



# DAVIS HISTORY MATTERS

## Newsletter of the Davis Historical Society

### Volume 1, Number 6, May, 2003

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#### 1. MAY 18<sup>th</sup> DHS MEETING AT THE YOLO COUNTY MUSEUM

As previously announced several times in a number of places, our Spring Quarter meeting will be on Sunday, May 18<sup>th</sup> starting at 3 pm on the grounds of the Yolo County Historical Museum. The museum is at 512 Gibson Road in Woodland.

We are meeting with the Museum's May Festival, which runs from 10 am to 4 pm this same day. Come early and join in the festivities. Admission to the festival is free.

Festival activities include a petting zoo, country barbecue and bakery, blacksmith shop, beer wagon, live music and dancing groups, evaluation of your treasures experts, exhibition booths and displays, craft/antique faire, plant shop, country market, and much, much more.

#### 2. MAY 18<sup>th</sup> AGENDA PROPOSED BY THE BOARD

The Board has approved the following as the elements of a proposed agenda. It must, of course, be voted on for approval at the start of the meeting and can be modified at that time.

**Board's Proposed Agenda**  
for the Davis Historical Society  
meeting of May 18, 2003 at 3 pm on the  
Grounds of the Yolo County Historical Museum  
Woodland, California

1. Adoption of an Agenda
2. Adoption of the Minutes of the meetings of November 17, 2002 and February 9, 2003 (Both of the minutes have been and are now on the Society web site. Please review them for changes before this meeting.)
3. Treasurer's report by Dennis Dingemans
4. Committee Reports and Associated Board Actions
  - 4.1. Education by Chairs Sharla Daly / Mark DuPree
  - 4.2. Research by Chair John Lofland  
Board action on the "Researching Davis History" project
  - 4.3. Publication by Chair Lyn Lofland
  - 4.4. Preservation by Chair Merrily DuPree
  - 4.5. Archives by Chair Mary Ann Harrison
  - 4.6. Newsletter by Stop-Gap Editor John Lofland
  - 4.7. Membership / Publicity by Jane Williamson Lewis
  - 4.8. Web Site by . . .
  - 4.9. Email by . . .
5. Any Other Old Business
6. Any Other New Business
7. Adjourn.

The next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, August 17 at 3 pm.  
John Lofland offers his establishment at 523 E Street, Davis as the meeting place. Exact arrangements at that locale will depend on the weather that day. The meeting would include a guided tour of his archive of Davis history materials.

**3. NEW "COMMITTEE NEWS" FEATURE BEGINNING IN THE JUNE NEWSLETTER**

Starting in the next—the June—issue of *Davis History Matters*, each of the nine DHS standing committees will have its own paragraph-length space in which to provide the membership an account of what it has been doing over the previous month.

The chair of each committee is invited each month to send to the Stop-Gap Editor, John Lofland at [jflofland@ucdavis.edu](mailto:jflofland@ucdavis.edu), a three or four sentence paragraph summarizing last month's activities. (It can of course be longer should a Chair so desire.)

The Newsletter is sent out in the last week of each month. Therefore, a given month's paragraph would be timely if received seven days before the end of a month.

Each committee will be given its own labeled space. If no news is sent in, the space will say "no news."

#### 4. THE YEAR 2003 IS THE 90<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY YEAR OF BOWERS' ADDITION

Wednesday morning, January 22, 1913, employees of C. W. Bowers, a Davis horse-breeder and developer, began laying concrete sidewalks at the northwest corner of Sixth and G streets.

This was sidewalk for the first of the five blocks making up what was called "Bowers Addition to Davis." This addition consisted of the blocks bounded by B and G on the west and east and Sixth and Seventh on the north and south. (A photograph of workers engaged in laying the sidewalk appears on page 111 of John Lofland and Phyllis Haig, *Davis, California*.)

2003 is the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that Davis-expansion work. This event is important in the history of Davis because it was one of the few expansions of the then-village since it was initially laid out in 1868 and slightly expanded in 1871.

Two features of the sidewalks themselves are especially striking. First, Davis people were quite interested in the sidewalks as sidewalks because Davis had few of them. Potential lot buyers were exhorted in *Davis Enterprise* ads to "come out" and enjoy walking on them (John Lofland, *Old North Davis*, p. 62).

