

sonoma county
Baby



A snapshot of Sonoma County histories, as told by those born here,
and a keepsake to start your own Sonoma County family legacy.



sonoma county *Newborn!*

My name is _____

I arrived at _____ on _____

I was born at _____

My weight

My length

My eye color

My hair color



Other special things
about me

About My Parents

_____ was born on _____ and grew up in _____

_____ was born on _____ and grew up in _____

How my Parents met _____

My Family Tree

Sister(s)/Brothers(s)

Parent

Parent

Grandparents

Grandparents

Great Grandparents

Great Grandparents

sonoma county

Legacy

by Gaye LeBaron

One definition of the word “legacy” is “anything that is handed down from the past.” Certainly that includes property or money or treasured possessions, but it also includes treasured memories. And that is the legacy being handed down in this book.

“Sonoma County Baby” is a paean to the fruitfulness of this place where we live. It offers the reader a potpourri of the past as a path to the future.

The people who stepped forward to share stories – either their own or those of their ancestors – will challenge generations to come to keep the continuum alive.

These “babies” were born here – some in the old County Hospital on the hill, others at the same place when it was Community Hospital that became Sutter Medical Center. But they also come from Memorial, General, Palm Drive, Petaluma General, Hillcrest, and Healdsburg. A few were born “at home” or “on the ranch.” Some offer compact vignettes of unfinished lives. Others are episodic, the retelling of favorite family stories.

They are farmers, artists, teachers, nurses, storekeepers – or have one of a wide range of jobs that cannot be described in a single word. Their families come from Switzerland and Sweden, Italy and China, Mexico and Germany. They met their spouses at 4-H meetings and Grange barbecues, at the then-new ice arena and the old Midway dance club on Sebastopol Road.

All are proud of being “connected” with Sonoma County. In this they share that “sense of place” scholars constantly seek to define. The place where we are “from” or where we live defines us. But it cuts both ways. We define the place. It is different, in small or large dimensions, because we live here.

I like to think that each of these storytellers is a thread in a giant tapestry, a work of art that draws its color and its design and its purpose from diversity. Sonoma County is a place that is so different in so many ways – in geography and geology, in agriculture and enterprise, in soils and climate, in ethnicity and culture – that the tapestry is beyond beautiful. And it is not completed.

This is only a fragment of Sonoma County’s continuing story. The newborns who receive this book will add their own thread and perhaps these tales of the past will challenge these Sonoma babies, as they grow, to find their own niche; to add their thread to the tapestry and their lives to the legacy.



sonoma county *Babies*

It started as a modest idea to collect a few stories about people born in Sonoma County. But Sonoma County Baby became something much, much bigger.

More than 2,700 people responded to Sutter's call for native babies, flooding us with stories that ranged from ancestors who traveled with the Donner Party to newcomers who are just beginning to sink their roots in Sonoma County's soil. Almost 900 "like" the Sonoma County Baby page on Facebook. It appears that people born in Sonoma County are quite proud of that fact.

"It's morphed into a monster, but a very nice monster," Shaun Ralston, marketing communications manager for Sutter Health's West Bay Region, said in 2013 in a story in the Santa Rosa Press Democrat. "We wanted a way to memorialize our history and the history of Sonoma County to our next generation of moms in our next-generation hospital. But it's turned into a lot more than that."

Most of the thousands of responses were brief. Our team of writers and editors selected a few dozen for further research. Through interviews with the principals and with the help of the archives of the Sonoma County Historical Society, we produced the 35 stories contained in this book.

New moms who give birth at the new Sutter Santa Rosa Regional Hospital each will receive a copy. We hope, once they get home and have a moment to relax, that the stories contained here will connect their families with the deep history of Sonoma County, and that they will be inspired by the trials and triumphs of the generations that came before them. We hope this book, with its front section devoted to the newborn, will become a family heirloom. And we hope that, like most of those who shared their stories with us, these new Sonoma County Babies grow up to appreciate how lucky they are to be born here.

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Victoria Aubert



In the late 1960s and early '70s, Vicki Aubert remembers the freedom that two wheels gave her and her friends.

“We lived in Larkfield-Wikiup, which was pretty rural at the time,” she says. “There was nothing close by. But my sister and I got 10-speeds one year, and we would ride those bikes everywhere. Out to the airport to pick blackberries. Coddington. All over.”

When she was 14 and a freshman at Piner High School, Vicki went ice skating once – just once – at the Redwood Empire Ice Arena. There, a friend introduced her to a boy from Santa Rosa High, Rick Aubert. They were married four years later, and this year they celebrate 40 years of marriage.

Vicki was born in 1956 at the old General Hospital on A Street, near what is now the Santa Rosa Plaza. Her mother, Sharon Eltervaag, was born in Missouri and came to Santa Rosa with her family as a young girl. Her father, Don Eltervaag, came from a Norwegian family that raised chickens on property off of Hopper Avenue in northwest Santa Rosa. Don and Sharon both attended Santa Rosa High School, about four years apart. When they met years later it took them two weeks to fall in love and get married, Vicki says.

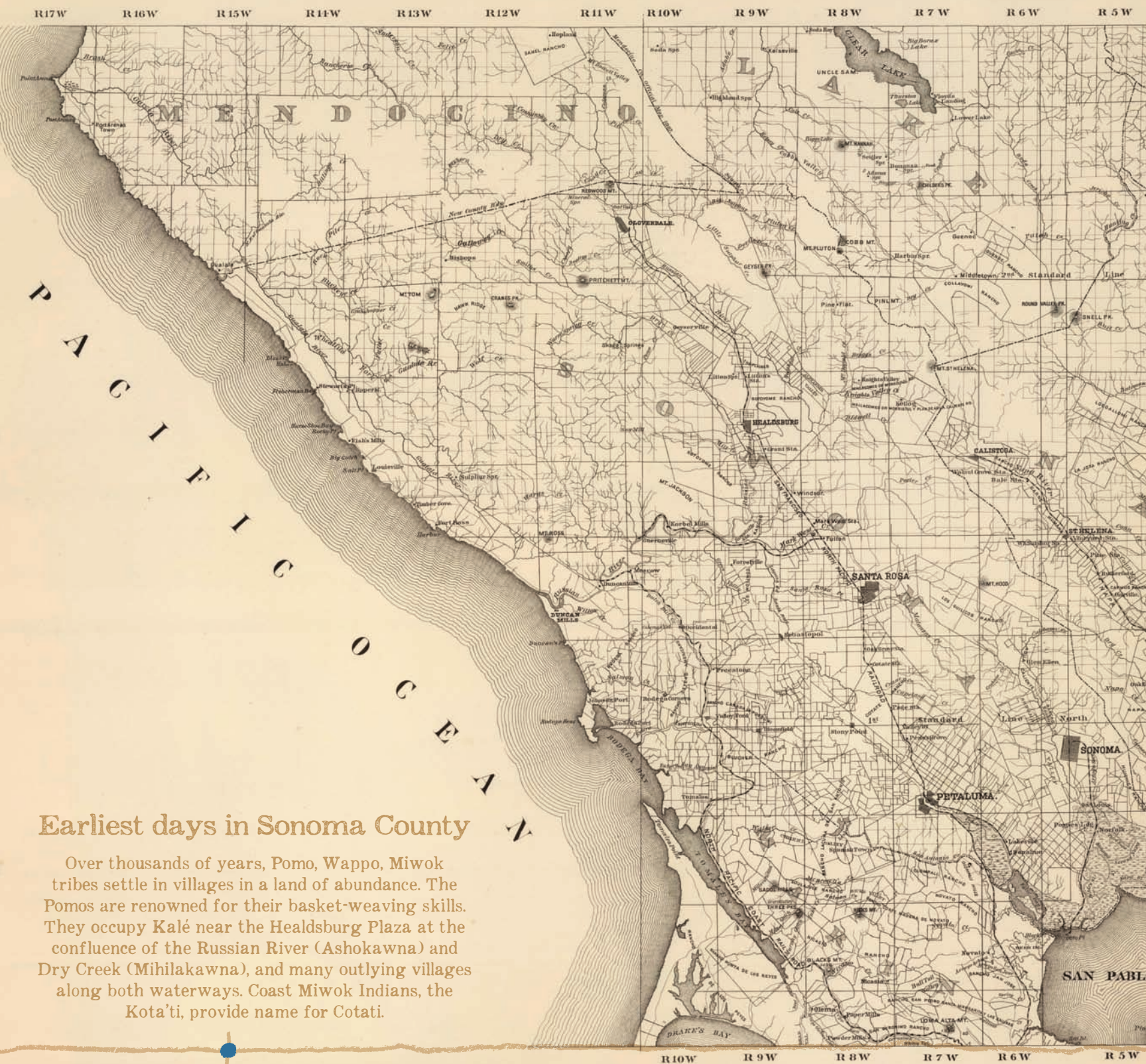
Vicki graduated from Piner the same year she was married, and she worked for State Farm Insurance for 21 years before retiring from that job. She now manages the family’s rental properties, and Rick is the facilities director for the Varena senior living community at Fountaingrove. They live in Windsor and have a 28-year-old son, Christopher, who is another Sonoma County baby.

“I LOVE living in Sonoma County and can’t imagine living anywhere else,” Vicki says. “My husband keeps throwing out the idea to move somewhere else for our retirement. I told him if (and it’s a huge if) I ever agree to leave, I want my bones brought back here to rest in eternity. My roots are here and this is home to me and always will be.”



1579

English sailor Sir Francis Drake, aboard the Golden Hinde, makes five-week stop at Drake’s Bay in present-day Marin County.



Earliest days in Sonoma County

Over thousands of years, Pomo, Wappo, Miwok tribes settle in villages in a land of abundance. The Pomos are renowned for their basket-weaving skills. They occupy Kalé near the Healdsburg Plaza at the confluence of the Russian River (Ashokawna) and Dry Creek (Mihilakawna), and many outlying villages along both waterways. Coast Miwok Indians, the Kota’ti, provide name for Cotati.

Bonnie Braren



Growing up along the Russian River in the early 1960s stamped indelible memories on Bonnie Braren. Each summer the river's population would swell with tourists, and a resort atmosphere would prevail through the warm, languid days and nights.

"I was down at the river practically every day in the summertime, swimming or sunbathing," she says. "And at night there was the hayride - a trailer full of straw pulled by four big horses. We'd sing our way from Guernewood Park to Armstrong Woods, where there would be a barbecue and toasting marshmallows over a fire. It was such a highlight of my youth!"

When she was 17, she and a girlfriend stopped at a gas station in town and she fell into conversation with "a real handsome guy in a red T-bird." He and his friend invited the girls to join them for coffee at Pat's down the street. Four years later, she married that handsome guy, Martin Braren from Petaluma.

Though Bonnie moved away from the river to go to school, start a career and raise a family (mostly in Santa Rosa), she and Martin moved back to Guerneville last year after she retired from her nursing job at Sutter Santa Rosa Hospital. They now live in the house that her parents bought shortly after she left for college.

"Things go full circle sometimes," she says.

Bonnie's parents, Ruth and Allen Mowry, both came from mining backgrounds. Ruth Goudge was born in a mining camp near Yosemite, where her father was a mining engineer. She later lived in Grass Valley, where an adventurous young man from Maryland stopped as he worked in mines across the west. Ruth and Allen met at a dance, but he was soon off on another adventure. It didn't take long, though, for Allen to make his way back to Grass Valley to convince Ruth to marry him. In 1939, the couple moved to Guerneville, where Allen ran the Sonoma Quicksilver Mine and Ruth became a correspondent for the Press Democrat and the local Guerneville newspaper.

Bonnie was born in 1948 at Palm Drive Hospital in Sebastopol. She and her twin sister, Brenda Joyce, were premature, and Brenda survived for only a few days. She had two other siblings, the late David Mowry and her sister Diane Mowry, who lives in Santa Rosa. When Bonnie was 4 years old, the family took a month-long voyage on a freighter to the Phillipines, where her father worked at a gold mine for eight years before returning to Guerneville in 1960.

Bonnie was a member of the first graduating class at El Molino High School, in 1966. She attended Pacific Union College and worked as a nurse for a time in San Leandro, then returned to Sonoma County and attended Sonoma State University, where she earned her bachelor's degree. She worked at Warrack Hospital in Santa Rosa before moving to Sutter, and she also taught Lamaze classes and was a labor coach for expectant mothers at Memorial Hospital and at her home. Martin, before retiring 10 years ago, was a sales rep for Continental Tires.

Bonnie and Martin have two daughters, Elissa Wallace of Washington and Janel Murray of Redlands, and six grandchildren.



1775

Spaniard Juan Francisco
Bodega y Quadra discovers
Bodega Bay and harbor.

Judy Buonaccorsi



Judy Buonaccorsi would have been born a Sonoma County Baby – if her parents had different health insurance.

Her father, Paul DeBolt, worked for the U.S. Post Office in Santa Rosa, and had a good health plan through Kaiser. But in 1951, the closest Kaiser hospital was in Oakland, so Paul and his wife Dolores packed up the car and traveled south when it was time for Judy to come into the world. Since then, though, Judy has rarely been tempted to leave Sonoma County.

“If you want to, you can create a really idyllic life here,” she says. “I just recently attended a Montgomery High Alumni Association event, and it’s amazing how many of us still live here after all these years. It’s a great place to raise a family.”

