

Piru Pictures & History



Updated 2022

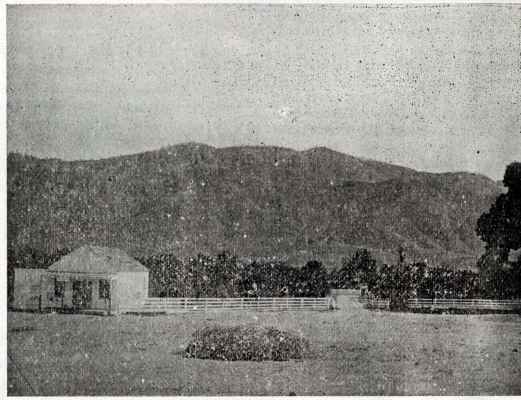
Ygnacio Ramon de Jesus Del Valle & Son Reginaldo Francisco Del Valle



The present 1800-acre Camulos Ranch, established by Ygnacio del Valle in 1853, was carved out of the 48,612 –acre Rancho San Francisco, granted to his father Antonio del Valle, majordomo and administrator of Mission San Fernando. Camulos was located at the western boundary of the Rancho and was originally a Tataviam Indian Village known as Kamulus.

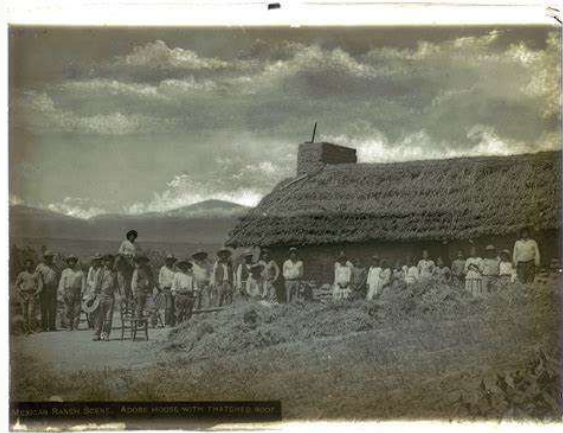
Ygnacio received the ranch in 1842 and acquired Rancho Temescal, north of Piru. In 1887 Ygnacio's son Reginaldo sold the Temescal Land Grant to David Cook of Chicago.

Rancho Camulos



CAMULOS RANCHO AT R. R. DEPOT.
Ulpiano F. del Valle, Proprietor.

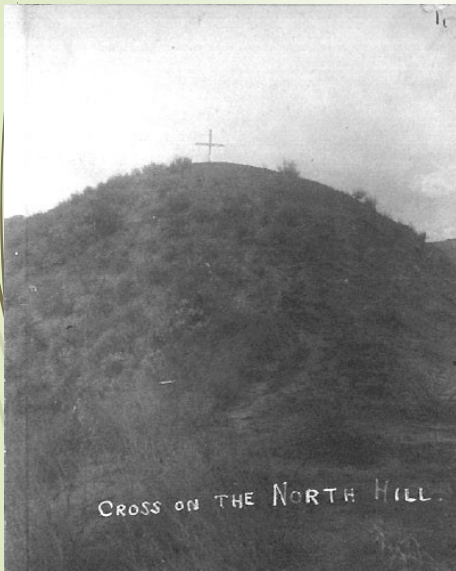
Visit www.ranhocamulos.org

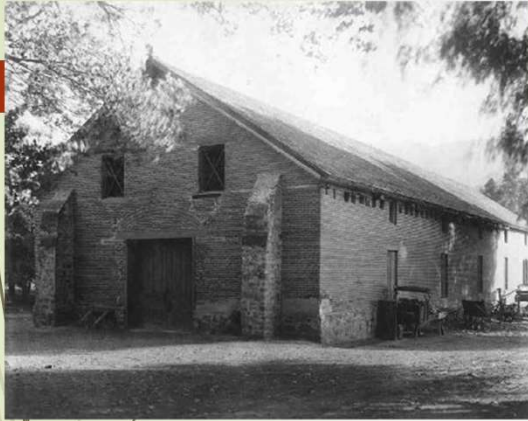


Native American
Sheep Shearers

The Rancho Camulos has a rich history, I have included some pictures and a copy of the cemetery records. To thoroughly learn, appreciate and enjoy the history of this historical landmark, I have provided the website. I encourage any and all to take some time to visit and enjoy the history provided by the wonderful docents at Rancho Camulos.

Rancho Camulos Aerial
View 1888





Camulos Ranch Winery



Rancho Camulos has a rich wine history; the Dominguez Wine Press was donated to the museum by Rosalind Ybarra Granddaughter to Juan Dominguez a longtime settler.

Rancho Camulos Cemetery



The Rancho Camulos Cemetery was established in 1853, many local Piru people are buried there.

Camulos Election Precinct

No.	Name	Age	Occupation	Address
1	Aguiar, Domingo	40	farmer	Pine
2	Aguiar, Juan de la Cruz	30	laborer	"
3	Albornoz, Juan Henry	47	farmer	"
4	Albornoz, George Washington	42	"	"
5	Albornoz, Raymond Henry	37	blacksmith	"
6	Albornoz, Charles E.	37	log raiser	"
7	Albornoz, Robert Newton	47	farmer	"
8	Baugh, Donald	43	"	Pillmore
9	Baugh, Richard George	37	farmer	"
10	Bellina, Constan	66	laborer	"
11	Bertina, Frank Joseph	59	farmer	"
12	Black, John Rex	35	"	Pillmore
13	Boninger, Bernard Prof'r	33	laborer	Pine
14	Brown, Charles A.	31	apiculturist	"
15	Brown, Charles A.	44	oil pump	"
16	Bright, James Albert	28	lockmaker	"
17	Burgin, Michael Jackson	44	oil pump	"
18	Burking, Percy	28	farmer	"
19	Castro, Juan	72	laborer	"
20	Caldwell, Roy Albert	33	oil pump	"
21	Carroll, Charles Arthur	59	mechanic	"
22	Carver, John Jay	68	farmer	"
23	Carver, Charles Wilkeson	48	"	"
24	Clark, John Laurence	30	laborer	"
25	Clenden, William Stanford	31	mechanic	"
26	Condon, Walter Guarnett	34	mechanic	"
27	Conroy, Justin Austin	76	farmer	Pillmore
28	De la Valle, Francisco	65	"	Champion
29	Rickey, Cleveland Oswald	38	"	Pine
30	Dominguez, Juan	62	laborer	"
31	Dominguez, Francisco	62	laborer	"
32	Dominguez, Joe Ygnacio	39	railroad	"
33	Dunn, Robert Brooke Wilson	31	farmer	"
34	Duarte, Manuel	50	"	"
35	Duncan, Henry C.	74	miner	"
36	Dunn, John Francis	34	farmer	"
37	Ealy, Ray J.	33	mechanic	Pillmore
38	Ealy, Ray J.	33	farmer	Pine
39	Estrella, Frank Graco	32	laborer	"
40	Fernandez, Jose P.	27	tailor	miner
41	Fernandez, Juan Baptista	46	"	"
42	Felenthal, David	46	"	"
43	Foster, Juan Jose Santos	23	laborer	"
44	Francis, Guy Hunter	23	"	"
45	Francis, Cecil Hepper	34	clerk	"

Ventura County Genealogical Society - Cemetery Records

VENTURA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
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Select Cemetery: Search for Surname: of Records: 1 to 25 of 41

Active	Surname #	Given Name	Age	Birth Year	Death Year	Burial Year
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	Aguiar	Ygnacio			
<input type="checkbox"/>	2	Albornoz	Bernard			
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	Albornoz	Concepcion			
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	Albornoz	Blas		before	
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	Albornoz	Esteban			
<input type="checkbox"/>	6	Albornoz	Fred			
<input type="checkbox"/>	7	Albornoz	Lorena			
<input type="checkbox"/>	8	Albornoz	Concepcion	65	1893	1993
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	Albornoz	Jose C.F.D.	71	1825	1900
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	Albornoz	Jose	Infant	1950	1950
<input type="checkbox"/>	11	Andreas	Juan			
<input type="checkbox"/>	12	Andra	Pablo			
<input type="checkbox"/>	13	Andra	Martha			
<input type="checkbox"/>	14	Andra	Francis			
<input type="checkbox"/>	15	Baugh	Grant			
<input type="checkbox"/>	16	Baugh	Adriana	1887	1925	
<input type="checkbox"/>	17	Baugh	Aurilia			
<input type="checkbox"/>	18	Baugh	Estrella			
<input type="checkbox"/>	19	Baugh	Joe			
<input type="checkbox"/>	20	Baugh	Margaret			
<input type="checkbox"/>	21	Calder	Carl	31	1903	1924
<input type="checkbox"/>	22	Carroll	Charles		1911	
<input type="checkbox"/>	23	Case	George	21	1874	1895
<input type="checkbox"/>	24	Case	Marie	13 yrs	1880	1881
<input type="checkbox"/>	25	Case	Edna	17	1875	1887

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Ventura County Genealogical Society - Cemetery Records

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Select Cemetery: Search for Surname: of Records: 26 to 41 of 41

Active	Surname #	Given Name	Age	Birth Year	Death Year	Burial Year
<input type="checkbox"/>	26	De la Cruz	Juan			
<input type="checkbox"/>	27	De la Valle	Ygnacio	71		1880
<input type="checkbox"/>	28	Dominguez	Adrian		1888	1982
<input type="checkbox"/>	29	Dominguez	Camilo		1814	1932
<input type="checkbox"/>	30	Dominguez	Esteban		1841	1893
<input type="checkbox"/>	31	Dominguez	Francisco		1851	1923
<input type="checkbox"/>	32	Dominguez	Juan		1842	1907
<input type="checkbox"/>	33	Dominguez	Peter		1814	1924
<input type="checkbox"/>	34	Duarte	Manuel		1863	1906
<input type="checkbox"/>	35	Duarte	Ramon		1829	1891
<input type="checkbox"/>	36	Duarte	Gertrude			
<input type="checkbox"/>	37	Duncan	Manuel			
<input type="checkbox"/>	38	Estrella	Aurea	1956	1956	
<input type="checkbox"/>	39	Estrella	Infant			
<input type="checkbox"/>	40	Estrella	Jose			1911
<input type="checkbox"/>	41	Estrella	Manuel			
<input type="checkbox"/>	42	Estrella	Miguel		1852	1915
<input type="checkbox"/>	43	Fernandez	Anna	58	1842	1860
<input type="checkbox"/>	44	Foster	Peter II		1881	1883
<input type="checkbox"/>	45	Garcia	Esteban	37	1901	1931
<input type="checkbox"/>	46	Garcia	Diego			
<input type="checkbox"/>	47	Garcia	Adelino	3	1918	1920
<input type="checkbox"/>	48	Garcia	Isabel	1 yr 1 mo 1 day	1912	1914
<input type="checkbox"/>	49	Manriquez	Isabel			1911
<input type="checkbox"/>	50	Manriquez	Conita		1882	1911

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These are some documents that provide a list of the Camulos Election Precinct, I am not sure if there are other pages, as I am still trying to find them. This is also a list of the people buried in the Camulos Cemetery.



