



President's Corner

by Jim Metcalf

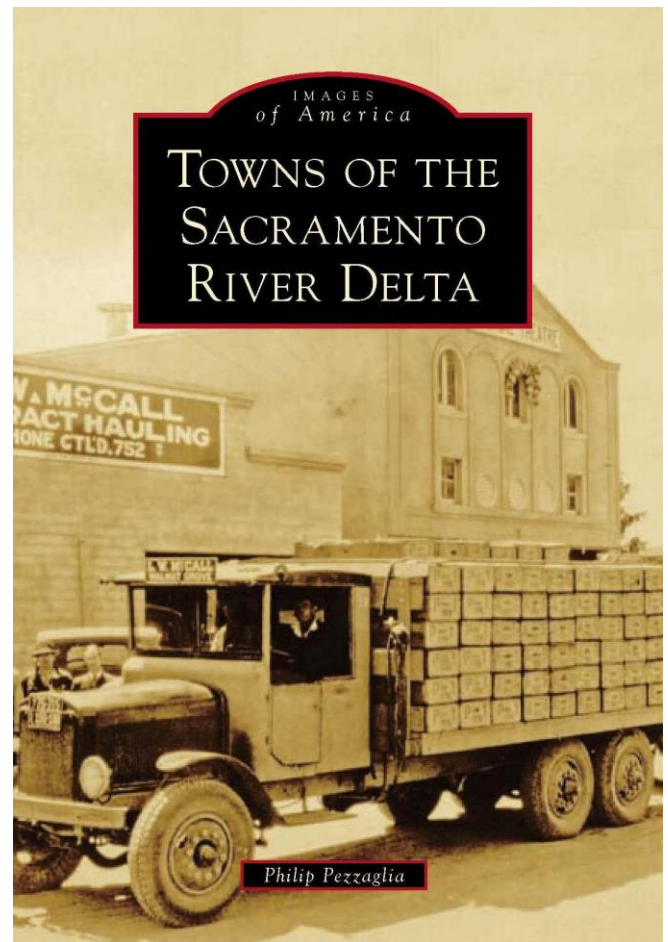
The Rio Vista Museum was founded in 1975 for the purpose of preserving the history and artifacts of Rio Vista, for the people of Rio Vista and all visitors.

Several years ago I lived on a small farm in Santa Cruz County. There, we had a number of different types of rats. On our house porch we had some shelving where we stored bottled and canned fruit. I noticed that my wife began to use the porch for storing oranges, potatoes and apples. I suggested that maybe storing fresh fruit outside on the porch might not be the best idea. One night she went to the shelves to get some fresh oranges. I heard a loud scream and went to investigate. What I found was a large pack rat carrying a huge orange in its mouth, going down the stairs, to the ground and off to its nest.

I am not sure that the pack rat would have fit into the museum artifact for today, a wire rat trap used in Rio Vista in a by-gone era. There are several types of rat traps but the one I would like to talk about today is a



continued on page 3



Book Signing at the Museum

Come celebrate the recent publication of *Towns of the Sacramento River Delta* by our very own Phil Pezzaglia. In this book, Phil explores the history of the towns of our area: Rio Vista, of course, Freeport, Clarksburg, Walnut Grove, Paintersville, Onsibo, Courtland, Emmaton, Isleton, Vorden, Ryde, Hood, and Locke.

Phil will share pictures and stories about his experiences in researching and producing this new book.

Monday, April 29 at 6:30 p.m.

Rio Vista Museum

16 N. Front Street

The Origins of Rio Vista Joint Union High School:

100 Years of Educating Rio Vista Youth

by Phil Pezzaglia

While Rio Vista's first public school was established in 1862, it would be four more decades before the town would have a high school of its own.

As early as 1894 attempts had been made to establish a high school in Rio Vista. These attempts unfortunately failed, for whatever reason. This was surprising as most of the citizens of the town felt that a high school would be a great addition to the community.

Rio Vista had a public school, located on Montezuma Street, but the students needed higher education, since the public school only went as high as 8th grade. The people of Rio Vista, Montezuma Hills, Collinsville, Birds Landing, as well as those living across the Sacramento River, felt that a need for a high school must be filled.

Rio Vista's first high school began with two teachers and thirty students.

Many of the local parents who wanted their children to continue their education sent them to Armijo High School in Fairfield. Often these students would stay with family or friends during the week while they were in school, returning to Rio Vista for the weekends.

By the persevering and enthusiastic action of many of Rio Vista's citizens, together with the support of people from outside the district, a successful organization was effected in August, 1912, and thirty days after the district had voted to establish it, the High School was in operation.