Her family has lived here for several generations. Both her parents were born in Santa Rosa. Her grandfather, Ralph DeBolt, also worked for the post office and can be seen in several historic pictures of the old building before it was moved several blocks to Seventh Street and became the Sonoma County Museum.

Judy grew up in Montgomery Village and attended St. Eugene’s School and Slater Junior High and graduated from Montgomery High School in 1969. She met her husband, fellow Sonoma County Baby Ed Buonaccorsi, at Montgomery, but they didn’t date until later, when she was attending Santa Rosa Junior College and he was a student, and a wrestler, at the JC and later at Sonoma State. They married in 1974.

Both are public servants. Judy worked for the County of Sonoma, including the Juvenile Probation Department, before retiring a few years ago. Ed has worked for both the City of Santa Rosa and the County of Sonoma, most recently in the county’s General Services Department.

They live in Bennett Valley and have two sons, Brook Buonaccorsi, of Novato, and Todd Buonaccorsi, who lives in Santa Rosa with his wife and Judy’s three grandchildren.

1792

Englishman George Vancouver surveys Bodega Bay.

Jennifer Crane



Jennifer Crane was born in 1978, becoming the sixth generation of the Crane family in Sonoma County, and today she continues the family tradition of growing Crane melons on the family’s historic ranch between Rohnert Park and Santa Rosa.

Her great-great-great-grandfather, Richard Crane, came west with the Gold Rush from Hannibal, Mo. While life as a 49er didn’t pan out, he found a different kind of gold in the dirt of Sonoma County when he settled here in 1852. His son, Oliver Crane, perfected a sweet and juicy melon that thrived in the soil and climate of the Santa Rosa Plain, and Jennifer still grows Crane melons and sells them each fall from the family barn on Petaluma Hill Road.

“A few years ago I found some of my old school work that my Mom had saved,” Jennifer says. “It was a questionnaire I filled out when I was 7 years old. Question 1: Hobbies. I wrote, ‘Cats.’ Question 2: What do you want to do when you grow up? I wrote, ‘Work at the Crane Melon Barn.’ After all these years nothing has changed, I still love cats and I work at the Crane Melon Barn!”

She was born at Hillcrest Hospital in Petaluma. The building is no longer a hospital, but Jennifer still treasures a couple of souvenirs.

“After I was born and was ready to head home, my parents realized that my outfit had been mistakenly left at home. So Hillcrest Hospital provided me with my first outfit – a white t-shirt stamped Hillcrest Hospital and a cloth pumpkin that the women’s auxiliary had made (I was born in October). We still have them!”

Jennifer grew up on the family farm and attended Penngrove Elementary, Petaluma Junior High and Petaluma High schools, and then went off to college at the University of Redlands and the University of Bristol, England. But her roots eventually pulled her back to the rich soil of Sonoma County. She returned home to take classes in viticulture at Santa Rosa Junior College, and now grows pinot noir along with Crane melons and runs the family business with her parents, Cindy and Richard Crane.



1808/1812

Russian ship *Kadiak*, commanded by Ivan Kuskoff, sails into Bodega Bay looking for a trading base; sets up colony at Fort Ross on Sonoma coast in 1812. Chapel at Fort Ross is first church in county.

The Daken Girls: Edith (Edna) May (1907 – 2003) and Sydney Tilden (1908 – 1984)



The Daken girls, my mother and my aunt, were born in Glen Ellen in 1907 and 1908. Their father was noted early California artist Samuel Tilden Daken. Their mother was San Francisco native Mary “May” Elizabeth Duplissea, a dressmaker for high society clients. They were married in 1903.

In 1904, the couple moved into a modest flat on Mission Street, and the artist opened a studio on Van Ness Avenue. On April 18, 1906, the lives of every San Franciscan would be forever changed. The Dakens were miraculously unhurt when their apartment building collapsed, but the artist lost his studio and all of his art when the military dynamited Van Ness Avenue to stop the spreading inferno. The couple set up interim residence in “Tent City” in Golden Gate Park, and eventually fled San Francisco to seek work elsewhere.

The Dakens settled in the Mineral Springs and Health Resort on Sonoma Creek. It is not known if they chose Glen Ellen because Jack and Charmian London had settled there in 1905 and brought a bohemian air to the town. But Daken and London had met eight years earlier during a chance encounter in the rail yard in Reno. Together they rode the underbelly of a freight train through Truckee, over Donner Pass to Oakland. They became neighbors in Glen Ellen, resumed their friendship, and frequented the town’s local bars. Daken was a frequent guest at Wake Robin Lodge and Beauty Ranch, where he painted one of his most publicized paintings, *In the Valley of the Moon*.

Edna May Daken, my mother, was born on Jan. 30, 1907. Conceived in Tent City in Golden Gate Park, she was born nine months after the earthquake, a fact she would recount countless times over the years. Within weeks of Edna’s birth and very nearby, her father painted a canvas that was acquired in recent

years by the family. The scene is Beltane Ranch, a place rich in early California history and a popular Sonoma County destination today. By the time Edna was a year old, her father had completed several works which are today quite historic: a canvas theater curtain for the Union Hotel in Sonoma, which now hangs in the Depot Park Museum; a theater curtain for Mayflower Hall in Glen Ellen, though its whereabouts are unknown; and a miniature scene of the Sonoma Mission painted on a salvaged roof tile from the mission, commissioned by Luisa Vallejo Emparan, daughter of General Vallejo. Today the roof tile is owned by the State of California and hangs in the Swiss Chalet, the museum and interpretive center at Sonoma State Historic Park.

Sydney Tilden Daken, my aunt, was born on Jan. 1, 1908. My grandparents had given each of their daughters a middle name derived from one of their own: Edna “May” for her mother and Sydney “Tilden” for her father.

In 1909, the family left Glen Ellen and moved to Santa Rosa, a burgeoning little metropolis that was in a constant state of rebuilding following the earthquake. They settled into a Victorian-style bungalow on Chestnut Street and the artist opened an art studio at 509 Fourth St. A Daken exhibition, *Sonoma Valley Beautiful*, was held in Santa Rosa around this time.

For the next year, Edna and Sydney’s father served as head of the art department at the esteemed Ursuline College in Santa Rosa, an institution for the Roman Catholic education of young women. “The Art Department needs no further recommendation other than Mr. Samuel Daken is at its head,” read Mother Superior Agatha’s weekly advertisement in the Santa Rosa Press Democrat.

It is during their Santa Rosa years that Edna and Sydney began to form lasting childhood memories. One of my mother’s early and vivid recollections was the bed of blue violets in the front yard of her little yellow house. Her memories express a poignant image, for it is the ink-like dye from these abundant blue violets that she used to paint her own pictures. The artist never shared his palette or pigments with his daughters, likely not recognizing the irony and too absorbed in the frenzy of his spiraling successes and crushing failures. (Many decades later, my mother and I searched for the little yellow house with the blue violets, confirming the address in a 1911 Santa Rosa directory. But what was once an idyllic tree-lined country road is now an unsightly dead-end street cut short decades ago by the construction of a busy highway. The site of the house with the blue violets where my mother, aunt, and grandparents lived over 100 years ago lies on the center divider of Luther Burbank Memorial Highway, California State Route 12.)

In 1915, Daken exhibited at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, along with hundreds of artists from around the world. More than eighty years later, Edna’s memories of the dazzling world’s fair were vivid. Her father displayed a collection of his paintings at the Palace of Fine Arts.

By Bonnie Portnoy

1826

First English-speaking settler
Thomas Reid arrives in Cotati.

Julie Davis



John George Frey's mother didn't quite make it to the hospital. He was born in 1937 in a birthing house in Santa Rosa. His mother, Emma Frey, was a woman of the old school. She gave birth, stayed in the house a week to recover, and went on with her life.

"No hospital back then for her," says her granddaughter, Julie Davis, who has spent much of her adult life as a nurse at Warrack and Sutter hospitals.

In the 1930s, the Freys had a ranch on Frey Road named after the family. There is also a Frey Canyon named after the family near Kenwood. The ranch was originally owned by Julie's grandparents, Emma and John Godfrey Frey. They put in a prune orchard and also went around the county baling hay with a high-powered hay press. Grandma worked on the cook wagon.

Julie says her father John George grew up on the ranch and raised sheep for the Santa Rosa Future Farmers. He met his future wife Joan Sartori at Dunbar School near Glen Ellen. When he took over the ranch, he raised melon, corn and later pumpkins for the farmers' market.

Julie, who was born in 1960, remembers going to the farmers' market with her parents and "everyone knew each other...it was like a big extended family."

Julie picked prunes but when the prune business died, her father put in a walnut orchard and a small vineyard of Chardonnay grapes. He also raised Angus cattle that his kids showed at three local fairs. For many years, John sold produce at the ranch on the honor system but in recent times he had to "bolt the box down to the table."

Growing up on the ranch "was full of hard work but had its rewards, too," Julie says. "What other kid had 55 acres to play on? We made forts in the mustard field, offices out of prune boxes



and had a rope swing in the hay barn. My life was spent on the ranch picking prunes and losing prune fights to my brother Donald."

Donald is an FFA teacher, sister Linda works for a local eye doctor and John Jr. is a local pharmacist. These country children all excelled in 4-H programs.

In 1981, Julie married Rodger Davis, "a city boy now turned country," and graduated from the nursing program at Santa Rosa Junior College. She worked 20 years at Warrack Hospital and then joined Sutter Hospital.

She and her husband have two children: Sarah, a dental hygienist, and Ashley, a respiratory therapist. They were born at Sutter Hospital and excelled in many 4-H activities. Both married "great guys" and live in Sonoma County. Life comes full circle with the family's fourth generation Sonoma County baby due this year.

The family gathers each year on the old Frey ranch, where they celebrate an annual luau at a spot called "Camp Cow A Dunga," because it is literally in the cow pasture. It's a "down-on-the-farm kind of time," Julie says.



1833

Mariano Vallejo, "the last of the Conquistadores," arrives, becomes dominant landholder and political leader through most of the 19th Century

Donna DeLaBriandais



Donna DeLaBriandais grew up on a small farm on Fulton Road in northwest Santa Rosa, and remembers fields of mustard in spring, sheets of rain in winter, long dry summer days and the many colors of fall.

“It was just a very calm place, and nature was so important,” she says. “I love all the seasons.”

That love is reflected in her art, which concentrates primarily on landscapes. She is a professional painter and an art instructor at Santa Rosa Junior College.

Donna was born in 1944 at the old Santa Rosa General Hospital, a building that now serves as a homeless shelter for families on A Street near the Santa Rosa Plaza. Her mother, Vancy McLain, had grown up just down the street living with the nuns at St. Rose School after her parents died and she moved here from New Orleans. Donna’s father, Harper McLain, was the youngest son of Irish immigrants who had come to Sonoma County in 1895 to farm hay, apples and grapes and run a small dairy in Freestone. In addition to the Fulton Road farm, her father was a heavy equipment operator.

“Every summer I would pick prunes at the local ranches,” she recalls. “The ranchers had fast pickers but they would help out the local kids by letting them pick boxes of prunes so we had money to go to the fair. We would get 50 cents per box, which was about four buckets of prunes. It was hard work in the hot sun and our knees would bruise so we tied rags on them so we could pick the prunes off the ground.”

Donna attended Piner School, which then was a three-room schoolhouse across Fulton Road from her home. She graduated from Santa Rosa High School in 1962, took “every art class they offered” at Santa Rosa Junior College, attended the Academy of Art in San Francisco and earned a degree in psychology from University of San Francisco.

She has four children, James, Angela, Loretta and Dustin McGrath – the first three Sonoma County babies – and two grandchildren, Brandon and Brittany McGrath, who also are Sonoma County babies. Donna lives in Santa Rosa with her husband, Les DeLaBriandais.



1837

Maria Ignacia Lopez Carrillo, daughter-in-law of Gen. Vallejo and the only woman to be directly given a Mexican land grant, builds the first permanent residence in the Santa Rosa valley on Rancho Cabeza de Santa Rosa.

Donna Diehl



The branches of Donna Diehl's family tree reach back four generations and connect some of the most significant periods in the history of California and Sonoma County.

On her mother's side, Donna's great-grandmother was Nancy Graves, a survivor of the Donner Party. She was just 9 years old when the infamous wagon train got stuck in the early snows of 1846 in the Sierra Nevada. Their story of hardship and survival is one of the most compelling tales of the settlement of the West.

On her father's side, her grandfather Fred Meier worked for PG&E for 50 years and for a time ran the Sebastopol power house (now the Hopmonk Tavern) that supplied electricity for the "Train Down Main" of the Petaluma & Santa Rosa Railroad. And her father, Edwin Meier, was a "red-diaper baby" born in Marin, but who fell in with a community of Eastern European and Russian Jews who settled in the Petaluma area after World War I, where many became involved in the poultry industry. Their stories about the egg business and Communism were memorialized in the book "Comrades and Chicken Ranchers."

Donna was born in 1936 at her family's home in southern Petaluma, and later moved west to Bodega Avenue. She attended St. Vincent de Paul Catholic School.

"I walked a mile to school almost every day until I was 10, and then I rode my bike," she says. "We rode our bikes all over everywhere, from East Petaluma to Two Rock. We could go anywhere we wanted. It was ideal."