Ventura County Genealogical Society
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Select Cemetery: Rancho Conejo Cemetery
Search for Surname:

Records: 51 of 70 of 81
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Action	Surname	Given Name	Age	Birth Year	Death Year	Burial Year
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marbuz	Elvira	?		1922	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marbuz	Leticia	infant	1936	1937	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Marbuz	Royaldia		1934	1935	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mohd	Carson			1926	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mohd	Francisco				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mohd	Guadalupe			1925	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mohd	Joan			1912	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nase	Carson		1912		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nase	Barbara	?			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Nase	Yolof		1911	1913	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ompa	Concepcion			1925	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Perez	Evangelina			1943	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Perez	Maeed			1929	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Phillips	Spencer	25		186	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rivera	Margaret	80	1826	1946	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ruiz	Jose			1917	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rodriguez	Maria de				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rodriguez	Rafaela				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Romero	Pat			1921	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ruiz	Angelita	55	1886	1941	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ruiz	Guadalupe				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Silva	Francisco	46	1890	1931	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sigales	Adolfo				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sigales	Luciano		1825	1915	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sigales	Maria Joaquin		1828	1922	

Records: 51 of 70 of 81
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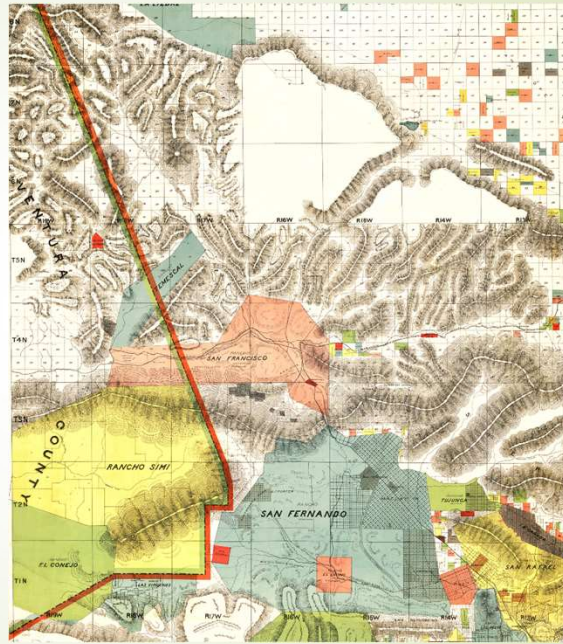
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LINKS
SURNAME RESEARCH
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Action	Surname	Given Name	Age	Birth Year	Death Year	Burial Year
<input type="checkbox"/>	Smith	Carson Rubio				1908
<input type="checkbox"/>	Solis	Jesus		1889	1922	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Suarez	Maria	55	1824	1879	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tapia	Estanisa	55	1840	1895	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vandigo	Alexandra		1892	1929	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Vandigo	Rafaela		1832	1929	

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Rancho Temescal 1888



Rancho Temescal was purchased by David Cook, who laid out a city plan and promoted the new settlement. Originally the town was to be sited on the south side of the mouth of the river in Piru Canyon, but the Southern Pacific Railroad refused to run a spur up Piru Canyon. Cook changed the location to where Piru stands today.



David C. Cook



David Cook was a wealthy publisher from Chicago who came to California to improve his ill health. His intent was to create a “Second Garden of Eden”, he planted crops and orchards. He began work his plan for Piru in 1887 through 1888. He built the Piru Depot, the Methodist – Episcopal Church. Other business were built including the Post Office, a general merchandise store, along with other businesses.


When his health improved, he sold out to the Piru Oil and Land Company in 1900.

Cook Mansion – Picture on Left circa 1900



COOK MANSION AT FIRU—BUILT ABOUT 1891
Picture courtesy of the Ventura County Historical Museum.

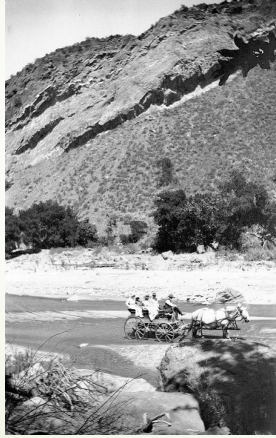
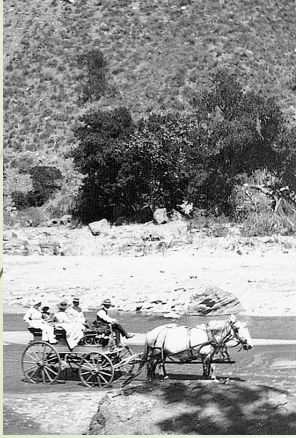
Mr. Cook built the Mansion about 1890 and has changed ownership multiple times.



➤ Photos & History Shared by Roy Grover

This group of pictures were shared by Roy Grover to Kathy Corley Recicar who graciously placed them in an album on social media to share with the people of Piru and Fillmore

1890s Sunday Drive



1890s Cowboys



This is a couple of cowboys in Piru in the 1890's. They look well set up to go out on a trip or hunting. Both have rifles in their saddle scabbards, carrying bedrolls, horses well shod and looking ready to hand anything they need to. Don't know what they would need the rifles for except hunting or shooting predators. Wouldn't think they needed them for protection against people at that time, but who knows. Horses look to be in good condition, as does their tack.

Piru 1890 – 1892 Slide 1



This picture of Piru between 1890 – 1892 is as good as I can make it as to quality. In the second picture are the various homes, buildings, and items that I have been able to identify in talking to many old timers over the years. I have shown it to several who remembered some of the places, and others are easily identified by anyone in Piru from just looking at the building that are still there. I wish I was able to have gathered more information from people like Harry Lechler, Mr. Clay, Papa Juan and several others, but this is all they could identify for sure. Where I grew up was just across the street from the left end of the old train depot. I wish, I had been able to find out what the two-story Spanish type building was this side of the other end of the train depot, and also who owned the large home and barns close to where Warring Park and the old Scout House now sits.

Piru 1890 – 1892 Slide 2



Repeat from previous slide

This picture of Piru between 1890 – 1892 is as good as I can make it as to quality. In the second picture are the various homes, buildings, and items that I have been able to identify in talking to many old timers over the years. I have shown it to several who remembered some of the places, and others are easily identified by anyone in Piru from just looking at the building that are still there. I wish I was able to have gathered more information from people like Harry Lechler, Mr. Clay, Papa Juan and several others, but this is all they could identify for sure. Where I grew up was just across the street from the left end of the old train depot. I wish, I had been able to find out what the two-story Spanish type building was this side of the other end of the train depot, and also who owned the large home and barns close to where Warring Park and the old Scout House now sits.

Aerial View of Piru 1945 Slide 1



My Dad Harry Grover, who was always finding thins, found this about 9" x 9" square block about a foot tall along-side the road. We went through them all and determined that they were all aerial shots taken of Ventura County in 1944 and 1945, by oil field companies or a company looking for promising oil drilling locations.

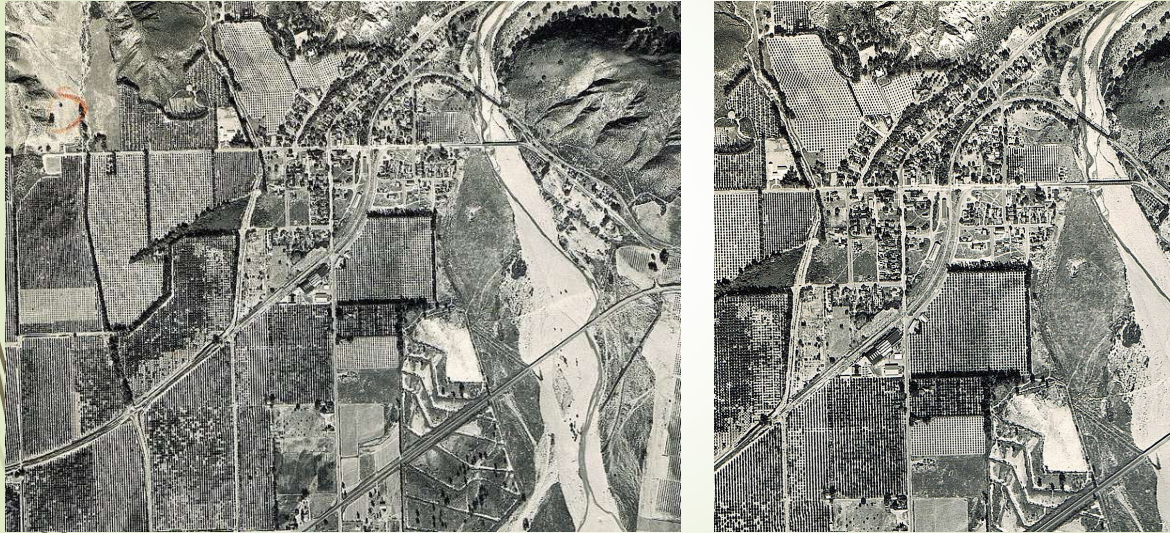
This was during the WWII and on all the pictures just of the coastline above and below Ventura, the backs of them were stamped with a Military Intelligence Officer as approved by him. I can only guess that any photos of our coastline had to be approved for use due to the war and fear of them getting into Japanese hands.

