

# Sacramento River Delta Historical Society

## NEWSLETTER

“For what is the present, after all, but a growth out of the past.” – Walt Whitman

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NEWSLETTER

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### President's Notes

Summer is here already. Hopefully it will not be a real hot summer, especially during the day of the Pear Fair. This year we are running the historical display for the Pear Fair. I will be calling on volunteers to help us with setting up, sitting and being a docent for Delta pear history. We will be displaying the Friends of the Clarksburg Library pictures along with them having a separate table for sales of their pictures and promotion for their fall wine event.

We are helping in a grant program by the Cal Humanities of “We Are Where We Eat”. It is co-sponsored by the Sacramento County Public Library, Sacramento County Historical Society and Sacramento River Delta Historical Society. This involves stories of the people who grow, cook, and serve the food we eat in the Sacramento area. Elaine Corn, a James Beard award-winning author, contributing reporter for Capitol Public Radio and an authority on foods will be doing interviews with local residences and businesses. Maryellen Burns and Elaine are running this program of which we already have had several good interviews along with a day at the Walnut Grove Library. If you have old grandma's recipes, old photos, festival posters, fruit –vege labels, and other food related materials please either contact our historical society or myself to be include in this program. I believe we also will be doing a time line to the food history of the Delta.

We again are doing a calendar of historic pear labels. We will be selling them at the Pear Fair and to anyone interested after we receive them. We also are selling them at a business rate to businesses that want to sell them. If you know of any businesses that could sell them please contact us.

Our January Pot Luck Dinner was well attended as usual. We had Paul Trimble speak on his new book “Riverboats of California”. This was a very informative talk on the history of riverboats. Our

March program brought Phil Pezzaglia up river from Rio Vista to give us an excellent program on the history of our Delta towns. He is currently working on a new book for Arcadia Press on these very Delta towns. If you have any old photos of our Delta towns please contact him as he's still looking for material in his book. In May Gene Chan a nephew of Captain William King from Locke gave a slide show and talk on Williams experiences and accomplishments in WWII with the Flying Tigers. This was a great program. The program planned for September is a talk and items on Earl Stanley Gardner who spent his vacations in the Delta and wrote several books on his experiences here. In the January Pot Luck we are hoping to have a program on the history of Courtland High School. I've taken up enough space so signing off.

Tom Herzog

President

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS FOR 2012

Jane Ellis from Sacramento  
Linda & Larry Gorham from Walnut Grove  
Wendy MacDonald from Elk Grove  
Marcia Reeve from Courtland  
Sally Moser Small from Orinda  
Dr. George Yagi, Jr. from Stockton



40th Annual - July 29, 2012

## ALICE MURAKAMI Walnut Grove Artist Turns 100

By Kathleen Graham Hutchinson

Alice Hanako (Kato) Murakami a native of California was born and raised in Sacramento. Born March 8, 1912, she attended local schools and graduated from Sacramento High School where she was a classmate of the "San Francisco Chronicle" and formerly "Examiner" columnist the late Herb Caen.



She married the late Robert (Bob) Murakami of Florin. Before World War II they worked during the summers for John and Barbara (Cowen) Wheeler of Courtland taking care of their children John Jr. and Bertram C. "Short". During the autumn and winter they lived in the Santa Cruz area doing farm work. They then moved to Long Beach to help Bob's brother raise chili peppers and tomatoes, later settling in Santa Monica where Bob started a gardening business.

After the December 7<sup>th</sup> attack on Pearl Harbor they moved back to Florin, thinking they would be safely removed from the coast and nearer to family. It was at this time that prominent Japanese businessmen, clergy, and school teachers tabbed as "enemy aliens" and "trouble-makers" were rounded up by the FBI and separated from their families. (This treatment was also visited upon designated Germans and Italians.

Anti-Japanese hysteria intensified and on the recommendation of some prominent politicians, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued and signed, in March 1942, Executive Order 9066 – the infamous civilian exclusion order which expelled all persons of Japanese ancestry: citizens, aliens, and non-alien. They were expelled from all West Coast Military zones. (At the time Canada followed suit with even harsher terms and relocation.) Subsequently they were ordered relocated by the U.S. Defense Department to Tule Lake, Siskiyou County, California – in the far northeast of the State.

In American over 120,000 Japanese were forced from their homes to internment camps. They were ordered to register and report for processing where they were inoculated and told they could take with

them only that which they could carry and the clothes on their backs.

