

Sacramento River Delta Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

"For what is the present, after all, but a growth out of the past." - Walt Whitman

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 26, NUMBER 1

JUNE 2006

PRESIDENTS NOTES

Hi everyone! My notes are going to be short so you can enjoy reading everything else. We survived a fairly wet spring and some of the old timers can't remember a wet spring like the one of 2006. It may be of history in the making. The history of wet seasons in our Delta have a history that includes flooding. One can find books like "Up and Down California" by William H. Brewer that give an account of the 1862 flood. As levees were built to protect from these floods many towns were started, land reclaimed for farming and a sense of business grew in this once wet Delta. One wonders how the Indians coped with the wet weather and flooding. We now face a new situation where the powers to be say our levees aren't of the strength and height to withstand a one hundred year flood. Again lets look at history. Many of our levees that protect us have withstood a hundred years of time with only small problems. Doesn't this account for something?

We lost the Delta author and "River Rat" Hal Schell this last month. Hal authored "Dawdling on the Delta", "Cruising California's Delta", "Delta Images" and the articles in the "Bay and Yachtsmen". He was working on a new book of the Delta when he had his stroke a year ago. I was excited he was doing another book and was going to help him with pictures and info. He wanted to do a quality book. He will be greatly missed. Maybe with some help a book can still be published in his honor.

Our society is still moving forward. The oral history program still needs your help as we need volunteers to do the interviews. Our programs have been well attended. Thanks to you. Our September program will be the museum in Elk Grove. We hosted the Sac Consortium meeting at Jean Harvie this month with good attendance from the Sac area historical societies. I have started putting an old book collection in the Walnut Grove Library display case. This will be rotated out every other month. Come buy and visit the display and give me ideas. Have a good summer. Tom

SOCIETY NOTES

We started January with our grand Potluck Dinner. Everyone worked hard and it was a success. There were over 80 in attendance. Helpers included C. J. Jensen, who was in charge and his kitchen crew Wally and Debbie Chan and Mindy Harding, Jim Dahlberg and Alfanso Marnia did the setup, Linda van Loben Sels and Doris Pylman were at the door, decorations by Mary Fulster, Nelson Harding poured wine which was donated by Bogle Winery, Pierson Lambert Vineyards and Erhardt Winery and everyone helped on clean up. The following were elected for the coming year Tom Herzog will continue as President. Judy Culbertson Vice President, Terry Alcorn Recording Secretary, Doris Pylman Corresponding Secretary and Linda van Loben Sels Treasurer. Newly elected Board Members are Debbie Chan, Jim Dahlberg, Mindy Harding and Esther Koopman. Board members continuing on are Fran Bates, Bobbie Collier, Joe Enos, C. J. Jensen and Marshall Pylman. Our program was Jim Dahlberg who exhibited and described his marvelous pear label collection. We have missed seeing it as the Pear Fair has changed its exhibit. The original labels were works of art. Some of them were lithographs. They were created so that farmers could identify their crops in the big warehouses and trading rooms. Jim made a most interesting presentation.

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JULY 30, 2006
COURTLAND, CA

SOCIETY NOTES (Continued)

Barbara and Jim Dahlberg have been among the major supporters of the Historical Society since the very beginning. It would be impossible to count the number of cookies and other goodies Barbara has contributed to many meeting and gatherings all up and down the Delta. Jim has acquired many donations for our Resource Center since its beginning. We are not sure of all his contributions but one for sure is the beautiful picture of Walnut Grove that hangs in the Center. It was found in the gymnasium of the old Walnut Grove Elementary School.

The meetings this year have been both interesting and well attended. In March we heard Phil Pezzaglia speak on Rio Vista history. He writes for the River News Herald and does a wonderful job of finding missing facts. Phil has also published a book on Rio Vista. We spent a very pleasant evening in the Jean Harvie Center.

The May meeting began with an always fascinating tour of the Rio Vista Museum. Jim Tracy then spoke about the local Indians and displayed some of his artifacts from the region.

Visit the Resource Center! You will find a great deal of interesting material very easy to locate and use. Copies of a lot of the material are available or you can simply pursue the various archival contents. We have most of the newsletters and speakers copies as well as many of the local interviews available. Resource Center is open Tuesdays by appointment.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS FOR 2006

Sharon Boyd, Florence Dinublio, Lim O. Mar, Lynn McIntyre, Deborah Mendel, Terry & Liz Mulligan, Russ Oms, Lana Paulhamus, Eugene Phillips, Marlene Schultz, Judy Smith Family and Barbara Takei.

