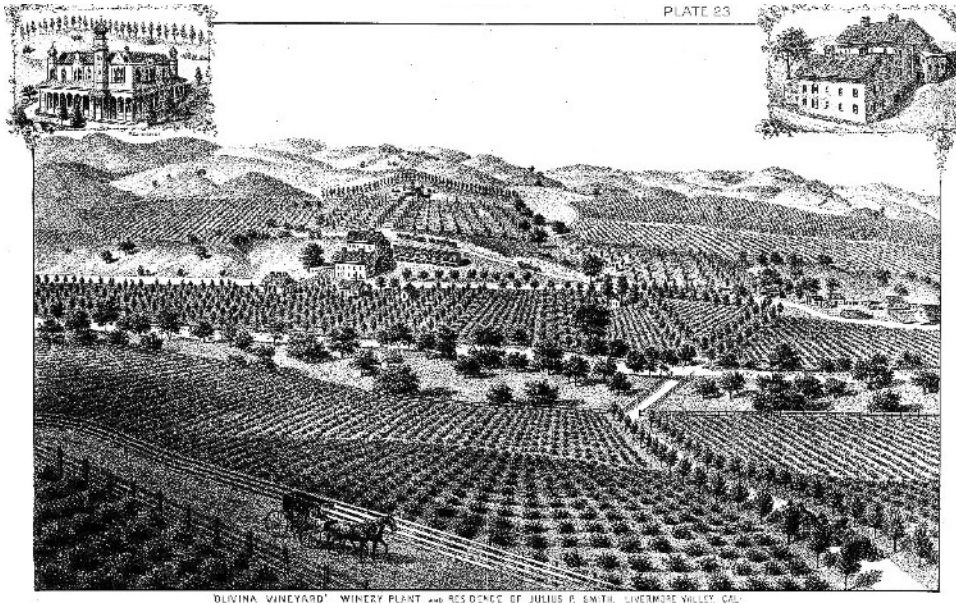


May 2025

The Mystery Gate

by Phil Bardsley

Vol. LII No. 3



Whenever I rode my bike to Arroyo Park in the 1960s, I'd stop at the large wrought iron "Olivina" gateway at the corner of Arroyo and Wetmore Roads. The land looked all but abandoned. There were long rows of straggly old trees suggesting an orchard from an earlier time. I always wondered what was behind that gate, who had lived there, and how they had used this massive property in its heyday. To find out, I recently looked into Olivina's history and talked with the current owner, Charles Troy Crohare.

Olivina has a storied past. The founder, Julius Paul Smith, made a small fortune in the 1870s with his brother, Francis Marion Smith, from their business producing 20 Mule Team borax, a household cleaning powder. Julius Paul lived in San Francisco and managed the company's office there. In 1881, he bought 1,903 acres along Arroyo Road south of Wetmore and west into the hills above the Arroyo del Valle. He planted 675 acres in wine grapes, creating what was at the time the largest vineyard in the county.

Julius Paul and his wife, Sara Barker Smith, built a large house on the estate.

Charles noted, "Sara never wanted to be out in the sun. They planted black walnut, olive, and almond trees wherever her carriage would go to provide her with shade." Julius Paul planted olive trees using cuttings from the old Mission San Jose trees. In 1887, Julius Paul sold his share of the borax business to focus on winemaking. He coined the name Olivina from the words "olive" and "vine".

In 1885, Julius Paul built a three-story winery using 2-foot-thick concrete walls with a redwood roof and flooring, and he dug a large wine cellar into the hill from the second floor of the winery. He distilled brandy in a small tin building near the winery, and he produced olive oil from his trees. According to Anne Homan, "Olivina's Cabernet Sauvignon, Malbec, and Haut Sauterne won awards at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. The winery also produced many other varieties including a white Grenache, a Zinfandel, Champagne, Riesling, sparkling Sauternes, and one of the first Chardonnays." In 1900 he won a silver medal for his olive oil. Julius Paul sold his wine, brandy, and olive oil throughout the US, shipping it by train

carloads to the Bay Area and to his office in New York. After Julius Paul died in 1904, Sara's brother Benjamin Barker continued running the operation until 1914. Sara moved to San Francisco and gradually shut down the winery by the start of Prohibition in 1920. She died in 1938.

The next chapter in Olivina's history began with a local baker and his family. In 1942, Bernard and Marie Crohare, along with their son Charles, bought the western portion of Olivina from the Sara B. Smith estate. (For more information about the Crohars and their bakery, see the February 2025 LHG newsletter.) They bought the land south and west of the Arroyo Del Valle, and a gravel company bought the rest of the land - north and east from the arroyo to Arroyo and Wetmore roads. The gravel company didn't do anything with the land and leased it to the Crohars to run cattle. By that time most of the grape vines had died from disease. The Crohars rebranded the property "Olivina Ranch," replacing Julius Paul's initials in the crest with "OR".

The decision to plant olive trees occurred decades later as Olivina changed hands within the family. Charles Francis Crohare took over the Olivina Ranch in 1953 when his father, Charles D., died. He was 21 years old.

(The Mystery Gate, continued on page 8)

Left: Drawing of Olivina from 1894. Courtesy Olivina.

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Heritage Garden

by Loretta Kaskey

The Heritage Garden at Hagemann Ranch is not quite ready to transition...

Though we will soon be collecting our summer crop seedlings (tomatoes, peppers, squash, etc.) and planning which beds they will reside in, the harvesting and growing of the winter crops continues. This year we have new offerings in spinach, leeks, potatoes, parsnips, and beets to complement the tried and true traditional winter vegetables like kale, broccoli, cauliflower, onions, and peas.