Second, a large portion of those sidewalks laid in 1913 are still there! We know this because lot boundary arrows were pressed into the fresh cement, as was the number of each lot. One can still see many of both the arrows and the numbers. For instructions on what to look for and how you can find them in the sidewalks, consult pages 84 and 85 of John Lofland's *Old North Davis*.

#### 5. DAVIS FIFTY YEARS AGO: MAY, 1953

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[May 14:] Ground was broken last Monday . . . at Second and F Streets for construction of the large, new Davis branch of the Bank of America. . . . In making an announcement, [the branch manager] . . . stated that the new Davis banking quarters are "indicative of the growth and economic health of this community."

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[May 28:] The meeting of the City Council last Monday evening began with a public hearing on the new proposed zoning ordinance . . . . Because of some of the provisions of the ordinance, residents in the neighborhood of B and Seventh were present to oppose zoning that area for light businesses. They stated that many fine homes have been built around that point and felt that the location of a store would have a tendency to lower the value of their property and they were against it.

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#### 6. DAVISVILLE A CENTURY AGO: MAY, 1903

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[May 16:] Wednesday Eve May the 20<sup>th</sup> The Davisville Military Band Will Give a Grand Ball. The Davisville Military Band . . . have been making progress and more progress during the past months. . . The boys have applied themselves earnestly and . . . have made splendid improvement. To keep up interest, and also with the hope of realizing a few dollars, the boys concluded to give an all-night ball, which means much dancing after supper. They will probably draw on Woodland for a few experts, enough to make the band good and sufficiently strong and correct for dance music.

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[Also May 16:] The local union of W.C.T.U. were royally entertained by Mrs. W.F. Johnson at her home north of Davisville last Tuesday evening. . . After the usual hour of business, we were asked to adjourn to the dinning hall, and were seated at a very prettily arranged table and

served with delicious ice cream and every variety of cakes and drinks which a white ribboner is entitled to enjoy.

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**7. DAVIS A FEW MONTHS BEFORE DAVIS: MAY, 1968 (136 YEARS AGO)**

[The May 30, 1868 issue of the *Yolo County Democrat* printed the following account of the editor's May trip by "stage" from Woodland down through the place were Davis would be established and over to Vacaville and beyond. He reported, in part:]

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The road from [Woodland] . . . to Putah Creek passes over one of the richest portions of the county, and is skirted on either side by vast fields of grain which present a prospect of one of the most abundant and valuable harvests ever garnered in any part of the world. . . .

At the crossing of Putah Creek, on the Solano side, a station is kept by J. H. Shuman, who, in company with enterprising citizens, is preparing to survey a plot for the depot of the Solano and Yolo Railroad. . . .

This point will probably be the terminus of the proposed railroad for some years to come . . . The prospective settlement is, we believe, to be called "Veranda City."

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**8. OP-ED: OLD NORTH E STREET WALKING TOUR ON THE DHS WEB SITE**

by **John Lofland**

A few years ago, a local company sought to publish a tourist-type magazine for Davis, the kind of publication one finds in the hotel rooms of large cities and that is named for the particular city.

An initial issue was printed and distributed as a way to test commercial feasibility. Over a period of weeks it became clear that the necessary advertising base was not there and the magazine did not proceed beyond that first issue.

During the period of assessing economic feasibility, however, the editors optimistically commissioned and paid for articles to appear in future issues. Among them, I wrote the first of what was to be an Old North "walking tour" series.

Because there was no second or other issue of the magazine, that first article was never published. Believing that making it available to DHS members does not preclude future and larger publication by the people who commissioned it, I have processed it into pdf and placed it in the Files section of our DHS web site.

It is titled "Savoring Historical Treasures Along E Street." The subtitle is "Walking Guide to Cultural Gems on the Quintessential Old North Street."

As the titles intimate, the exercise is rather "over the top." As a proposed magazine article, the to-be-editor kept asking me to re-write it to make it ever-more "gee-whiz." The result is definitely too breathless, but fun anyway.

Look it up and try it out. It is at [www.davishistoricalsociety.org](http://www.davishistoricalsociety.org), the next to the last item in the Files section.

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