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CLARKSBURG

Written by Kathleen Graham Hutchinson

This is the continuation of our Towns along the River series. We have completed Ryde, Vorden, Courtland and Walnut Grove. This is a multi part history of Clarksburg. Because some of the material is conflicting and some is vague or ambiguous there are sure to be inaccuracies in this article and recollections can be fallible. As with all previous articles, additions or corrections are welcomed. Many thanks to those who are no longer with us George Hudson, Warren Bogle, Tom Merwin, Herbert and Daisy Merwin, Lester Holmes, Robert Heringer, Crutcher Houtley (Sac Bee), Joe Olson, George Wilson among others and various Ephemera.--Ed.

Clarksburg is located in the tail of Yolo County. It is the nexus of a region which includes the Holland Tract, Merritt Island, Lisbon District and the Market of Freeport to which it has historical ties. At eleven feet elevation, the town is situated between Sutter Slough and Elk Slough. The original settlement straddled the natural levee or berm on a neck of land contiguous in the west with a vast swamp of waving twelve-foot trees (bulrushes). Elk Slough, named for the herds of tulle elk which roamed the southern limit of the swamp, branches from the river at the down stream end of town. As a result of its unique location, Clarksbergers were called "rim landers" or "rim carmers." One could row a boat into the swamp and cover two to three miles north, south or west. Occasionally, during the summer dry season the tule swamp was fired and soot from thousands of acres of burning and smoldering vegetation blackened the sky. "The fire glowed at night as if the entire earth was ablaze." Prior to American settlement, the Miwok Indians roamed the area living off the bounty of the land and water. A half-mile down river from town there once was an Indian mound. But, by the time Clarksburg was founded, the Indians had gone, decimated by malaria.

In 1849 Frederick Babel established himself as the first white settler in the area near Babel Slough on the far side of the tule swamp. In 1856 Robert Christopher Clark, a judge, lawyer and later State legislator, established Clarksburg. The Clark home was located near the site of the present day Holland Market. Clark is also known to have been an early fruit grower, cultivating peaches. The Clarks lived in the town only a short period of time, moving to Sacramento in 1869. Clark evidently also sought acreage opposite Freeport. By 1879 he is alleged to have owned 600 acres. Other

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CLARKSBURG (Continued)

early settlers went to Clarksburg to hunt, fish, trap (beaver and muskrat) and to farm. Neighboring Merritt Island was settled in 1850; the adjacent Lisbon District in 1870. Among them were Carver (1858), Krull, Curtis, Heringer, Rose, Miller, Soto (all 1860's), Cornish, Hogaboom (1870's), Webber (1878), Lawlor (1880s), Hosick, Pylman and Waterbury (1882). The Lisbon District is known for its large Azorean Portuguese population of fisher folk and small farmers.

Clarksburg didn't have protective levees until 1918 and many residents, as late as 1910, lived in houseboats or in homes built on stilts to protect from floods. The Waterbury house was built on stilts and stood on the site of the "old Olson House". Among other early houses was that of the Cornelius Hogaboom family who after migrating from New York State via the Isthmus of Panama, built a house roughly between the north end of the town and the sugar refinery. The Cave house was built on the riverbank and the Daniel Grant Webber house near the Hogaboom house. From the time of settlement, Clarksburg was a major riverboat stop. The wharf was the hub of community activity. Even local elections, until 1930, were held on the wharf. In 1878 Daniel Grant Webber sold his Freeport commercial interests to his brother-in-law, Philip Riehl and moved to Clarksburg to open a store on the wharf. Thereafter the wharf was known as Webber's Landing. He operated the store until 1905. The wharf burned three times: 1909, 1915 and 1941/2. After the last fire it was not rebuilt. The 1909 wharf was a "drive" through structure. The 1915 wharf was constructed of massive redwood beams, tin roof and a large freight door, which faced the river. A chute or "runway" was integral to both the pre-1905 and 1915 wharves and could be lowered to accommodate riverboat and barge/lighter decks. Produce was wheeled down the chute to the deck by stevedores pushing steel wheel hand trucks. If a stevedore lost control of the hand truck he flipped into the river. Again, using hand trucks, freight was unloaded from the boats and was pushed up the chute by brute force or hauled by rope and windlass. A wharf master was in charge. Sacks of onions, pink beans, peas, potatoes, wild fowl, fish, cans of cream were all shipped from the wharf. Bread and beer were among commodities remembered by early residents. After 1911 the swamp was drained and developed agriculturally by the Netherlands Farm Company and its successor, the Holland Land Company. The last remnant of the swamp, Winchester Lake, northwest of Clarksburg, became a