The rain and unsettled cool and warm temperatures catapulted the growth of the peas to such an extent that the trellis supplied for them fell over and had to be buttressed. In the photo above, you can see the vigorous growth that the pea plants have produced and the extent of how we shored up their trellis. Also of note in the foreground are potato plants. If you attended the February Hagemann Ranch open house, we were offering the extra seed potatoes for the bring a plant / take a plant event that day.

Other new root crops grown this winter season include beets, photo on right, and fennel, photo far right. All these vegetables can be used in combination in delicious winter soups and spring salads.



The first harvest of the sugar peas, above, with a close up of a vine tendril with the pea flower.



As the days become longer, our onions are beginning to bulb. In the photo above you may be able to make out the leek plants on the left versus the onion plants on the right. While both belong in the Allium family, they differ in flavor and appearance. The stems of the leek are more flat versus round for onions. Additionally, leeks have a milder, slightly sweet, and more subtle onion flavor, while onions have a stronger, more pungent taste.



SUNDAYS AT HAGEMANN RANCH

Free, family-friendly activities!

One Room School House Experience
HistoryMobile

Prairie School

Sunday, May 25

1 - 5 pm

455 Olivina Ave., Livermore

Ice Cream Social -
\$1 per person

Cactus Corner
Square Dancers

Duarte Garage: Star Light in the Garage

by Will Bolton

A couple of decades ago, before there were two Star automobiles in the Duarte Garage, there were two Star engines in the Garage machine shop. They were casually lying around as decorator antiques in a building where Star automobiles had been sold, serviced, and repaired about 100 years ago. Susan Junk tells us that these engines were donated by Lee Talbot, who had a 36-year career at LLNL as a mechanical engineer. He was a noted car and boat racer and car customizer in the local area. The donated engines were what are usually referred to as “short blocks,” that is, cast iron engine blocks containing the crankshaft, connecting rods, pistons, valves, and some gears and a timing chain. With the side covers off, virtually all the moving parts of the engines were easily visible.

One of our roles at the Garage is providing educational opportunities in addition to displaying historic items. For example, we have a display that explains how a magneto works. Although magnetos are not as commonly used in engine ignition systems as they once were, we are providing an opportunity to learn how they work. Similarly, internal combustion engines are slowly being supplanted by electric propulsion systems. However, internal combustion engines were a dominant factor in economic activity and growth in the 20th century on land, at sea, and in the

air. Therefore, we saw the donated short blocks as an opportunity to allow visitors to the Garage to turn a crank at the front of the engine and see how the internal parts worked together.

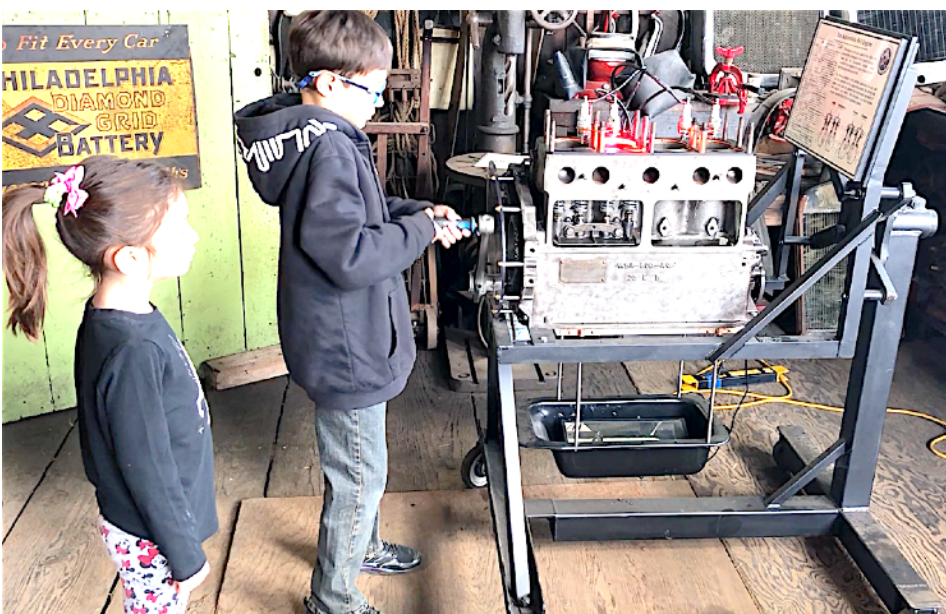
The problem was that the donated engines had sat outside, exposed to the elements for a long period of time. Everything was rusty, everything was corroded, and everything was stuck. About six years ago, we embarked on a long program of disassembling the engines. Because they were about 100 years old, we couldn't easily get replacement parts, so a major consideration was breaking as little as possible. A large challenge was getting the pistons out of the cylinders. We puddled penetrating oil and other concoctions (which we collectively called “magic juice”) in the cylinders and let it soak for months. We tried heat. We tried acetone and dry ice. None of that worked. It might have been the accumulation of all the things we tried, but a lot of pounding by Don Keech, Ralph Moir, Jay Morris, and Fred Deadrick with progressively larger hammers eventually succeeded in getting the pistons out of the engine.

