

## Escape from the Gallows *The Story of “Bad Boy” Bruggy*

By Raymond L. Owen

In February 1890, readers of *The Sonoma Democrat* were startled to see an article captioned, “Murder in Windsor — Richard Louison Killed by George W. Bruggy.” This was but the first chapter of a saga that would see George W. Bruggy repeatedly escape the gallows and, in fact, twice escape custody.

On 17 February 1890, after a day of drinking and minor fights, George W. Bruggy shot and killed Richard Louison in Fred King’s saloon in Windsor. Accounts of the event differed somewhat but in general agreed that the two had been drinking freely and that Bruggy had been harassing Louison. Louison was a larger and more powerful man, about 28 years of age, and Bruggy was of medium height, about 23 years of age. Testimony was developed that Louison had knocked Bruggy down in the street in front of the saloon and later, inside, had refrained from striking the younger man with his fist, rather slapping him with an open hand. When Bruggy persisted in harassing Louison, the latter threw him on the floor but did not follow up his advantage. Bruggy then drew a gun and, as Louison fled, shot him in the back of the head, killing Louison instantly.

Bruggy was taken into custody by

Deputy Sheriff Hy Groshong and transported to the county jail in Santa Rosa. He was uncommunicative during the trip and upon arrival was described as in “a partial drunken stupor.” When asked by Sheriff Edward P. Colgan why he had killed Louison, he reportedly



George W. Bruggy

“looked up with an idiotic leer on his face and asked, ‘What man? I didn’t kill anybody.’” Was his response because of shock? Drunkenness? Or, was it a reasoned ploy?

Four years later, it was learned that George W. Bruggy and his older brother, Jeremiah, had been indicted by the Grand

Jury of Contra Costa County, California in 1881 on charges of murder and robbery of a man near Brentwood. George Bruggy was the last person seen with the victim before the discovery of the body. That and other evidence led to the indictment. Although the Bruggy brothers were acquitted, the mystery was never solved and it was soon after the acquittal that they came to Sonoma County. It seems George Bruggy was not unfamiliar with the legal system, a suggestion strengthened by his refusal to answer particular questions before consultation with his attorney.

The general opinion was that Bruggy was a person of a quarrelsome nature and most citizens of Windsor felt that the shooting of Louison was an unprovoked murder. Bruggy pled not guilty to the charge of murder in the first degree and trial was set for 26 March 1891. On 16 April 1891, he was found guilty as charged and sentenced to death by hanging. Upon sentencing, Bruggy asked if he could make a few remarks, but the judge denied the request, stating that the time for talking was over, thus engendering a scowl toward the bench. An hour later Bruggy was “singing a gay song” in his cell and called upon the other prisoners to join in the chorus.

The case was appealed to the State

*Continued on page 6, Bruggy*

## Windsor Historical Society Board Members

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**9225 Foxwood Dr.**  
**Windsor, California**



## Mission Statement

*The mission of the Windsor Historical Society is to found, maintain and operate a community historical museum and association in order to collect, store and display historical artifacts, to develop a fund of information and knowledge of the history and culture of the Windsor area.*

## President's Message



## Hop Harvest Happenings

We just finished the first annual Hop Harvest at the Hembree House (that has a nice ring to it, doesn't it?) We picked about 15 pounds and gave the hops to a few local home brewers. Maybe we'll get lucky and have some Hembree House Ale to taste in a couple of months. We plan to expand the Hop Yard next year and double the number of plants. We will use only the plants we have taken from the original hop yards along the Russian River.

If you have not already seen the latest exhibit at the museum, don't delay. We have a model of a hop ranch constructed by Jack Beedie in the late 60's that shows in detail a hop yard, kiln, and cooler shed. While you're looking at the model you can listen to Jack's brother, Bill, describe the hop industry from a recording he made about the same time his brother made the model. We also have Rafor Jones' movie of the hop season in 1951. The movie is very detailed with everything from erecting the trellises to aerial spraying for aphids. All this and photos from Lorraine Kimes Owen, Earl Price, Barbara and Rafor Jones, George Greeott and others.