By the time she was in high school, however, that ideal life was changing. Unbeknownst to her, her father and other left-leaning "comrades" were rubbing the conservative establishment of Petaluma the wrong way. In 1952, after Donna's sophomore year at St. Vincent's, Edwin Meier left his job as manager of the Petaluma Cooperative Hatchery and moved his wife, Philippa, and four children to Sutter County.



1840s

Steamers from San Francisco dock south of Petaluma; stagecoaches carry riders overland as far as the Geysers. Cyrus Alexander settles on land north of Healdsburg in the valley that bears his name. Diseases and other factors drop Native-American population from 8,500 in 1840s to 100 in 1916.

"The story was that we moved because the chicken industry was dying," Donna says. "But I found out after my parents' deaths that he was being persecuted for his Communist leanings. He was trying to unionize the hatchery, and people didn't like that."

Donna graduated from Marysville High School and attended Yuba College and San Francisco State University, where she majored in elementary education. She met Robert "Whitey" Diehl, an athlete from Iowa, while she was working a summer job at Lake Tahoe, and not long after they were married he landed a job coaching and teaching at Analy High School in Sebastopol. He taught business and math and coached at Analy for 30 years, while Donna taught at Twin Hills School and for 15 years at Cinnabar School in Petaluma - where her mother had taught years before. She retired in 1998. Her husband passed away in 2009.

Donna has four children, all born in Sonoma County: Daniel and Ted Diehl, who both live in Japan, and Tom Diehl and Tamsen Patocchi, who both live in the East Bay. She also has nine grandchildren

Shauna Rose Eagleton

Shauna Eagleton can't trace her family tree back into the early days of Sonoma County history, but she notes accurately that her story "is probably a more common one" for the tens of thousands of families who moved here in the second half of the 20th Century.

"Both of my parents migrated from the East Coast and found themselves in Northern California in their hippie days," Shauna says. Her father, Lee Smith, came to California from upstate New York. Her mother, Lanie Abrams, is from Philadelphia.

"They both came to San Francisco first, and eventually to western Sonoma County," she says. Their first meeting was at a rally/concert in Santa Rosa's Courthouse Square, where Lee's invitation to dance was turned down by Lanie. But later, when Lanie's Volkswagen Beetle wouldn't start outside of a pub on River Road, Lee was there with the jumper cables. And that time, there was a spark.

Shauna was born in 1984 at Memorial Hospital. She attended Sequoia Elementary School and Rincon Valley Junior High and graduated from Santa Rosa High School in 2002. She earned her associate's degree and a certificate in land surveying from Santa Rosa Junior College, and now works as a senior land technician for PG&E.

"I do surveying work all over Sonoma, Napa and Marin counties, and this one is BY FAR the best," she says.

Her husband, Jeff Eagleton, also works for PG&E as a lineman. He, like her parents, is another transplant to the area, from Montana. And last year, the two of them produced another Sonoma County baby.

"I could not be happier that our baby girl can forever claim Sonoma County as her home," says Shauna. "I even named her Callie - not specifically for this great state (at least that's what I tell my husband)."



1848

James Marshall discovers gold on the South Fork of the American River, triggering rush to California.

1850

California admitted into the union on Sept. 9. County population 560, mostly in Sonoma. Gen. Mariano Vallejo elected Sonoma district's first state senator.

Hansjuerg Enz



When Hansjuerg Enz got a chance as a young man to get out of the dairy business, he jumped at the opportunity and eventually went to work in the big city. But he expects some day to be back on his family's small west-county farm.

"We had pigs and goats and sheep and cows, and I was in 4-H and FFA and Young Farmers. I was a farm kid through and through," Hans says. "But eventually I completely ran from that."

Starting as a volunteer with the Hessel Fire Protection District, he became a paramedic with Redwood Empire Life Support and eventually a professional firefighter. He lives in Rohnert Park, but has been a member of the San Francisco Fire Department for 19 years, now working out of Station 10 in Presidio Heights.

Still, "I see myself back on the farm some day," he says. "There's something about Sonoma County that draws people back to where they came from. All of my friends who left seem to have come back. It's one of the greatest places to live."

Hans was born in 1966 at Palm Drive Hospital in Sebastopol, the first child of two immigrants. His mother, Ilse, had left Germany - a region that is now part of Poland - near the end of World War II. She first lived in New York, but in the late 1950s came to San Francisco to be near friends. His father, Hansueli, a farm boy from Switzerland, had immigrated to upstate New York when he was 18. He served in the U.S. Army to earn his American citizenship, moved for a time to the San Diego area, and in the late 1950s came north to Sonoma to work for the Stornetta dairy.

Ilse and Hansueli met at Little Switzerland, a restaurant and dance hall in the Sonoma Valley that was popular with immigrants from Northern Europe. After they were married, a Swiss friend who lived in the Hessel area gave them money for a down payment on three acres near his farm, figuring the Enzes would



make good neighbors. Ilse still lives on that property, and Hanseuli, who now lives in Rohnert Park, still makes his daily rounds as an artificial inseminator at local dairies.

The younger Hans also took up the trade of artificial insemination, making money at that trade even during his years at Analy High School, where he graduated as the senior class president in 1984. He continued that work, partnering with his father and then branching out on his own, into his mid-20s.

He met his wife, Pamela, at a Hessel Grange barbecue, shortly after she moved from the Los Angeles area to attend SSU. She teaches at Santa Rosa Junior College and Sonoma State University and creates costumes for local theater companies. Their son, Michael, attends SRJC.



1852

Harmon Heald establishes trading post at future site of Healdsburg. Berthold "Barney" Hoen and "Ted" Hahman become leading Santa Rosa businessmen, succeed in shifting county seat and courthouse to Santa Rosa in 1854.

Nancy Frost



The various lines of the Frost family have not let Sonoma County grass grow under their feet.

The Meacham line, consisting of seven generations born in the county, started with Alonzo Meacham arriving in California as a 49er, digging for gold and a shiny new life.

The Cunningham line began with pioneer Windsor settler Robert Cunningham. A third line started with Thomas Frost and Isabella Ellis and spread mostly from Petaluma to Healdsburg. The Cunninghams, Frosts and Ellises have six generations born in Sonoma County.

In total, over more than 150 years, members of this family popped up in Santa Rosa, Fulton, Healdsburg, Windsor, Petaluma and Two Rock.

Alonzo Meacham (not to be confused with the prominent Petaluma Meachams) came from Iowa and his wife Sarah Tate from Ireland. He bought the Carrillo Adobe at one point and was heavily involved as a local businessman.

Robert Cunningham, a native of Ireland, came to California in 1849. His wife Isabella and daughter Mary Jane joined him in 1852. Isabella, a gritty type if there ever was one, gained fame by driving one covered wagon pulled by oxen across the plains. The Cunninghams once had 160 acres or more of land in Windsor, bought at a cost of \$1.25 an acre.

Thomas Frost, a native of Tennessee, and Isabella Foster of Illinois, lived in several parts of the county in the early days, starting in Petaluma and ending up in Healdsburg where they were involved in ranching activities.

Several generations later, Michael Frost, born at the Sonoma County Hospital in 1949, married Nancy Seacord, born at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital in 1953.

Michael and Nancy Frost have owned an information technology business in Sonoma County for 21 years. They are the proud parents of two sons and have three grandchildren.

These families chose Sonoma County early on, and being very wise people, stayed (pretty much) right where they were for well over a century.



1853

Settler David Wharff arrives in Penngrove, bringing first chickens to county. Many Missourians populate Santa Rosa area, including Robert and Richard Crane, who raise cattle. Family later becomes known for world-famous Crane melons, grown near Cotati.

Adriane Vanoni Garayalde



When she was a little girl in Geyserville, back around 1960, Adriane Vanoni took a look around and determined that ranching was the life for her.

“Being outdoors, riding my horses is my favorite pastime,” says Adriane.

Adriane’s great-grandparents Mark and Angelina Vanoni settled on the Geyserville ranch around 1900, and “it’s been the family ranch ever since,” she says. Her ancestors, originally from Switzerland, moved north from the Cambria area when they suffered heavy losses because of a drought that crippled their dairy operation. Later, grandfather Clement took over, followed by his son – Adriane’s father – Clement Edward.

When Adriane’s father became head man, in addition to the cattle, he trained cutting horses. Now 84, he is still going strong, and horses remain a big part of the ranching operation, she says.

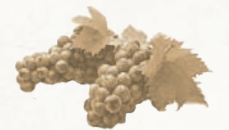
Over the years, many horses were raised, trained and entered in state and local competitions. “We were involved in 4-H, FFA, teaching horse classes at Santa Rosa Junior College, managing local cutting horse shows and garnering many awards for horses and livestock.”

The ranch today is much the same, except that “now my niece (Monica Vanoni) helps her grandfather with the horses and cattle...and brothers are involved, too.” Sister Yvonne and her husband have a ranch in Hood River, Oregon, but visit Sonoma County and still compete in cutting horse events.



As a bonus, the sixth generation of the family is enjoying the childhood opportunity to play on a ranch that has been recognized by the State of California’s Agricultural Heritage Club for being in agriculture for 100 years or more.

Adriane, who was born at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital in 1955, visits Sonoma County frequently, but she and husband Ed Garayalde currently operate a ranch in Montague, Siskiyou County, CA .



1857

Hungarian nobleman Count Agoston Haraszthy brings cuttings of European varietal grape vines to Sonoma, creating wine industry.

Bertha A. Sosa Garcia

It took some doing, but Bertha A. Sosa Garcia has left her impact on Sonoma County.

Her father, Nestor Sosa Sr., born in Texas in 1936, lost his father unexpectedly in 1955. He decided it was time to move west. The next year, he traveled with another family by car and made it to Sonoma County in 1956. About a year later, Bertha says, her father drove back to Texas to get his mother and two young brothers and return to California.

In 1964, Bertha's parents married in Geyserville and "I was born in 1965 in the county hospital on Chanate Road." The family lived in Petaluma for a time and then bought a home in Windsor, where Bertha attended Windsor Elementary School. Her father worked on the Oscar Miller Ranch in Petaluma and later at the Tiburon Winery in Healdsburg as a cellar man.

In 1975, the family moved back to Texas. They had plans to return, but unfortunately, Bertha's father became disabled and they were not able to get back to Sonoma County. Bertha married in 1988 and "I loved Sonoma County so, so much" that in 1999 "my husband and I packed up with our two little girls and my parents (Nestor and Alicia) and made that permanent move" back to California.

Today, Bertha calls herself a "proud Sonoma County native." Nestor and his mother Guadalupe Sosa are both buried in Petaluma's Calvary Cemetery. Although they were both born in Texas, "Sonoma County is what they loved and called home."

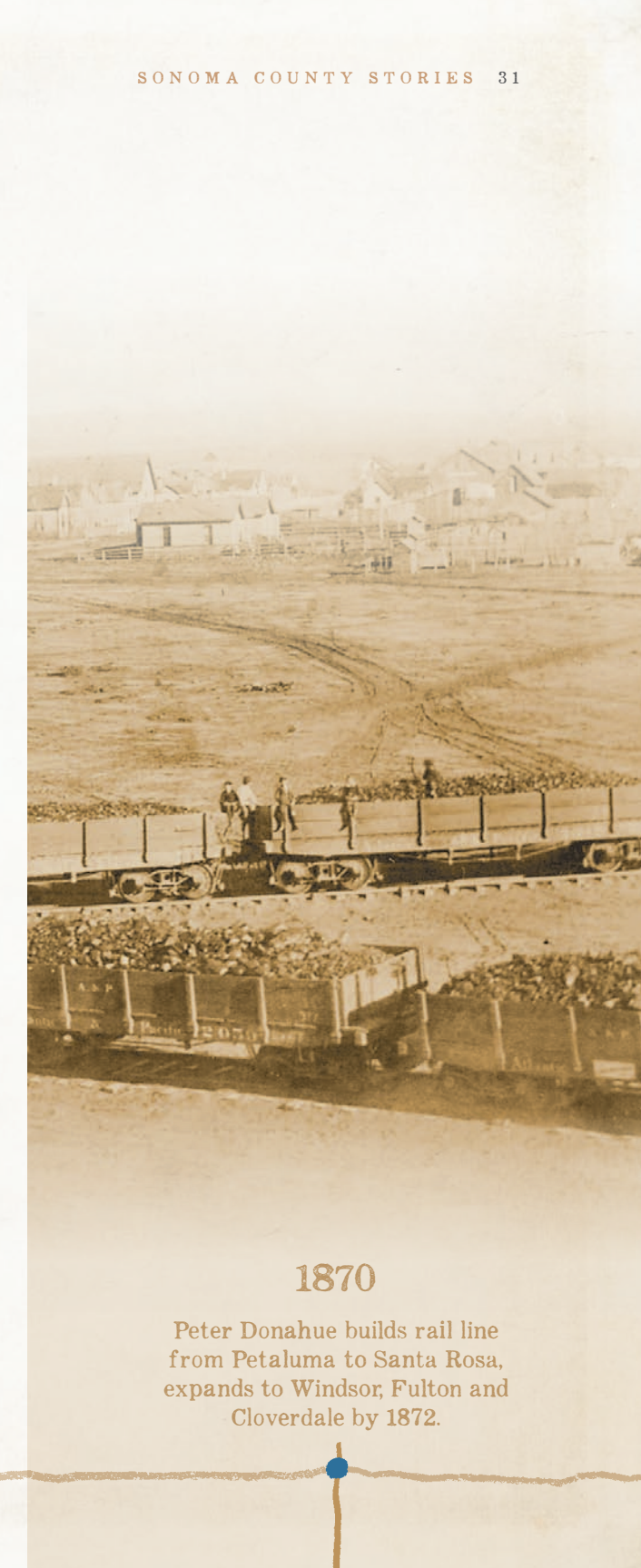
Bertha says her mother Alicia still lives in Sonoma County along with her two daughters.