In April 1942 came the order to gather at assembly centers where they were tagged with the name of the concentration camp to which they were assigned. They were transported to the camps where they remained until late 1945 without charges, hearings or trials. The Murakami's stored some valuables and a truck with the John Wheelers before leaving for the Tule Lake Relocation Camp. They then were further relocated to Heart Mountain Park Co., Wyoming, north of Cody in the Big Horn Basin. Alice taught elementary school in camp and Bob was a block captain. Their only son Mike was born in Heart Mountain.

After the war ended in June 1945, Bob returned to the Wheelers in Courtland to retrieve their possessions and to thank them. The Delta Japanese were well respected in the community and found Deltans willing to assist them where they could and were allowed. Looking for work, the Wheelers suggested to Bob that he should contact the John Stewart Browns (no relation to the Bank of Alex Brown family) for a possible gardening job. He did and was hired and the family moved to Walnut Grove where they lived for many years. They lived in a small cottage on the J. S. Brown estate which was on the west bank of the river just north of Clampett Tract. Bob tended the gardens and Alice worked for the J. D. Wheelers in Courtland. She later became the J. S. Brown's housekeeper.

Alice was always talented in art and might have studied art in college but in the early 1930's she was not encouraged to do so. Her interest in art was rekindled after Bob died in 1968. She became an active member of the Water Color Association of Sacramento Horizons (W.A.S.H.) for more than 30 years and an early founding member of the River Road Art Gallery in Locke. She took many classes both privately and at Sacramento City College (her son comments probably enough for a degree.) She further studied watercolor technique with California artists Richard Yip, George Post, Jan Miskulin and Larry Weldon. Her warm and inviting style has its roots in earlier primitive forms and she has drawings and paintings in many subjects. She has painted in California, Nevada, Hawaii, Wisconsin and Mexico.

In California her subjects are weighted toward the Sacramento River Delta, especially Locke scenes, the Mendocino Coast and in Nevada: Virginia City. Besides watercolor, Alice has worked in pen and ink, crayon and wood block. She has even dabbled in basket weaving in which her skills are shown in lovely delicate pine needle baskets.

In 2010 Alice published, with the help of her son Mike and daughter-in-law Nancy, a small book of her New Year's cards which were made using woodblocks. The cards were based on the Japanese Zodiac (year of the Tiger, Ram, etc.) The book entitled "Greetings from Alice" includes selected cards.



Horse (uma)



Alice now lives in Sacramento and still draws. Still active and sharp, she produces her famous Holiday "Year of the \_\_\_\_" greeting cards. A book of her Locke watercolors is planned for 2012. "Greetings from Alice" is available from Lulu.com.

Source: Michael T. Murakami, AIA

Note: During World War I hysteria also gripped America. Certain people of German ancestry were closely watched and German expressions (Katzenjammer) were frowned upon as were the words "hamburger" to be known as "Salisbury Steak", "potato chips" "Saratoga chips" and "frankfurter" finally lost out to "hot dog".

## RIVER ROAD ART GALLERY

By Kathleen Graham Hutchinson

Walnut Grove and the nearby area was blessed with some very accomplished artists – watercolorists, oil painters, limners in pen, ink, pencil, charcoal and sculpture which included throwing pots. As an

outgrowth of the talent, the River Road Art Gallery was founded. Francis Armstrong, a founding member recalls other founders were Roslyn Silva, Julia Gemignani, Jo Lyman, and Jo Shanks. Early on Dorcus Burchell and Alice Murakami joined. The members rented the old "bus stop building" (now a pizza restaurant) in Walnut Grove from the Brown/Dye Estate through their representative Bud Kruse. Soon after the group was increased with the addition of Connie King, Irma Mulvihill, Jo Jensen, Elaine Robertson, and Kisse Pereira. Later Fred Hill (from Rio Vista), Wayne O'Neill and Kris Dixon joined. The later three joined after premises were moved to Locke where the gallery occupied, on Main Street, the 1916 building which originally housed Owyang Tin Git's dry goods store.

Francis also taught Frankie Laney and Phyllis Crane the rudiments of watercolor painting. Both joined after the move to Locke and were very active.

During the Walnut Grove years 1969/70 – 1973 there were many opening shows and special exhibits as well as art classes. Francis Armstrong was one of the teachers and one of her pupils was Paul Wiseman the noted San Francisco interior designer who hails from Merritt Island across from Courtland.

During a year of a big freeze the pipes broke and so did the glass in the front windows. Francis remembers there was never any heat and the place was a wreck.

