

Yolo County Historical Society



Prez Says

This has been a busy month for the Society. We did not participate on the First Friday Art Walk even though I had planned to do so. The weather was too cold and the sun set by 6 PM. So, we decided to bypass the month of February. I seem to recall we did that last year too.

We will begin our participation in the Art Walk on the first Friday in March. **Serendipity**, located at 519 Main Street in Woodland, will be our first business this year. We will give free tours of the building from 6:00-7:30 PM.

In this newsletter I am focusing on several churches in both Davis and Woodland. The information regarding the Community Church in Davis is directly taken from Dennis Dahlin's book *Church and Community, A History of Davis Community Church*. The other article is about the windows in the Methodist Church in Woodland. A third article is about the 165-year old celebration of Woodland Christian Church.

On another note, Teri Laugenour and I are cleaning out one of our storage units. Since the building has sold, the rent has increased. We are working to eliminate multiple copies of assorted old newsletters, shred old bank cancelled checks and statements, and recycle old files. We have also found items for the Archives. Teri has done a wonderful job. Thanks so much.

Finally, Seth Alban has agreed to be our new treasurer. John thanks him and I thank him.

If you would like to receive a digital copy of the newsletter, please let me know. It saves us around \$1.50 per person per mailing. My email is khwoodland@aol.com.

Remember, as always....

History Rules!

Kathy Harryman, President

Patrons

Thanks so much to the following for supporting the Yolo County Historical Society. We could not run this organization without your additional help.

Starr and Jeff Barrow

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**Become a patron by
contributing \$100 or more.**

A Church is Born

excerpted from *A History of the Davis Community Church* by Dennis Dahlin

Excitement was in the air! On May 10, 1869, a telegraph message announced that the nation's first transcontinental railroad had been completed. The railroad had reached Davisville in the previous year, and now the emerging community would benefit from this vital link between California and the rest of the nation.

A few days earlier, Rev. Benjamin B. Bonham had returned from the Benicia Presbytery meeting on May 8 to announce that the delegates had given approval to establish churches in Davisville and Tremont. Rev. Bonham was a pioneer minister in northern California, helping to establish churches in Sonoma County before arriving in Davisville.

Beginning in the early 1860's, an informal group of Presbyterians had gathered in rural homes and schoolhouses served by circuit riding preachers who might travel twenty to forty miles per day. Church records indicate that a congregation may have been meeting in the Tremont area as early as 1861. Now the stage was set for establishing an official congregation. On November 18, 1869, the First Presbyterian Church of Davisville was officially organized by Rev. Bonham and a number of charter members. The enterprising Rev. Bonham combined his calling as minister with work as a physician and co-publisher of Davisville's first newspaper.

The first services in Davisville were held in the front part of Charles Harwood's blacksmith shop, with a curtain dividing the worship space from the shop. A nail keg or bench served as a pulpit. From time to time, farmers would bring their horses to be shod; sermons and hymns were accompanied by metallic clanging behind the curtain.

Seeking a quieter setting, the worshipers soon moved to the new Davisville schoolhouse.

The Davisville Land Company donated two lots at what is now the corner of Fourth and E Streets. Architect Charles Geddes of San Francisco was retained to prepare plans for a 52' by 32' sanctuary.

Construction was underway in January 1870. The congregation's ambitious goals were tempered by financial reality. The 100-foot steeple, bell, and town clock were eliminated from the project.

After the initial excitement of the church founding, sober reality set in. As soon as construction of the new church was underway, the trustees placed a notice in the *Davisville Advertiser*, to notify subscribers that they "are in great need of funds to carry this work forward," along with a plea for all to lend a helping hand.

A traditional timber-raising took place on January 17, and the trustees noted that "all hands applied themselves vigorously to the work, and we were gratified to see that our grunting had not been in vain."

However, some of the original pledges of support were not forthcoming. By November 1870, only five dollars remained in the building fund. In order to complete the structure, a mortgage was taken out – at 1-½ percent interest per month.

Then the Panic of 1879 occurred.

If you want to find out more about how the church faced its many challenges and opportunities, Dahlin's book is on sale at the [Hattie Weber Museum](#) for \$20.00. Thank you, Dennis, for your work and contribution not only to the church but also to the Yolo County Historical Society.

