



President's Corner

by Jim Metcalf

The Rio Vista Museum was founded in 1975 for the purpose of preserving the history and artifacts of Rio Vista, for the people of Rio Vista and all visitors.

It's harvest time in the Delta, and those tractors that were used to plant in the spring are now pulling combines and harvesters. The machines we see now have some similarities to tractors of the past. But in the past, items such as air conditioning, radios, and enclosed cabs were not available. I wrote an article for the *River News-Herald* in July 2012 which dealt with the Caterpillar tractor which was used on the McCloskey Ranch in 1926 and is one of the two tractors which we have on display in our farm section.

Today I would like to talk about the other tractor which is on display at the museum. It is a 1937 F-12 McCormick-Deering FARMALL. It was donated to the museum by Russell Graham, Jr. His daughter, Kathleen Graham Hutchinson of San Francisco, remembers the day Ike Cravens and Krug Dunbar came to their ranch on Sutter Island to take possession of it. George Hansen of Gordon-Hansen restored the machine.

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The Origins of the Rio Vista Hotel Company

by Phil Pezzaglia

On the 16th day of July, 1912, the Rio Vista Hotel Co. Articles of Incorporation were signed. These articles contained eleven sections, with the first section stating the purpose for which the Rio Vista Hotel Co. was formed. "To build, erect, construct, purchase, lease, rent or otherwise acquire, to manage, equip, occupy, maintain and operate buildings for hotel purposes, dwelling houses, apartment houses, office buildings, and any and all other structures; to buy, own, operate, lease, and occupy lands, buildings for hotels, apartment houses, dwelling houses, office buildings, and business structures of all kinds for the accommodation of the public and of the individuals; to buy, lease, rent or otherwise acquire, to keep, manage, conduct and operate restaurants, lunch and tea rooms, barber shops, billiard halls, cafes and bars for the accommodation of the public and of individuals and to conduct a hotel business in all of its branches."

The articles listed that the said corporation was to exist for fifty years from and after the date of its incorporation.

The Rio Vista Hotel Co. wanted to build a three-story hotel on the northwest corner of Main and Second Streets. John Bidwell had originally owned the property in question as far back as 1847. Through the years the property went through a number of people whose names are associated with the early history of Rio Vista, such as P.B. Reading, J.D. Hoppe, S.J. Hensley, Nathan H. Davis, F.J. McWorthy, J.H. Gardiner, J. Johnson and T.P. Emigh. However a family by the name of Segurson was the most recent owner in 1911.

A mortgage was taken out with the Bank of Rio Vista, in the sum of \$10,000, with interest at the rate of 7% per annum, payable semi-annually.

A San Francisco architect by the name of Bernard J. Joseph was brought in to design the hotel. Nothing of this scale had been constructed in Rio Vista, with the exception of St. Gertrude's Academy. But the academy had been built in sections over a period of numerous years.

The Grand Opening Banquet of the Hotel Rio Vista was held on Saturday, September 26, 1914. Hawaiian music was performed while patrons dined on

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a menu that included: Zinfandel Wine, Fillet of Sole, Ravioli a La Italian, Golden Boat Veneticune, Broiled Spring Chicken, Succhuri Ripieni, and Chicken Creole Soup. The opening was an affair that stayed in the memories of all who attended for years to come.

It had only been twenty-five years since the devastating fire that in 1892 had destroyed most of the business district of the downtown. With that fire still fresh in the memories of the townspeople, as well as the fire in 1907, which destroyed the Rio Vista Electric Light and Power Company, they were once again faced with another fight against the flames.

On August 1, 1917, a fire broke out involving the Masonic and Odd Fellows Hall, on the corner of Main and Third Streets, the Rio Vista Hotel, on the corner of Main and



Second Streets, and the livery stable that was between the two buildings. Both the Masonic Hall and the livery stable fell victim to the fire. The hotel, however, found its exterior walls still standing while the interior of the building was gutted. It took nearly two years to make the building once again operational.

In 1923, the rates were: Room with detached bath, \$1.00 per day; Room with private bath, \$2.00 per day; Special prices to permanent guests.

Around 1943 Arthur R. Emigh, James C. Hamilton, Harry K. Stewart, & E.R. Engtdahl purchased the hotel. Around 1955 the hotel was sold to Henry Brown and Kenneth Stewart. Eventually Brown bought out Stewart, making him the sole proprietor. After Henry's death in 1966, the hotel became the property of his widow, Virginia (Mitchell) Brown. And at the time of Virginia's passing the property was passed down to her children. Since that time, there have been several owners.

The street level of the hotel has several commercial spaces. Since 1914 the hotel has been host to many businesses. Some of the businesses that were operated in the corner business space have been: a Haberdashery operated by Walter Schafer up until the fire; Hite's Pharmacy, run by F.A. Hite during the early 1920s; Moody's Pharmacy, operated by F.C. Moody, took over from Hite in September 1926; followed by Scanlon's and the Hotel Pharmacy. In 1963

James Wilson took over the pharmacy. He changed the name to Delta Pharmacy in November 1967 and moved it to 150 Main Street. Other businesses located in this corner space have included a Sears Catalog ordering store, television sales and repair, and eventually the business Second Coming. Second Coming was the last businesses to operate out of the storefront.