Connie King of Locke came to the rescue suggesting renting a building in Locke. Harvey Lyman, Jo's husband, thought it would be an excellent move because there would be constant foot traffic and outsiders milling about. However, Julia Gemignani had misgivings about Locke which she characterized as a "den of iniquity". But in 1973 move they did and the Gallery thrives.

In addition to members many non-members exhibited; locals Ada Barry, Jim Pylman and Chiles Wilson among others. Gordon Ward of Oregon often exhibited and sold his pottery at the Gallery. In 2001 the late Phil Frank the "Farley" cartoonist in the "San Francisco Chronicle" also had a show.

Over the years, Judge James Gualco of Walnut Grove District Court urged Jo Lyman to open a gallery before someone else did and gave the group

endless support. Eventually the group incorporated and bought the Locke building. When the building was sold the proceeds went to the members at the time of the sale.



Connie King was the group's "general manager," and in Francis's words, "made the operations go": she was building manager, financial manager, public relations manager – whatever was needed. The Gallery was a great success for 25 years.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**NOAH ADAMS LUMBER COMPANY**

- 1913 Fairfield
- 1914 Walnut Grove
- 1926 Clarksburg
- 1927 Rio Vista
- 1929 Isleton

Adams began in the lumber business in Minnesota in 1884, For two decades he operated a sawmill and retail lumberyards. In 1904 he came to California and associated with Hammond Lumber Co. He opened his first lumberyard in Ripon in 1909 under his name. He added lumberyards in Winters, Concord, and Walnut Creek and at the above listed. He freighted lumber on hay scows up river, returning with hay. He later used trucks and trailers.

*Pezzaglia – River News and Tele. Journal*

**TIDBITS OF INTEREST**

The "Bing" cherry is said to have been developed by the Chinese in Sacramento County.

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The Sacramento River is navigable for 300 miles. The historic head of navigation is Red Bluff. Sacramento is 120 miles from the river's mouth. Measureable tides are recorded at the I Street Bridge in Sacramento which illustrates the estuarial system reach to Sacramento.

In 1921 \$60 million of tonnage was annually carried on the river.

Riverboats and barges/lighters only drew 2 feet of water and could easily operate during the day in the pre-dam era. The Delta King and Delta Queen drew 3 feet of water.

After hydraulic mining silted the river, the head of navigation moved down river to Sacramento.

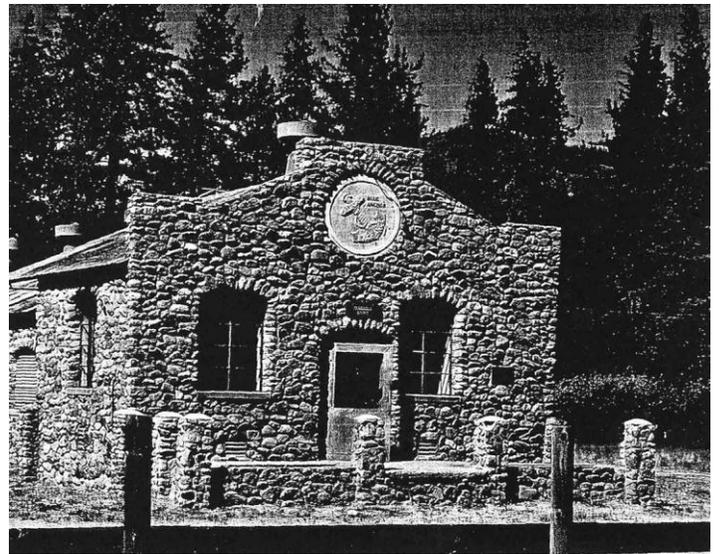
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"Lee" transliterates from Chinese to mean "profitable family".

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"Rancho del Paso" – translated it means ranch of the pass and was so named because the old wagon road to Donner Pass diagonally crossed the rancho.

\*\*\*\*\*



Blue Anchor Dairy at Graeagle, Plumas County where the company owned the sawmill (and town) to process shook for boxes.

\*\*\*\*\*

Two of San Francisco's best known and sought after interior designers are Paul Wiseman (raised on Merritt Island across from Courtland) and Diane (Micheli) Chapman raised near Ryde and a proud Beaver Union Elementary School graduate.

\*\*\*\*\*

“For Sale” (Now sold)

The oldest building in Isleton which once housed the oldest Dodge Dealership west of the Mississippi is Located on Main Street it was known as Dunn & Bonetti for many years.