The Cunningham House roof is

**August 1911  
HOP PICKERS NEEDED**  
WANTED - Hop pickers, men, women and children; shady camp grounds on Russian river; picking begins about September 2; register at once, as books will be closed as soon as crew is secured. Call at 118 California st., room 7, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.  
*(San Francisco Call, Aug. 26, 1911)*

scheduled to be replaced before the first rains. It will be a steel roof and will keep the weather out (finally) and give us time to work on the interior. While removing some of the peeling wall paper inside we discovered part of a poem written in pencil in the entry hall: "sing a song of sixpence, a pocket full of rye, 4 and 20 black . . ." I wonder who wrote it?

This was a very sad summer for our family of docents and good friends. We will miss Marj, Paulette and Joyce very much. They were longtime supporters and members of the Historical Society and also very good friends.

See you around the museum,

Steve

## Beedie Brothers



Jack Beedie



Bill Beedie

Beedie family photos



**Hop Yard Model by Jack Beedie.** Shown above are two photos of a model hop yard, kiln and cooler shed currently on display in the WHS Hembree House Museum. This beautifully detailed piece was built by Jack Beedie during the 1960s. Edward John "Jack" Beedie (1910-1985) was the brother of Windsor historian and author William L. "Bill" Beedie (1903-1983). (Cathy Landis photo)





# WHS Member News

## *A Letter from Lori Ann*

May 27, 2011

Hello,

I am a member of WHS. I will not be able to attend [the annual meeting] on June 25. I live out of state ( Florida).

My Grandfather was the late Bill Beedie Sr. My mother was Bill and Isabelle's daughter, Audrey Beedie Stalker.

The hop story is a gem! [*Windsor Walk*, Mar/Apr/May 2011, President's Message] No one could have done it better then he [Bill Beedie] did. I have heard the story and seen the slides many times. It is priceless! I am so pleased that it will be shared and enjoyed by many.

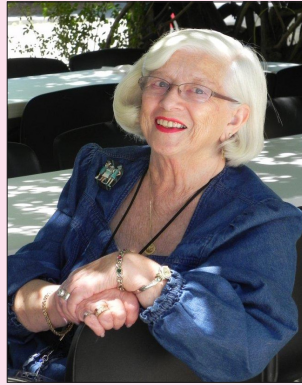
Soon, I will send my renewal for my membership. I am so happy that WHS is doing great work!

My husband and I enjoy the newsletter.

Thank you.

Lori Ann Pemberton

## *Volunteer of the Year - Marilyn Reynolds*



**Marilyn Reynolds** has been a tireless WHS supporter and member for over ten years. She has been instrumental in managing the silent auction at the Polenta Feed and soliciting donations. She has also been a steady docent at the Hembree House since its opening and has accumulated the most hours (outside of board members).



Above, honoree **Marilyn Reynolds** receives her volunteer award from WHS President Steve Lehmann. Board members are (back, l to r) Marilou DelGreco, Cheryl Strong, Edna Honsa, Dave Turnes, and Ken DelGreco. (front, l to r) Josephine Rebich, Steve Lehmann, and Barbara Ray. (Standing in the background is Jan Lehmann.)

*Congratulations, Marilyn!*

## C o n d o l e n c e s

### **Marjorie (Beardsley) Tynan 1935-2011**



Above left, Marjorie Beardsley, a cute teenager, poses for a class photo. On the right in recent years, Marj Tynan is shown helping paint the fence at Hembree House, laughing because the photographer caught her with a bit of paint on her nose.

Marj was a valued member of WHS, serving on the Board of Directors and as Mananger of the Hembree House Museum gift shop, to which she contributed pieces of her unique and lovely handcrafted jewelry.

We extend our deepest sympathies to Marj's husband, Brandon Tynan, and other members of her family.

### **Paulette Marie (Gianoli) Carroll 1951-2011**



Paulette Carroll was a very dear friend of the Windsor community and a dedicated member of Windsor Historical Society. Over the years, she volunteered for many WHS activities and events, and as recently as June of this year she visited the museum with friends and donated items to our hop display from her family's barn on Eastside Road. The photo above right was taken at last year's WHS volunteer appreciation luncheon.

Paulette will be deeply missed, and we hope the memories of her generous spirit and well-lived life will ease the grief of her husband, Terry, and family.