In parallel with the effort to clean up the parts and reassemble the engine, Jay Morris brought an old engine stand to support the engine. A multi-talented volunteer, Steve Raca, cut up old bed

frames for the steel and welded up an adapter to mount the old engine to the modern engine stand. Tim Sage, with help from Don Aguiar, added a wider set of front casters and additional front supports to the stand for safety and painted it black for looks. Trevor Gaspari used one of the Star connecting rods to make a hand crank for visitors to use to rotate the crankshaft. With the reassembled engine mounted on the stand, we suspended the oil pan - containing a slanted mirror - about a foot below the engine so visitors can easily see what the crankshaft, connecting rods, and pistons are doing in the bottom of the engine. The penultimate touch was adding a display sign that shows the original specifications for the engine and illustrations of the four stages in the operation of a four-cycle engine.

With the display engine essentially finished, there was one more flourish we had been talking about for a year or two. The original distributor was still installed on the engine. With some antique spark plugs (which we have) and some antique spark plug wires (which we have), we thought it would be cool to have the distributor route a low voltage current to an LED mounted on each spark plug so it would flash at the proper time in the operation of the engine. Tom Kulp took up that challenge and figured out how to mount individual white LEDs on each spark plug with the current controlled by the distributor. Dennis Ulich used his impressive home 3-D printer to make a plastic head gasket that is thick enough to hold a red LED rope light surrounding each cylinder. In operation, as the visitor carefully and slowly turns the crankshaft handle, each spark plug flashes a white light and the cylinder is illuminated by the string of red lights, indicating combustion in each cylinder. There is a short video on the LHG website showing the display engine operating. The firing order for the Star engine is 1-3-4-2, so when you come to the Garage to see the display engine, you can check to see if the Star Lights are in the correct order.

Left: Visitors turning the crank on the display engine with cylinder #2 lighted. Photo by Will Bolton.



Collections Corner

by Jeff Kaskey

Like most historical societies, photos are a large part of our collection. While newspaper clippings give us the running narrative of our town, historic photos are often personal expressions of an important person, place, or event. Today, when we grab our phones to photograph anything light can strike, there are fewer of us who recall having only 12 shots to be taken in a roll of film. A photo was a planned exercise, and when an unplanned photo was taken we gave them the category name of "candid". Most of us who had cameras (and they were far from ubiquitous) used snapshot or 35mm cameras, but artists and professionals sometimes took photos with large negatives, where each piece of film was the size of a page from a book and would be individually developed. These we called "large format." The magic of a large format negative is that the resolution of the photograph, the ability to discern small details clearly, grows dramatically as the photo gets larger. A negative that is 4" x 5" (a fairly common old large format) can have 15 times the resolution of a 35mm image of the same thing. Consumer cameras available today still do not have the resolution of some of those 50 to 100 year old large negatives. That crisp image is just one of the charms of digging through old photos.

The largest commercial negatives were from a camera specifically for panoramas, called the Cirkut camera.

The negatives are long - in some cases up to 18 feet, and between 5 and 16 inches tall, so the combined resolution is immense. The camera would rotate on a tripod while synchronously winding the film, creating an image of whatever was around it in an arc. Occasionally a prankster captured at the beginning of the photo would scamper to the other end of the arc before the camera got there, so as to be featured twice in one photo! You may have already seen some of these Cirkut camera photos from Livermore. We have one from both the first and the second annual Livermore rodeo, some featuring the various fraternal or social organizations, and some showing school classes. The challenge for these large photos is that unless you have it framed and mounted on a wall, they are nearly impossible to safely store. Many of them were rolled up and hidden away. Today, after years rolled up, they are nearly impossible to roll out flat without causing cracking and severely damaging the image. Recently, as I was looking for something else, I came across a box of just these tightly rolled photos in the Guild's collection and was curious of course about what they might contain. As it happens, I have a very particular set of skills...

Photos, real film photos, fascinate me. My first camera, a gas station give-away from the 1960s, used 120 film and could take the aforementioned 12 photos per

roll. My father taught me darkroom skills and financed my film appetite until eventually, with a slightly better camera, I became a sports photographer for our local paper in Ohio. I spent many darkroom hours getting photos out after an evening football game for morning press time. As I write this, that original camera sits on a shelf behind me. With that darkroom background, I felt I could unwind the mysteries of this stash of photos.

Fortunately, the process has gone very well and we have recovered half a dozen rolled Cirkut photos. A couple were additional prints of the ones mentioned above, rodeos and fraternal groups, but a couple were new, unseen for decades, including some from Livermore's National Guard regiment, Company I. Perhaps we will create an exhibit of the Guild's collection of Cirkut photos (over 20 in total) but for this article I want to share a school photo - half on this page, half on page 5. The photo is dated 1924 and was taken in the street roughly at the intersection of 5th and J streets, looking generally east including the church and 5th Street school, and of course a few hundred kids. The reason I am putting this photo in the newsletter is that I am hoping that, based on the age of the photo, there is a chance that some of you may recognize the childhood face of a parent or grandparent. Like many photos, this one has no one identified, so we do not know any of the names. Yet.



History Center Display

By Don Smith and Harry Briley

The Guild is featuring a new display at the History Center. The exhibit highlights the life of the late Hon. Dr. John Shirley, a local resident who greatly impacted the Livermore community for four decades. He was beloved as a veterinarian and local political leader. Different aspects and eras of Dr. Shirley's life are displayed, including veterinarian equipment such as menacing-looking syringes, an old microscope, and a fully assembled dog skeleton, as well as other artifacts from his time as Mayor and his service in the Army during World War II.

John was born on a small orange orchard in Costa Mesa in 1924. He described his early years in Costa Mesa during the Depression as a wonderful place to grow up. Although his father could not always find work as a carpenter, his mother worked occasionally as a registered nurse in private practices. They always had food from their farm and wood to keep warm. John worked on the farm milking the cow, feeding chickens, pigs, sheep and veal for meat, tending the vegetable garden and fruit trees.