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Chicago Cubs, 1945: Swish Nicholson, Andy Pafko, Phil Cavarretta, Peanuts Lowrey, Don Johnson, Stan Hack

Stan Hack (far right) was raised in Freeport. The family house is now part of the Cavanaugh Golf Course plant.

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Clarksburg Sugar Mill – In 1935 the sugar mill at Clarksburg bought a part of the recently dismantled sugar mill at Hopper, Utah. The equipment had been “on the move” since it was built in Hamburg, Germany. In 1906 the equipment was incorporated in a mill in New York State. Six years later, in 1912, the New York mill was dismantled and bought by the San Joaquin Valley Sugar Company of Visalia, CA. In 1919 dismantled again and again sold the equipment was sent to Hopper, Utah and finally to Clarksburg.



Clarksburg Sugar Mill

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Thornton Depot on the Western Pacific Railroad mainline. Built around 1909 it is designated on the timetable as New Hope. The town was named after Arthur Thornton who owned a 1000 acre ranch which included the present town. In exchange for the right of way through the ranch the depot was named for Arthur Thornton, property owner and a town grew.



The depot was retired in 1966.

\*\*\*\*\*



Franklin Station on the Western Pacific Railroad mainline. Built around 1910 and enlarged in 1922 and 1924. The editions were torn down during the depression by the WPA and the lumber used to build Franklin Grammar School’s gymnasium. The gym was razed in the 1960’s. The depot was closed in 1931 and destroyed by fire in 1946.

**RESOURCE CENTER NEWS**

“2013 Calendars” produced by SRDHS are soon to be printed. They feature “another” 12 pear labels from Jim Dahlberg’s collection in frameable sizes. They will be available for sale at Courtland’s Pear Fair and at the center beginning in August. See sample of our new labels and order form on next page.

Thank you for your donations to our resource center! We are recording each item in our data base – many collections are done, but many still need to be entered. **Would you like to help?** We work almost every Tuesday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and need people to enter data (it’s already handwritten and just needs to be typed.) Please call Bobbie at 777-6792 or Esther at 777-2227 to make sure we will be there and join us.

**SRDHS 2012 SCHEDULE**

July/August.....	Summer Break
September 18.....	General Meeting
October 16.....	Board Meeting
November 20.....	General Meeting
December.....	Board Meeting
	December Newsletter
January 15, 2013.....	Annual Potluck

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**INFORMATION**

Sacramento River Delta Historical Society web site is [srdhs.org](http://srdhs.org). Please view and enjoy the information. If you wish to email the resource center, the email address is [srdhs@riverdeltawireless.com](mailto:srdhs@riverdeltawireless.com).

**MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

We would like to thank all those who made memorial contributions to the Sacramento River Delta Historical Society.

**DO YOU WANT TO CONTINUE TO RECEIVE THIS GREAT PUBLICATION???**

*Then make sure you pay your 2012 dues – Use this form or one of our handy dues envelopes*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

- I’m paying Annual dues for the following year(s):  
      2012                       Other \_\_\_\_\_  
     \$25.00 a year for Annual 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

**NEWSLETTER STAFF**

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\*The Sacramento River Delta Historical Society publishes the Sacramento River Delta Society Newsletter twice a ye

# New "2013" SACRAMENTO RIVER DELTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY CALENDAR

Here is a preview of the cover of the delightful 2013 Calendar representing more Pear Labels from Jim Dahlberg's Collection? Each month shows a different Pear Label and there is one page with explanations of each of the labels shown.



*2013 Calendar  
Sacramento River  
Delta Historical  
Society*

The Sacramento River Delta Historical Society's "Pear Label" Calendar for 2013 may be purchased at the Courtland Pear Fair July 29<sup>th</sup> or at the Resource Center and at the Society Meetings after August 1st. You may also purchase the calendar by filling out the form below and mailing it with your check to:

SRDHS  
P O Box 293  
Walnut Grove, CA 95695

The price for each calendar is \$15.00 (plus postage if applicable)

If you wish to have the calendar(s) mailed please add the following postage:

1 Calendar \$15 plus \$2 postage

2 - 6 calendars \$15 each plus \$3.00 postage for media mail (7-12 day delivery)

Or

2 - 6 calendars \$15 each plus \$5.25 for priority mail (2 to 3 day delivery)

### Sacramento River Delta Historical Society Calendar Order Form

Please send \_\_\_\_\_ calendars @ \$15 per calendar

Enclosed is payment in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ (include postage in total)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_