### **Joyce Ann (Osborne) O'Connell 1932-2011**



We were deeply saddened to learn of the unexpected death of our friend and WHS docent Joyce O'Connell, who passed away peacefully on Sunday, August 21. She was a good friend of Paulette Carroll and had attended her recent funeral.

Joyce was a quiet woman whose actions spoke louder than words. She was efficient, dependable, and a strong supporter of the Windsor Historical Society. It was always a pleasure working with her, and her passing is a great loss.

We offer our heartfelt condolences to Joyce's family, each of whom she treasured.



# Our First Hop Harvest Festival – Sept. 10, 2011

(photos courtesy Clara Brock, Arlene Rusche, and Cathy Landis)



Hops ready for harvest.



Joan Bennett demonstrates hop picking techniques while Jan Winrich, right, watches.



Hops at the top are a bit more challenging.



A four-man team quickly strips a hop vine. They are (l to r) Matt Brown, George Greeot, Loren Barker, and Steve Lehmann.

## Youth and experience join forces to fill vintage hop baskets.



Melia Calzada Omar Santiago



Angela Alvarez Erik Partida Omar Santiago



Melia Calzada Fabiola Meza Jaslyn Guillen



Angela Alvarez Jesus Gudino

Other AVID students who assisted but are not shown or are not identified include Lizeth Chavez, Maria Garcia, Daniela Garcia, Brenda Aguilar, and Ana Ramirez.

**WHS thanks each of you for your help!**



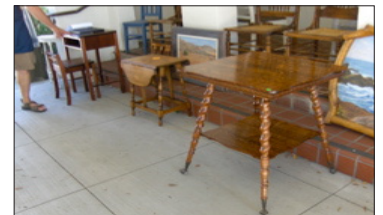
Using a vintage scale, Steve Lehmann and Loren Barker, balancing the scale's support beams, weigh a bag of hops.



WHS members (l to r) Clara Brock, Eulalia Grove Willson, and Joan Bennett share a humorous moment.



Shown left, WHS volunteer Brandy Bowman takes a turn overseeing the yard sale.



A few of WHS's vintage and antique sale items.



Millie Turnes is ready to serve a typical hop-pickers meal, and visitors line up in eager anticipation.



Arlene Rusche, left, and Clara Brock enjoy their lunch.



Hops aplenty!





## Memories of Windsor in the 1950s

### The Hardtops

By Jim DuVander

It was really the hardtop races, but we boys shortened it to just “The Hardtops.” Now this was real entertainment! For kids who had no TV or video games, but only bikes, a Friday night at the Hardtops was like going to Disneyland.

It seemed like everyone would arrive about the same time, there was so much activity. We’d park out behind the track near where the racers were warming up. The smell of burning methyl alcohol was faint in the air. The distinctive flathead V-8 sound was background to our arrival, as we made our way to the stands. We’d always sit on the short straight-away. To sit near either turn was to invite mud clumps into your lap (or worse), which the cars would send flying into the stands as they went hard into the turn.

The race drivers were announced in order as each took a quick solo run around the track and came back to line up in

some pre-established pattern. The flagman would go out front and when all were ready, he’d give a flourishing wave and the half-dozen or so cars would jump to life and shoot forward in a flurry of noise as they jockeyed for position. What followed was a melee and a jumble of cars stirring their way around the track, engines roaring as they vied to get into the lead. Spinouts, collisions and wrecks spiced up the spectacle. A winner would finally get the checkered flag and we boys would be pumped. We’d never seen anything this exciting on the farm.

A favorite driver emerged for us boys. He was a Windsor resident named Rod Zanolini. His nickname, Rod, had to be for his skills in creating hot race cars. He excelled at this sport. Challengers would come and go, but year after year Rod would prevail. He was brash, always had a hot car and knew how to use it. It

seemed to us that he never backed away from danger, and he never seemed to get hurt. He must have carefully calculated his risk or was just plain lucky. Rod was something of a legend to me, a mythical figure who I don’t think I ever met face to face. I knew where he lived on Chalk Hill Road, on a corner, but never saw him there. The house burned some time ago and was not rebuilt. I still see the bare spot and look for signs that there really was a house there as I go by. We boys got to calling this corner, “Zanolini Corner.” I still think of it that way.