John attended Cal Poly before being drafted into the US Army in 1943 on his 18th birthday. Following training he was assigned as an infantryman in the Third Infantry Division, fighting on the Anzio Beachhead. He was promoted to Sergeant and Squad Leader, Platoon Sergeant and Acting Platoon Leader.

Fighting up the Rhone River Valley, he participated in the capture of Strasbourg. Wounded, he was treated for three months in France and England. Upon returning to his unit he was part of the final European battles in Southern Germany. Sergeant Shirley was awarded the Silver Star, Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster and "V" for valor device, a Purple Heart, Good Conduct Medal, American Defense, Victory Medal, European Theater Operation Medal with Battle Stars for Campaigns in Italy, France and Germany, Bronze Arrowhead for Southern France Invasion, and, later, the French Legion of Honor presented by French President Chirac on August 15, 2004.

Upon discharge he studied at University of California, Davis and received his B.S. in Veterinary Science and a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree. He received a Production Credit Association Scholarship, a Union Pacific Scholarship, and a Guggenheim Scholarship. He met Helen Freeman at Davis and they married in 1951. Dr. Shirley first worked as a veterinarian in Ukiah then moved to Livermore in 1954 where he opened a veterinary practice which he owned for thirty-three years. He and Helen raised five children and were blessed with grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

John served on the Livermore Planning Commission and successfully ran for

City Council four years after arriving in Livermore. He witnessed the construction of the Rincon fire station and the development of the Civic Center which included a city hall, new library, and police department. In addition to being a civic leader, he served the community for four decades in numerous capacities. John was a Rotary Club President in 1967-1968 and a member from 1956 until his death.

While visiting the History Center consider purchasing the two books Dr. Shirley wrote about his life. *I Remember: Stories of a Combat Infantryman* is a recollection of his World War II experiences in the European Theatre (\$15), and *I Remember: Stories of a Small-Town Politician*, which documents the rapid changes in Livermore post-1952. The second book is illustrated by Bruce Shore and Jean Otto and includes numerous Livermore news clippings (\$15).

The Guild's free exhibit of Dr. John Shirley's life runs through the end of June in the Livermore Heritage Guild's History Center in the Carnegie Building at 2155 Third Street, Thursdays through Saturdays from 11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Anyone interested in local history and the life and times of a significant member of our community will especially enjoy the display.



Midway School Project

Our fundraising efforts to get the Midway School moved are in full swing! We have just learned that the timeline for the Project has accelerated significantly. The schoolhouse needs to be removed from its current location by the end of the year. This page features three different ways to support the Midway School Project. We hope that you will support the effort in at least one way!



Buy a Brick

The Buy a Brick Campaign is underway! You can now buy a specially engraved brick which will join those of other supporters to form a patio area near the ADA ramp of Midway School in its new location at Hagemann Park. It speaks of your commitment to preserving Livermore's learning legacy by helping to relocate and restore a significant historical property. The personal legacy you create at Livermore's newest historic building will last several lifetimes. Use the QR code below or find more information at thatsmybrick.com/ LHGCA to learn all the details.



THE LIVERMORE HERITAGE  &
LIVERMORE AMADOR SYMPHONY
GUILDS *present*

Harmony & HISTORIC HOME TOUR



🎵 **LIVE MUSIC** at each of our **8**
LIVERMORE HISTORIC HOMES

Tour starts at **CARNEGIE PARK**

SATURDAY MAY 10 from 11 am - 4 pm



TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW

Scan the QR code
or visit our websites

lhg.org
or

livermoreamadorsymphony.org

*homes are not ADA compliant



Help support our Yum-Raiser for the Midway School Project !

Midway School needs to be moved from the Altamont Hills to Hagemann Park, next to historic Hagemann Ranch, *before the end of 2025!* There is much to do before it can be moved and none of it is inexpensive. Why not help with this great project in a sweet way? LHG receives the profits from every purchase of See's boxed chocolates, candy bars and more when you purchase from the QR code below, or by going to our website, lhg.org and clicking the link under the Midway School heading. There is no minimum order required and all purchases are shipped directly to the address(es) you provide.



It promises to be a sweet experience - Make Your Day Delicious!



Hageman Happenings

by Barbara Soules

Springtime at Hagemann is lovely. The grass is a lush green, the wisteria is in full bloom, the ranunculus and California poppies in the SFH garden are a kaleidoscope of color. The plants around the house are beginning to bloom. One of the horses who was born at the ranch five years ago, Dasher, returned from his stay with a trainer in time to celebrate his birthday with us. Soon there will be new stable doors on the east side of the Cow Barn thanks to an Eagle Scout project.

Children's Day in March was a huge success with close to 800 guests enjoying the HistoryMobile and the 4-H animals. Prairie School is the May Open House theme. You are all invited to join the fun, dance with the Cactus Corners Square Dancers, visit the HistoryMobile, have an ice cream sundae, and best of all, watch children enjoy the experience of learning in a one room schoolhouse.

Community members are doing some spring cleaning, and as a result the Guild received two items that are Hagemann family heirlooms and were originally in the Ranch House. An original oil painting of the house from the backyard by James Swinnerton Atkinson has this dedication on the back: *To my friends, the Hagemanns, Sincerely, Jim Atkinson, 3-31-1975*. Not much has changed since then except the two giant Mendenhall oaks are no longer there shading the house and a tree is now obstructing the windmill.

The second item is a beautiful, electrified oil lamp with an unusually

large porcelain globe hand painted by Gussie Hagemann Holm. It is reported that Gussie had this in her bedroom on the ranch, which was the room to the left when you enter the front door. Talking to the donor piqued my interest in discovering more about Gussie, Herb's older sister.