Two teachers with an enrollment of thirty students were installed, with F. B. Smith as principal, in temporary quarters on the lower floor of what had formerly been the Masonic and Odd Fellows Hall. This building stood on Main Street, approximately where the Bank of Stockton's property is presently.

The years 1912–1913 were exciting years, for these were the infant years of Rio Vista Joint Union High School.

The year 1914 was a year full of firsts. It was the year of the first graduating class, which consisted of only one student, Miss Mabel Kalber (Duker). Other classes were slightly larger. The

continued on page 3



Mabel Kalber was the first graduate of Rio Vista Joint Union High School in 1914. After graduation, she attended the University of California at Berkeley. In 1919, she returned to Rio Vista and took a position at the high school, teaching history, political science, and economics.

MUSEUM OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Jim Metcalf	President
Phil Pezzaglia	Vice President
Peter Hamilton	Recording Secretary
Mary Anne Peterson	Corresponding Secretary
Gail Machado	Membership Secretary
Renee Tingey	Treasurer
Bob Bard	Past President
Suzanne Goldberg	Newsletter Editor
Harvey Felt	Doug Tingey
Joyce Metcalf	Beverly Bellows
Janet Blegen	

cage rat trap. A cage rat trap is designed primarily to catch rats without killing them. Food bait (not poisonous) is put in the trap. The wire funnel trap is constructed and cut to form a funnel shape directing the rat into the body of the cage when it goes after the food. This design is usually dome shaped with the funnel at the crown. Rats are extremely flexible and can push through the narrower opening into the cage, but cannot escape due to the ends of the wires poking them in the face. The advantage of this type of trap is that it can catch more than one rat at a setting.

My hope is that you are not plagued by large rats at all. If you are, probably most people these days would call for an exterminator. In the past, however, if you had a problem you had to be part of the solution.

About thirty years ago a company in New England was still making the same kind of rat trap we have in our museum. The design of the rat trap was used by early settlers in New England and in Rio Vista.

Look for the trap when you come to the museum.



junior class numbered seven; sophomore class, twenty-one; and freshmen class, thirteen.

The student body officers for 1914 were: Lester Upham, president; Roland Lauritzen, vice-president; Bulen McCormack, treasurer; and Gertrude Bryan, secretary. This was also the year of the first school annual, which was dubbed *Netherlands*, for the simple fact that Rio Vista had often been referred to as "the Netherlands of the Delta."

The faculty, in 1914, had increased to that of Professor Frank B. Smith, principal, English and History; H. J. King, Mathematics; Miss M. Wendell, Latin and German; and Miss Ethel Akers, Commercial and Drawing.

By 1915, the student body enrollment had increased to fifty.

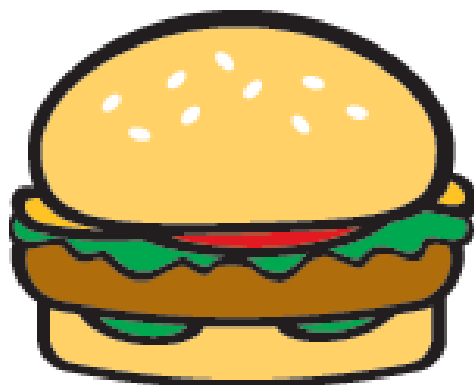
These Masonic and Odd Fellows Hall quarters were large enough to hold the initial thirty students that were enrolled in the high school that first year. However, by 1915 the student body enrollment had increased to fifty, and the students and faculty were beginning to feel very cramped in the temporary hall. Even with the lack of space, the students did not feel deprived, as the school had such extracurricular activities as a basketball team, track team, chorus, and glee club.

In 1915 the new Rio Vista Joint Union High School was constructed. The school was truly a masterpiece. The beautiful two-story building stood high on the hill, approximately where the existing quad is, and faced down St. Gertrude Avenue.

The 1915–16 school year was the first year that students attended classes in the new structure. The class of 1915 held dual honors, as it was the first class to hold graduation ceremonies in the newly constructed buildings as well as being the first regular class to graduate, for they were the original freshman class in 1912–1913, one hundred years ago.

Check out the website:
www.riovistamuseum.org

Rio Vista Museum Hamburger BBQ



Donation: \$7.00

Date: Monday, May 20, 2013

Time: 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Place: 401 Club, 401 Montezuma Street

Tickets available at the Door or at the RV Museum

Rio Vista Museum
16 N. Front Street
Rio Vista, CA 94571