

Earl's Diary - Sunday - May 4, 2014

To all my Loyal Readers;

The King City/ San Lorenzo Park Gathering is coming to a close. Today is a very laid-back, relaxing day for those of us who are remaining until tomorrow. Many of the participants are pulling out this morning to return home in time to head for w--- tomorrow. Very few of us remain and the park is quickly becoming empty.



One last group photo



Hitching up - ready to roll out



Pulling out



Some of us are watching the rest pulling out.

Looks kind of empty doesn't it?







Not much was happening today, so I took the opportunity to see what was in the rest of the park.



King City Depot: The Southern Pacific Railroad played a key role in opening the Salinas Valley to settlement and agricultural development. Over 20 depots were once scattered along its route through Monterey County. In order to preserve King City's depot, it was moved to San Lorenzo Park in 1989. Today the original waiting room and ticket office have been restored to their turn-of-the-century appearance. The baggage room now serves as a meeting room, complete with kitchen and restroom.







*Exhibits inside the museum*



Exhibits in the Museum Barn trace the development of Salinas Valley agriculture. Visitors can learn about dairies, dry farming, row crops and other enterprises, which have shaped Monterey County's heritage. Peek into a turn-of-the-century general store, see what tools were needed on the farm or learn how produce was shipped a century ago. The Museum's large collection of farm machinery is displayed as well as at several locations throughout the park.



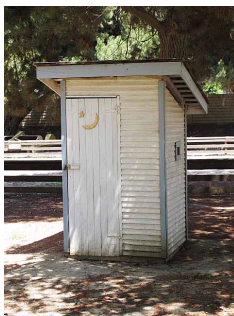




An old ditch digger



La Gloria School: Built in 1887, the La Gloria School was originally located 5 miles south of Gonzales. Local people constructed both the school and furnishings. Like all country schools, La Gloria School was a community focal point, doubling as a theatre, town hall and social center when necessary. La Gloria School closed in the early 1960s and remained vacant until it was moved to San Lorenzo Park to become part of the museum complex.



Spreckels House: The Spreckels House was originally located on the Spreckels Sugar Company's Ranch No. 1 south of Salinas. Built in 1898 it was moved to San Lorenzo Park in 1980. The Spreckels Sugar Company constructed houses for their workers both in the company town and on their outlying ranches. The diamond shaped "wooden sugar beet" in the front gable distinguished the ranch cottages from homes in the town. San Lorenzo Park was once part of Spreckels Ranch No. 3.



A person asks, "History of Irrigation, how interesting can that be?" I had no clue as to how interesting this subject would be as I walked in the doors. It was truly fascinating and well worth the time spent.

Monterey County's Water Education Building focuses on how Salinas Valley farmers have transformed what was once called the Salinas desert into one of the richest farming regions on earth. Exhibits explore the unique combination of climate, geography and people, which have made the Salinas Valley what it is today.

Visitors learn how water helped develop and "win" the west. Early irrigation efforts at the missions are described as well as how valley pioneers build canals to water their crops. There are stories of the many people who contributed to irrigation methods and what farmers are doing today to protect our water resources for tomorrow.

Here's your history lesson for today. How did King City get its name?

Charles Henry King was born in Ontario County, New York on May 3, 1844. In 1859, King traveled to California to pursue a teaching career. After graduating and teaching a few terms, his failing health inspired a trip to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii).

King returned to California in 1865 and took a teaching job in Butte County. He met and married Kate Brown of Yreka in 1875. Kate was also a teacher. They had six children.

In 1884 King purchased 13,000 acres of the San Lorenzo Rancho. King intended to grow wheat, an unusual crop for the Salinas Valley, then known as "the Great Salinas Desert". King was called a fool, but when his first 6,000 acres of wheat was harvested successfully, neighboring farmers clamored to lease his land for wheat.

King never intended to found a town, but his successful wheat venture inspired the Southern Pacific Railroad to expand its line to the small settlement in 1886. As the area's most prominent citizen, King's name was chosen for the station.

Well, dear Loyal Readers, that's about all I can report for today. If you have a chance to travel to King City, plan to make a stop at San Lorenzo County Park. It will be well worth your while.

Thanks for coming along with me today. Tomorrow I will be heading for home. I have one more stop planned for this expedition. Until then - - bye for now - - Earl