### THE CARS

Most of the cars started out as worn hulks, tired and ready for the scrap heap. But the race drivers saw one final use for them and would strip off the fenders, take out the window glass, hoods and trunk lids, weld the doors shut and weld some reinforcing around the cockpit and radiator. The most favored cars were Fords from the thirties with the flathead V-8s in them. These cars are now valuable collectors items, in most any condition, but back then they were just expendable derelicts. In the off season, the drivers worked their magic on the engines, putting in hot cams, balanced pistons and rods, racing heads and extra carburetors on a modified manifold. The newer overhead valve V-8s were around then but were probably too expensive. And anyway, by the 50s, so many after market items were available to hop up the Ford flathead V8 that it was just about the only engine used. Occasionally someone would use a straight six, but they were so inferior to the performance of these V8s that they



**Windsor’s Rod Zanolini.** Above, Rod Zanolini stands beside his race car, which was powered by a Ford “Cobra” engine and was one of the fastest cars during this year (1964 or 1965). (photo courtesy Tom Voudy)

*Continued on page 6, DuVander*

always lost. The venerable old flat head V8 was king.

### THE RACEWAY

The Santa Rosa raceway was off Russell Boulevard on the north-west side of town. At the time, there was no development north of Steele Lane. It was just a field that someone had decided to make into a raceway. This was also before permits, so if you wanted a raceway, you just made one. It was just a dirt track, tightly banked at the turns. Heavy equipment must have carved out the track from a flat field, and it was probably less than a quarter mile around. As I recall, we parked on the grass when we went to the track. Sometimes, the field was still wet and walking through mud puddles to get to the stands was part of the experience.

Whoever had the idea for the raceway must have expected a big turnout. The grandstand was much larger than any attendance I remember. But then, Sonoma County was a sparsely populated area in the '50s, and attracting numbers was more of a challenge.

If someone made another raceway now, I'd go. It was fun then and I think it would be fun today. It was up close and personal. One could smell the field, the mud and the exhaust fumes. But maybe it would be just me and a few of my boyhood friends there. Times have changed and there are so many other ways to be entertained now. Besides, there are no cheap thirties Fords around anymore. I don't think it would be the same without the old cars and the sound of that old V8 putting out a bit more than one hundred horsepower.



Supreme Court where the verdict was upheld in May 1891 and it was ordered that Bruggy be hanged. However, owing to the prominence of the case, a second hearing was granted, but on 26 February 1892 the state supreme court again upheld the verdict of the lower court and again denied a request for a retrial.

During the protracted appeal, a new feature was added to the drama. On 21 August 1891, George W. Bruggy married Mary N. Pool, a daughter of Henry J. and the late Mary E. Pool, a Windsor neighbor. The ceremony was conducted in the jail. They were already the parents of a baby girl born about 1890.

Following the appellate ruling, the date of execution was to be set in the Superior Court of Sonoma County on the morning of 2 May 1892. When Bruggy's name was called, the sheriff replied, "May it please Your Honor, he has escaped." Bruggy and a fellow prisoner, "Frenchy" Theron, a petty thief, had broken out of the county jail just hours before the sentencing.

The county jail was in a brick building with barred windows within which was an iron strapped cage containing two tiers of cells on the sides with an open interior. There were two versions of the escape: the prisoners' and

the authorities'. According to the prisoners, much of the work was done on Sunday afternoon when the interior was open and prisoners could freely circulate. Inmates later commented that they were not closely watched and that Bruggy even displayed two revolvers, apparently smuggled to him days before. During Sunday afternoon, Frenchy, having been promised forty dollars by Bruggy, filed through some of the thin iron straps of the cage, climbed through the opening and hid in an iron water tank reservoir that served the jail. It had been purposely emptied during the day.

The evening inspection was carelessly made and the absence of Frenchy was undetected, apparently because of the guard's focus on the presence of Bruggy. After the inspection, Frenchy left the water tank, crawled back into the cage and filed open the hasp to Bruggy's cell. As Bruggy walked out, he said, "Good bye, boys ... we're on our way." They then simply crawled through the cage opening, scaled the lattice and exited through assuredly already cut bars on an outside window. They had a six-hour head start before their absence was discovered.