Bertha has worked for Santa Rosa City Schools since 2000 and is a recruiting technician in the Human Resources Department. She says she has made herself well known making job postings "throughout all of Santa Rosa."



1860

Thomas Heald and George Guerne harvest redwoods and begin lumber operations at Guerneville. Quicksilver mining is sporadically successful in Russian River and Pine Flat areas through much of the 19th Century.



1870

Peter Donahue builds rail line from Petaluma to Santa Rosa, expands to Windsor, Fulton and Cloverdale by 1872.

Nancy Gardner



Nancy Gardner's family tree is decorated with a good sprinkling of the modern history of Sonoma County. When she was born at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital in 1952, her family had been living in Sonoma County for more than 100 years.

John G. and Millie Underhill were her great-great-grandparents. Millie Dunbar Underhill came to Sonoma Valley/Glen Ellen with her parents from Missouri in 1849, when she was 10 years old. Crossing the Plains with the Dunbar family, John G. Underhill settled in Rincon Valley/Santa Rosa in 1852. A handy man with tools, he constructed the first house ever built in Rincon Valley in 1853 for a man named Armsby Elliott. He became owner of the house and farm in 1863.

John G. and Millie married in 1855. After building the first house, John G. planted the first orchard in Rincon Valley and was one of the first in the state to breed thoroughbred horses for racing. He also was a trustee of the Wallace School District for many years.

Millie's parents were Alexander and Mary Hudson Dunbar, both of whom were born in Tennessee. Alexander donated the land where the original Dunbar School was built and had a road named in his honor. His wife was from the Hudson family that was part of the Bear Flag Revolt.

Millie and John G. had seven children, all born in Sonoma County: William, Charles, Katie, Mary, Sarah, John and Neva. Sarah Underhill was Nancy's great-grandmother. She married J.C. Crain and had three daughters, Nell, Hazel and Eva. Eva was Nancy's grandmother. Eva married Ned Zappa, whose family came to Sonoma County in the late 1890s from Italy. They settled in Rincon Valley and had a daughter, Joann, who was Nancy's mother.

Nancy and husband Richard Gardner have two children, Shelly Schubert and Richie Gardner, both born in Santa Rosa.

In all, there are eight generations who have touched down in Sonoma County.

1875

Innovative horticulturalist Luther Burbank arrives and sets up experimental gardens in Santa Rosa. Thomas Lake Harris brings his Brotherhood of New Life to Fountaingrove in Santa Rosa with Kanaye Nagasawa second in command. Businessman Mark McDonald comes to Santa Rosa, buys water company, invests in real estate and in 1877 builds horse-drawn Santa Rosa Street Railway. His elegant Mableton Mansion (McDonald Mansion) is completed in 1879.

1878

Lyman Byce and Isaac Dias invent artificial egg incubator, lay groundwork for poultry industry in southern Sonoma County.

Lynn Hamilton



A stint in the Peace Corps, a master's degree from Harvard and a job in South America weren't enough to pull Lynn Hamilton away from her roots in Sonoma County.

"Despite my time away, I always had a base here, I've always felt very connected," she says. "I've always considered Sonoma County my home."

She was born in 1948 at Community Hospital on Chanate Road in Santa Rosa, the first of two daughters for Marcia and Stan Hamilton. Stan Hamilton was the son of two San Franciscans who had survived the 1906 earthquake; Marcia Correll was an adventurous young woman from Minnesota who came west by train with a few girlfriends in 1944. All four Minnesota girls wound up marrying young men from San Francisco.

Lynn's grandfather brought the family to Santa Rosa when he opened a beauty salon in Rosenberg's Department Store. Her parents moved to Montgomery Village, and her father worked in sales for Hills Bros. Coffee, tending to accounts up and down the North Coast. Her mother, in addition to raising two daughters, worked for a time for the district attorney's office and for KSRO radio.



1895

Santa Rosa's first high school building completed on Humboldt Street
Sebastopol Grammar School opens with enrollment of more than 100.

When her father was promoted to an executive job with Hills Bros. in San Francisco, the family moved to Marin County. Lynn graduated from Redwood High School in 1966 and attended Santa Rosa Junior College. She served in the Peace Corps in Bolivia and the Dominican Republic from 1968-1970, and eventually earned her teaching credential from Sonoma State University.

An environmental activist from a young age, Lynn was a city council member and mayor of Sebastopol from 1990-1994, and at the end of her term was recruited into the graduate public administration program at Harvard University. After earning her master's degree, she returned to Latin America and worked for the non-profit Ashoka, later consulting for that group's programs in California, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Turkey, Hungary and Slovakia. She returned to Sonoma County in the late 1990s, living in Occidental with her husband, Don Frank, and continuing her community activism as a founder of the Town Hall Coalition and Community Clean Water Institute.

"My parents were very involved with the community in Santa Rosa, particularly the Junior Chamber of Commerce," she says. "I got involved in protecting the redwood forests when I was 18, and I've stayed involved ever since."

Her son, Hayes Hamilton Ruggiero, is a Sonoma County baby born at Memorial Hospital in 1973. He lives in Santa Cruz with his wife Anna and Lynn's grandchildren, Mia Rose and Miles James Ruggiero.



1897

Santa Rosa newspaper editor E.L. Finley merges Democrat and Evening Press into a single paper, publishes first Press Democrat October 9.

Phyliss Irvine

Jene and Philip Irvine came from San Diego to Santa Rosa in late 1947, just two months before their first daughter, Phyliss Irvine, was born at Santa Rosa General Hospital. Phyliss says her father was in the Marine Reserves at the time, having served as a Marine Raider in World War II.

The family stopped for a visit with Phyliss's grandparents, Harry and Dorothy Irvine, who had a ranch off Calistoga Road. They liked what they saw.

Phyliss says her dad applied for several jobs in the area and eventually was accepted as a fire fighter.

"He loved his job and retired in 1984 after 34 years."

The Irvines bought a home and had three children: Phyliss, her sister Connie and brother Terre.

They all attended Santa Rosa schools and graduated from Montgomery High. She "married and had three children of my own (Leon, Lois and Luke Pimentel), all born in Santa Rosa." Her sister and brother ended up leaving Sonoma County but Phyliss stayed and established "very strong roots here."

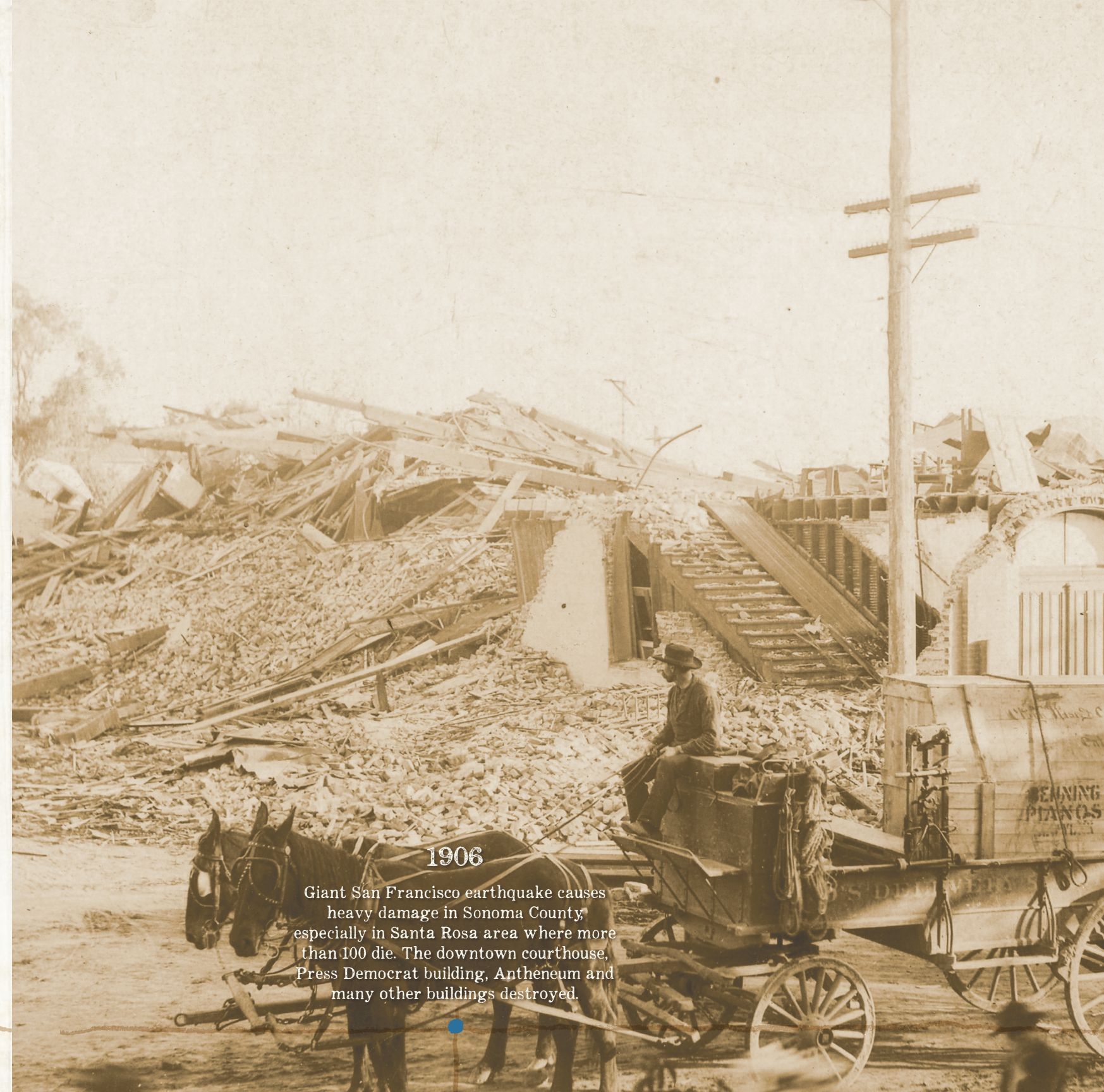
She developed many lasting friendships while working at State Farm Insurance for 33 years. She has also spent a great deal of time volunteering at Luther Burbank Gardens and at local schools. She has two children still in the area and has spent time taking classes at Santa Rosa Junior College.

She says she has "often thought about relocating to a warmer climate, but the thought of leaving the hometown I love so much keeps those thoughts pushed aside. I love my hometown and the activities and friends I have cultivated over the years. I can't imagine living anywhere else."



1899

Bicyclist Ben Noonan races train from Santa Rosa to Sebastopol, wins in 16 minutes. Dr. James Jesse owns first auto in Santa Rosa, a Schelling built in a bicycle shop by George and Alex Schelling. George becomes Santa Rosa's first auto dealer in 1901.



1906

Giant San Francisco earthquake causes heavy damage in Sonoma County, especially in Santa Rosa area where more than 100 die. The downtown courthouse, Press Democrat building, Anthènum and many other buildings destroyed.

Jacqueline Jewett

Jacqueline Jewett traces her family line across the country and across the Atlantic to the Azores Islands, an autonomous region of Portugal famous for its stunning scenery and thriving dairy industry.

Her great-grandfather Antonio Mattos Silva Sr. arrived in the U.S. in 1881 through New York's Ellis Island, after a 31-day voyage from the island of Sao Jorge. He wed Rosaline De Souza and worked as a dairy rancher in the Point Reyes area, later moving to Santa Rosa and Windsor.

Her grandfather, Antonio Mattos Silva Jr., was born in Olema in 1886. And her grandmother, Mary Victoria Ramos, was the eldest child of Joseph Ramos, an apple rancher from Sebastopol and his wife Rosalina De Souza Ramos. Both had come to this country from the Azores Island of Pico.

In 1913, Mary Ramos attended a dance at the Holy Ghost Hall in Sebastopol with her sisters Lina, Josephine and Ada Ramos. So did Antonio (Tony), who immediately took a liking to Mary. Jacqueline says that to gain the privilege of dancing with Mary, "it was politely necessary for him to dance with her sisters also."

The romance that began between Tony and Mary lasted 50 years. After their marriage in 1914, they lived in Petaluma where their two children Mildred (Jacqueline's mother) and Leland were born. In 1918, Tony became quite ill with the flu. To recuperate, "it became necessary for the young family of four to live with Tony's parents in a ranch at the top of Riebli Road," Jacqueline says.

As he recovered, Tony brought his children down the mountain grade each morning to Wallace School on Brush Creek Road. On his trips into Santa Rosa, he "noticed a picturesque roadhouse at 3011 Sonoma Highway," Jacqueline says. After much thought, he and Mary decided to buy the property and remodel it into Silva's Grocery Store.