favorite spot of market hunters. A slough once connected Winchester Lake to Big Lake, the center of the swamp. Duck Slough still drains the area Big Lake covered. Until 1918, wild waterfowl were an important product shipped out. The birds were killed, collected, drawn and bundled. Next, they were stacked (high) like cordwood on the wharf. Each autumn, during the migratory flights of duck and geese, market hunter's shot all day using large bore shotguns. According to local residents, the sky darkened with duck and geese flying overhead. In 1895 the limit was established at 50 ducks and night hunting was banned. Post 1895, after delivering game to the wharf, the hunters often spent the night reloading brass shells for the next day's shoot. Each hunter had a favorite spot and those spots were given his name. "Poachers" were dealt with, although technically, these spots were public property. A 1907 license cost \$1.00. In 1918 the U.S. Migratory Bird Treaty prohibited the open sale of wild fowl. Over a longer period of time, salmon and sturgeon were shipped from Clarksburg. The salmon were netted downstream from town in a straight reach of the river. The fisher folk were Azorean Portuguese who usually lived on arks. Excellent fisherman they commercially fished the river using a "Missouri drift" net, which is a salmon swing net, which reached across the river. The net was 20 meshes deep with a fork line on top and a lead line on bottom. (*A mesh is 7 inches and nets are measured in inches to pull its weight. The nets are measured knot to knot; seven inches equal 3 1/2 square inches.) Using rowboats, the net was laid out and placed in a circle shape, which the current held in place. The drifts were often 2 1/2 miles long. Commercial salmon fishing in the river was banned by the state in the mid-1950's and sturgeon fishing became highly regulated. Dairying was another big business in the area and which shipped from the wharf. The Clarksburg Creamery was located just down river of the Lawlor store. The Kneppel Dairy was just upriver of town where today the dehydration plant is located. The Kneppel Dairy shipped separated cream from the wharf to Sacramento and San Francisco. Other dairies in the surrounding area included Greene Cave, Trumpler, Babel, Paine, Hinsdale, Krull, and Waterbury. The well known King Brothers Dairy was located by Elk Slough, south of town. Among the other early businesses in town, the first Lawlor store was built on the riverside burned and was rebuilt on the landside. The store specialized in general merchandise and sold harnesses, hardware, soda pop, chicken feed, clothing, hand and soft good and housed the Wells Fargo Express office. Hardware items were discontinued after 1915. After the 1915 fire and until

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CLARKSBURG (Continued)

the new store was built, Lawlor's operated from the nearby Terra Butcher Shop. Terra operated both a slaughterhouse and butcher shop, a common combination. The new store, built 1916/18 incorporated an office and barbershop. On the north side, behind a partition was a bar and pool hall. Lawlor operated the store until succeeded by his widow, Grace Webber Lawlor Cave, who had remarried. The Lawlor's son Norman, followed in 1918/19 and during the transfer, Mrs. Cosby was associated as partner and the business was known henceforth as Lawlor & Cosby. In 1919 a service station was added. The pool hall was altered in 1925/26 to accommodate a butcher shop operated by Fay Ruhe. Two large meat iceboxes cooled by 300 pound blocks of ice were in the basement to which the ice blocks were lowered by rope elevator. During prohibition the bar was transformed into a lunch counter and soda fountain which was presided over by Ruhe's wife, Inez. By 1936 the store was known only as N. U. Lawlor and a V. I. M. automobile made deliveries when not in family use.