Augusta Ruth Hagemann lived her entire life in Livermore. Born in 1918, the only daughter of Herbert Sr. and Edna Kottinger Hagemann, she grew up on the Ranch and graduated from Livermore High School in the 1930s. She married Lowell Holm and they had a son, Carl, born in 1942, but they divorced in 1943. With a young child to support, Gussie began selling fabric to local farmers' wives from bolts in the trunk of her car. This led to starting a dry goods business, *Gussie's Country Cottons* in Castro Valley. By the mid-50s she had moved the business to First Street in Livermore and called it *Gussie's Fabrics*. It was more than a fabric store. One person I talked to called it a "high end" shop with expensive lingerie, jewelry, and fine items for the ladies of Livermore. In the 60s, Gussie moved from the Ranch, retired from her shop, and moved into her own home on I Street to follow her passion, painting, especially on porcelain.

Eugenia Zobel, an accomplished porcelain artist who has often been a vendor at ranch open houses, reminisced about Gussie. "She was a wonderful and good-hearted person". She was Eugenia's teacher. "I was a beginner!"



she said and described Gussie as a kind and patient teacher. She taught painting classes in her home. "She was a very good artist and did many pieces." She especially liked to paint flowers and fruit and some landscapes. She was active in the Livermore Art Association (LAA) and there is a note of her showing in a LAA show in the gallery of the Carnegie Library in September 1990. After her death in 2002, Eugenia bought some of Gussie's art from her son, Carl. When the Ranch House becomes a museum, these pieces will return to their "home".

Left: Detail of oil painting by Jim Atkinson of Hagemann home, March 31, 1975. Photo by Barbara Soules; **Top:** Augusta (Gussie) Hagemann Holm. Courtesy of LHG Archives; **Above:** Gussie's paintings on porcelain. Photo by Barbara Soules.



The Mystery Gate

(continued from page 1)



He stayed in the cattle business, bringing in his son Charles T. But after 40 years they changed course. Charles T recalled, "We used to talk about how we had good land, good water, and good weather. We should do more with the land than just run cattle. By the 1990s I was set in my career as a banker, and my dad was getting ready to retire. We decided, because of the history of the property, we would either do wine or olives. We were more interested in trees and the fact that olive trees live so long. They can provide a legacy for my kids and grandkids. We knew nothing about olives, but we jumped in and immersed ourselves, and we've been learning ever since."

Starting the new business was not an easy task. Charles talked about building up the olive orchard nearly from scratch. "There were still olive trees, the ones Smith planted in the 1880s, but they were just shade for the cattle. The trees were totally ignored, neglected. Fortunately, olive trees will live for thousands of years even if you leave them alone. There are trees in the Middle East that predate Christ and are still producing olives." This was the beginning of interest in olive oil in

Above: Charles F. Crohare and his dog Jag on road lined with Century Mission olive trees, Feb 2005. Courtesy Olivina.

California. "Olive oil never became the go-to cooking oil because there weren't enough trees in the valley, and butter took over. People didn't start growing olives for oil in California, including Livermore, until the 1990s."

The Crohars planted 70 acres in five varieties of olives, and they pruned the 200 original Mission trees that now produce their Century Mission oil. "UC Davis didn't have an olive center and didn't teach anything about olive oil. They dealt with cured olives, but not oil. We just figured we'd talk to other people who were already producing oil. The thing we didn't realize until after we'd planted the trees is, the few growers who were out there were only a couple years ahead of us. I would have loved to go to Europe and learn from the growers there, but I used all my vacation time during the olive harvest."

"When we started planting new trees at Olivina in the late '90s and started attending meetings of growers, there were maybe 20 producers including the former Mission San Jose in Fremont. It was a fledgling industry. Now there are large corporate growers out in the Central Valley. California Olive Ranch, for example, is actually owned by the Spaniards. Still, California produces so little oil that 97% of the oil used in the US is imported."

At first, the Crohars took their olives to a mill in Modesto to extract the oil. In 2007 they bought their own Italian Alfa Laval mill. "The Frantoio and Lucca olives produce the most oil per ton of olives, about 40-55 gallons per ton, depending on how ripe and the quality of the fruit. The Arbequina and Mission are in the 35-gallon range. The old Century Mission and the Picholine don't produce as much because they aren't irrigated so they don't get babied through the summer months."

The town's growth brought its own changes to Olivina. In 1974, Livermore started buying the central portion of Olivina along the arroyo to create Sycamore Grove Park. "We had plenty of land at first and continued to run cattle. At our peak we had 150 cow-calf pairs. As we sold off land to the park, we scaled back on cattle. Now I have six live weed eaters, cows that I move from field to field to cut the grass. When I see

them, I think of my dad." The park now extends from the original Olivina boundaries in the southwest up to Wetmore and Arroyo roads. Charles notes, "Now 847 acres of Olivina is Sycamore Grove Park. There are original olive trees out there that are doing fine." Another 120 acres of the original Olivina was sold for 20-acre residential parcels on the flats near the old Smith residence, which burned in 1959.

The triangle of land behind the iron gateway is now owned by Wente Vineyards who has planted it in grapes. They also planted olive trees along the first part of the old Olivina entrance road starting at the gateway. The rest of the trees along that road are still the old black walnuts that Julius Paul planted to shade his wife, Sara. Charles says, "The Wentes did a nice job with that vineyard, about 180 acres. It's great for me that they did such a good job, because I drive by it every day." Wente Vineyards also owns the old Olivina Pasture to the east of Arroyo Road where they grow grapes and have a golf course.