Through the years, the business prospered, the children grew and the family enjoyed living in their home at the back of the store. As the children grew into adulthood, they enjoyed dancing with their friends to the big bands at Rio Nido. Jacqueline says her grandparents "operated their store for fifty years and died two days apart in 1964."

Jackie was born in 1938 at Tanner Hospital, downtown Santa Rosa. As a child, she said, "I picked prunes where the Flamingo Hotel is now located and I picked hops at Imwalle's. I built dams and caught pollywogs in Santa Rosa Creek, and explored the wonders of the (so-called) dynamite cave. I rode my bike all over town and very often walked to St. Rose and Ursuline School, where I graduated in 1956."

She was married to John V. Jewett for 22 years and was the life partner of Bob Norman for 30 years before he passed away in 2008. She has a daughter, Jill Victoria Jewett Asker; grandchildren, Brent Michael Sullivan and Elise Victoria Sullivan; and a great-granddaughter, Shyanne Grace Sullivan.

She says that now makes "seven generations who have lived and loved in Sonoma County."



1908

Teacher Frances Louise O'Meara inspires young Robert Ripley at Santa Rosa High School; Ripley goes on to international fame with his "Believe It Or Not" cartoons.

Cecile Kiser



Cecile was born in 1938 at the old Sonoma County Hospital on Chanate Road in Santa Rosa, becoming the third generation of her mother's (Bei) family in Sonoma County.

After living a few years in Geyserville and Cazadero, she grew up in Petaluma, where she attended St. Vincent de Paul Elementary and High schools. She now lives in Sonoma.

“As you can see, I’ve circled the county,” she says. “I have seen it change from prunes, pears, apples and hops to vineyards. I saw Petaluma grow from a small community to the city it is today. And for the last 50 years, I have witnessed the changes in Sonoma.

“What a beautiful county to call home.”

Even with all the changes and growth, Cecile says her home county remains a close-knit community. She still gets together for lunch with girlfriends from elementary school.

“That’s the greatest thing about living here,” Cecile says.

Cecile’s mother, Assunta Bei, grew up in Cazadero. Her father, Fred Boom, came to Sonoma County from Colorado in the early 1930s, and the couple met at a dance in Duncans Mills. Fred Boom was a truck driver for Nielsen Freight Lines of Petaluma. Assunta Bei stayed busy at home raising eight children.

After graduating from Dominican College in San Rafael, Cecile worked for 30 years as a teacher, mostly in Sonoma Valley schools. Former students from Flowery and Prestwood schools still greet her on the streets of Sonoma, where she and her husband, Bill Kiser, have lived for 50 years. They have three adult children, Patrick and Matthew Kiser and Kathleen Welch – all Sonoma County babies.

1914

Assemblyman Herbert Slater elected to the State Senate, where he serves until his death in 1947. Slater writes for the Santa Rosa newspaper while in the Legislature and is known as “the blind senator” because of eyesight problems.



1916

Author Jack London dies at his Kenwood ranch, age 40.

Kathy Lane



Kathy Lane was born in 1949 at what was then General Hospital, on A Street in downtown Santa Rosa. But she wound up spending a major portion of her life at the city's other old hospital, the one at the top of the hill on Chanate Road.

Her first memory of what was then "Sonoma County Hospital" is from 1957: "The walls were green, the ceiling was green, the doors were green, even the floor was green," she writes. "A sea of green was all I saw as I looked up from the gurney."

She was 8 years old and suffering from what doctors thought might be leukemia. A bone-marrow biopsy found her malady to be much less serious, but it still was a traumatic experience for a little girl. What she didn't know was that the hospital "would become like a second home, where I would work, teach, laugh, cry, birth daughters, welcome a granddaughter, nurse family members, cheer, shiver and sweat over the past 42 years."

Kathy, a registered nurse on the cardiac telemetry unit, first donned her nurse's cap at the hospital in 1972, and in the course of her life has seen the name change from "County Hospital" to "Community Hospital" to "Sutter Medical Center of Santa Rosa." This fall, she makes the move to the new facility, Sutter Santa Rosa Regional Hospital.

Her family history in Sonoma County pre-dates that of the old hospital. On her mother's side, the Mahoney family of Petaluma goes back several generations, with a grandmother born at San Quentin (her father was a guard) and a great-grandfather born in Petaluma in 1867. Her father, Hilmar Cann, was born in Oakland - but barely. "He was conceived in Estonia and his mother came here just in time to give birth," Kathy says.

1918

Santa Rosa Junior College opens its doors on Santa Rosa High School campus, offers 2-year degree, attracts 32 students.

Hilmar met Edwardine Mahoney just after World War II. He was in the Army Air Force, she was a Navy WAVE and they both were attending radio operator's school. It turned out they were on the same frequency.

They moved to Santa Rosa, where Hilmar became chief engineer for KSRO radio. In addition to his technical duties, he took to the airwaves every Sunday night with the popular "Sunday Evening Concert," several hours of classical music. Kathy remembers visits to the station and to the transmitter on the city's west side, and listening to her father's voice on the air.

The family lived on Marlow Road when it was more rural than today, and Kathy and her four younger brothers would pick apples and prunes at harvest time. She attended St. Rose School, Ursuline High School and Santa Rosa Junior College before earning her degree at the University of San Francisco's school of nursing.

She met her husband, Jim Lane, at a meeting of the Piner 4-H Club when she was 16. He is from Leggett in Mendocino County, and was attending SRJC at the time. They have three daughters, Jenna and Krista Lane, both of San Francisco, and Becca Lane of Santa Rosa, a granddaughter and a grandson - all but the grandson Sonoma County babies.



1928

Gravenstein apple boom sees 1,800 rail-car-loads of fruit go to eastern and southern markets

Dennis Magatelli



Dennis Magatelli's grandparents were married in the early 20th Century on a piece of property in Alpine Valley, between Santa Rosa and St. Helena, that still belongs to the family. But his roots reach back all the way to Italy, where his father's family came from Lombardy, and his mother's from Andalo.

For the last four generations, though, the Magatellis have been Sonoma County babies.

His father, Ben, was born in Alpine Valley in 1914, and he met the Santa Rosa-born Virginia Girolo at the Midway Dance Club on Sebastopol Road when they were young adults. They were married at St. Rose Church in 1939. Ben owned the St. Rose Hotel on lower Fourth Street, worked at Pat's on Mendocino Avenue and managed Sawyer's News downtown – all establishments that now are just part of Sonoma County history.

Dennis was born at Memorial Hospital in 1953. He attended St. Rose School, Cardinal Newman High School and Sonoma State University. He worked for 24 years for Exchange Bank before deciding he wanted to try something different, so he became a teacher. He now teaches economics and business courses at Rancho Cotate High School in Rohnert Park, where he also is coach of the varsity basketball team.

While Dennis says he enjoys other parts of the West Coast, he's never wanted to leave the place where he was born. "Sonoma County has everything to offer, and my roots here are pretty deep," he says.

He and his wife, Linda Reid Magatelli, live in Sebastopol. Their children, Cece Bianchini and Anthony Magatelli, live in the area and have three Sonoma County babies of their own – 5-year-old Dominic Bianchini and 2-year-old twins Emma Rose and Abigail Marie Magatelli.



1937

Golden Gate Bridge opens in spring, much credit going to Exchange Bank's Frank Doyle.

Catherine Ricci Maltby



Catherine Ricci Maltby learned about service stations early in life. After all, it was the family business.

Both of her grandfathers, Jim Ricci and Harry Park, owned and operated service stations in Petaluma.

Catherine says, "If you had a car in the '50s to the '70s and filled up in Petaluma, you probably met them."

Jim Ricci, a Petaluma native, owned the service station on D and Wilson streets. from 1948-1967. He then owned the Gulf Station on Western Avenue from 1967-1973.

Her father Dan worked at both stations. He remembers when the three-story hotel on Western Avenue (now the site of Chase Bank) caught on fire. He was told to shut down the service station for fear of the gas tanks exploding. He also remembers the crowds standing around watching as the hotel burned down. In 1973 the city purchased the service station in order to create more parking space downtown.

Catherine's other grandfather, Harry Park, also ran a service station from the 50's until he retired in 1980. His was on Western at the Five Corners. First, it was a 76 station but then it changed to ARCO.

The building is still there although, says Catherine, "I'm not sure what it is!" Her grandfathers were essentially competitors as their stations were just two blocks away from each other.

Catherine was born in 1973 at Hillcrest Hospital in Petaluma. She was raised in west Petaluma and graduated from Petaluma High in 1991. She attended Santa Rosa Junior College and then moved to the Midwest for college but returned in 1997 to teach in Sonoma County. She has been teaching at Brook Hill Elementary School in Santa Rosa for the past 13 years.

Her two sons, James and Jake Maltby, were both born in Santa Rosa. Both of Catherine's parents, Daniel Ricci and Virginia Park, were born at Petaluma General Hospital and attended St. Vincent's School together. "My parents are still together and have 3 children and four grandsons (all Sonoma County born!)"

1937

Italian Swiss Colony recognized as world's largest winery E.L. Finley puts radio station KSRO on the air. Sonoma County Hospital opens with daily cost of \$2 for each bed patient, only half of typical Bay Area tab.

Maria Mar



When Maria Mar's parents left the south-Texas border town of Harlingen in the early 1950s, all they knew about Healdsburg was that a job awaited Evaristo Mar in what was then the Maloney & Snyder Lumber Mill.

That was enough for Lucia and Evaristo to load up their baby daughter Rosa, pack their belongings and relocate from the banks of the Rio Grande to the banks of the Russian River. Evaristo, who had come to the U.S. from Mexico as part of the Bracero guest-worker program, would have to take odd jobs to supplement his income from the lumber mill, "but he always felt he was coming to America to lend a helping hand," his daughter says today.

Maria was born at Healdsburg Hospital in 1955, followed by her sister Rita and brother Evaristo.

Maria fondly remembers a childhood in the 1950s and '60s in a sleepy town where everything was in walking or biking distance, and children had the freedom and the safety to explore. She swam in the Russian River, sewed some of her own clothing and enjoyed singing very much. She loved spending time in the quiet confines of the Carnegie Library (now the Healdsburg Museum), and staging impromptu plays in the Plaza with her friends.

1949

In spite of heavy criticism, new four-lane highway built through Santa Rosa opens in May.

She also worked in the orchards and the vineyards around town, earning extra money to help pay for tuition at St. Johns Elementary School and Ursuline High School.

"All four of us helped our parents in the fields, from about 1959 to 1968," she says. "It was understood that this was how we were contributing to our education."

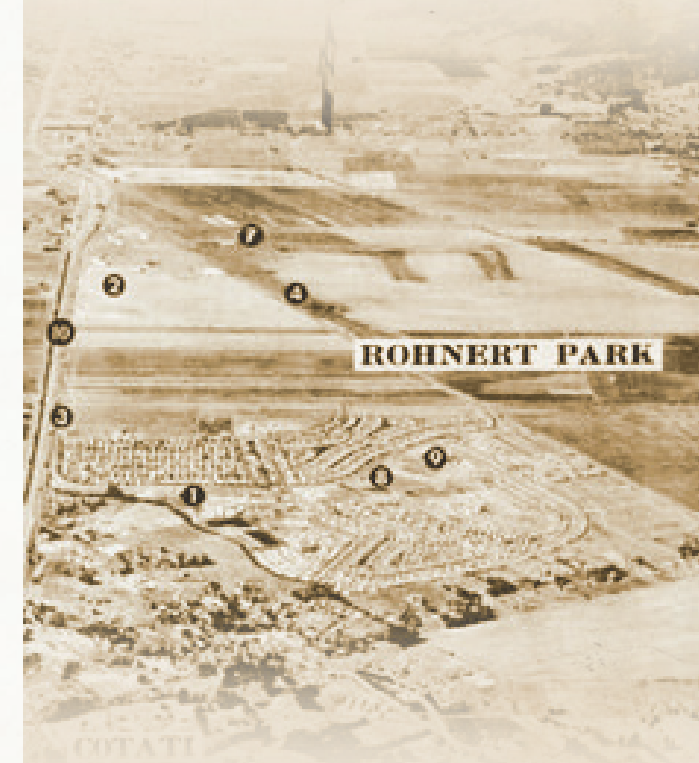
The work could be hot and hard, but Maria also recalls that it was good family time together, and she and her older sister had friendly competitions about who could pick more fruit.

"It's a fond memory," she says. "I don't remember ever feeling deprivation as a child."

Growing up as a Mexican-American in very-white Healdsburg brought its share of prejudice and discrimination, Maria says, but it also provided her with a rich cultural experience. She remembers countless weddings and baptisms, quinceaneras and funerals, each of which was a cause for a gathering and, often, a lively party. Her memories are of music, dancing and singing. Her bilingual skills served her well when she worked as a teenager at Ben Franklin's and the Rexall Drug Store.

After high school, she attended Santa Clara University for a time, and later in life Santa Rosa Junior College, before earning her degree from University of San Francisco. She is now retired from the Sonoma County Mental Health Department, and lives in Oakmont with her husband, Tony Apolloni.

"I enjoyed growing up in Healdsburg," she says. "It was a beautiful, peaceful little town."



1955

Montgomery Village annexed to Santa Rosa, causing jump in city population from 18,000 to 30,000. Developers close deal with Fred Rohnert and his sister for land near Cotati. First phase of new Rohnert Park community starts in 1956.