Methodist Church Windows Tell a Story

by Dianne Moody, submitted by Karen Hannum

The next time you are in the Methodist Church, located at 620 North Street in Woodland, look at the first set of large double stained-glass windows to the right of the “Christ Knocking at the Door” window on the north side of the church. You’ll see that the windows were given by Lester and George Cranston in memory of their father Reuben B. Cranston.

At the top of the left window there are three white lilies on a blue background. At the bottom of that window, the symbol for the Odd Fellows world-wide fraternal organization of three interconnected rings is shown. The top center ring is higher than the other ones and inside is the word “Love”; the bottom left one has the word “Friendship” inside it and the bottom right ring has the word “Truth” inside it. Their motto of Friendship, Love and Truth stands for the three basic guidelines that we need to follow in our daily lives.

At the top of the right window, there is an open eye which is a symbol of God’s divine watchfulness and care of the universe. Underneath the eye again is the symbol of Odd Fellows fraternal organization of three interconnected rings on a blue background. At the bottom of this window is “In memory of Reuben B. Cranston”.

Reuben Cranston, one of Woodland’s leading citizens and one of the church members, came to Yolo County from Ohio in 1879. For a brief time, he was a stagecoach driver for a line running from Woodland to Lake County. Later he worked as a clerk at the Marshall Diggs hardware store.

In 1898, Reuben started his own hardware store in downtown Woodland at 539 Main Street. His building, located at 616-618 Main Street, was built for his expanding hardware business in 1914. He was a member of the *Independent Order of Odd Fellows* fraternal organization.



Business Buddies

Please support these local businesses.
They support the Yolo County
Historical Society.

The House Dresser
Corner Drug
Local Inspirations

History of Woodland Christian Church

by Wanda Freeman, Historian of *Woodland Christian Church*

In the spring of 1854, bills (signs) were posted around the village of Woodland, then known as Yolo City. The bills announced the upcoming visit of a wandering preacher to the Shellhammer Ranch. The next Sunday a crowd gathered – some out of curiosity, some to worship. A man from the crowd jumped to a platform and delivered a fiery sermon. He then removed his disguise, revealing himself as a resident of the community, Joshua Lawson.

Woodland Christian Church was organized the following fall. The original membership was 27 people. Elders Thomas Thompson and Joshua Lawson officiated at services. The congregation met first in a small board schoolhouse. A union meeting house was built in 1856 on property which is now occupied by Woodland Cemetery. This building was used for services by four denominations.

John Nixon Pendegast became the first minister. In addition to serving as pastor for the congregation for over 20 years, he was an important figure in the development of Woodland.

Education of the children of the community became of foremost importance. Co-education was virtually unheard of anywhere. Still, this community's desire for the best possible education grew, resulting in the founding of Hesperian College. The school opened on March 4th, 1861, at the very hour that President Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated for his first term. By August, it rose to the first rank among schools on the Pacific slope. Records for the years of 1867 through 1869 show an average attendance of more than 200 students per annum. (At that time, the city of Woodland had a population of about 1600 with another 1000 in the immediate vicinity.) The rules of governing the college required that most of the trustees be members of Woodland Christian Church. Many of the instructors of the college were also pastors of the church. After building a new facility for Hesperian on College Street, the Hesperian charter was transferred to Berkley Bible Seminary and the physical property was deeded to Woodland High School. Several Christian colleges united in 1934 and relocated to Southern California where it remains under the name of Chapman University.

In 1865, Woodland Christian Church built its own small brick building on the Hesperian College campus. The congregation worshiped there for over 20 years.

A large brick church was erected on the corner of College and Lincoln Streets in 1889 at a cost of \$20,000. The church had a membership of 600 people. The building had beautiful stained-glass windows and a huge pipe organ. (Some furnishings from the 1889 building are on display in the church's museum, known as Heritage Oak Room.)

The Education Building was erected in 1927. This two-story building has 28 rooms and a large social hall. In the excavation for this new building, the wall of the sanctuary was cracked. The church building was declared unsafe and had to be razed in 1927. Worship services were held in the social hall from 1927 through 1949.

On October 16, 1949, the present mission style sanctuary was dedicated. This building, constructed by Goodenough Construction Company with Mr. Church as the foreman, cost \$108,275.

Research materials used for this article include materials found in Yolo County Archives and the archives of the Woodland Christian Church located in the Marven Suggett History Room. These materials include, but are not limited to, writings of descendants of John Nixon Pendegast, Elmer Davis, Marven Suggett, Charles Payton as well as articles from "Christian Church News" from Healdsburg and Woodland Daily Democrat of many years.

