

# Livermore Heritage Guild

*Saving Yesterday For Tomorrow*



P.O. Box 961, Livermore, Calif. 94551      [www.livermorehistory.com](http://www.livermorehistory.com)

Phone (925) 449-9927

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## Livermore's Historic Legacy to Be Displayed

When Livermore was established in 1869, the primary residential growth took place south of the railroad tracks. Consequently, the "Old South Side" contains an eclectic collection of homes dating from the beginnings of the town to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The first annual **Livermore Legacy Tour**, a historic home tour benefiting the Livermore Heritage Guild, will be held May 18 and will highlight several South Side homes of distinction. The historical significance of all of the homes will be shared on the tour. This article summarizes the history of four of them.

### *The Thomas Scott House*

First up is the Thomas Scott home at 2175 Seventh Street. Scott came to Livermore in about 1887. As a young man, Scott had studied law. He was admitted to the bar in 1889 and opened his practice in Livermore. His law offices were located on K Street between First and Second.

In the spring of 1894, Scott's home was built at the corner of Seventh and J Streets. It was initially a single story structure, but in 1897 a second story was added to accommodate his two growing sons. Scott's law practice required him to commute on alternate

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## A word from the president....

Dear Members and Friends,

One of the great pleasures of working in the Livermore Heritage Guild is the process of discovery as each new piece of information is slid and twirled across the puzzle of Livermore history to see where it fits. Last month we decided that as part of a Valentine's Day themed exhibit we would display some cards, including Valentines, that were collected in an album signed by a certain Emily A. Brown, (later married to a Copeland), around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. You can see examples of the cards on the facing page. We were not sure, exactly, who Emily was and how she was tied to Livermore. Our office manager, Lydia Carpenter, did some research, then started the email thread with the irresistible "...Does anyone know who she was?"

Dick Finn, an LHG member as well as a member of L-AGS, conducted many name searches and came up dry. Livermore was not a large town in 1900; it seemed curious not to find any reference to her.

Anna Siig, an original LHG member and constant source of good stories, knew about the album donation and gave us a full family narrative, including brother Andrew, since she had owned property that had once been part of the Copeland Ranch on Tesla. Andrew's name shows up in the album on some of the cards, so the mystery seemed solved. Dan Mosier added that he found her as Emily C. Brown, daughter of Catherine Brown, but the rest of the story seemed to line up with Anna's.

But wait! Anna realized that Lydia said "card" album, and Anna was thinking of a photo album. Did we have two collections from the same person or two different people?

Having struck out initially, Dick Finn came back with a new twist. He found a Catherine Emily Brown, who may have gone by Emily at various times (makes sense if Dan is right that her mother is also Catherine) and had a brother, Andrew. Dick also told us that she was the daughter of Kate and Adam Brown of Ireland, and we are willing to believe that Kate and Catherine (elder) are one and the same. But while she might have gone by C. Emily or Emily C., it seemed less likely she would have used Emily A.

Meanwhile, Dan had reached Earlene Walker, who donated the photo album, and learned it came from her mother, Alice, who in turn got it from her aunt, Emily Copeland. Ah! That closed the loop; the photo album was from Emily Copeland, nee Catherine Emily Brown AKA Emily C., born 1/28/1878 in California, died 2/13/1950. She lived on Tesla Road, and Anna can tell us a little about the parties in the garage.

But who was Emily A. of the Valentines? We all wanted to think it was just Catherine Emily being playful, as Emily A. had also written her name Emily K. and Emilie and so clearly was somewhat causal about spelling. But are we sure?

Still twirling that piece across the puzzle, Lydia went back to the card album. Another name on the cards was Mamie. And then in the census she found that our Catherine Emily Brown had a sister Mary. Mamie being a common nickname for Mary, we felt this was enough corroborating detail to decide that Emily A. is Emily C. is Catherine Emily Brown Copeland.