Anyway, I covered the whole house with them, like a large jigsaw puzzle. You could easily identify all the towns and cities, but I was looking for areas that looked like they would be promising hunting areas for deer. I had way too many of them to need them all, so I did what I would usually do in such a situation and gave them to Harry Lechler for the museum, except I kept out the originals of Piru and Fillmore.

On the second one above (right) which is the original I can see all the houses, school, Mansion, churches, and paths we walked to get to our friends' houses, and of course, I have many stories that these pictures bring back memories of, but before I get to those, I thought I would send these to you and see what you think. I don't know I I need to crop them down to smaller sections to get more detail and am waiting your advice on that.

And before you get too excited, the Fillmore one starts just past the Fish Hatchery and goes West. Sorry, I have no idea who ended up with all of the pictures that Harry had in his museum. Am sure someone bought them.

Aerial View of Piru 1945 Slide 2

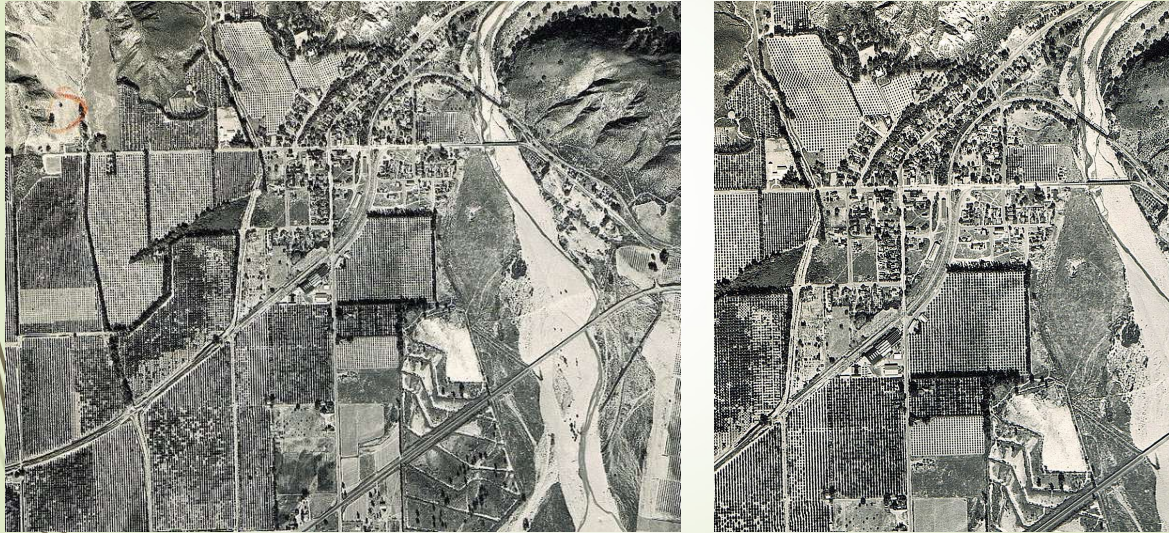


The first picture (left) goes from the cemetery on the left to the train and car bridges on the right, and the Mansion at the top to 126 and the spreading grounds on the bottom.

The second picture (right) is more close-up and shows from the Mansion to part of the spreading grounds and from Piru School to the car and train bridges coming into town. More detail on the train depot, warehouse, packing house and Ramona Corners.

On the right of that road up Warring Canyon at the very top was a beekeeper that had a business up there, and I would work summers for him capping honey. He had a screened in room that the two of us could work in, and a large vat behind us that tapered down to a hole in the bottom and had racks in it to place the individual combs in the hives in, and it would spin. He would bring in the hives and open the tops and we would pull out a comb in a frame, and we had hot electric knives that we would cut off the top of the honeycombs on each side and place them in the vat holders. When full, it would spin, and the honey would spin out into the sides of the vat and rain to the bottom and be collected in large containers there. It was hot, hot work in the summers, and we would work without shirts so that the bees would not get caught under our collars or inside our shirts. I have never been afraid of bees, and the only times we would get stung would be when we put our arm down and happened to catch one between our arm and our body. I think I remember that he also smokes the bees to calm them somewhat.

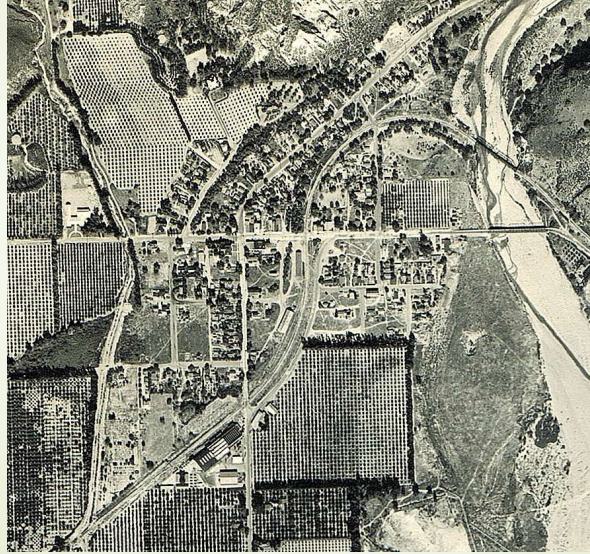
Aerial View of Piru 1945 Slide 2 (cont.)



The next story is that across from that bee place there used to be a small dam in the mostly dry stream bed. When a small kid, I crossed that and walked up the side of a not very big hill there and found a small cave that was mostly dirt filled. Dug through that and went in about 10 or so feet and it came out the other side of the hill, a real surprise. Then from there you could see another larger cave on a straight up and down chalky bluff. That one had me curious and I could see that there was a yucca plant growing above the cave where it leveled out some. Don't remember who was with me, think it might have been Mike Mee, but anyway, we went back and got a rope and went through the mountain and worked over above the larger cave and tied the rope around the base of the yucca plant, and since I was smaller, I went down the rope until I could get into the cave. Wasn't more than 4 feet deep and had to crawl in so maybe 3 feet high. Dug around in the chalky dirt at the bottom and back of the cave and found some pieces of, and one whole small Indian basket. Wanted to find some arrowheads but never have anywhere yet. Anyway, took all that were in the cave and stuffed them into my shirt and climbed back to the top. Surprised the yucca held, but I didn't weigh much. Gave everything I found to Harry Lechler for his Museum, which at that time was above his house in a separate room.

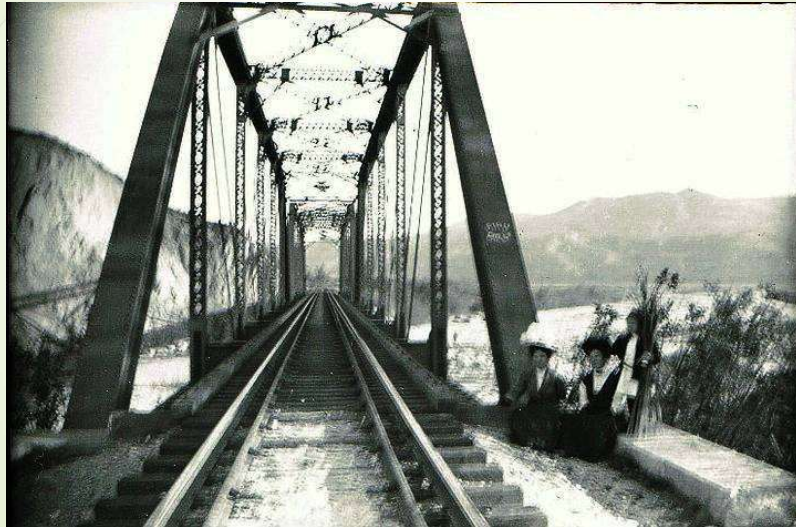
The last story is there used to be a fenced garden up there, above the school, in Warring Canyon. I used to trap animals around that garden. Carried a .22 rifle and one day Mike Mee and I were checking traps and I found a skunk in one of my traps. Being younger, I asked Mike if I should shoot it, he said not to, as it would stink, but that if I were very careful and moved very, very slowly, I could crawl up to the skunk that was backed up to the end of the trap chain looking at me. So, I gave him the rifle and started crawling up to the skunk, very slowly and just as I got to where I could almost stretch out and grab and squeeze the foot hold trap handle, the skunk spun around and let out a huge cloud of greenish gas from 2 feet away. I ran back and picked up the rifle that Mike had dropped as he was running away laughing and shot the skunk. By then it was too late for me, so I picked up the skunk and left my trap and carried it back with me past the school. Mike, from a distance, told me that I couldn't take that thing back through town, to get rid of it, so I threw it up on the roof of the Piru School. I then went home, and Mom made me strip down to nothing in the yard and hosed me down with a garden hose, then made me take a bath in tomato juice. Don't think anything really helped too much except for time wearing the smell off. Clothes all got burned in the burn barrel! So, if anyone ever tells you, you can be kind to an animal and will allow you to release it, let them do it themselves!