According to the sheriff and guards, the escape was an outside job. While there had obviously been outside

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State of California, County of Sonoma, ss.

George W. Bruggy being duly sworn, says:

My name is George W. Bruggy. I reside at Santa Rosa. I was born in California my age is 25 years; I desire a license to authorize my marriage with Mamie Pool She resides at Henderson she was born in California and is 19 years of age. And I further swear there are no legal objections to our marriage.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 20th day of Aug 1891

A. D. 1891

L. H. Hubbard County Clerk.

By M. A. Coulter Deputy Clerk.

George W. Bruggy

Marriage License Application for George H.W. Bruggy and Mary N. "Mamie" Pool, 20 August 1891.

help and Bruggy had been smuggled money, guns, and files, the accounts of the prisoners more closely matched the evidence. When one prisoner was asked why he had not sounded an alarm, he prefaced his answer with a comment that Bruggy was a desperate man who was to be sentenced to hanging the next day and then said, "Give the alarm — and him with two pistols? Not much!"

George Bruggy and Frenchy were captured within seventy-two hours, prompting the question, "Dead or alive?" Deputy Gill Hall received a report that smoke had been observed in a gulch near Windsor and a voice overheard that sounded like Bruggy's. Deputy Hall, accompanied by Deputy Hy Groshong, went to Windsor where they were directed to the gulch. From concealment, they saw Bruggy and Frenchy standing under a tree, sheltered from the rain. One deputy crept to within twenty feet behind a bush and the other deputy positioned himself uphill with a shotgun. Upon the order to drop their guns, and seeing that they were covered with a pistol and a shotgun, the fugitives meekly complied.

Later at the jail, Bruggy was asked why they hadn't traveled farther. He explained that during two years in jail he had gotten "tenderfooted." After two days, his feet were so swollen he could not put on his shoes. Then they got cold and wet from the rain, built a fire and gave themselves away. Bruggy was matter-of-fact about his capture, remarking, "It's hard luck ... our plans were well laid but you see they miscarried."

Upon re-incarceration, Sheriff Mulgrew placed a twenty-four hour guard over Bruggy and the district attorney considered filing charges against Mrs. Bruggy for having furnished firearms to her husband. A petition for commutation of Bruggy's sentence was soon sent to Governor Markham who in June 1892 refused the request. When the governor's decision

was received, Bruggy was given a set of new clothes, moved to a holding cell and a scaffold was erected in the jail yard for his execution on 1 July 1892. Bruggy's reaction to the Governor's decision was a forced levity, a request for whiskey and the comment, "Well, I ain't hung yet. There's many a slip betwixt the cup and the lips."

On the 28th of June, the chief justice of the California Supreme Court wrote to the Governor and requested a reprieve of execution for thirty days. A mistake had been made with Bruggy's appeal and it had erroneously been filed in the case of the State of California versus John McNulty, thereby denying Bruggy due process. Both cases involved an identical issue of interpretation of an 1891 law that vested execution authority solely with prison wardens, not sheriffs. Because the McNulty case was before the United States Supreme Court, an agreement was made that the decision would also be binding on the Bruggy case. The request for a reprieve was granted. Mrs. Bruggy was at the jail when Sheriff Mulgrew delivered the news. After displaying her relief, she asked for and received permission to kiss her husband through the grating.

Although the governor had granted a reprieve in June and would grant four more until 30 September 1892, he steadfastly refused to commute the death sentence. The hanging was scheduled for the first of October. An appeal to the U.S. Circuit Court had earlier been denied, however, on September 29 the decision was reconsidered and an indefinite stay ordered pending the ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court. Once again Bruggy escaped the gallows by hours. In view of the indefinite stay, work commenced to dismantle the scaffold. Bruggy requested to see the structure and was accordingly led to it. He stood on the trap door, surveyed the construction and commented, "It looks strong."