Beverly Dorsey McChesney



Three days before D-Day in 1944, Beverly Dorsey McChesney entered this life at the county hospital on Chanate Road in Santa Rosa. Since her father, Cecil “Hap” Dorsey, was in the Navy, her mother, Elnora Morgan Dorsey, was her sole parent for the first few months. However, her two older sisters Sharon and Sue and grandparents Pat and Faye Morgan provided plenty of family and love.

By December 1946, the reunited family bought and moved into an old two-story house on Sonoma Highway in Rincon Valley, just in time for Christmas. When her mother burned the Christmas tree in the fireplace, she also burned the house from the top down. A very kind woman knocked on the door to tell her that the roof was burning, so that she had time to get her daughters out. The house was destroyed.

Montgomery High School was still new when Beverly attended from 1959-1962. She was chosen as a speaker at graduation on the topic “1962-2062: Age of Anxiety or Opportunity?” Looking back, she says that was a very appropriate topic in the decade of the Kennedy assassination, the King assassination, the Vietnam War and the moon landing.

During her two years at Santa Rosa Junior College, she decided to major in English and minor in U.S. history. Instructors Bigby, Emblen, Andreini, Hunter and Yates were probably the most influential, although the economics teacher made a lasting impression when he refused to allow two young women the opportunity to make up the midterm they missed to march for the right of women to wear pants on campus.

Transferring to San Francisco State College was smooth academically, “but no one would claim that the San Francisco State experience in the 1960s was smooth socially or politically,” she recalls.

“Experiencing real diversity for the first time was exciting, learning from a first-rate faculty was stimulating and being around during the ‘Summer of Love’ was eye-opening. Those years were a whirlwind

of finding my calling, meeting my future husband and questioning my values during the hundred-day strike in 1968-1969, when the students protested, the faculty picketed and the armed Tactical Squad threatened. My M.A. exam was conducted by three professors in a professor’s apartment several miles from campus. It took years to come to terms with that era.”

A month after graduation, Beverly was “in front of a class of lovely Hong Kong immigrants in an urban San Francisco war-on-poverty program.”

Following marriage to David McChesney in June 1970, the couple moved to Silicon Valley. Before long, she began the job that would last more than three decades, teaching at Stanford University, working with extremely gifted foreign graduate students on their way to advanced degrees.

Beverly says she “thought I’d be lucky to last a few years in that competitive environment, but I managed to become one of those who stayed on and on. My life was extremely busy, with job, commitment to professional associations and above all, to my husband and our son Donald. After all, the women’s movement said we could have it all.”

When Silicon Valley laid off thousands of people in 2000, “we were ready for a change. We downsized not only furniture, but also town size by moving to Cloverdale. David and I have become part of this jewel-like community, with a hundred other active senior volunteers. My life changed dramatically as I developed my painting style and exhibited in a local gallery and elsewhere for six years. How different English teaching and art are!”

In 2013, she again found herself at the hospital on Chanate Road.

“My 93-year-old mother, who no longer recognized me, was taken to the ER after suffering another stroke. It became clear that she would not survive. In a quiet moment, I reflected that she and I started at County Hospital and were ending our relationship in the same place.”



1961

Sonoma State College (later University) opens in Rohnert Park in temporary quarters with 272 students. Ambrose Nichols serves as president until 1970. Students from SSC create demand for living space in converted Cotati chicken houses.

Beth Pardo



When Beth Pardo's third granddaughter was delivered into the world in January 2010, grandmother was proud and excited that little Jessica was delivered by Dr. Ann Figurski, a third-year resident at Sutter Medical Center's Family Practice Residency, where Beth worked for 12 years as a program coordinator.

And, when the newborn suffered complications a few weeks after her birth, Beth was comforted and relieved that the network of health care facilities that supports the Family Practice Residency was there for her family.

The widely acclaimed Residency has been associated with the hospital at the top of Chanate Road since the 1930s, long before what was once Sonoma County Community Hospital became Sutter Medical Center. The Residency, affiliated with the University of California San Francisco Medical School, trains medical students to become family doctors. Many of those residents spend part of their residency seeing patients at Santa Rosa Community Health Centers.

All three – Sutter, Community Health Centers and UCSF – became part of the story of the first month in the life of Jessica Pardo-Valdivia.

Beth's daughter, Xochitl Pardo-Valdivia, had a relatively uneventful labor and delivery at Sutter. Dr. Figurski and an attending physician, Dr. Laurie Cederberg, delivered Jessica and mother and daughter were sent home the next day.

A few weeks later, though, Xochitl brought Jessica in for a checkup at Santa Rosa Community Health Center, and she told Dr. Figurski that the baby was having problems with frequent vomiting. Fearing an intestinal blockage, the doctor and her preceptor, Dr. David Schneider, recommended an ultrasound, which

turned up what is known as pyloric stenosis, a blockage between the stomach and intestine. They wanted to get a second opinion, and Jackie Leon, referral coordinator at the Health Center, arranged for Jessica to be seen the very next day at UCSF.

"They were told to be prepared to stay overnight, because Jessica might need surgery," Beth said.

A specialist examined Jessica at UCSF, and another sonogram was performed. The doctor there said it was likely that the little girl's problem "would clear up on its own," Beth said.

"It did, and now she is thriving" as a four-and-a-half-year-old.

Beth, who retired from Sutter in early 2014, is a proud grandmother of that Sonoma County baby, along with two other granddaughters.

"But mainly I just want to say thank you to everyone who took such good care of Jessica. What would we do if we did not have these people and businesses in our community which we count on so heavily to keep us well?"



1969

Major quakes rip downtown Santa Rosa on Oct. 1.

1967

"Summer of Love" in San Francisco brings thousands of hippies to the West Coast. Some, dissatisfied with the urban scene, migrate to rural Sonoma County starting "back to the land" movement.

Sheridan Peterson



Sheridan Peterson is a fourth generation Windsor resident who grew up on a 380-acre fruit farm on Faught Road. The house “built by Spaniards,” he says, “is still standing and occupied.”

Peterson says his great-grandfather, Barcilius Aime Peterson, came to California in the 1840s and struck it rich mining for gold. With the proceeds, he bought the land on Faught Road. Peterson’s grandfather, Sheridan Peterson I, born in 1865 in Ohio, planted what was at the time the only citrus grove in Sonoma County. He died in 1951 and is buried in Sonoma County.

Peterson’s father, Capt. Chauncey Peterson, was born in 1895. He fought in France in World War I and received a Silver Star. He was disabled by poison gas and, for reasons not totally clear, vanished in the 1930s when his son was only 9 or 10 years old. He died in 1964.

Sheridan was born in 1926, at Santa Rosa General Hospital on A Street downtown. He served with the Marine Corps in World War II and graduated from the University of Missouri in 1954 with a degree in creative writing, journalism and philosophy.

After becoming “disgruntled as a reporter and high school English teacher” in Washington state, he spent 35 years in Asia and the Middle East teaching English, “working as a training specialist for the military-industrial complex and seven years in Vietnam...as a refugee adviser and training specialist,” he says. He also did a stint as a smokejumper in the mid-1950s.

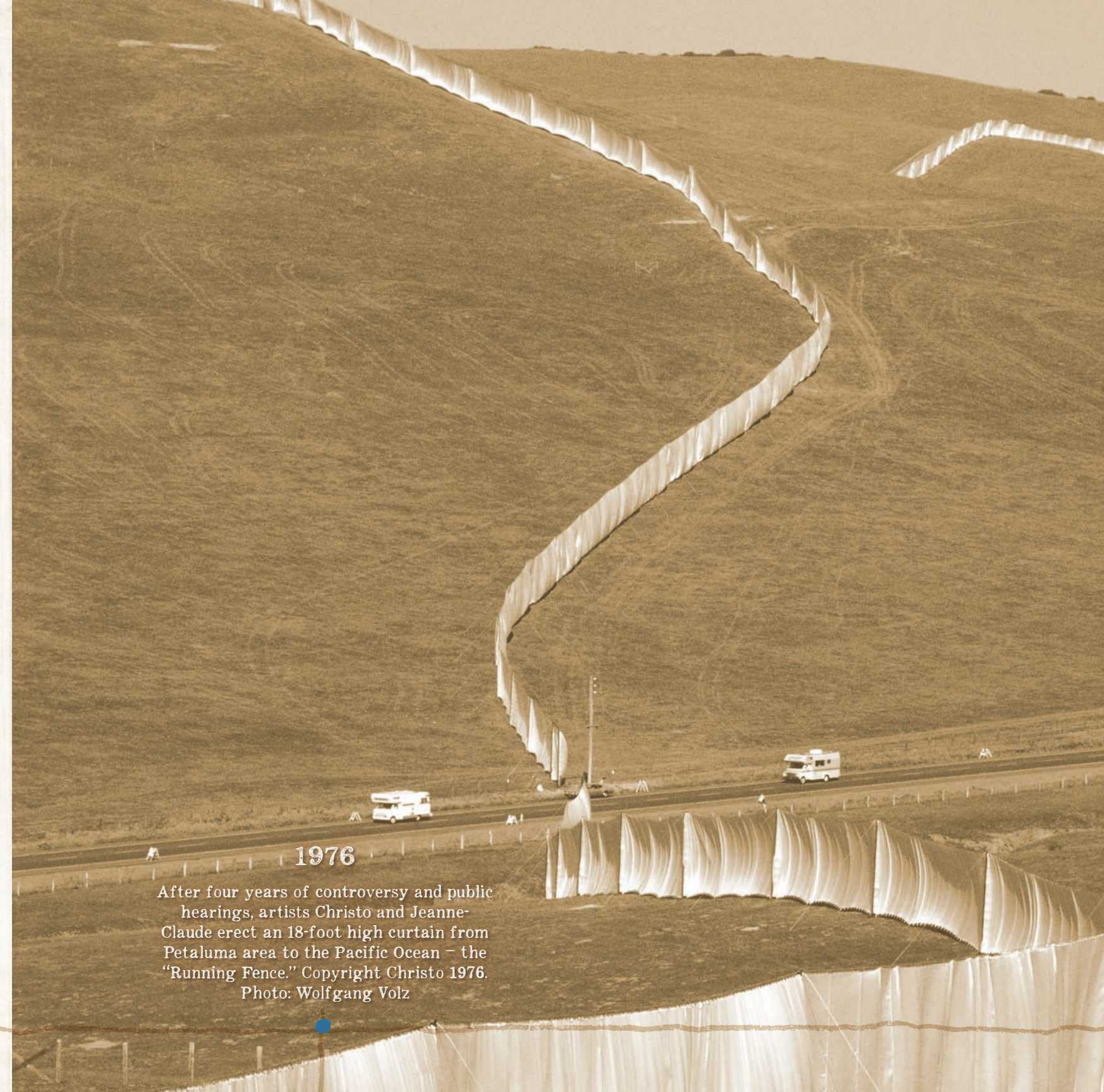
The fact that Peterson has had certain skills and has traveled much of the world has led to speculation that he might be some type of international secret agent or even the famed “DB Cooper,” who hijacked an airplane in the 1970s and disappeared after parachuting from the jet with a large cash ransom. He does little to quell the speculation, but he doesn’t necessarily confirm it, either.

Which allows Peterson, the descendant of Faught Road farmers, to remain something of a man of mystery.



1973

Classic teen movie “American Graffiti” is made in Petaluma.



1976

After four years of controversy and public hearings, artists Christo and Jeanne-Claude erect an 18-foot high curtain from Petaluma area to the Pacific Ocean – the “Running Fence.” Copyright Christo 1976. Photo: Wolfgang Volz

Van Proschold



Known as the Chamise Kid, Mervyn “Van” Proschold was one of 12 children of Edwin and Christine Proschold. He avoided the San Francisco earthquake by moving with his large family to a ranch in Cazadero in 1900 at age 2. But that didn’t save him from getting knocked around in his young life.

“By the time I started school, there were still 16- and 17-year-old boys going to grammar school who were so bored all they could do was be mean. When I was at school Otto and Willie Bronsert were the local toughs,” he says.

“Otto and Willie ... tormented all the younger kids something fierce. They used to hold me upside down (over the well) until my pockets turned inside out. Everything in them, including my pocket knife, went down the hole. I tried to stay on Otto and Willie’s good side as much as I could but when my number was up there wasn’t much I could do about it but take my licking.

“One day, (teacher) Charlie Wilson ... tried to get them to stop. The Bronsert boys really teed off on old Charlie. They bloodied his nose and broke his glasses. He transferred out the next day.

“Another male teacher had a run-in with a 16-year-old boy. They went outside to settle the matter like men and the boy knocked the teacher out. (The teacher) left right then and there.”