Aerial View of Piru Slide 3



This is the last one from Piru, it show the most detail. On this one look at the left end of the car bridge coming into town, and then look down just a little bit to your left and you can see the upper right corner of the water in the spreading grounds. You kind of have to picture what I am showing you in your mind, but there was, under the left end of the car bridge, a cement channel with wall on either side and slots in the bridge end of the channel. When water needed to be diverted into the spreading grounds from the creek, 2 x 12 boards would be slid into the notches in the two upright cement walls, damming the creek as high as was needed by putting in more or less boards to get the proper level. Then on the left bank of the creek, it was made of cement with either two or three holes that if I recall right from so many years ago, were covered with rebar. I think there was also a valve that could shut off the holes. Anyway, there was about a 4-foot round cement pipe that ran from there kind of along the riverbank and veered toward the spreading grounds, all underground, where water would empty into.

Piru Train Bridge 1890s



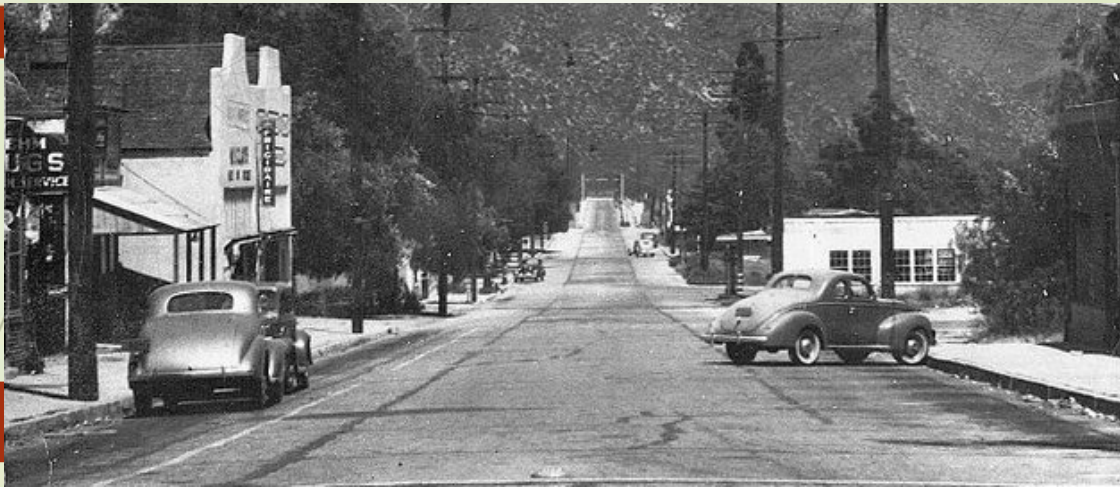
Love the hat on the woman on the right, right out of the gay 90s. You can see Piru Creek written on the right bridge column. It looks like at least one of the women had been gathering willows. All my other pictures from this era are much better, but this is just to give you an idea. I have pictures of all of Piru in one picture between 1890 and 1892 and you can see the bridge there in it along with what little else was in Piru at the time.

Now for the stories. I remember three in particular. Back in the late 40s, early 50s, the Scout House was beside the tracks in the Quonset Hut in Warring Park, and we would meet there weekly. One night the scoutmaster had to leave early and told us youngsters to close up before we left. After he left, we heard a train coming. Someone had the dumb idea to turn out all the lights and go outside, and when the train came by in the dark, we all threw rocks at it, and a couple even hit the caboose. It went on by and we went back inside and turned the lights back on. Several minutes later the door opened, and a bunch of train guys came in with axe handles! They wanted to know who was in charge and who threw the rocks. We tried to convince them that we had just got here, and nobody was in charge yet. Don't think they bought it for a minute, but we were just a bunch of kids, they left. No more rocks were ever thrown at the trains again!

The second story was that this was the bridge that Harold Butch McDowell fell off of down into the riverbed headfirst. There was not much water in the river at the time and he landed on the rocks and was badly injured. Some thought he might not make it, but he survived. If my old memory serves me right, I think he was on the bridge with a girl and was showing her that if a train came, he could jump out to the girders and the train couldn't hit him. He either missed or slipped and fell.

The last story, and I wouldn't want anyone to try this and get hurt, but Jim Rangel and I used to always cross the train bridge to get to the flats to the left of the far end of the bridge to hunt. In looking at the picture you can see the railroad ties that used to be where, when you looked down, you could see the water in the river below. On one particular day we had the bright idea when we heard a train coming to try a trick. We went about 20 ties out from the near end of the bridge where there was a pool of water under the bridge and there were a couple of railroad ties that were spaced a little more apart than the rest of them. We were skinny so we laid our guns parallel to the tracks on the ties and then worked our way down feet first between the wider ties and hung onto a tie and our guns and pulled our heads down and let the train pass over us as we hung there. We figured in our dumb minds that would always let go and fall into the water in the pool below us. Anyway, it worked, but we never tried it again. Wash hard to climb back out of there but we did it.

The last time I was down there years ago I think I remember that the tracks had been removed beyond the bridge. Don't know what it is like now. Anyway, those are some of the great memories of growing up in Piru.



Piru Main Street 1930s

This is Piru Main Street in the 1930s. All the cars are 1930s and before 1940s. This one shows the old type streetlight, Bummus King's garage, probably Sanchez's store, past Bawdle's Courts to the bridge and on the other side of the street is the Brehm Drug Store, the Piru Billiard Hall, and the building that my uncle Alan Floyd bought. I don't know if it is the Piru Post office anymore but don't think so. I also don't know if it is yet the Pioneer Market and Piru Theater. Hard to read the writing on the building other than the vertical Frigidaire sign.

Piru Pioneer Market & Piru Theater 1940s



Piru Pioneer Market and Piru Theater when my uncle Alan Floyd owned it before it burned down. I believe the building on the left of the market is still the Piru Pool Hall, which I was told was thought to be where the fire started that burned all three buildings down. I particularly remember the movie "The Song of the South" shown playing in this photo. It was the Disney Brer Rabbit movie, and I can remember seeing it with Jim Chessani and for days afterward, we couldn't get that Zip a Dee Doo Dah song out of our heads! I also remember that the last show playing there when it burned down was "Unconquered".



Piru Fire 1940s Slide 1

This is a picture that gives a good idea of most of what was left of the Main business district of Piru. Across the street from the fire that burned the Piru Theater and Pioneer Market, the first building heading uphill is the Water Office, then Lechler's Hardware and Sporting Goods Section, then Lechler's Market, then the new Pool Hall, and the Bank of America on the corner. You can still see the roof and the palm tree from the Round Rock Inn, and on this side of the street was either Brehm's Drugs or a beauty shop which at one time was the old Barber Shop. And a-lot of neat old cars.



Piru Fire 1940s Slide 2

This view after the fire that burned down the Piru Theater and Pioneer Market and the bar next door was taken from across the street near the Water Office. My uncle Alan Floyd who owned the Theater and Market said it was believed that the fire started in the bar next door that used to be the old Piru Billiards Hall.



Piru Fire 1940s Slide 3

This view is taken more from Brehm's Drug Store and shows the destruction of the Piru Theater and Pioneer Market pretty well. Doesn't show too much of the Old Piru Billiard Hall that by the time of the fire was a bar. Ron Golson and I spent many hours digging through the rubble for long afterwards, finding old burned coins. I think Piru was never really the same after that fire.

Constable's Office Building Piru 1953



This photo is of the Piru Constable Office and Justice of the Peace office. The Constable was Ray Davis. He and his wife Jean Davis and two sons Lyle and Lon lived West of the Post Office, where Jean worked for many years. Ray Davis was a great person who taught me how to braid horsehair ropes. My Dad, Harry Grover, used to help him out when he needed it. I recently ran into his son Lon living in Mt. Vernon Oregon. Lon is a great Silversmith, and unfortunately, is losing his sight and his wife now makes most of the jewelry and horse items and belt buckles.

The Justice of the Peace was Judge McDowell and he lived across the street from the Post Office. All the kids loved to Trick or Treat at his house, as he was the only one who gave out nickels to the kids instead of candy, cookies, popcorn balls or candied apples back in the day when it was safe to eat those items. He was Louise, Janet and Butch McDowell's Grandfather.

The building in the picture was across the street from Bummus King's garage and gas station. The picture was taken by me in I believe it was 1953. It is where James Mason and Judy Garland filmed "A Star is Born" which came out in 1954. My mother, Jeanne Grover, worked at Ed Brehm's Drug Store at the soda fountain and James Mason and Judy Garland came in every day they were filming for her to make them ice cream dishes. The movie was released in 1954, and I am not positive, but I believe it was the first of many movies filmed in Piru. It was about 4 years before Tony Curtis and Sidney Portier filmed "The Defiant Ones" in Piru, by the Railroad Bridge.

Many of the Piru pictures were given to me years ago by Harry Lechler. Harry and my Dad Harry Grover, were very good friends and taught me how to fish and hunt, and took me on many, many trips. I grew up with his son George Lechler and graduated with Therese Lechler. George and I spent evenings stocking Harry's store, and we also spent many, many hours in Harry's old Museum above his home before he built his new one. Harry Lechler gave me rolls of old movies of our fishing trips, and he allowed me to video tape his new museum. We were both coin collectors and he told me I was the only one that he allowed to video tape his coin collection in the museum before he separated it into 4 parts to give to his 4 children.

Piru Ford Garage 1946



This is a picture taken in 1946 of the Piru Ford Garage. It was bought and owned by George Bell, a friend and partner of my Dad, Harry Grover. Dad moved to Piru to become the mechanic at this garage which was next door to the Ramona Bar, Restaurant and Gas Station, across the street from the old Piru Packing House. The building is still there, as far as I know. My Dad taught me a lot about working on old cars in this building.