Charles has been the sole owner of Olivina since his father passed away in 2023. He sells six varieties of olive oil from his property along with flavored vinegars. "The bottle we chose looks like the bottles Julius Paul used originally. It's not the most practical bottle, but we wanted to stay as close to the original with both the label and the bottle as we could." They offer custom milling to commercial growers, and they offer community milling one Sunday each year when individuals with a few trees can pool their olives and take home the oil. The facility is open for tours and tastings on the third Sunday of each month. For details, see their website: TheOlivina.com.

As for the "Olivina" gateway, what is its story? In 1905, Sara Smith erected the gate to honor her late husband. In 2008, both the gateway and the winery ruins were designated a Point of Historical Interest by the California Office of Historic Preservation. You can see the gateway on Arroyo Road, and the western branch of the Arroyo Del Valle Regional Trail in Sycamore Grove Park goes by the winery ruins.

Livermore's MacGyver

by Will Bolton

The May 2018 issue of the Guild Newsletter had an "In Memoriam" article, written by Jeff Kaskey about Walter Detjens, following his passing in December 2017. That article did a nice job of summarizing Walter's life and his family's presence in the Livermore Valley. However, here I want to go into a little more depth on some of the qualities of self-reliance, innovation in the face of necessity, and multiple hands-on skills characteristic of farmers and ranchers as exemplified by Walter.

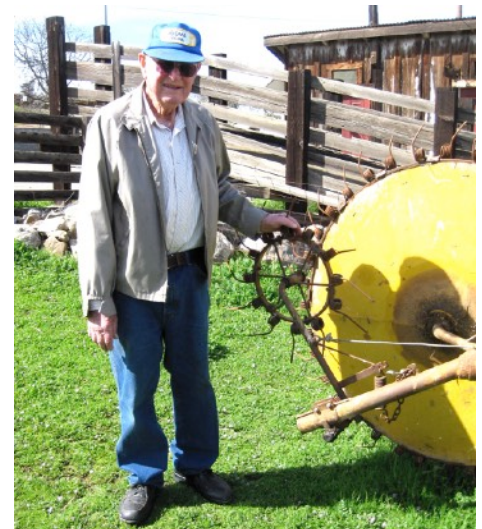
Through a chain of events, starting with the City of Livermore acquiring the Duarte Garage and Cottage in the 1970s, Walter came to own the lathe, drill press, and some other equipment from the Garage. In early 2014, Walter had sold his property on the south side of Livermore and was preparing to move close to family in Wisconsin. He wanted to return the Duarte items back to the Garage. Ralph Moir, a long-time volunteer at the Duarte Garage, lived adjacent to Walter's property and had known Walter for many years. Ralph made arrangements for the two of us to visit Walter and talk about his donation to the Duarte Garage. Our discussions expanded beyond the Duarte equipment to walking around the property while Walter described the history of the buildings and the stories of the equipment, most of which he had either built or modified to fit his needs. The 18" Bradford lathe from the Duarte Garage is a serious piece of equipment requiring significant knowledge and skill to operate proficiently and safely. I thought he might have learned machining in a technical school or the military. When I asked him where he learned machining, he replied, "I just picked it up." Clearly he had the equipment and skills to MacGyver solutions to problems he encountered on his property.

As we walked around his buildings, Walter showed us his forklift. It was built during WWII by Ross and had a 6,000 pound rating. Walter needed a higher capacity because the back end of his forklift would lift off the ground when he tried to pick up things he needed to move. Walter recognized that

Ross also built a 14,000 pound forklift that had a larger engine and a heavier counter weight but had the same forks, tower, and hydraulics. The obvious answer (for Walter) was to cut his forklift in half, move the engine and counterweight back four and a half feet - providing a longer lever arm for the counterweight - and weld in some steel beams. When he was finished modifying his forklift, he drove his 12,000 pound Caterpillar track layer over the forks, started up the forklift, and picked up the Caterpillar. Problem solved. A few weeks later, we used this same forklift to load the Bradford lathe (a mere 2,000 pound item) onto a trailer for the move to the Duarte Garage.

Several pieces of equipment were sitting outside of Walter's red barn, including a hay rake that would be pulled behind a tractor. Many years ago, he needed a hay rake but either didn't have the money or didn't want to spend the money to buy one. He went to an equipment dealer and carefully looked over their hay rakes. His conclusion was, "I can make one of those." Generally, not much got thrown away on ranches or farms - there was always a spot to park an old piece of equipment. Getting rid of an old piece of equipment costs time and money; it might need to be pressed into service at some point, and it could be a source of parts and material for future projects. Walter pulled enough pipe, angle iron, wheels, and sheet metal out of his scrapyard to make the hay rake with six disks about three feet in diameter. He proudly told me that the only new parts he bought were the spring steel tines for the disks. When being pulled through a field of cut hay, the tines on the disks rake the hay into a windrow to be picked up by a bailer or loaded onto a wagon. In that configuration, the rake is too wide to go through most gates or be towed down a road to another field. Narrowing the rake is often a manual operation, but Walter devised a system with a hydraulic cylinder, chain, cable, and pulleys so he could narrow the rake by himself from his tractor seat.

Inside of the red barn, Walter showed us some antique horse-drawn wagons and more machines he had made. One that



particularly amazed me was a self-propelled grape vine pruning machine. It was a three-wheeled contraption with a small gas engine hooked to a hydraulic pump. He had a hydraulic motor on the rear wheels and a cable/pulley/hydraulic valve arrangement so as the worker moved down a row of grape vines, the machine would obediently follow under its own power. The clippers were hydraulically boosted to save hand strain. I noticed a speaker mounted on the machine. When I asked Walter what that was for, he answered, "Happy Workers." He had mounted a car radio in a wooden box on the machine. He said his crew leader would tune in classical music for entertainment.