The middle space on the Main Street side was originally the "Main Street Entrance" to the hotel. This was used up until the mid-1930s. In 1939 Jack Pezzaglia opened Pezzaglia's Toggery, a men's clothing store that was in operation until around 1949. During the 1950s Elliott's Barber Shop found its home at that location, followed by Bobbee Hopper and Bobbee's Beauty Salon from the mid-1950s until late 1964. Tina Nelson opened a beauty parlor suitably named Tina's, which operated until Tina retired in the 1980s. Next was Mane Street Hair, the last beauty parlor to be located in that space. After years of being a beauty parlor, the space lay empty for a while and eventually was incorporated into a pool table area for the Striper Bar.

The next space was used as an annex until it became the Rio Vista Tavern during the 1940s. From that point on it has always been a tavern or bar. Most remember it as the Striper Café and Bar. Many assume that the next space has been a restaurant for the majority of the life of the building, most notably as the Striper Restaurant. However, back in the '20s and '30s it was the Rio Vista Cash Store.

The final business space in the hotel many people will remember as the Rio Vista Creamery. Joe Lorentz operated this business from October 31, 1935 until 1951, at which time his brother Ralph took over. Ralph ran the business until 1972 when he changed the name and the type of business to Delta Music Center. This business continued until the early 1980s. Eventually this space was taken over as a dining room for the Striper Restaurant.

We look forward to new developments as this property enters its second century.

MUSEUM OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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Phil Pezzaglia	Vice President
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The first row crop tractor manufactured by International Harvester was given the name Farmall. Development began around the 1920s and the tractor was introduced in 1924. IH was fearful that this new "tricycle" type tractor might not sell well, so when the tractors rolled out, they were meant to be sold in Texas, so as to minimize potential embarrassment if not successful.

By 1934 we know that the Farmall tractor was a huge success not only in Texas but also in Rio Vista, California. On the wall in back of our restored tractor is a picture of nine 1934 Farmall tractors sitting in front of the Gordon-Hansen building at 101 North Front Street in Rio Vista. On February 1, 1974 at 9 a.m., the 5 millionth tractor came off the assembly line at the Farmall Plant in Illinois. IH was the first tractor manufacturer to accomplish this.

All Farmall tractors were painted battleship gray until November 1, 1936. Our 1937 F-12 is painted bright red. In 1938 the F-12 was discontinued and the letter designation was introduced. (A, B, BN, C, H, and M) The F series had a long history from 1924-1938.

Little-Known Serial Killer Case Revealed

The HOMICIDAL HANDYMAN
of Oak Park:
Morris Solomon Jr.

Tony Ray Harvey

Now On Sale !

"Morris Solomon, the handyman, should be in the hall of shame of serial killers. Morris' motives were strictly behind sex. Morris was a sexual predator in the black community of Oak Park. He is a true serial killer."

*— John Cabrera
Ret. Homicide Detective
Sacramento Police Department*

As seen in the criminal documentary, "Crime Stories" on the Biography Channel

Notes of Note *Museum Happenings*

- ❖ The Hamburger Feed was a huge success! Thanks again to all who helped. We had an amazing display of delicious cookies donated by numerous supporters. Special thanks to Lira's and to the hamburger cooks, the Tingeyes, Joe, Nick, and Doug.
- ❖ We had a recent visit from representatives of our sister city of Tobishima, Japan. Our reliable ambassadors and tour guides—Harvey Felt, Bob Bard, Jerry Machado, Irwin Anderson, Gene Vick and Jan Vick—treated our guests to a special tour of the museum.
- ❖ Our curator is looking for information: If you know anything about the Rio Vista Jazz Festival of the 1970s, please get in touch with Phil Pezzaglia. Yes, there really was a Jazz Festival here. There were a number of music groups at the high school. Can you help us?

New Book on Sale at Museum Rio Vista Connection

A series of horrific murders was committed in the Oak Park neighborhood of Sacramento in the mid-1980s. The man who perpetrated those crimes has spent the past 20-plus years in San Quentin. However, Morris Solomon, Jr., who was born in Georgia, spent his teen years in Isleton and attended Rio Vista High School, graduating in the class of 1961.

Harvey Felt remembers the boy as a freshman in 1957. Coming from the Jim Crow South, young Morris was shocked that there were no separate bathrooms for whites and "coloreds." Morris was very active in Rio Vista High activities, participating in track and field and playing in several different bands.

It is regrettable that his life took the course that it did, but you might want to check out Tony Ray Harvey's new book about this man.

Win this beautiful handmade quilt!



We welcome the generous donation of a Dixon May Fair award-winning quilt from longtime resident Florence Inouye.

This is a full-size quilt, hand-stitched in the Dresden plate pattern. The colors of gray, beige and mauve (purple) would complement any décor.

Raffle tickets for the quilt will go on sale Friday, October 11, Bass Derby weekend. The winner will be drawn at the Rio Vista museum Christmas Faire. Tickets are priced \$1.00 each or 6 for \$5.00. You do not have to be present to win. All proceeds from the raffle will support the Rio Vista Museum.

Rio Vista Museum
16 N. Front Street
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