Piru Methodist Church 1888



I would guess that this Church and the Pastor's home was built in the late 1880s. I don't know if the man in front is Mr. Cook or the Pastor to the Church

Early 1890s Piru Apartments & Bunkhouse



This is the building that I remember Jack Mee owning in the 1940s. There are large eucalyptus trees in back of the place now but were none then. It was right across the street from the Methodist Church and Tennis Court. Sure seems like it snows plenty in Piru, or only that it was so rare that people went out and took pictures whenever it did. On a personal note, in the 1940s, from where the photographer is obviously standing, as you look at the guy bending over to get more snow for a snowball, is just about exactly where Ray Davis, the town sheriff was standing one day when I was about 20 feet behind him, and he had got a call about a drunk man beating his wife inside the Mee apartments. This guy came out with no shirt and was carrying a half empty whiskey bottle and Ray Davis told him to drop the bottle. He didn't drop it and kept coming at Ray Davis, and Ray told him if he didn't drop the bottle, he was going to shoot him! Well, he kept coming and cussing at Ray and Ray warned him again, but it did no good, so when he got about 10 feet from Ray, Ray shot him in the left shoulder. That was the first person I ever saw shot. The guy fell down and dropped the bottle and started crying like a baby while Ray handcuffed him, and then told me to run down and get Doc Wilson. I did and it was really exciting for a kid to see! The doctor patched him up and Ray took him off to jail until he could be taken to the hospital in Ventura. Ray didn't put up with any nonsense and the guy was lucky Ray wasn't carrying his sawed-off double-barreled shotgun, which he mostly just took to break up fights.

Cook Mansion



COOK MANSION AT PIRU—BUILT ABOUT 1896
Picture courtesy of the Ventura County Historical Museum.

Piru 1910 – 1920 Period



This one I think in the 1910 – 1920 period, it looks different in the 1930s. Definitely before 1940s as by then the Ventura County Co-Operative Association had turned into my Uncle Alan Floyd's Pioneer Market and Movie Theater. This one shows the building that has expanded into a larger building that now includes the Piru Post Office in between the Ventura County Co-Op and the Piru Billiard Hall. You can see the Piru Post Office sign to the right of the telephone pole on the wall. Still showing the hitching rails, so may not many cars around yet. Printed posters on the telephone pole, and the same old timers sitting around out front that are probably still there.

Piru 1920



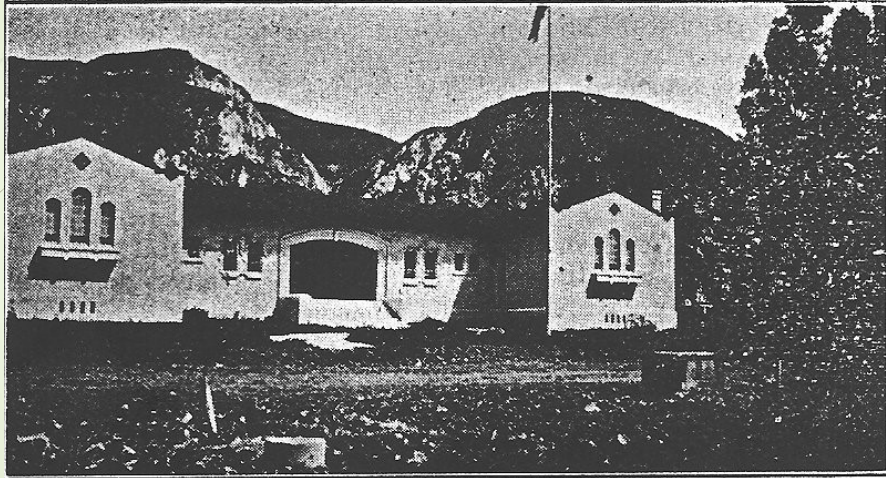
This picture is I believe from the 1920 or before era. It shows the Piru Co-Operative Association on the building on the right. The sign over the door reads Walter A. Wood and then wording I can't make out, possibly Proprietor. It has snowed as the roofs are white and the street with the horse and buggy are wet. It looks as if it may have hitching posts in the front. The next building on going left would later become the Piru Billiard Hall, although I believe at this time it was the Piru Post Office. I do not know what the rest of the buildings are and couldn't find out years ago except that the next one eventually became Brehm's Drug Store. There is a crossed street sign across the street by the newer small frame building. Would bet that one of the signs reads Main Street.

Piru Citrus Building



How well I remember fighting the fire when the old place burned down. I remember being on the nozzle of on hose of the RR track side and it was so hot. I couldn't make myself take on more step closer. I watched the telephone poles across the intersection at the Ramona smoking from the heat before anyone got water on them, and the oxygen and acetylene tanks going off like roman candles, a lot of older guys went in the back and drove equipment out to save it.

Grammar School at Piru



GRAMMAR SCHOOL AT PIRU.

Roy Grover in Lechler's Store



This was taken of me in Lechler's Store in the Sporting Goods section, where I spent a lot of time. It was taken in 1952. I would go there to buy all of my ammunition. Behind me is the gun cabinet he kept all his guns for sale in, plus the ammunition. My Dad, Harry Grover and I built the cabinet for Harry Lechler. It must have been around Christmas, as there is a tree in the window. Always loved to go in there and look at all the game heads. Harry's Son George and I used to work there nights restocking shelves and listening to great music after hours.

Mrs. Ora Van Epps & Jeanne Grover
1952

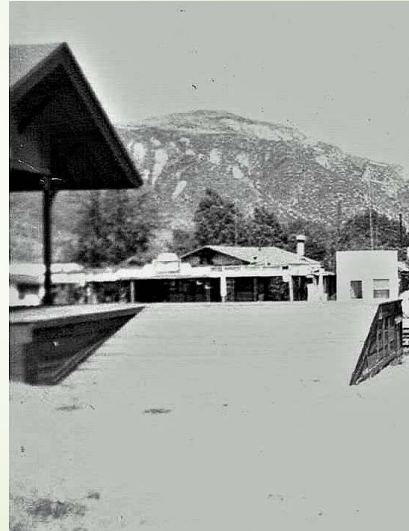


This one is a picture of Miss or Mrs. Van Epps and my Mother, Jeanne Grover taken in 1952 in the Piru Drug Store, check out all the candy cigarettes and bottles. I am not sure if those are whiskey bottles or bottles of flavoring. The Drug Store had a soda fountain that my Mother ran, and she could turn out great ice cream dishes. It was a regular stop across from Lechler's Store for all us kids when we got off the Fillmore bus coming home from school.

I believe the Drug Store at that time was owned and operated Ed Brehm who had a house behind it. I remember the house very well, as I delivered papers there and come collection time, had to try to get the house from the fence through the door before his two Doberman's could get me! I believe later, that Bart Swopes owned the store.

This is the store that Judy Garland came in each day to have Mom make her a Sundae while she and James Mason were in town filming "A Star is Born" at the Constable's Office and the Justice of the Peace Office.

Cecil Decker with his Pet Crows

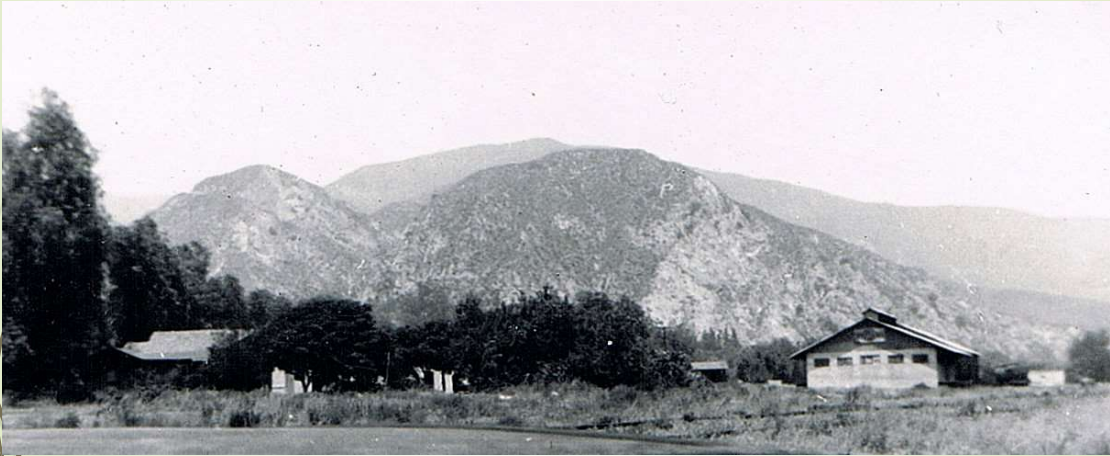


This picture says on the back Cecil D., and I am pretty sure I remember it being Cecil Decker, with a couple of pet crows that we called Heckle and Jeckle. On the left side of the picture is part of the old Piru Train Depot where freight used to be loaded. Directly behind that is the old White Kitchen Café and Bar, that was in use when the Bracero Program was in full swing. Next to that, closer to Cecil, is the old Molina Rental house. Directly behind Cecil's head is the home I grew up in and at one time about 90 years ago used to be the barber shop. When we took up the floor covering, we could still see the ring where the barber chair was in the center of the room. Right over Cecil's bird's wing is the old Piru Hotel. I think this one was taken in the late 40's or very early 50's. Also, if memory serves me correctly, there were two Bradley brothers, Jess and Herschel. I think Jess had the garage to the East side of the courthouse and Blue Bird Café and Herschel lived up behind Molina's store. One of the brothers, and I think it was Herschel, used to raise and train birds, and the crows may have been trained by him. I know that I brought him crows, hawks, and owls when I found young ones, and that he had a Golden Eagle and he trained them for films and movies. Anyway, someone may correct his but that is what I remember.