As Ralph and I spent two afternoons with Walter walking his property, I carried a small voice recorder. I have about four hours of recorded conversation and some photos I took as we walked and talked. My goal is to turn this material into a slideshow that will go into the Guild archive. In the meantime, I have started discussions with Harry Briley about putting the raw materials into the archive. There are more interesting stories in those recordings but the most important thing for me is that I got to spend a couple afternoons ten years ago with two terrific people: Ralph Moir and Walter Detjens.

Above: Walter Detjens with his hay rake. Photo by Will Bolton.

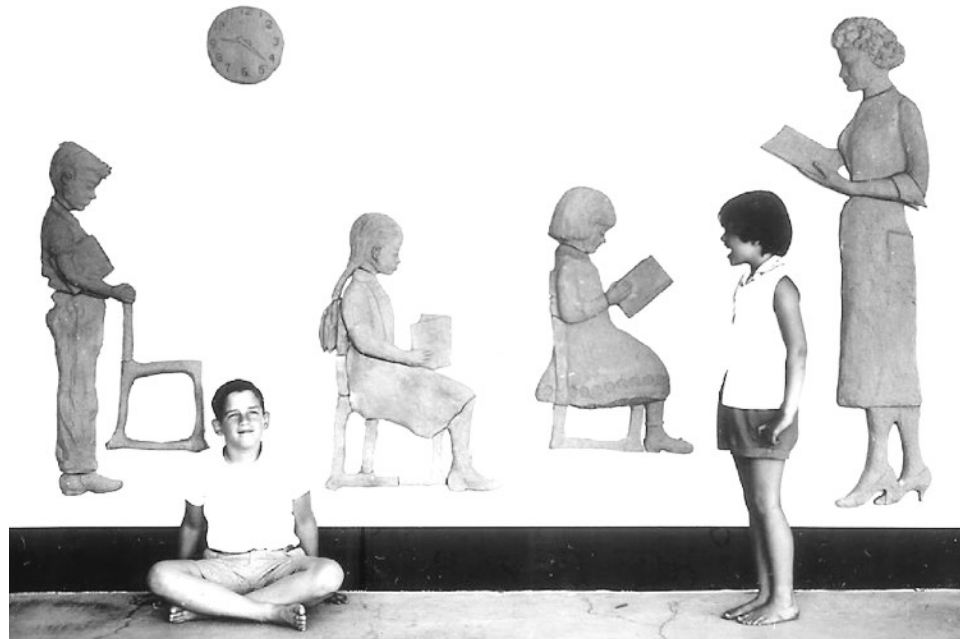
Junction School Bas Relief

by Phil Bardsley

Editor's Note: In our last newsletter I had the pleasure of introducing Phil Bardsley in our Meet a Member column. When asked to give a silly, crazy factoid about himself, Phil's answer was that he served as a model for one of the clay relief panels that graced a side of Junction Avenue School. We thought it would be fun to ask if anyone still had a photo of the mural. As soon as Phil's friend (and LHG member), Jim Oliver, read his copy of the newsletter he contacted Phil and sent him the photo to the right. Phil has kindly given us a little more history to go with the photo

-Dottie Eberly

Art Supervisor Marjorie Kelley dreamed big: a life-sized mural of kids at Junction Avenue School. In 1960, she made it happen. This picture is the first of nine bas-relief clay panels that her students made to decorate the school's front. The Livermore Herald described the mural on May 13th. "Across the mural in groups of two or three are first graders reading, kindergarten children learning cooperative activity, seventh graders studying arithmetic, fourth graders in science, eighth graders in citizenship, fifth graders in music, second graders in art class, third graders in language arts, and sixth graders in physical education."



East Avenue School students had previously created a mural of Livermore Valley history and industry under Mrs. Kelley's direction.

This picture shows Miss Myrtle Iseke's first-grade class. I'm the boy bringing a chair to the reading group. Miss Iseke was from Hawaii, which seemed totally exotic to me at the time. Al Oliver, who took the picture, was a photographer at the Lab. He loved taking pictures of

family and friends in his off hours. His daughter, Barb, who also was in Miss Iseke's class, and his son Jim, are in front of the mural. The picture was taken shortly after the mural was installed. It shows Al's ability to capture the spirit of the moment and bring it to life in the darkroom.

Above: Jimmy and Barbie Oliver in June 1960 in front of the bas relief. Photo by Al Oliver, courtesy of Phil Bardsley.

Livermore Depot Freight Room Affiliated Project

by Will Bolton

In addition to major projects, the Guild also supports smaller projects for which the Guild doesn't provide substantial funding or volunteer time. We refer to those as "Affiliated Projects." A current example of such a project is the Livermore Depot Freight Room. When the Livermore Railroad Depot was moved from its historic location to its current location and refurbished, the former freight room was left unfinished. After discussing completing the freight room for several years, last year Alan Frank (a member of both the Guild and Livermore Rotary) suggested that this be

a Rotary project with support from the Guild. Rotary is coordinating with the City, overseeing preparation of plans, managing the construction, and rounding up the majority of funding – with a small contribution from the Guild. The finished freight room will be a flexible community meeting space with historical displays. A group of Rotary and Guild volunteers recently moved some piles of lumber in the freight room in preparation for construction, which is now underway. Future updates will keep you informed about progress on the Freight Room Affiliated Project.