So as I write this, we're pretty sure, reasonably confident, nearly positive we know our Valentine girl. But even if this one seems solved we are asked about many other mysteries at the Carnegie History Center, and we would be thrilled to have you volunteer some time and do a little puzzle solving of your own!

Best wishes,

*Jeff Kaskey*

President

Livermore Heritage Guild

## Post Card Collection Mystery Solved

At right and below are samples of post cards in the collection donated to the Guild by Earlene Walker. Guild "history detectives" worked together to identify the collector of the cards. The cards are not only lovely, but also a good primary source for historical research.



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## Town of Livermore Government Actions

I have been working for several years on transcribing the minutes of the Board of Trustees of the Town of Livermore, which were handwritten from May 15, 1876, to September 1921. Part of the fun of the work comes from the many interesting tidbits I find, which are often amusing and always help enlighten me about our history.

The first meeting of the Livermore Board of Trustees was on Monday, May 15, 1876. During the next 20 days, the trustees met six times and passed 12 ordinances. My favorite of these first ordinances is number 7: "To prevent acts against good morals and decency."

*Ordinance No. 7  
To prevent acts against  
good morals & decency*

*Section 1 The following acts are Subject to fine and imprisonment*

*Section 2 There is to be no. 1<sup>st</sup> Exposure of person, 2<sup>nd</sup> Model Artist Exhibition etc, 3<sup>rd</sup> Obscene books or picture, 4<sup>th</sup> Lewd songs and obscene language*

Such activities were not only indecent, but also one could be fined or jailed for 12 days for their commission. There is an escape clause though; such activities would have to be annoying or offensive to other persons present. No one offended, no crime. Penalty on conviction: \$25 or 12 days in jail

*Section 4 Disturbing the peace-fighting etc. (\$15 file or 7 days in jail)*

*Every person who maliciously and willfully disturbs the peace and quiet of any street, neighborhood, family, or person by loud or unusual noise, or by tumultuous or offensive conduct, or by threatening, traducing, quarreling, challenging to fight, fighting, or addressing to another in public language having a tendency to cause a breach of the peace...*

*Section 5 Disturbing meetings (\$15/7 days)*

*Every person who disturbs any assemblage of persons who have met for social, political or religious enjoyment, or discussion, by unnecessary noise, profane language, rude or indecent behavior either within the place where such meeting is being held or so near it as to disturb the order and enjoyment of the meeting is guilty.*

*Section 7 Giving liquor to habitual drunkards after notice (\$20/10 days)*

*Every person who having a license to sell liquor, sells or gives liquor of intoxication drink to any habitual drunkard, after having received a written notice signed by [the police officer or] three citizens of the town of Livermore, not to sell or give liquor, or intoxicating drink to such habitual drunkards is guilty.... I wonder if this law is still on the books? It was in 1935.*

*Section 17 Grazing of loose animals on town streets (\$10/5 days)*

*To wit, horses, mules, hacks,*

*Continued on Page 5*

days to Oakland. In the fall of 1903, Scott announced that he was moving his practice to Bakersfield.

### ***The Oscar Meyers House***

Another house on the tour is the Oscar Meyers home at 580 South L Street. The Meyers were early residents in the new town of Livermore, coming to the community in 1872. Jacob Meyers managed the Livermore Hotel until 1875 when it was sold. Seeing an opportunity to enlarge the housing stock in the new community, Jacob Meyers and his sons contracted for construction of many of the structures, homes, barns, and wineries in the area.

The family purchased properties on both sides of South L Street, between Fifth and Sixth Streets, and it was on one of the lots that Oscar constructed his home in 1894. At his marriage in 1895, it was reported that “the happy couple will



occupy an elegant home, which the groom has so long had in readiness for the reception of his bride.” The Oscar Meyers moved to Oakland in 1904 where he was engaged in the home construction trade, and over a year later they sold their home to the local Presbyterian Church for use as a manse. It was not sold again until 1956.