Ben Molina's Store 1960s



Warehouse & Mountain with the "P" on it



At last! A picture of the mountain with the "P" on it, its not lined with white-washed rocks, but still can be plainly seen. This picture is a great one of the warehouses, with the Piru Depot in the background. We used to play in and on the warehouse. Pigeons used to roost inside of it and some of the locals got their "squab" there. When a train was parked next to it, you could climb on the train and jump to the roof of the warehouse. I took my little sister Eileen up there to the very top with a weather balloon parachute I had found in the mountains and tried to have her put it on to jump off, as it was the highest point around. She chickened out and made me use her doll instead. The parachute didn't open and her doll broke, and she wouldn't believe me that it was because the doll didn't weigh enough! She, of course told Mom and you can imagine what happened from there!

Hopefully this one will convince that back in the 40s, the P on the mountain was very distinct and pretty white. Would love to know who took care of it and kept it up since at least the 30s when it was first mentioned in past posts. Climbed it many, many times and even took a deer on the back side of the hill one time.

Mike King Comment: I asked my Uncle Wally about the history of the "P" on the mountain. He said that it was there ever since he could remember it, and that is from the 1930's.

Vance Johnson Comment: The warehouse is only a third of its original size today... back in the sixties, the Piru Sportsman Clube stored clay pigeons (birds) in the southernmost portion... in the room next door was the original chandelier from the original Mansion, which had been stored there many years previously... if I recall correctly, they eventually returned the chandelier to the Mansion before it burned down.

The Warehouse



First School of Piru – 1915 - 1920



This picture is of the first school of Piru. On the picture bottom it is written 1st Piru School and 1st M. E. Church Building (Hart Wilson Bldg. 1982). It says on the two identified children as Sis and Alice (Thelma Wilson & Alice Wilson). I have no doubt that it was the first Piru School, in my picture of Piru in 1890 – 1892, it shows the building there then, but in that same picture it also has the present Methodist Church in it also. I don't know if this building served as the M. E. Church plus the school while the present Methodist Church was being built or not. What I do know is that the girl identified as Sis, was my Aunt, Thelma Wilson, later Floyd, because she gave me the picture and told me what I know about it.

The 1890 – 1892 picture of Piru (next page) shows this building and the Methodist Church farther up Main Street with no buildings in between them, all the old-timers who helped me identify the buildings, homes, orchards etc. had me write on it as the second of two Churches, so it confirmed my Aunt's telling of it, her recollections are right. This picture was supposed to be taken of the class in about 1915 to 1920, not the year the school was built.

Thelma Wilson and her then husband Doctor Hart Wilson lived in the building on the corner of Main and Center Streets across from the Round Rock Inn, and Ben Molina's La Victoria Market and diagonal to the Bank of America, he worked out of his home. Doc Wilson used to make house calls to me and others that were sick back then. I used to do yard work for them in the yard of their old home. After Doc Wilson died, Thelma Wilson and my Uncle Alan Floyd married, and they then sold this home at that time in 1982.

White Kitchen Bar & Restaurant



This picture was taken in our front yard in Piru, my sister Eileen Grover (Beaty) is on the right and someone named Marilyn is in the center, and on the left is H.R. Sayer. I don't know the dog's name, and at one time I think I knew every dog in Piru by its first name! Of special interest to me is that it shows the restroom at the left end of Bummus King's garage, which I don't think is there anymore, and beside that was the old pay phone booth. I remember the phone booth so well, because as a kid, one day I was riding my bike by with my BB gun and some kid, I think either H. R. Sayer or Butch McDowell, threw a rock at me. He then ran into the phone booth thinking he would be safe and made faces at me. Big mistake! I shot several BB's at the glass in the phone booth and cracked it! And, of course, someone let my parents know before I got home. It cost me 20 dollars back then that I had to pay the phone company at my Dad's insistence, for a new window, and it came out of my lawn mowing and paper route money. Another lesson learned, and this one I couldn't even blame on my sister! Maybe someone will remember who Marilyn was. I bet Dorothy Baker would remember, as she babysat for all the smaller kids in the area.

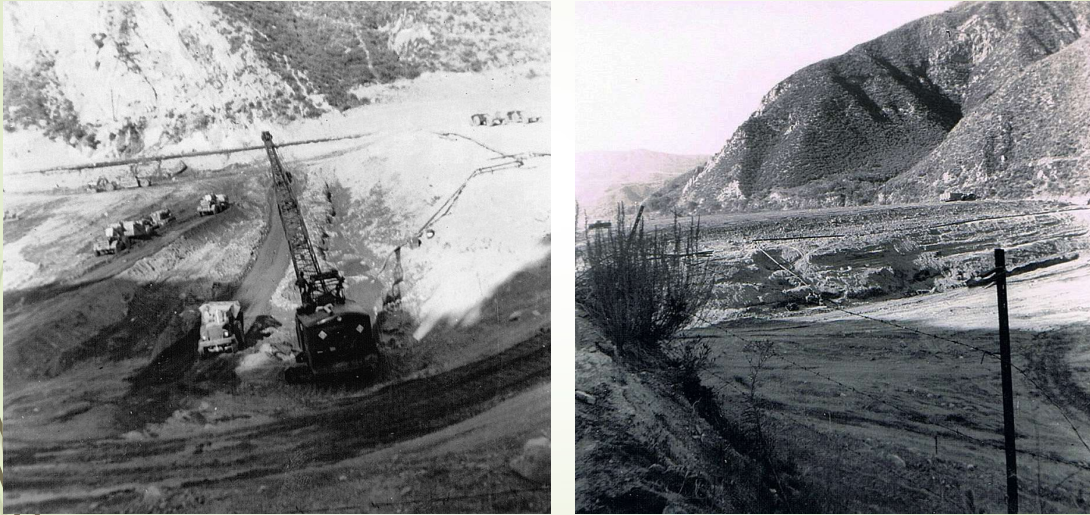
Also behind the kids is the White Kitchen Bar and Restaurant.

Piru Dairy Milk Bottle



This picture is of a Piru milk bottle from the old Piru Dairy with the lid and a cream skimming spoon. There be a ton of them out there, but I only know of three. I have one, Ron Golson has one in Idaho, and his uncle, I heard has one in Piru. Mine and Ron's are different as his has the name raised on the glass as I remember, and mine is printed on the glass. Just thought you might be interested. Mine was a gift from Lechler's Museum.

Piru Dam Construction August 6, 1954



This was building the dam in 1954. I started working there in 1955 as soon as I got my learner's permit to drive and bought my 1931 Model A Ford.

Comment Mike King:

I don't know if you remember the "pond" that was just below the dam on the east side of the creek. It filled in when the dam spilled in 1969. In any event, that one of the borrow pits where they got the material to make the dam. Another was near the place we called The Gum Row (there were a lot of eucalyptus trees there).

Rain run off, Piru Creek and its tributaries above the dam; San Feliciano Canyon, Reasoner & Dominguez Canyons, Jaynes Canyon, Diablo Canyon, Stockton Canyon, the Agua Blanca, Ruby Canyon, Hungry Valley and all of the smaller tributaries along the way plus those above Pyramid. You have got to realize that Piru Creek drainage is as long, or nearly as long as the Sespe. They both first drain in from the North, then turn dramatically to the West. I believe that the spillway lip on the dam is some 475 feet wide. At the height of the 1969 flood waters was running over the spillway about 6 feet deep, so I was told and remember.

Apricots



I can't identify the house or building in the background but do recognize all the hills. It's funny to me that all the people who live there now only remember orange trees and avocado trees and some other citrus, but I sure remember picking a lot of apricots.

Apricot Harvest – Mule Wagons 1891



Mule wagons going to apricot harvest West of Piru in 1891

1891 Piru Itinerant Apricot Workers



Piru itinerant apricot workers going to harvest in 1891

Fruit Tramps



This picture was taken in 1892 and shows what were then called “Fruit Tramps”, (words on the picture not mine!) and that they were of Italian and Russian descent, who moved with the crops. Looks to me like a pretty clean camp and nice-looking people.

Apricot Drying Boxes



I love this one, as it shows a man in a hat and tie checking out the apricot drying boxes that are full and shows the pitting sheds for the apricots. Also shows the still standing apartments and bunkhouse and the Methodist Church, plus the only picture I have ever seen of the pitting houses. I think but don't know, that in the trees to the right of the Round Rock Inn, and above that in the trees, is the Beltry Home and the Mansion. Behind the man walking are buildings that old-timer's thought were a home and equipment building. I think this picture was taken from near the Warehouse and close to the Railroad Tracks and not far from the Train Depot.

I would guess the boxes of dried apricots would have been loaded onto possibly vehicles to the left of the pitting sheds for transport to the Depot. No one has even been able to give a good guess as to what all the tall towers above the pitting sheds were for unless somehow, they were used in unloading the apricot wagons bringing the apricots in for pitting. I know that the pea harvest was bagged into sacks, but not one knew if the apricots were bagged or shipped in their drying boxes so that they could continue drying in the open air. I would love to go back and watch the whole process at the time.

Harvested Peas



This one shows the harvested peas being fed into a threshing type machine to separate the peas from the vines.