Frank Husick arrived in Clarksburg from Minnesota and bought or built his hardware store on the riverbank and opened a blacksmith shop in conjunction. His house was on the south side and adjacent. His hardware store opening explains the elimination of the hardware line by the Lawlor store. In 1913 he built a new store for \$2,000 and moved the smithy north of the new store. In 1922 he built a metal shop/garage on the site now occupied by the telephone company. He closed the blacksmith shop in 1928 after the death of his son but occasionally "fired the forge to make beet knives, asparagus knives, to sharpen harrow teeth or to do the odd job." Other early businesses included the Buell Boarding House, a Chinese laundry and as mentioned before, Jack Forter's grocery store. The first Post Office was opened in 1858 at Willow Point and closed in 1860 due to recurring floods. Until 1870 locals ferried across to Freeport by the Clarksburg ferry or the Jackson ferry over to Freeport. In 1870 Merritt Post Office was opened; closing in 1873. Again, flood and inaccessibility and again the mail was sent to Freeport. In 1876 Frederick A. Alexander was appointed Post Master by President Grant. The Post Office was located at the Kneppel Dairy, later moving to the Lawlor store where Lawlor served as Post Master from 1888 to 1900. Rural delivery was begun in 1921 when J. B. Long of Hood ferried across in the Model T to deliver the mail for 33 years. Until the 1920's, the principal mode of transportation was by boat. All the

major riverboats, both freighters and packets, stopped at Clarksburg. As noted above, a ferry linked the town with the east bank of the river. The first ferry was placed in service in 1855 and was owned and operated by Jack Foster. In summer it was powered by cable. The craft had an engine, which turned two sheaves which reeled in an underwater cable. Residents recalled the engine sounded "chucka drucka, whoosh, whoosh, whoosh." The pesky hand-cranked engines were difficult to start in clamp or foggy weather. At anytime the cables could break allowing the craft to aimlessly float downstream until lassoed. In winter, the cable was replaced by a pontoon shagged against the ferry. Depending on the current, the ferry crossed at either a "leisurely pace or thrilling speed." "Conflicting patterns of travel" resulted from heavy river traffic negotiating around the pontoons. If the ferry was overloaded she settled into her slip and was dislodged with a crowbar. If she remained lodged, the offending vehicles were unloaded. Another problem was driving off the ferry into water, as Jack Clarke did in his Model T Ford. The notorious free-floating ferry "Mary Ann" was placed in service in 1920. She was a twin paddle wheel ferry and accommodated vehicles on either side of her engine, which was placed amid ships. She was designed by Nunes Brothers of Clarksburg and could safely carry six trucks or the equivalent. Her tenders were Mike Silva and Charlie Butler. She was advertised as "largest, best, and fastest" on the river. However, if her load was lopsided, it caused one paddle wheel to take more water and caused her to corkscrew. If possible, a rudder adjustment was made to compensate. The "Mary Ann" sank twice: 1928 and 1929. In 1929, overloaded with hardwood flooring for the new high school, she circled across and ground in front of Husick Hardware-- the load of lumber was lost and floated away to be collected by locals as salvage.

In 1920 the Sacramento - San Francisco Railroad Company opened the Northern Electric Interurban. Area residents boarded the trains at either Arcade Station (Lisbon Station) or Glide Landing and arrived in San Francisco three hours later. In 1941, due to declining revenues, some of which was due to improved infrastructure for auto transportation, the interurban closed. The Holland Branch Line of the Sacramento Northern Railroad reached Clarksburg in 1929 and served the sugary refinery. The railroad, originally the Oakland, Antioch & Eastern, entered the "Holland Tract" at Riverview, crossed Jefferson Boulevard and Duck Slough at Greendale Junction. It maintained sheds at Oxford where

CLARKSBURG (Continued)

the branch line terminated. River and rail transportation were popular means of travel because the levee tops were unimproved and nearly useless to most vehicular transportation. The levee road between Clarksburg and Freeport was sand topped and impassable to automobile traffic. All the dirt topped roads became impassible in winter. Straw could be layered on top in winter to give vehicles some traction, but attracted chickens who pecked it. In winter, standard equipment for the rural mailman included: shovel, chains and planks. Travel during levee repair work was always impossible. Not to be thwarted, locals drove via "barnyards, fields, and orchards: opening and closing gates; letting down fences; planking ditches." After the levees were paved, the Gibson Stage buses regularly stopped at Clarksburg. Youngsters provided their own transportation to school: they walked, rowed, rode a horse or drove a cart. All the schools provided stabling. After the auto was developed, Clarksburg Elementary School operated a school bus built by the White Motor Company. The bus was called the "Cracker Box" and if overloaded on either or both sides, the frame sank to the tires and locked the wheels. On rainy days if the bus became mired, everybody but the driver got out and pushed. In 1929 the Freeport Bridge was opened. It is a cantilevered counterweight bascule bridge and originally had a wooden deck, later replaced by steel mesh decking, in the mid-1950's.