### **The George W. Langan House**

This Legacy Tour house, the Langan home, is at 587 South H Street. One of Alameda County’s best known



lawyers, George W. Langan, built his home at the corner of Sixth and H Street. He had come to California in 1872; by 1877 he had been admitted to the bar. He practiced for a short time in Oakland before coming to Livermore.

Langan married Ella Mendenhall, daughter of the town founder, and they moved into their spacious new six-room home in 1885. Construction costs were \$2,000. It was in this home that the Langans raised their three children. On an evening in late August 1903, while the family was attending an entertainment sponsored by the Methodist Church Ladies Aid Society, the Langan home caught fire. By the time the firemen arrived the house was beyond possibility of being saved. Sadly, many mementos of the Mendenhall family were lost in the fire. George Langan had a new home constructed, which was completed in early 1904. In December 1904, the Langans moved to Oakland, and the home was sold.

### ***The Julius Jacobs House***

An outstanding representative of Queen Anne Eastlake architecture is the Julius Jacobs home at 615 Sixth Street (at K). Jacobs purchased the Livermore Soda Company in 1895 and moved the business to property he had purchased on K Street. In mid-block he built a barn and several other structures where he had his bottling facility.

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Julius Jacobs and Adelina Reimers were married in November 1896, and by May 1897, Almon Weymouth, a local contractor, was building a home for them on the corner lot. Julius Jacobs sold his business in 1902 and moved to Santa Cruz to open another soda works. In 1905, he and a business partner were killed when a pressurized tank exploded. Mrs. Jacobs returned to Livermore to live in the cottage for some years.



### ***For More Information***

For more information about the tour visit [www.livermorehistory.com](http://www.livermorehistory.com) and click on the Livermore Legacy Tour link or call 925-577-4206. Proceeds will benefit the Livermore History Mobile, a traveling bus that educates local children on Livermore's unique history.

- By Gary Drummond

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### ***Ordinance- Continued from Page 3***

*jennets, cattle, sheep goats or swine owned or kept by him, for the purpose of grazing upon any of the public streets, alleys, or [public] grounds within the limits of the Town of Livermore is guilty...*

Not only are animals to be kept off the sidewalks they are not allowed to forage off the streets. Streets at this time had not been laid with gravel let alone paved with concrete and asphalt. Prior to 1915 gravel was laid on the main streets and sprinkled to keep dust down.

#### ***Section 18***

*This ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage.*

*Holmes, McLeod.*

*Approved and filed: May 18 1876*

*Geo. E. Freeman Town Clerk*

*-By Don Meeker*

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### **Memories.....**

Lorraine and Tom Raison were long-time members of the LHG. Lorraine died a couple of years ago, and Tom passed away this December.

The Raisons gave time to many organizations and left an impression that will be long remembered. Lorraine served as the Guild's membership chair and often helped with projects. Tom drove Lorraine to meetings and helped at events. Lorraine's quiet, gentle ways stood strong and steady during some of the challenging times in the Guild's journey.

Memories of Lorraine and Tom came to mind when I read Tom's obituary. As the years went by, the Raisons began sorting through their treasures. They often came at auction time with valuable donations.

One year, they called and asked if I could arrange for someone to

meet them at the Duarte Garage to help unload that year's donations. Gary and I decided to help and met them at the Garage. Gary and Tom unloaded a couple of items and took them inside.

Then came ***the trunk*** ...just an ordinary, sturdily built, travel trunk. The Raisons said it was empty, but the weight belied that. Gary and I asked that they open the trunk to see what might be in it – to be sure it was material they wished to donate.

Well, the collection in that trunk was the fulfillment of every antique lover's dream! There were pristine dresses from the late 1800s. There was a fur cape or two; a gold topped man's walking stick with engraved initials. It had belonged to Tom's grandfather or his father. Tom beamed when he held the stick and posed with it.

There were mantillas from Spain, silk and wool table covers from Italy. There were small, folding travel lamps and some delicate dishes. A small, well decorated, travel frame, much like a triptych, opened to reveal a painting of Tom's great grandfather. It was the only likeness they had of him. Again, the look on Tom's face was something to see!