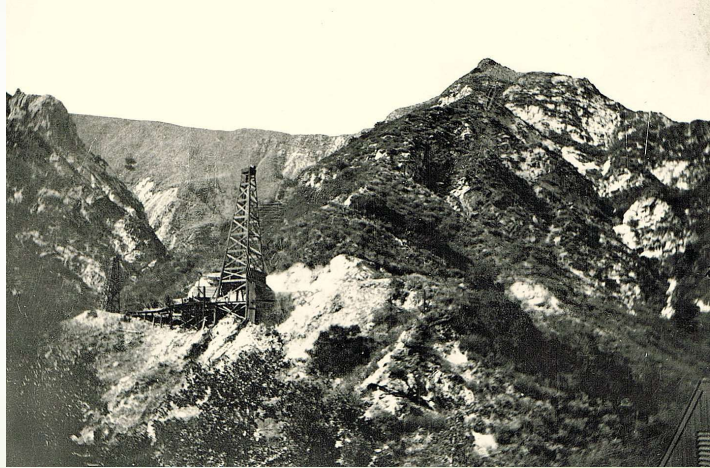
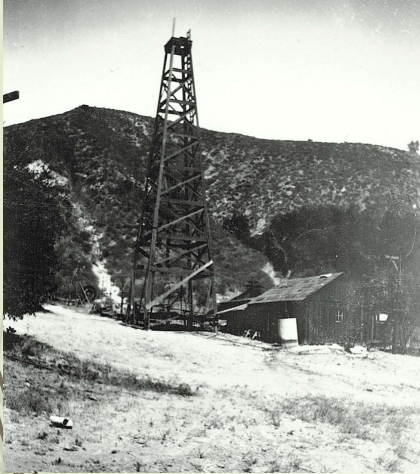
Holser Canyon Black Eyes Peas Planting



This is an interesting one taken of planting black eyed peas in or near Holser Canyon in Piru. I don't know if the four horse teams are plowing the ground and the person in the back with the 2-horse team is doing the seeding or not. Never done any of this type of work or really even seen it done except in films.

One memory that I do have that is very vivid is that I used to hunt in Piru and up in Frazier with an old man who I remember calling Papa Juan. I think his last name was Espinosa, but not positive. But anyway, he told me that when he was very young, he plowed some local areas around Piru that would almost take him all day to make one round with the horses and plow. He also told me, and I had no reason to doubt him, that back then in the very early days of Piru, that they sometimes had such wet years that the hills stayed green all year long and didn't always turn brown in the summer.

Modello Canyon 1900s



These are two pictures of oil rigs around 1900 in Modello Canyon in Piru, doesn't show much but interesting.

Modello Canyon 1900s - 2



I have been told that this was a wreck of some kind below one of the oil derricks. The cart looks like it has track type wheels for running on rails. In the lower corner is a 5-gallon bucket, looks like a backpack, and maybe an old boot. In the center there is a larger spoke type wheel and a lot of debris. Don't know if anyone was injured or not. If I really let my imagination go wild, I could almost see a person under a tarp or cover, but probably not. I have spent many, many days hunting Modello Canyon and it is one of my favorites. There used to be an old man and his wife who lived up there and he always had a Model A blocking the road, so we would have to stop and talk to him and then go in and have something to drink and eat with he and his wife, then he would move his car so we could get by to go hunt. Same process on the way back out. I recall he was very old, and he had a patch of skin cancer on his face. The last time I saw him he was building a large metal building pretty high up on the mountain across from his house. Don't know if he ever finished it or not.

But the drive up Modello Canyon all the way to the top was interesting, as there were very old vehicles pulled off the road and rusting. Milk trucks, more Model A's a Model T and several more. Don't know if they are still there or not. Mostly hunted up there with my Dad, or with Ron Golson, Jim Rangel and Ron's Dad Lee Golson.

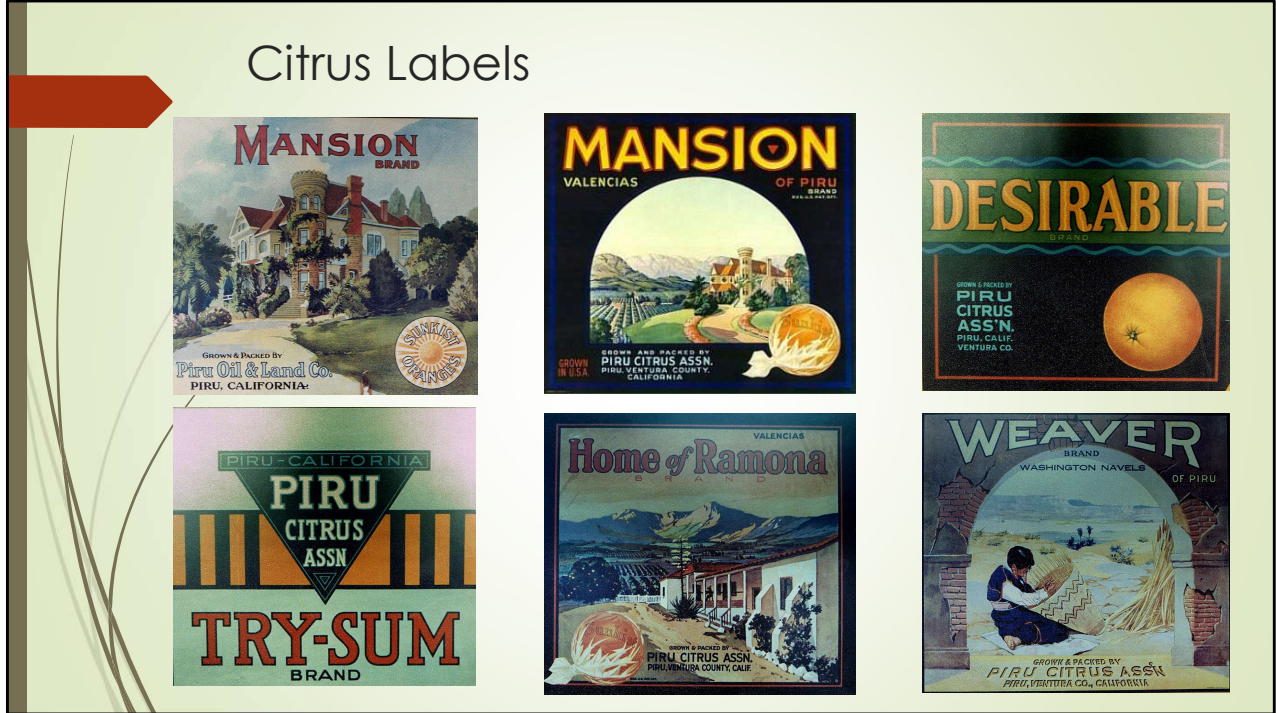
Citrus Labels



Here is a picture of a couple of old orange crate labels from Piru. Not in very good shape, but I found them in my Dad's shop where he was using the boxes to store tools and junk in, so took the ends off of the boxes.

Everyone has mansion labels, but you don't see many of the Piru Try-Sum labels. I have a lot other Piru stuff in a lot better condition, but these are the only Piru ones that were used on the wooden boxes. Probably plenty more in Piru in old garages, shops and attics, who knows.

Citrus Labels



The Mansion Brand oranges whose popular Sunkist label of the 1930s vintage is shown above. It is still the principal local Valencia orange brand.

Per Mike King: These are very rare, as most of the supply of them burned up when the old packing house burned in 1967.

Citrus Labels



The story behind this rare label "Orange Stripe", if I remember right from a long time ago, that Darren Beaty was doing some caterpillar work around Rancho Sespe and dug up a square bundle. He got off and got it and it turned out to be a large stack of these Orange Stripe Rancho Sespe Labels that had been in the ground for a long time. All the outer ones on the top and bottom of the stack were too damaged to be any good, but in the very center he was able to salvage 2 for me. As you can see, they have been damaged around the edges, but I thought if they were matted in a frame, they could be made so that the damage wouldn't show.

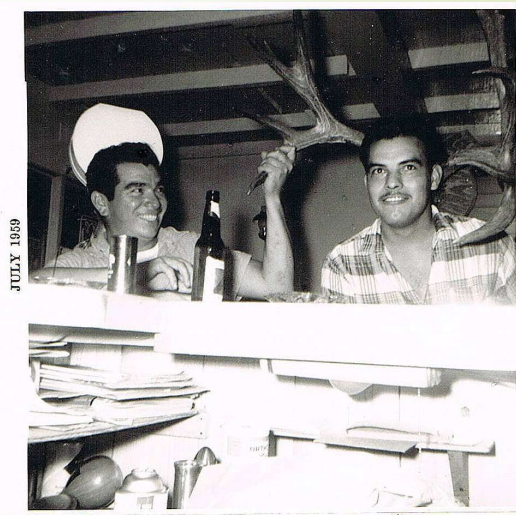
I haven't done anything like that yet, as I am more interested in Piru labels. I have not seen any others like this one anywhere. I heard there was an old packing house out there at one time and it was torn down and these with it, but I am not really sure of any of the Rancho Sespe history or if there was an old packing house there or not. But I do know that Darren digs up some neat stuff. He got some good bottles while digging at the Piru Spreading grounds that I think my Sis Eileen said were from either Fillmore or Santa Paula and had a white deer on them. He gave those to Eileen.

Ramona Bar & Cafe



Pat Patterson who used to own the Ramona Bar and Café before Leo Jensen bought it, was without a doubt the very best deer hunter I had or have ever known. This is the only picture I have of him, but it is with a very old 32" wide 3-point buck that we were together when he killed it. It was the biggest buck I had ever seen at that time in 1954. He had spotted it from Lundy Lake in the Sierra's near Lee Vining and got out his rifle and ammo and I asked him what he was going to do. It was over a half mile away. He told me to watch, and proceeded to shoot, then pick up his binoculars and see what he was hitting. He was not trying to hit it, only drive it into the cover. Once he got hitting close enough, the buck went into some trees and didn't come out. My Dad then drove Pat and me over an hour to the top of the mountain toward Twin Lakes and dropped us off. Pat and I headed down to the trees where he last saw it. He asked me if I wanted to go to the right or left. I went left and he went right, and the buck charged out between us, and he put it down before I could even aim! It was all downhill to camp from there. One of my most vivid hunting memories, 7 of us got 6 bucks on that trip.

Ramona Bar & Café 1959



Left Picture – Jim Purves in the Ramona Bar & Café 1959 – He was removing a splinter; Ron says he eventually did get it out. He was the one that flew the plane under the green bridge I have been told.

Right Picture – Tom Rangel and Pablo Ramirez Sr.

The Ramona didn't have a deer contest, but everyone who got a deer would bring it by the Ramona to show it to everyone before or after they took it up to the Piru Fire Department to be validated.