Agriculture arrived in a big way with drainage of the tule swamp by the Netherlands Farms Company. The huge tract of land (25,000 acres) extends from Ryer Island to the southeast, Elk Slough and the Lisbon District to the east and the Sacramento Land Company to the north. The original survey was begun in 1912, finished in 1913 and Guy Fraser subsequently was appointed resident engineer with Alfred Parsons of the Bank of Hayward as the company representative in San Francisco. The land was projected as prime sugar beet acreage, but the company was short-lived when President Woodrow Wilson reduced the sugar tariff and the domestic sugar market collapsed. Coupled with this blow was the bankruptcy of the Northern Electric Railroad, which served the area and the outbreak of World War I. Revived in 1916, the company was refinanced and renamed the Holland Land Company. J. V. Mendenhall was appointed president and Gus Olson was named general manager. The headquarters were one mile west of town on the Netherlands Road. By 1917, the privately financed reclamation project was entirely completed. The

job cost \$2,500,000 and used twelve clamshell dredges. Thirty-five miles of levee were built, 150 miles of canal excavated, and one pumping plant built, capable of 175,000 gallons per minute and eighteen sub-pumping stations. Twenty-five miles of roads were also built one hundred bridges and culverts constructed, telephone lines installed and ninety farm buildings built. In 1919, the Holland Bypass Company was formed to reclaim and enclose with low-tide levees an additional 3,000 acres in the Yolo Bypass. In 1924, after this job was completed, the Holland Bypass Company was dissolved. The Holland Land Company was disbanded in 1941. Thereafter, Reclamation District 999 became responsible for maintenance.

The development of the tule swamp into agricultural land by the Holland Land Company helped make Clarksburg the commercial and social center of the area and increased the population three-fold in the neighboring areas; The Lisbon District, Merritt Island, the "Holland Tract", and the Glide Tract. Irving Smith, a civil engineer and company employee, platted and subdivided Clarksburg into the town familiar today.

During the first half of the 20th century businesses included a garage with blacksmith shop which, from 1935 until 1950, was the site of a Dodge and Plymouth dealership, followed by a trucking headquarters, and even today a roofing business. Another garage was, by the mid-1930's, a Chevrolet dealership. There were several owners of the Chevrolet dealership; among them the Henry Cleaves before the premises were acquired by the Silverdale Labor Association which specializes in contract farm labor. In the 1930's Anderson Brothers owned an electrical, plumbing and well-digging business in the same building. (The more distant rural areas outside Clarksburg were not fully electrified until 1925.) Anderson Bros. closed in 1941 at the outbreak of World War II. Noah Adams Lumber Company (home plant in Walnut Grove) owned a lumberyard in Clarksburg. The town had two oil company bulk plants: Standard Oil Company of California and the Union Oil Company. "Standard of California's" wharf was just north of town near the sugar refinery. Its office overhung the river. A blue and orange Union 76 sign perched prominently on the roof of the Clarksburg Wharf.

In conjunction with opening the "Holland Tract" to agriculture, the Oregon Nursery Company established a local outlet managed by Robert Schneider. The nursery, locally known as "Schneider-Vaughn", Continued Page 6

CLARKSBURG (Continued)

was located on Willow Point Road. "Oremco" owners with Mendenhall and Olson thought the reclaimed land would sustain five fruit orchards and not groves. A photo taken circa 1920 shows bundles of saplings stacked in town near where today stands the church and post office. Generally, the water table in the tract is too high for store fruit trees and the trees developed root rot. After a few years, the nursery closed and the Holland Tract was left to open field crops. The walnut trees raised by the nursery were eventually exclusively planted along area roads, many surviving today.