California Baseball History Firsts

by Curtis “Hammer” Piatt, from *The Scorecard*

The earliest known record of organized base ball activity in California has a connection to Central Valley Vintage Base Ball. One of our clubs, the **Sacramento Base Ball Club**, is continuing the story of a real club that made California history. According to Dick Dobbins and Jon Twichell in their book *Nuggets on the Diamond: Professional Baseball in the Bay Area From the Gold Rush to the Present*, “the first truly active baseball club [in California] was organized November 11, 1859, as the Sacramento Base Ball Club” (Pg. 16).

However, despite Sacramento Base Ball Club’s claim to fame as the first active California club, Sacramento did not play in the first official game in California. Dobbins and Twichell explain that the Sacramento Club’s formation “immediately got San Francisco’s juices flowing, and the November 19 edition of the *Spirit of the Times* exhorted the locals to generate their own baseball clubs....” (Pg. 16). The **San Francisco Base Ball Club** formed shortly after, and they publicly sent out a challenge to face them in a game on February 22nd, 1860, to celebrate George Washington’s birthday. The Red Rovers accepted that challenge, and the first officially recorded baseball game in California was held on the morning of February 22nd in San Francisco. Sacramento was close behind by hosting the second game in California that same day in the afternoon when they took on the newly formed Union club from Sacramento.

This year marks 160 years since the first and second officially recorded baseball games were played. That fact brings a tremendous amount of pride and responsibility to our work of teaching history through the lens of this beloved sport, and I’m grateful for everyone that puts in their time and energy to keep us going. I hope you will join us if you haven’t already, and experience the joy and passion our players and volunteers have for reliving moments of history like these.

Central Valley Vintage Base Ball Spring 2020 Schedule

(Home team will play a doubleheader against two opponents)

Date	Home Team	Time	Opponent	Location	Bye
April 18th	Sacramento	9 AM	VS Woodland	South Natomas Community Park	Davisville
		11:30 AM	VS Solano		
May 2nd	Davisville	9 AM	VS Solano	TBD	Woodland
		11:30 AM	VS Sacramento		
May 16th	Woodland	9 AM	VS Sacramento	Woodside Park	Solano
		11:30 AM	VS Davisville		
May 30th	Solano	9 AM	VS Davisville	TBD	Sacramento
		11:30 AM	VS Woodland		



www.cvvbb.org

From the archives: 1974, before telephone area codes were necessary.



YOLO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 PRESENTS
"AN EVENING WITH MARK TWAIN"
 Starring:
MR. JAMES PULSIFER as Mark Twain
 AT
THE WOODLAND OPERA HOUSE
 2nd and Dead Cat Alley
 Woodland, California

Friday, Nov. 1 at 8:00 P.M.
 Saturday, Nov. 2 at 8:00 P.M.
 Sunday, Nov. 3 at 2:00 P.M. Matinee

Tickets may be purchased at:

TRAYNOR'S MUSIC
 618 Main Street
 Woodland, Ca
 952 2873

THE COUNSEL STATIONERY
 708 Second St.
 Yuba, Ca
 753-6382

BENDER'S
 1215 Col
 Woodland
 662-284

A wonderful audience and wonderful the

Ticket price: \$2.00 per person. Proceeds go toward the restoration of the Woodland Opera House. Tickets may be purchased by check in care of the Yolo County Historical Society, P.O. Box 1447, Woodland, Ca 95692. 1. By return mail with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. OR 2. At the door on performance.

Clarksburg Schoolhouse on the Move

reprinted from the *Archives Ledger* (with permission)



Clarksburg Schoolhouse

December 9, 2019, was the big moving day for the Clarksburg schoolhouse which traveled a challenging quarter mile to its new location. The schoolhouse started on Clarksburg Road, where it was part of the Noah Adams Lumber Yard; traveled east up to the River Road, went south for one good-sized block, then turned down Netherlands Avenue, and finally north onto Center Street and its final destination at the corner of Netherlands Avenue and Riverview Drive.

Although the distance was short, navigating the ups and downs to get onto and off the levee road was a challenge. The next step is to start fund raising in earnest and begin the process of rehabilitating the building, before raising it up on stilts to comply with FEMA requirements.

Read more -- [Friends of the 1882 Clarksburg Schoolhouse](#)

Proposed reconstruction



Vision Statement

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

See our webstie at ychs.org

Newsletter editor: *Barbara Sommer*