In May 1893, the U.S. Supreme

Court rendered its decision in the McNulty case — the writ was dismissed. The Santa Rosa newspaper announced, "Bruggy's Last Hope for Life Is Gone." This pronouncement was premature because of the suspended case in circuit court, along with another appeal. Nonetheless, it was a devastating blow. Interestingly, the months before and after the decision saw a remarkable transformation in Bruggy. He changed from a troublesome inmate known for "pranks and deviltry" to a model prisoner. In a July 1893 newspaper account Bruggy was described as "attired in a neat and becoming suit of steel gray. He was clean shaven, and hair and mustache trimmed ... Bruggy is a changed person ... the change extends much below the surface." Bruggy lamented his past use of whiskey and expressed deep feelings about its self-destructive nature. Another account in October 1893 stated, "Those who remember the rough, brutal and dissipated slayer of Louison would not recognize him in the George Bruggy of the present day ... in fairness it must be said an apparent great change has been wrought in his character and certainly in his behavior. The officers say there is not a more quiet and obedient prisoner." In fact, he was so obedient that he was made a trustee and assistant turnkey.

The appeal in Circuit Court continued to languish. By agreement, if the decision went against him in the Supreme Court, a motion to dismiss was to be made in the U.S. Court of Appeals. However, lacking a requisite certificate from the circuit court, the matter was pending until after the court of appeals reconvened in January 1894.

On the 27th of January, George Bruggy and five others broke out of the Sonoma County jail.

The jailbreak was a sensation! As the news spread, crowds descended on the jail. The escaped prisoners were Bruggy and Jack [John Lorin] Espey,

*Continued on page 8, Bruggy*



Continued from page 7, Bruggy

convicted murderers, Richard Craig and John Smith, burglars, and David Pridgett and Thomas Owens, petty offenders. The timing was perfect and occurred while the jailor was absent having supper. A cross bar of the lattice had been sawn out and the escapees simply crawled through the opening, scaled the cage, broke a skylight, crossed the roof, and dropped a short distance to an alley. There had obviously been outside help and suspicion fell upon Mrs. Bruggy, considered by some to have been allowed too much liberty to visit her husband. Others felt friends of Espey assisted.

On condition of anonymity, an inmate confided to a reporter how the escape was engineered. It was known in advance that an escape would be attempted. Bruggy had gotten possession of a file with which he made a key for his cell and one for the middle door that led to the jailer's office. Apparently, thin blanks of soft pine were inserted into the locks and turned, leaving impressions and a template. Making keys to the other cells was simple. For some time Bruggy had been the assistant turnkey and as such he handled all cell keys except his own. It was just a matter of surreptitiously making key imprints on tinfoil. The original plan was to open the middle door, overpower the jailor, and exit en masse through the front door. However, Bruggy acquired a steel saw and it was decided to cut through the cage.

To mask the sound of sawing, the inmates loudly sang and shouted. When asked why the sheriff wasn't informed of the plot, the informant replied, "In the first place none of us was anxious to get brained, and in the second place, I think we all would rather like to see him get away."

Sheriff Sam Allen initiated an intense search for the escaped prisoners and within a short time Pridgett and Owens were captured at Healdsburg. The whereabouts of the burglars, Craig and Smith, was unknown, and Bruggy and Espey remained at large. Months later it was learned that Bruggy and Espey had been secreted for several weeks in a farm house less than ten miles from Santa Rosa, after which they hid in a brush shanty near Windsor, not far from the site of Bruggy's capture in 1892. Local residents later reported that they had observed Mrs. Bruggy and another woman carrying well-provisioned baskets to the area. When the site was eventually found, it was littered with empty food cans.

George W. Bruggy was never recaptured or returned to California authorities. He simply vanished. After two years, his wife divorced him for abandonment and later remarried. Was he a "Bad Boy?" As a youth, he was implicated in a murder-robbery. As a young man, he needlessly and deliberately shot and killed a man and feigned ignorance of the act. He married

while an inmate — was it affection or to acquire an outside accomplice? Later, he abandoned his wife and child. He morphed from a troublesome inmate to a model prisoner, gained the trust of his jailors and exploited their confidence. A "Bad Boy?" You bet — but one who represents a colorful thread in the fabric of our local history.



### Sources

**Note:** This article appeared in the *Russian River Recorder*, Autumn 2007 and is reprinted with permission.

*The Sonoma Democrat, Santa Rosa, CA:*  
22 February 1890; 29 March 1890; 17 April 1890; 27 February 1892; 7 May 1892; 13 May 1892; 25 June 1892; 2 July 1892; 30 July 1892; 6 August 1892; 3 September 1892; 1 October 1892; 8 October 1892; 20 May 1893; 24 July 1893; 28 October 1893; 27 January 1894; 23 June 1894

*The Press Democrat, Santa Rosa, CA.,*  
6 August 1903.