After 1920, sugar beets were tried again as a principal crop when the Alameda Sugar Company contracted for the first beets grown in the "Holland Tract." Ten dollars per ton was offered to the farmer. Holly Sugar Company later bought out the Alameda Sugar Company and in turn was followed by the Amalgamated Sugar Company in 1934. Under the direction of Mr. Benning, the landmark refinery was built. The brand name of the product was "White Satin" sugar. In 1936, American Crystal Sugar bought the plant and Lester Holmes, a local landowner, served as the general manager until 1954. The refinery has always been locally known as the "sugar beet factory". Growers trucked the beets to market in bobtail trucks and paid for the haulage. Sugar beets were either taken to the local refinery or to refineries out of the area. If out of the area, the beets were transported first by truck and then by barge. The "beet dump" on Merritt Island was where "the road goes to Olson's". A bulkhead held the beets in place until a barge arrived. The beets were loaded by conveyor belt onto the barge. The conveyor belt was operated by a small engine but the beets were shoveled and pushed into the conveyor belt. The refinery closed in 1980 after the sugar tariff was again eliminated. It became a cooperative and then closed permanently in 1993, creating a tremendous economic stress down turn in Clarksburg.

At the end of World War II Clarksburg was the site of two German P.O.W. camps. In 1945 a camp of 250 was opened followed by, in 1946, a camp for 550. The P.O.W.'s were used for farm work. Joe Borges owned and operated the Clarksburg Airport, which specialized in airplane repair and crop dusting. In the later 20th century, "The Davis Survey" recommended the Holland Tract as wine growing country. It has hot days and cool nights. It is now a Department of Treasury certified Appellation. The oldest, best-known winery is Bogle

Vineyards. Also, among new crops, Dichondra crop was raised for seed in the Holland Tract.

In 1856, the first school in Clarksburg was underwritten by Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Curtis. Another source claims the school was established by N. Greene Curtis. Built of wood, sitting next to the natural levee at the head of Elk Slough, it perched on stilts to keep it above floodwater. In 1859 Merritt School District was formed. The second school, built in 1879 at the same site, was brick. The third school, built of wood in 1883, carried a sign reading "Merritt School 1893". In 1924 this building was moved to its present site and incorporated into the Noah Adams Lumber Company. The room divider, blackboards and chimney remain. The present Clarksburg Elementary School opened in 1923. It replaced several neighboring rural schools, which were consolidated into the Clarksburg School District: Merritt School and Lisbon School, among them. For many years Tramel Moore was the Elementary School principal. The Jefferson School on Merritt Island was consolidated into the Bates School District centered in Courtland. There was no high school until 1926/27 and ambitious youngsters traveled either to Sacramento High School in Sacramento or to Franklin School east of Hood. At Franklin School a one-year commercial course was offered. Students rode horseback to Franklin, crossing on the Hood Ferry. The high school opened with classes held in its newly constructed auditorium and one room borrowed at the elementary school. The entire school was completed in 1929. Students lunched at Lawlor's Fountain, the Red & White Store, or took sack lunches. The mechanical arts shop was built in 1934. In 1938 gale force winds tore the roof off the school and then, on July 4, 1940, the school was destroyed by fire. It was rebuilt at the same location using the same plans, but in compliance with a new State of California law, which required that all schools be reinforced to withstand earthquakes. In reopened in 1941. In 1947, the Elementary School Cafeteria was built which accommodated the high school students. Mrs. Ruth Long is credited with organizing the cafeteria. In 1950, the school snack bar opened. In 1964/65 a California Department of Education directive required all small rural school districts to consolidate. Consequently, Clarksburg became a member of the River Delta Unified School District and the high school consolidated with Courtland the high school was housed at Clarksburg and was renamed Delta High School. After the devastating high school fire, the Clarksburg fire Department District was organized. Theretofore, a 1920 Model T Ford Chemical Fire Truck owned by the

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CLARKSBURG (Continued)

Holland Land Company could handle only small fires. After the district was formed, fire insurance rates dropped dramatically. The organization "The Clarksburg Volunteer Firemen's Association" handles the finances and volunteer activities.