The Raisons remembered that an aunt of Tom's died in the late 1940s. The trunk had been sent to them and had remained closed and packed all those years. We all felt as if we had just opened a most wonderful treasure! Yes, they did take the trunk home. I will long remember their faces and that evening's special experience. This memory is small, even trivial, compared to all Lorraine and Tom did in their lives. Yet the joy, pleasure,

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## LHG Begins Strategic Planning

A smooth-running organization is known by a number of characteristics, but one of the most important is a well-understood mission and set of goals. So Deborah Fields and I took the Guild's board through a strategic planning process that started with an online opinion survey about the Guild. We asked questions about its mission and effectiveness and had respondents evaluate our strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities. This four-point evaluation is commonly used by organizations to get what is sometimes called a 360-degree view of the organization.

With those inputs collected, we conducted a one-day strategic planning session with the Livermore Heritage Guild board and selected guests with interests in the Guild's activities. We were fortunate to have guests ranging from Joan Seppala and Janet Armantrout of the *Independent*, Guild member, president of L-AGS, and author Anne Homan, and Darryl West from the Livermore Planning Commission. Past president Neal Cavanaugh joined us, as did other Guild members, including our own City Historian, Gary Drummond. The group reviewed and interpreted the survey results and adding more information than was possible in short survey answers.

The clearest response to the survey was the belief that LHG has dedicated talented members and volunteers, just not enough of them. Some other hot-button

items were the need for a museum that is all our own and the importance of reaching out to citizens and community groups for collaborative efforts. Also, many respondents noted that we have good collections and many good projects, however the collections are not as accessible as they should be nor the projects well organized. During the next month, we will incorporate these inputs into a new five-year strategic plan that will also drive our yearly goals.

After lunch we regrouped with just the board and a few guests. Given the morning conversations, we started by reviewing our motto and mission statement. These simple sentences should set the tone and the goals for the Guild, and it seemed a good time to refresh them.

The current motto, "Helping save yesterday for tomorrow," sounded less than fully committed. The group felt that as Livermore's leading non-profit concerned with heritage preservation, a more self-assured statement was appropriate.

And so, with board approval on February 6, your new Livermore Heritage Guild motto is "Saving yesterday for tomorrow." There, don't you feel stronger already?

In our mission statement there was a similar feeling; where the existing statement said the Guild would "...coordinate the efforts of con-

cerned individuals and organizations to collect and preserve..." the board felt that a more assertive statement was appropriate that states our leading, not coordinating, role in heritage preservation.

In addition, we felt that one part of the Guild's mission is public advocacy, that is, taking public positions on civic topics related to preservation of Livermore's heritage. In the past, Guild members have lobbied public officials and addressed the City Council and various commissions on historic preservation. Participating in public discussions is an important part of preserving Livermore's past, but it has never been stated as one of our goals. As Gary Drummond said, "we've always done it, now we're admitting it."

With a framework from the strategic planning session, and final

### **Livermore Heritage Guild's NEW Mission Statement**

The mission of the Livermore Heritage Guild is to ensure awareness and protection of Livermore's rich heritage through public advocacy and by collecting, preserving, interpreting and sharing historic resources for the education and enjoyment of all.

"wordsmithing" by Loretta Kaskey and Lydia Carpenter, the board approved your new LHG mission statement.

We value your continued support in Saving Yesterday for Tomorrow!

-By Jeff Kaskey

## Calendar

**LHG Board Meeting**, Wednesday, March 5, 7 pm. Carnegie Building (Third and J streets), downstairs. All welcome

**Duarte Garage Open**, Sunday, March 16, 10-2 pm. On the Old Lincoln Highway at the corner of Portola and L Streets.

**History Talk**, Wednesday, March 19, 7:30 pm. Gary Drummond will talk about "Viticulture in the Livermore Valley." Doors open at 7 pm. Livermore Civic Center Library, 1188 S. Livermore Avenue. Light refreshments.