Memo to File, dated 14 March 2007. Advisement by California State Archives that no prison file exists for George W. Bruggy.

Governor's Offers of Rewards (F3672:985), California State Archives, Sacramento, CA.

1880 U.S. Census. Identified Mary Ness Pool in the household of Henry J. Pool, Russian River Township, Sonoma County, CA. 1870 U.S. Census identified Mary's mother.

Sonoma County Marriages, 1847-1902. Sonoma County Genealogical Society, Santa Rosa, CA, March 1990.

Sonoma County Superior Court, Probate Case #1580, Estate of Mary Bruggy. Confirmed identity of Jeremiah Bruggy as an older brother of George W. Bruggy.

Sonoma County District Court, Case #3844, Mary N. Bruggy vs. George W. Bruggy, filed 5 April 1895. Divorce granted 10 April 1896, desertion and abandonment.

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THOS. T. ECKERT, General Manager. NORVIN GREEN, President.

NUMBER	SENT BY	REC'D BY	CHECK
43	David		

Received at SACRAMENTO, Cal. 1.35 P. M. Standard Time. May 2 1892

Dated Santa Rosa Cal

To Hon. H. H. Markham

M. H. W. Bruggy under sentence of death escaped from County jail last night. Height five feet ten—weight one hundred eighty, complexion light, red hair and mustache, aged twenty five. Have offered \$200 reward [approximate value today: \$4600]. What will state offer?

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**THIS IS AN UNREPEATED MESSAGE, and is delivered by request of the sender, under the conditions named above.**

THOS. T. ECKERT, General Manager. NORVIN GREEN, President.

NUMBER	SENT BY	REC'D BY	CHECK
188			

Received at SACRAMENTO, Cal. M. Standard Time. 188

Dated

To

Twenty five—Have offered \$200 reward—what will state offer?

J. F. Mulgrew  
Sheriff Sonoma Co.

**Two-Page Telegram from Sonoma County Sheriff J.F. Mulgrew to the Hon. H.H. Markham, Governor of California, Sacramento. May 2, 1892.** G.H.W. Bruggy under sentence of death escaped from County jail last night. Height five feet ten—weight one hundred eighty, complexion light, red hair and mustache, aged twenty five. Have offered \$200 reward [approximate value today: \$4600]. What will state offer?



## John Cunningham Murdered - April 1890

*The Sonoma Democrat*, 26 Apr 1890

John Cunningham, whose short, stout figure and broad Scottish brogue will be well remembered by many people in this city, was found dead on the ranch of Geo. Bruggy, the condemned murderer, near Windsor, Friday. He held a mortgage on the property and foreclosed a few days before Bruggy committed the act which is to cost him his life probably.

After the trial Cunningham went up to the ranch and had been living alone for several weeks. The remains were horribly decomposed and it is probable that he had been dead two weeks or more. Justice Shane impanelled a jury and held an inquest over the remains, Friday afternoon, but no conclusion was arrived at and the inquest adjourned

until this morning. The physicians who examined the corpse are of opinion that the deceased was murdered.

The coroner's jury in the case of John C. Cunningham whose putrescent remains were found on the Bruggy ranch, two miles north-east of Windsor, Friday, rendered a verdict, Saturday afternoon, of death from unknown causes. It was at first believed that the deceased had come to his death by foul means, as there appeared to be a bullet hole in his cheek. On examination, however, it was found that the apparent mutilation of the face was the result of natural causes, decomposition having so far advanced as to produce holes and gaping seams in other portions of the body. The deceased is estimated to have been worth between \$15,000 and \$20,000.

**May 1922**

## Wesley Burkhead Rescued

**Windsor, May 16, 1922.** Wesley Burkhead, 15, was rescued from drowning in the Russian river near this place on Sunday, through the efforts of Mrs. J. E. Huffman, her daughter, Dorothy, and Miss Genevieve Smith of Santa Rosa.