Two churches provided religious services and recreation for the townspeople and their rural neighbors. The first Protestant church used the Curtis School. The Curtis' stipulated that the school was to be used for religious and social purposes. Weather permitting, a traveling pastor from Courtland conducted evensong. He crossed the river on the ferry or rowed to Clarksburg. During flood stages when he couldn't cross, service were cancelled. In 1923 Vacation Bible School doubled church attendance. In 1924 full service was established and in 1926 the church became associated with the Methodist Church. Services continued to be held in the High School Auditorium until 1947 when the new church was completed. It was designed by the renowned Berkeley, California architect, Raymond Yelland, as were several houses in town. The church was constructed on land donated by the Holland Land Company for that specific purpose. Until the church was built, the site was known

as the "Community Park." In 1951, the church switched its affiliation to congregational. The church was enlarged in 1954. Catholics attended St. Joseph's Church across the river from Freeport and four miles upstream from Clarksburg. The Protestant Church, commonly known as the "Community Church" doubled as a community hall until the Community Hall was built. Among social organizations were the Clarksburg Farm Bureau and its women's auxiliary, the Home Department, the Clarksburg Garden Club, the Friends of the Clarksburg Library, the Mixmasters, Boy Scouts (they owned a Scout Cabin), Future Farmers of America, 4-H, Clarksburg Ladies Fellowship, Camp Fire Girls, the Tuesday Nighters, a local theatre group, a bridge club, and F.O.C.Y. (Friends of Clarksburg Youth). The town orchestra (piano, trumpet, flute and three violins) performed at special events of which the biggest was always the High School Graduation Exercises.

The Clarksburg baseball team, a semi-pro team, played other Delta and Yolo County teams. Its home field was Wheeler Field. Wheeler Field, built in the 1930's by the Farm Bureau, was named for a well-loved teacher. Many balls were lost in the tree line by the Elementary School until the Fire Department and F.O.C.Y. joined to build a backstop.

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SRDHS 2006 SCHEDULE

Meetings are typically held on third Tuesday of each month. Tentative schedule – Subject to change.

- January 17.....General Meeting/Annual Potluck
- February 21.....Board Meeting
- March 21.....General Meeting
- April 18.....Board Meeting
- May 16.....General Meeting
- June 20.....Board Meeting

June Newsletter

- July/August.....Summer Break
- September 19.....General Meeting
- October 17.....Board Meeting
- November 21.....General Meeting
- December.....Board Meeting

December Newsletter

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- 2006 other _____
- \$25 a year for Individual/Family/Business Membership
- I've enclosed \$150 to become a LIFETIME member.
- I'd like to register as an Honorary Member.
- (Free to those members 80 years and older)

Please mail this form with a check payable to SRDHS to:

SRDHS – Membership
 P.O. Box 293, Walnut Grove, CA 95690

CLARKSBURG (Continued)

The Fire Department Association sponsored Babe Ruth League and Little League Baseball teams over the years. Special recreational delights included diving off the twin paddlewheel ferry and swimming to shore, riding and playing on the barge and riverboat wakes (swells), diving from the plank board and swimming at the sane beach which at night was festively lit by a string of bare light bulbs, extra thick milkshakes at Lawlor's, hunting and fishing. A sandbar, exposed at low tide, on the east side of the river between Clarksburg and Freeport, provided a place to swim and fish where the water was so clear that fish were easily visible. Sturgeon slapped their tails at passing rowboats while swimming in shallow water. And, there were the big picnics at Hinsdale Grove, west of town on the west bank of Elk Slough. The Holland Land Company sponsored the picnics for promotional purposes. Today the town thrives. Besides the schools, church and post office, Clarksburg is the site of the Yolo County Branch Library. The Holland Market continues

and the Purple Thread Thrift Shop has discontinued providing its special service. The town is increasingly becoming a bedroom community for Sacramento. In 2006, it was suggested by developers that 162 new home sites are a possibility. It has been suggested before to no avail. Nevertheless, Sacramento creeps closer. In 2005, the old sugar refinery reopened under the ownership and management of Carvalho-Stanich Properties, Inc. The building was preserved, restored, and now reused for dining, recreation, leisure, art, entertainment and lodging. The Clarksburg Wine Company operates a state-of-the-art crushing facility on the premises. It is at this writing a work in progress. At the time Carvalho-Stanich purchased the property, the town was undergoing a general plan update. The project covers 35% of the town area and the developers are working closely with the community.

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"The Sacramento River Delta Historical Society publishes the Sacramento River Delta Historical Society Newsletter twice a year.

Sacramento River Delta Historical Society
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