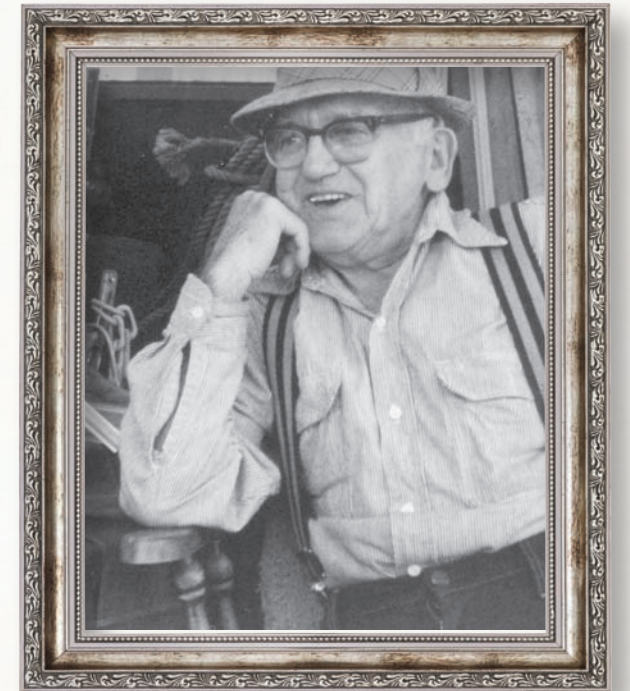
“When mother went into labor it was my job to fetch the midwife (Mrs. Eckman.) Their place was at least three miles from our ranch. It seemed an eternity waiting for her to get ready because Mrs. Eckman never moved too fast. She was as big as a house, weighing 400 pounds if she weighed an ounce, and because of her size she needed a cane to get around.

“(When sister Lilly was born) I was almost 6. It was wintertime and raining hard. (I told Mrs. Eckman) I knew a shortcut we could take. She said, ‘I’ll do it if you go ahead of me and hold my hand.’

“We got to a point where we were 40 feet above the flat and the trail went around a big oak tree. We were inching past the tree when Mrs. Eckman stepped on an oak gall. Her foot rolled over the top of it. She lost her balance and fell backwards. I was holding her hand when she went down and her weight pulled me over, launched me off the trail and pulled me down like I was a cricket. I sailed 40 feet and landed on a big rock while Mrs. Eckman rolled all the way down the hill. She looked like a house rolling in slow motion and steamrolled everything in her path. Mrs. Eckman and I were in sorry shape but were lucky we weren’t hurt worse.

“(After mother got out of bed and treated Mrs. Eckman and her son, she) laid back down on her bed and started having her baby. Mrs. Eckman did her job...waddling around the cabin with her cane in one hand and a dishpan on her hip.”

Story courtesy Sonoma County Historical Society.



1982

The Santa Rosa Symphony draws a crowd of 1,500 as it moves into its new venue at Burbank Center for the Arts. After years of lawsuits and other delays, controversial Santa Rosa downtown shopping mall opens.

Kerry Rego



Kerry Rego's parents grew up in San Francisco and lived in Richmond before moving to Santa Rosa in the early 1970s, seeking a "quieter community" in which to raise a family. They made a striking couple: Her mother, Daphne Dean, was a black woman; her father, Kevin Quirk, was a white man – a relationship that was still illegal in many states until the Loving v. Virginia ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court in 1967.

Kerry's sister, now Colleen Dillaway, was born in 1973 at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital. She now lives in Bakersfield. Kerry was born in 1977 at what was then Sonoma County Community Hospital.

Their parents divorced when Colleen and Kerry were young, "but they brought up two daughters who love it here in Santa Rosa," says Kerry. Her mother challenged a lot of barriers, becoming a licensed pilot, a certified air-traffic controller and a business executive before her death. Her father worked as a Sonoma County probation officer and alcohol counselor before his retirement. He also is a pilot and builds experimental aircraft, and is now married to Sue Sarmir.

Kerry attended several elementary schools around town, and went to Rincon Valley Middle School before graduating from Santa Rosa High School in 1995. She attended Santa Rosa Junior College and Heald College of Business, and now runs her own consulting firm training people to use social media. She also is a columnist and author.

1983

First Gay and Lesbian Parade/Picnic held in Santa Rosa. Warm Springs Dam, flood deterrent and water storage facility, is completed after decades of conflict.

Henry Righetti

Henry Righetti Sr. and Evelyn Scollaro both started their lives in Bodega, Henry in 1896 and his future wife in 1912. The houses in which they lived as children still exist, one occupied and one pretty much deserted.

Henry Righetti Jr., who lives in Santa Rosa with his wife, the former Judy Hart, says his father had the biggest jolt of his childhood when he was tossed out of his bed during the 1906 earthquake.

Henry Jr., who was born at the Petaluma General Hospital, says his father was a day laborer, spending much of his life working at Golden Eagle Milling Co. in Petaluma. Henry Sr. also loved the outdoors and fishing. He started going fishing at the mouth of the Klamath River in the 1930s. Mixing business and pleasure, he became a fishing guide in the latter part of his life on the Klamath and Smith rivers.

Many Petalumans fished for salmon and steelhead on the Klamath, including Henry Sr.'s good friend Joe Milner, who had the major sporting goods store in Petaluma.

Henry Jr.'s mother stayed close to home, although she worked at the jeans factory in Petaluma and also at Sunset Line and Twine in east Petaluma, he says.

After college, Henry Jr. and his wife had three children, born at Memorial and Warrack hospitals in Santa Rosa. His two grandsons were both born at Sutter Hospital. Henry worked at a variety of jobs over the years, engaging in several businesses, including an Orange Julius franchise, and also doing assessor work for the County of Sonoma. Wife Judy was a nurse for 47 years.

1986

Don Green becomes founder of "Telecom Valley," establishing Optilink Corp. in 1986 and Advanced Fibre Communications in 1992. Eventually, some 15 telecom equipment manufacturing companies come to the county. Green makes \$10 million donation for concert complex at Sonoma State University.



Marla Rudoni



Perseverance was a key word in the world of the Wong family when they moved to Sonoma County in the late 19th Century. And persevere they did.

Marla Wong Rudoni's grandparents, Minnie and Ham Wong, were long-time California residents, dating back to the 1880s.

Marla's father, Bob H. Wong, told Marla the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 made life difficult for the family. The Wongs were among the few Chinese families left in Sonoma County after most were run out of town due to the law that not only made it more difficult for Chinese to immigrate to the U.S., but also increased hardships and discrimination for those already here.

Still, Marla says, "they persevered, owning and operating Minnie Wong's Chinese Restaurant at 209 Fourth St., now historic Railroad Square."

The restaurant offered both food and gambling. Ham started as a bus boy at age 12 and refined his cooking skills to eventually become head cook at Mare Island Navy Yard in Vallejo.

Marla's father, born in 1921, graduated from Santa Rosa High School. When Bob married Hazel Wong he was unable to own a home under his name because of his Chinese background. He had to arrange for a friend to purchase it on his behalf.

He rose to the rank of staff sergeant in the U.S. Army Air Corps in World War II. After the war, he became one of the operators of the Diamond Market at 319 Fourth St. Bob was known in the area as a great bowler and a Sonoma County tennis champion. Overcoming racial challenges over the years, he became post commander for the Roseland District Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Bob and Hazel had seven children, most of whom went to Santa Rosa High School and to higher education and into the business world.

Carolyn, born in 1948, worked for Fortune 500 companies such as Lockheed Martin. Robert, born in 1950, owned jewelry stores in Sonoma and Marin counties and the San Francisco Bay Area. Richard, born in 1952, has a chiropractic practice in Santa Rosa. Patricia Joyce, born in 1954, worked at Hewlett-Packard and is a contract bookkeeper. Brian, born in 1957, is an accomplished trumpeter and operated Lyle's Tackle and Travel Services for many years. Perry, born in 1963, died at age 11.

Marla Wong Rudoni, the youngest of the children, was born at Warrack Hospital in 1967. She graduated from Piner High School and Santa Rosa Jr. College. She worked at Hewlett-Packard/Agilent in marketing and currently owns Afton Medical.

"It seems silly to think about nowadays but despite the hardships, our family became well-respected business owners/citizens in the Sonoma County community," Marla says.



1993

Elsie Allen High School, named after famed Pomo Indian basket weaver, opens in southwest Santa Rosa.



Lesa Tanner



Lesa Tanner has been a proud resident of Graton all her life. She is the author of the book “Images of America: Graton,” and she writes the Hometown Graton column for Sonoma West Times & News. She knows her community well.

The town of Graton was founded in 1905 after the Petaluma & Santa Rosa Railroad line came to the Green Valley area. Santa Rosa businessmen James Gray and J.H. Brush bought land from Moses Hicks and laid out a grid of streets named after themselves and their children, creating one of the first subdivisions in Sonoma County. The town’s name came from a contraction of its nickname, “Gray’s Town.”

Lesa’s mother, Judy Schaefer Tanner, and her family came to Graton in 1943, and her father, Jim Tanner, came with his family in 1952. They married in 1957.

Lesa was born in 1962 at Palm Drive Hospital in Sebastopol. Her sister, Angie Tanner, was born there in 1964. They both came home to the house on Edison Street where their mother still lives. Her dad died in 2008.

“The Graton my sister and I grew up in was, until the late 1970s, very similar to how it was in mother’s day. My sister and I walked downtown to the grocery store to turn in soda bottles for cash, which we spent at the penny candy counter at Flesher’s Fountain, unless we splurged on a sundae or vanilla Coke. We could head over to Baker’s Lunch and get one of Myrtle’s hamburgers. In apple season, our mother worked at Hallberg’s cannery and we would go in to visit her, walking through the sticky apple juice mist. In those days, Graton was filled with the noxious odor of rotting apples and the constant chug of processing equipment.

1999

Closing of Vacu-Dry plant in Sebastopol speeds downswing of apple industry, a 20-year trend.

“Graton kids go to Oak Grove School, founded in 1854. My mother and her three sisters went there, as did my sister and I, along with 10 of our cousins. My three sons and two nieces attended Oak Grove with a dozen of my cousins’ children. Now the fourth generation of Schaefer descendants lives in Sonoma County and several are at Oak Grove. At our last family Christmas gathering at the Graton Community Club, there were more than 40 of us, the majority still living in Graton.”

When the apple industry declined in the late 1970s, Graton declined as well, and by the early 1990s it was almost a ghost town. Developer Orrin Thiessen saw the potential in Graton and purchased most of the downtown, remodeling it based on photographs of how it looked in 1912. The iconic Skip’s Bar became the Underwood Restaurant and Bistro and the former grocery stores, bars, soda fountain and pharmacy were transformed into restaurants, an art gallery, real estate offices and a wine tasting room. There is a small market, and the post office is around the corner from downtown, but the fire department has moved up to Highway 116.

Lesa, a proud hometown girl says, “My family’s Sonoma County ties are strong and it is my hope that there will always be future generations of us going to Oak Grove School and living in Graton. It’s a special place.”



2003

Santa Rosa completes \$200 million Geysers wastewater project, sending treated wastewater 3,000 feet up into the Mayacamas Mountains to be recycled in the region’s geothermal steam fields.

Lee Torliatt



I'm Lee Torliatt and my story begins in 1867, when Peter Torliatt Sr. was born in a village near the French-Italian border. As a young man, he and a friend, Louis Marion, came west, possibly jumping ship in San Francisco and ending up on farms near Penngrove.

Louis married but after losing his wife in childbirth sent for his sister Pauline in France. Somehow, sister Adrienne showed up instead. She was in the country only two months when she married Peter Torliatt. Peter and Adrienne had five children: Marie, born in 1889; Theresa, 1890; Charles Louis, 1892; Peter Jr., 1897; and Adolph, 1900.

A midwife, Daisy Watts, delivered Mary, Theresa and Charlie and perhaps Peter Jr. It was a good thing she was around. Celebrating her 95th birthday, Theresa said that when she was born on the family's Penngrove ranch in 1890, she weighed less than 2 pounds and her parents feared for her survival. It was the midwife "Grandma Watts" who took charge, keeping the infant in a shoe box lined with cotton. To keep the baby warm, the midwife put her in the oven of the stove. When it was time to bake biscuits, the baby was removed and given to someone nearby to hold. She was never seen by a doctor.

Peter Sr. raised tomatoes and corn and finally planted strawberries on the Sonoma Mountain ranch. His berries were so tasty he became known as "Strawberry Pete." He sold his berries privately to many pioneer families and took his remaining goods to a grocery store in Petaluma.

The children were forbidden to enter the butterhouse. Admittance to that building was a privilege enjoyed only by adults. One day, Peter Sr. and Adrienne saw that someone or something had gotten into the room and suspected a rat was loose. Unknown to the parents, the intruder turned out to be their son and later my father, Peter Jr., who said the mixture of fresh cream and rich, red berries was a treasure too tempting to resist.

Peter Jr. said his father had a temper. Peter Sr. often threatened to apply "two fingers on the nose" if his son misbehaved. Instead, Peter Jr. said, he "usually gave me five fingers in the mush."

Peter Sr. and Adrienne had a stormy marriage. Over the years, they filed for divorce five different times and they eventually separated. For "a simple man of the hills," the senior Torliatt appeared in court far too many times. His most celebrated case involved an incident on the ranch in February, 1899, in which he claimed he shot at an owl to protect his farm animals. A couple of neighbors claimed the shots were aimed at them. According to court records, the "owl case" came out of a domestic dispute."