Young Burkhead had climbed upon a log which dislodged itself and rapidly carried the boy down the river into deep water. Mrs. Smith was first to try to rescue the boy, who was twice carried underneath by the current. Unable to help him along, she called to the other women. The three, with much difficulty, because of his frantic grappling, were finally able to get the boy to shallow water. (*Healdsburg Tribune*, May 16, 1922, pg. 4)



**Windsor School's Little Bo Peeps. (c. 1927)** (left to right) Frances Hinkle, Alice Cook, Evelyn Binggeli, Gladys Richards, Shirley Berry, Eleanor Robbins, Joy Reiman, and Barbara Hayes. (photo courtesy Cheryl Strong, whose mother is Evelyn Binggeli above)



# Snapshots from the Annual Meeting, June 25, 2011



Debbie Bailey, left, and Edna Honsa, two great WHS volunteers, pose for a snapshot in the George Greecott Room.



Edna Honsa thanks Elizabeth and Stephany DelGreco for their help setting tables for the annual meeting luncheon.



Gene Stuart and Dawn Comstock share great stories. Gene recently donated personal family artifacts for a county fair exhibit.



Ken DelGreco, left, and Bob Honsa take a break from volunteer responsibilities.



Where's the Beef? Bill Strong, left, and Dave Turnes are almost ready to serve it.



Steve Lehmann displays a vintage hop sack from the Baudau Hop Ranch, which was donated by Paulette Carroll in June.



Jerry and Lorrie Avery help whenever and wherever needed, always with a smile.



Bob Honsa and Joe Rebich enjoy the sunshine in front of the Hembree House.



Steve Lehmann and Dave Turnes are handy men to have around the museum.



The food is always excellent when prepared by Chef Bill Strong.



Ed Binggeli, left, and Gene Stuart greet one another while Cheryl Strong looks on.



WHS members are transfixed with Raford Jones' 1951 hop movie.



# Windsor Historical Society Announcements



1907 illustration

“Get real, Daisy! If you want to be WHS’s Volunteer of the Year, you’ll have to mail that membership application and actually volunteer.”

## Mark Your Calendars

and please join us at the  
**Annual  
Windsor Town Reunion**

**Saturday, Nov. 5, 2011**

(Yes, it is in November  
this year!)

As always, there will be a  
great lunch and an interesting  
program. More details  
will be sent later.

## Welcome New Life Member

**Dianne Graner**  
Windsor, CA



**WE NEED YOU!**

## Volunteer Opportunities

Don’t forget to volunteer! There are a variety of areas in which you can help. For more information and to volunteer, call Jan Lehmann, 838-6152. We really do need you!

## I remember . . .

**PLEASE SHARE YOUR WINDSOR MEMORIES.** Do you have a happy, fun, sad, poignant, or otherwise significant memory of old Windsor? Please call editor Barbara Ray (707-836-0101) or jot it down and e-mail (ldyray61@aol.com) or snail mail it to her in care of WHS (POB 1544, Windsor, CA 95492). You can be sure others will enjoy your story.

## Museum Hours

Windsor’s Hembree House Museum is open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday (except holidays) from 9:30 to 4:30. It’s a great way to experience Windsor’s past.

**Hembree House  
Cultural Center  
9225 Foxwood Dr.  
Windsor, California**

## Need more copies of the WHS newsletter?

Additional copies of the *Windsor Walk* are available for \$2 each, plus postage for addresses outside of Windsor. If you wish to order extras, contact editor Barbara Ray.

Windsor Historical Society • P.O. Box 1544, Windsor, CA 95492

### Membership Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Membership \_\_\_\_\_

Please select from the following list of memberships:

- Life Member           \$300.00
- Family Membership     \$ 25.00
- Family of Seniors (60+)   \$ 20.00
- Individual               \$ 20.00
- Individual Senior (60+)   \$ 15.00



### Area of Interest

- Museum Receptionist \_\_\_\_\_
- Research \_\_\_\_\_
- Publicity \_\_\_\_\_
- Garden Club \_\_\_\_\_
- Grant Writing \_\_\_\_\_
- Board Member \_\_\_\_\_
- Newletter Articles \_\_\_\_\_
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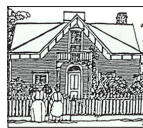
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