**LHG Board Meeting**, Wednesday, April 2, 7 pm. Carnegie Building (Third and J streets), downstairs. All welcome.

**History Talk**, Wednesday, April 16, 7:30 pm. Isabel Nolte will talk about "Early Pioneers in Livermore." Doors open at 7 pm. Livermore Civic Center Library, 1188 S. Livermore Avenue. Light refreshments.

**Duarte Garage Open** Sunday, April 20, 10-2 pm. On the Old Lincoln Highway at the corner of Portola and L Streets.

**Newsletter Mailing**, Saturday, April 26, Carnegie Building, Third and J Streets. Help get the newsletter ready for mailing. Call Maxine at 925-422-6539 or just drop in.

**LHG Board Meeting**, Wednesday, May 7, 7 pm. Carnegie Building (Third and J streets), downstairs.

**Livermore Legacy Tour**, May 18th from 11-5. Visit [livermorehistory.com](http://livermorehistory.com) or call 925-577-4206.

## Guild History

As the LHG enters the 35th year of its existence, its members can be proud of our many accomplishments. Unfortunately, few of today's members know much about the Guild's early years; what were the Guild activities; who were the persons involved? what has the Guild really accomplished. Access to LHG records, and thus details of the Guild's past, is difficult. To correct this situation, we are undertaking a project to collect records related to LHG's history, organize them for easier access, and draft a plan for collecting and preserving new records as they are created.

Records that document the history of the LHG include Board meeting minutes and agendas, financial reports, government forms filed by LHG, bank statements, budgets, etc., and newsletters, membership lists, and other Guild publications. These materials will be invaluable to Guild officers and members in the future who want to understand where we have been and guide our steps as we move forward.

If you have old LHG records or memorabilia--fliers, invitations, minutes--call Dick Lerche at 925-447-9365. Dick would also welcome your help in locating, organizing, and listing these materials.



*Raison Continued from page 5*

and delight on their faces that evening is the picture I hold of them!

The Raisons are part of the foundation of the Guild; they helped us reach our 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary, which we are celebrating this year. Thanks to them for giving of themselves, their talents and good humor. I salute you!

-By Anna Siig

## Contact Us

### President

Jeff Kaskey  
[jkaskey@yahoo.com](mailto:jkaskey@yahoo.com)

### 1st Vice President (Program Chair)

Marie Abbott  
925-443-9740

### 2nd VP (Membership Chair)

Matthew Shellenberg  
[m.a.schellenberg@att.net](mailto:m.a.schellenberg@att.net)

### Secretary

Anna Siig  
[siig@comcast.net](mailto:siig@comcast.net)

### Treasurer

Dick Lerche  
925-447-9365

### Curator Duarte Garage

Bill Junk  
925-447-4561

### Newsletter Editor

Maxine Trost  
[mtrost@netzero.net](mailto:mtrost@netzero.net)

### Office Manager

Lydia Carpenter  
[lhg@lhg.org](mailto:lhg@lhg.org)

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*Livermore Heritage Guild  
P.O. Box 961  
Livermore CA 94551  
925-449-9927  
[www.livermorehistory.com](http://www.livermorehistory.com)*

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**Masthead photo:** Robert Livermore's "Around the Horn House" photographed in the early 1950s just before it was torn down. Arroyo Las Positas is in the foreground.

# Members Old and New Plan Guild's Future Direction



*Above: Guild president Jeff Kaskey and Deborah Fields lead Board members and community leaders through strategic planning activities. At right are three new guild members who have already made major contributions. Left to right: Matthew Schellenberg, Second Vice President, Joe Adams, Auction Chair, and Neal Cavanaugh, past President.*



*Above: Founding members Pat Hoenig and Henri Fankhauser shared their invaluable knowledge of the Guild's past.*

*See Page 6 for a full account of the planning effort.*

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