Above: Railroad Depot Community Room. Photo by Dottie Eberly.

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 three LHG members worked at the Fair and still made \$266.00 for the Guild. We can do better than that this year! 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! Let's "Celebrate Summer" and help LHG!

LHG Events Calendar

Date	Time	Event	Place
Sat. May 10	11am - 4pm	Harmony & Historic Homes Tour	Various
Wed. May 14	7pm	LHG Board Meeting	Virtual Meeting
Sat. May 17	9:30am-noon	Workday: Hagemann Ranch	Hagemann Ranch
Sun. May 18	10am-2pm	Duarte Garage Open House	Duarte Garage
Sun. May 25	1pm-5pm	Sundays at Hagemann Ranch: Prairie School	Hagemann Ranch
Wed. June 11	7pm	LHG Board Meeting	Virtual Meeting
Sun. June 15	10am-2pm	Duarte Garage Open House	Duarte Garage
Sat. June 21	9:30am-noon	Workday: Hagemann Ranch	Hagemann Ranch
Sun. June 29	1pm-5pm	Sundays at Hagemann Ranch: Cars and Engines	Hagemann Ranch
Wed. July 9	7pm	LHG Board Meeting	Virtual Meeting
Sat. July 19	9:30am-noon	Workday: Hagemann Ranch	Hagemann Ranch
Sun. July 20	10am-2pm	Duarte Garage Open House	Duarte Garage
Tues. July 22	7pm	Then and Now Talk: Paintings of Carolyn Lord	Public Library
Sun. July 27	1pm-5pm	Sundays at Hagemann Ranch: Self-guided Tours	Hagemann Ranch

Welcome New and Renewing Members!

January - March 2025

Life

Saundra Lormand
Doris Ryon

Patron

Harry Briley
Muriel Dean

Sponsor

Cheree Hethershaw

Senior

Philomena Buonsante - NEW
Mary Keech Butterfield
Michael Ferrario-NEW
Lynn Rogan-NEW
Greg Thompson
Ken Underhill
Kathleen Young

Household

David & Alice Quinn

Individual

Julie Clark-NEW
Suzanne Clark
Richard Clay
Trevor Gaspari
Richard Hanan
Patrick Timmer-NEW
Virginia Williams-NEW

In Appreciation

Donations

Alan Frank
Loretta Kaskey
Jeffrey Williams

Midway School Project

Dana Boyd in memory of Arlene Webster
Lance Cavalieri Jewelers
Richard Finn
Rickie Friedli/Giono
Rosetta Roasters
Questers (for McGuffey Readers)
Barbara Soules

Duarte Garage

John & Nadine Mills

Hagemann Ranch

John Bishop
Tri-Valley Cultural Jews

Home Tour Sponsors

Mary Evans, Coldwell Bankers Realty
Jay Frost, Livermore Valley Real Estate
The Kaskeys
Jean King
Michelle Massey, Merrill
Nicole Nicolay, Love Livermore
Mony Nop Real Estate Team
Glen Riggs Realtor

Contact Us

President

Will Bolton
will.bolton1@aol.com

1st Vice Pres. Program Chair

Harry Briley
brileyh@comcast.net

2nd Vice Pres. Membership Chair

Donna Stevens
dlmstevens@comcast.net

Secretary

Sylvia Chatagnier
syl.chatagnier@gmail.com

Treasurer

Madelynne Farber
treasurer@livermorehistory.com

Directors at Large

Barbara Soules
tbsoules@yahoo.com
Susan Junk

Duarte Garage Curator

Will Bolton
will.bolton1@aol.com

Volunteer Coordinator

volunteer@livermorehistory.com

Newsletter Editor

Dottie Eberly
newsletter@livermorehistory.com

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

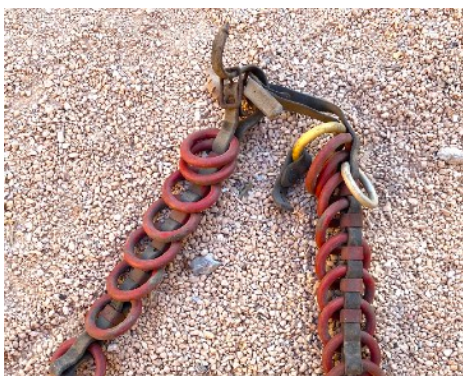
Annual membership dues are: Individual \$25.00, Household \$35.00, Senior (age 62+) \$15.00, Student \$15.00, Sponsor \$75.00 and Patron \$150.00. Life (Individual) \$500.00 memberships are also available.
Please make checks payable to "LHG."

Livermore Heritage Guild
P.O. Box 961
Livermore, CA 94551

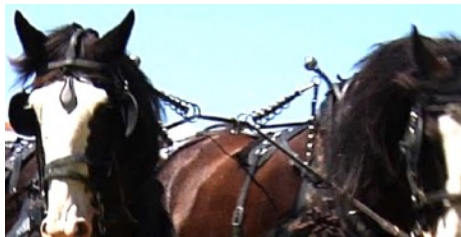
What It Is!

by Jeff Kaskey

These red and white rings in the photo below from the What Is It? question in our February 2025 issue were not only confirmed as spreaders, but member Kathleen Young explained that they



were used with teams of horses to properly direct the inner reins of the parallel horses back to the driver so as to avoid tangling. Kathleen sent a photo (below) and further suggested I look very carefully at the rings to see if there was any identification. Indeed there was. These rings were made by the Zylonite corporation in Massachusetts, from 1881 to 1891. Thanks Kathleen!



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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2024

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Charity
Navigator



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