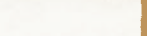
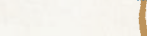
The incident became public when two Torliatt children, Theresa and Charlie, showed up at the home of David Horne, who lived down the road from the Torliatts. The excited children told Horne that Peter had been breaking dishes and planned to do similar damage to their mother. According to court records, the angry strawberry rancher fired his shotgun at Horne who was 50 or 60 yards away. Peter allegedly fired a second time and "there was dust all around." Torliatt was arrested but the stories at the preliminary hearing bore little resemblance to the versions given by neighbors. The eldest Torliatt daughter, Marie, going on 10, was called as a witness and said her papa shot an owl that was trying to kill a chicken. She said the chickens were an easy target because they slept on a tree in front of the house. A dead owl, presumably the one hit by Torliatt, was introduced as evidence. The owl was still warm, raising questions of how it could be in such a state eight days after being shot. Expert witness Joseph Fitch said that it was most unlikely that the owl had been shot out of a tree since the bird on display was a ground owl. Torliatt's wife Adrienne was reported sick and unable to testify. The "owl case" became a mere historic footnote.

My father, Peter Torliatt Jr., moved into town, taught himself how to do body and fender work and upholstery and for many years operated Pete's Auto Top Shop at 3 East Washington St. in Petaluma.



2005

New housing construction highest in six years; median price of homes in Sonoma County hits \$619,000.



Marie Vadon Hill



Marie Vadon Hill was born in 1924 in Cloverdale in the office of Dr. William S. Shipley. She reported on rural and small-town life in Sonoma County with wit and charm. These are excerpts from her book, "Cloverdale Memories."

Childhood

"As a pre-schooler, I remember following Papa around the vineyard when he was pruning vines. I liked to sneak around behind him and pick up a clipping from the vine he had just pruned and then stick it back in the next vine for him to prune again. He always pretended not to notice and would snip it again so I could laugh at the big joke I had played on him..."

"What I remember most about summers was picking prunes and swimming in the Russian River. Papa would pay me 5 cents a box for Imperial prunes and 10 cents for French prunes (they were smaller.) We would start picking in the early morning before it got hot, 6:30 or 7:00. I would usually quit at noon, have lunch, and then go to the swimming hole for the afternoon. We had a great sandy beach and a raft and Papa had built a changing room (just walls, no roof) and a picnic table and at night we would reach up with a long pole and hook a wire over an electric line and we would have lights."

School

"Miss K ... taught 5th and 6th grades. She was short and stout and kept a baseball bat near her desk to keep the big boys in line and also used a ruler for minor infractions. We had to hold out our hand, palm up, and she would whack it a few times with the ruler. It stung. I know because I felt it once when I passed a note to a classmate. It was during penmanship lessons. Miss Kelso said I was not writing the letter P correctly and to practice some more.

"After she passed my desk, I wrote a note to my girlfriend that said, 'My P's suit me.' Miss Kelso intercepted the note and I got the ruler as well as writing the letter P on the blackboard 100 times."

4-H Club

"I started the Cloverdale 4-H Club in 1962 and was Community Leader until 1966. The following is one of my favorite songs that we sang:

*She sailed away on a sunny summer day on the back of a crocodile,
You see, said she, he's as tame as can be,
I'll sail him down the Nile.
The crow winked his eye as she bade them all goodbye,
wearing a happy smile.
When they returned from the ride, that lady was inside,
and the smile was on the croc-o-dile."*

Music

Marie's grandfather "Papa" Ingram and his younger brother Alva "both played the fiddle and piano by ear. Papa and Alva played for many dances at the Oaks dance hall around 1930."

"When my brother and I stayed with my grandparents, we often begged Papa to play a tune on his fiddle before we went to bed. He usually obliged, even though he was tired from a hard day's work. My favorite tune was the 'Irish Washerwoman,' an Irish jig that was very lively and took a lot of fingering on the fiddle. The closing of the dance hall was the end of Papa's musical gigs although he would occasionally...play for a special event. He always tucked a bandana handkerchief under his chin when he played.

"I remember the last time I asked him to play 'Irish Washerwoman.' He played a few bars and quit, saying his fingers were too stiff and old."

He gave his fiddle to his brother Alva.

"Uncle Alva played this fiddle at the Cloverdale Historical Society Fiddle Contest for many years. The last time was in 1982 when he was 91 years old. He won the oldest fiddler contest for several years."



2008

"Subprime" housing crisis
brings median price in county
down to \$325,000.

Agnes Vinci



Agnes Vinci says there's a reason her mother had 12 children.

"We were free babies! We were all born at home" on a farm at the corner of Dutton Meadow and Bellevue Road in southwest Santa Rosa. "My father said we had 12 kids because everything's cheaper by the dozen."

Agnes, born on the farm in 1918, was the tenth of 12. She is the last surviving sibling.

Her parents, Alberta and Karl Haberhauer, were immigrants from Germany and Austria. They were married at St. Rose Catholic Church on Thanksgiving Day in 1898. On their farm in the rich soil of the Santa Rosa Plain, they grew fruits and vegetables and flowers, raised chickens and made wine.

Agnes walked to classes every day at the schoolhouse on the corner of Todd and Stony Point roads, and became the first member of her family to attend Santa Rosa High School.

"There was too much work on the farm" for her siblings to go to high school, she says. Her job, before after school each day and on weekends, was to take care of three chicken houses on the property. She picked prunes at harvest time for a nickel per 60-pound box. At the end of the season, she had \$2.50 - enough for a new pair of shoes.

Seeking a change from the farm and the orchards and canneries, she took a job in San Francisco looking after a small boy for \$25 a month. She remembers taking him to the World's Fair on Treasure Island in 1939. Later, she worked as an executive secretary in the city's Financial District, and she managed a rooming house near St. Brigid Catholic Church on Van Ness Avenue.

It was there she met Paul Vinci, a World War II veteran who worked in a produce market and was a boarder at the rooming house. They married and had a son, Eddie, and a few years later moved back to Santa Rosa, where they added two more Sonoma County babies, Kathy and Tom. Agnes and Paul still live in the Rincon Valley home they bought in 1953.

Besides her own children, Agnes took care of hundreds of other Sonoma County children in her at-home day-care business. And though she left the family farm for the big city as a young woman, she still grew fruits and vegetables and flowers in her garden and sold them at the weekly market at the Santa Rosa Veterans Memorial Building.

Her childhood home still stands not far from Elsie Allen High School, and her son Tom lives nearby. Agnes turned 96 on May 2 this year, and she and Paul celebrated their 63rd anniversary. They have six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.



2010

Census figures show an aging of the population in Sonoma County. The number of residents 60 and older in 2010 are 99,563 compared to 78,000 in 2000. The Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index ranks Sonoma County first in California and fifth nationwide on factors such as mental and physical health, job satisfaction and healthy behavior.

Fred Wiseman



There have always been a lot of cow pastures in Sonoma County.

That was a good thing in the early days of the 20th Century when a few brash local lads decided they could fly an airplane. Since what goes up surely must come down, they often needed to find a place to make an emergency landing, and cow pastures made fairly good runways.

It was a nasty February day in 1911 when Fred Wiseman took off on a dangerous flight that would forever put the Santa Rosa native, born in 1875, into the record book of aviation history.

Over two days, he made a 16-mile flight from Petaluma to Santa Rosa. He carried three letters, a bag of groceries and a bundle of newspapers that he tossed from the plane as he made his way north through fog and rain. He was in the air somewhere between 12 and 20 minutes and at the end he could claim the honor of making the first “airmail” flight in world history.

The spark had been lit for Wiseman when he visited with aviation pioneers Wilbur and Orville Wright. After he returned home, he decided to build his own airplane. With mechanical help from Jesse Peters and financial assistance from Ben Noonan, he built a biplane dubbed as “the first practical airship in California.”

It carried a 5-gallon gas tank, good for about 20 miles. Wiseman and his crew tested the craft at the Laughlin Farm near Fulton and finally the gallant young man in his flying machine took to the air on the fateful day of February 18, 1911. The plane made it just north of Petaluma on the first day but engine trouble forced it down. The next day, Wiseman went aloft again. He seated himself in air-conditioned solitude with the motor and propeller behind him, manipulating controls leading to what looked like rudders or box kites fore and aft. Using his shoulders, he leaned into turns and got over a tall batch of trees south of Santa Rosa. He made it to a farm not far from what is now the Sonoma County Fair. Wiseman went down in a cow pasture and a wildly-cheering crowd declared the flight a success and accompanied him into town.

A replica of his plane hangs in the Smithsonian Postal Museum in Washington, D.C. His airmail odyssey remains a benchmark in aviation and postal history.

Story Courtesy Sonoma County Historical Society.



2012

Petaluma's 12- and 13-year-old All-Stars go to the Little League World Series, win the hearts of fans and come home with a third-place finish. Some 20,000 join in a welcome-home parade in September.

Joyce Wieck



Joyce Wieck's great-grandmother, Adella Standley, traveled from Kansas to California on the Transcontinental Railroad in 1881. Her family worked in the orange groves of Southern California before moving north to Ukiah, and eventually settled in western Sonoma County in the late 1880s.

Her grandmother, Esther Standley Doty, wrote about her childhood west of Healdsburg in the very early years of the 1900s:

"The winters were long and wet. But then high water brought lots of salmon up Felta Creek that ran below our house and through our barn yard. One of Dad's hobbies was jigging salmon when the creek had overflowed. I don't know if that sport was legal at that time. I know that years later it was illegal. But fried salmon was so good, and there were so many in the creek spawning or shedding their roe on the riffles.

"Two other things Dad did often when it rained were wild hog hunting and panning for gold. Behind the house there was a tall smoke house and Dad took great care and pride in smoking and curing hams and bacon. I don't know how much gold, if any, he found, but I have often wondered if six kids in the house on a rainy day didn't make tramping in the woods seem like heaven."

Sonoma County has seemed like heaven to the family ever since.

"My grandmother, my father, my three sisters and I were all born in Sebastopol," says Joyce, who came into the world at Palm Drive Hospital in 1953. "We all graduated from Analy High School. My children and grandchildren were all born in Santa Rosa, where we still reside. I have never moved away."

Joyce remembers feeling closely connected to her community from an early age. "Everyone knew everyone else" in Sebastopol, she says. She could walk past buildings built by her contractor father, Ed Doty - including the Redwood Empire Ice Arena. A fifth-grade classmate was the daughter of "Peanuts" cartoonist Charles Schulz, and when he came to talk to their class one day he used Joyce as a model as he drew her profile on the chalk board.

"And after class, it got erased," she laments.

She attended Pinecrest School and was in the last class at what once was Park Side Junior High in Sebastopol. She graduated from Analy High School in 1971. She met her husband, Bob Wieck, while visiting her sister in Texas, where Bob was stationed in the U.S. Army. They were married nine weeks later, and soon settled back in Sonoma County, where Bob worked for the county Health Services Department. Their children - all Sonoma County babies - are John Wieck, of Santa Rosa, Gretchen Kenny, Petaluma, Robin Hansen, San Francisco, and Alyssa Kutzer, Santa Rosa. They have five grandchildren.

"I have always had a very, very strong feeling of ownership and pride at being from Sonoma County," Joyce says. "I feel like I have roots that go to the end of the Earth."



2013

The Bay Area's largest casino, owned by the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria and located just outside Rohnert Park, opens for business Nov. 5. At 340,000 square feet and a cost of \$800 million, it is the most expensive private development project in Sonoma County history.

Credits & Gratitude



Thanks to the 2,700+ Sonoma County natives who registered at sonomacountybaby.com to voluntarily submit their stories, share family photos and join our local legacy project. We never expected such an overwhelming response, but we shouldn't be surprised. Sonoma County is a rich place to live - in culture, beauty, climate, diversity and legacy. While we couldn't include every story and photo, we believe the ones published represent the fruitfulness of Sonoma County.

Also, special thanks to our story interviewers, editors and contributors Gaye LeBaron, Chris Coursey, Marge & Lee Torliatt, Shaun Ralston and Jenna Cameron. We are grateful for the hard work by the Sutter Medical Center of Santa Rosa Auxiliary volunteers for sending out thousands of Sonoma County Baby bracelets to those who registered online and to the Sutter Medical Center of Santa Rosa Community Advisory Board for their support. Others who helped us get the word out, seeking local natives include Petaluma's Jennifer Jones Lee (KGO Radio), Windsor's Debbie Abrams (KZST Radio), Santa Rosa's Meg McConahey (*The Press Democrat*) and all the caregivers at Sutter Health who help deliver more than 35,000 babies annually.

The Sonoma County Baby book was beautifully designed by JB Communications. The Sonoma County Map is courtesy of David Rumsey Map Collection, davidrumsey.com. We're grateful for the photos courtesy of the Sonoma County Public Library (1906 Earthquake and Geysers photos), Luther Burbank photo from the Collection of the Luther Burbank Home & Gardens, lumber photo from Old Oregon Historic Photos, Christo's Running Fence photo from Wolfgang Volz and the Petaluma All-Stars photo courtesy of *The Press Democrat*.

For those interested in the Sonoma County Baby project, visit sonomacountybaby.com.

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“A place is not a place until people have been born in it, have grown up in it, lived in it, known it, died in it -- have both experienced and shaped it, as individuals, families, neighborhoods, and communities, over more than one generation. Some are born in their place, some find it, some realize after long searching that the place they left is the one they have been searching for. But whatever their relation to it, it is made a place only by slow accrual, like a coral reef.”

–Wallace Stegner

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Sutter Health's
Sutter Santa Rosa
Regional Hospital

Sutter Health

2014

Sutter Health opens new hospital
in Santa Rosa.



Sutter Health
Sutter Santa Rosa Regional Hospital