The only deer contest was the one Harry Lechler had at his store and he had a box made with a slide ruler built into the bottom of it, and we would all bring our deer in there also and he would slide the side of the box in until he could an official width measurement, and he offered prizes for the biggest buck, smallest buck, and that sort of thing.

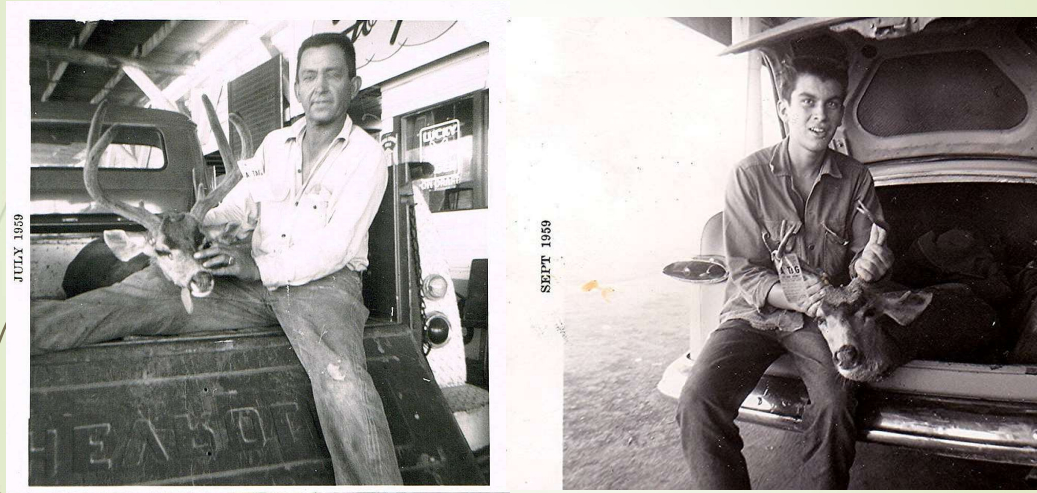
Interesting people and some of the greatest guys you would ever want to meet.

Ramona Bar & Café 1959



Frank Zavala – Frank Encinas – Tony Ruiz

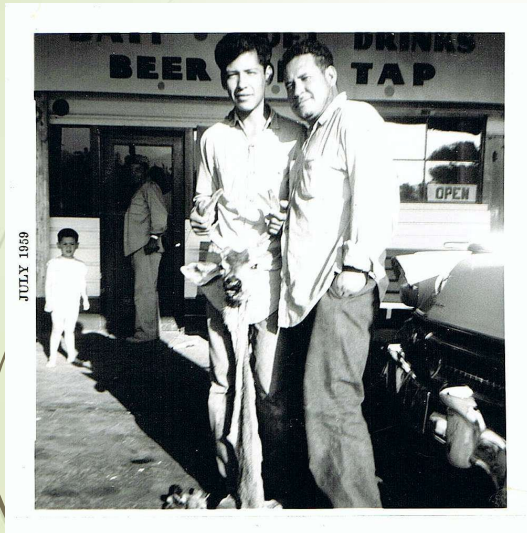
Ramona Bar & Café 1959



Left – Riley Dominguez

Right – Jim Rangel (taken by Ron Golson)

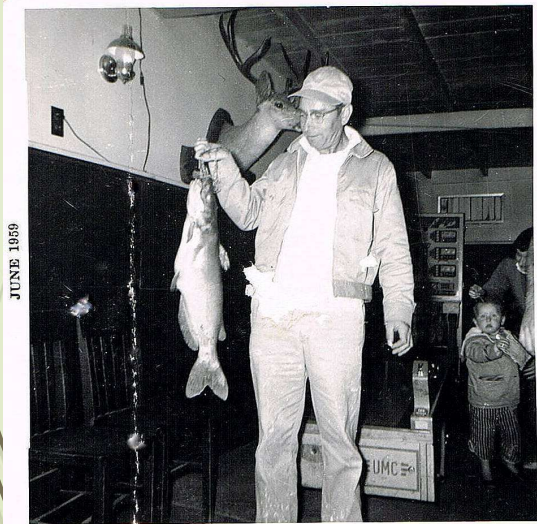
Ramona Bar & Café 1959



Left – In front of the Ramona Bar and Café in 1959 – Ray Alverdi who worked for Newhall Farming, and his son Raymond (Class of 1963).

Right – This fishing picture was of the booby prize won by Lute Lutrell. I don't think anyone ever called him by any other name, and am not sure of the last name spelling.

Ramona Bar & Café 1959



Left – Taylor Everette – Taylor won a case of beer with the largest catfish of 14 pounds 12 ounces. I remember that Taylor's wife was named Lucille and they lived in the trailer park, not sure of the last name spelling on this.

Per Vance Johnson – Everett, they had a son named Ronnie, Lucille had a beauty parlor in the front of the of the house, trailer park is still there, so is the old tennis course next door and so's my old house.

Right – Julian Rangel – This is from the fishing contest that was held at the Ramona, Julian was another big Piru Lake Channel Catfish.

Ramona Bar & Café 1959



Jim Ruiz and Henry Ortega

Frank Beckwith



One of the few pictures of Frank Beckwith that I have. Frank worked for UWCD, United Water Conservation District and controlled the water output from the lake and also diverted water in to the Piru spreading grounds, or Dikes as we called them as needed. A great guy who lived in the house at the front of the dam at Lake Piru, after the Jensen's moved out of there. Frank was one of the two best open sighted rifle shots I have ever known, the other being Pat Patterson. Frank had a telescope and would watch the deer across the river below the dam up Cat Canyon and would occasionally let me know when he found a good one over there and Ron Golson and I would go get it. He would also let us know what ponds at the spreading grounds the ducks were using, which was also a big help.

Harry Grover



This is an interesting picture of my Dad, Harry Grover, taken between 1960 and 1962. He worked at Lake Piru as the Patrolman. He loved working at the lake and worked there until about 2 weeks before he passed away. Lots of interesting stories he told me or that I experienced with him. He, my Mom, my Sister Eileen Beaty and I all worked at the lake at various times.

Roy Grover – Mike & Jack Mee



Roy Grover, Mike Mee, and Jack Mee about 1951, taken in the boarding house Jack Mee owned across the street from the tennis court at the Methodist Church

Al Floyd



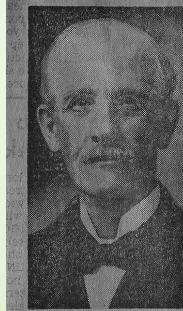
I don't have the date written on this but think it was 1946. Some relatives of my Grandmother's which I will get into later, owned the Pioneer Market in Piru and in 1946 my Uncle Al Floyd moved to Piru and bought the Pioneer Market and the Movie Theater. Jack Mee used to own the boarding house right across the street from the Methodist Church, which I believe is still there. Jack Mee had a wooden leg, and I remember when we would go anywhere, he would sit in the back seat, and I would lie my head on his wooden leg. I was 6 at the time, and it really impressed me. He had a son named Mike Mee who was older than me, but I used to hangout t with him, and we would hunt together.

You can see the P on the mountain behind my Uncle's head in the picture. It is whiter here, I think Piru was trying to keep up with Fillmore with their F on their mountain.



Newspaper Clippings

Mr. & Mrs. Clyde E. Spencer - 1965



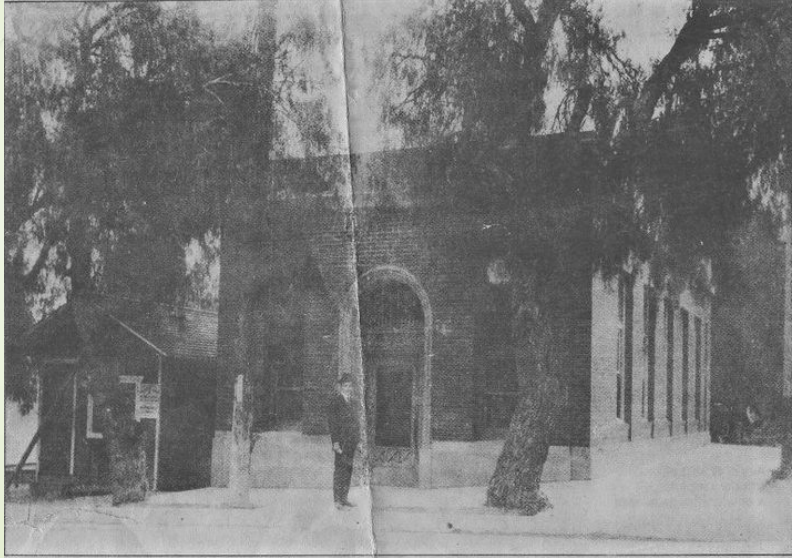
DAVID C. COOK
Founder of Piru



**Longtime
Residents
Of Piru**

Mr. and Mrs. Clyde E. Spencer, two of the earliest and now oldest, residents of Piru, stand in front of their home. The town's population of about 3500, are happy with what they have and aren't terribly interested in change.

Bank of Italy Page 1 – 1965 Clipping



Bank of Italy Page 2 – 1965 Clipping

In its first six decades, this brick building at the corner of Main and Center streets in Piru was the cornerstone of banking in the town. According to Piru historian Harry Lechler, the building

LOOKING BACK

went up around 1920, first as the Fillmore State Bank, then as the Bank of Italy, which became the Bank of America. For years, the Bank of America served the small town, but in 1983, as part of an economy move, the bank shut down the Piru branch along with many of its other branches.

The decision threatened to leave some 1,700 residents of Piru without a bank for the first time in generations.

Fortunately, the people of this unincorporated area did not suffer, because in January Citizens State Bank took over the building and started its



own Piru branch.

At its most profitable, the Bank of America had roughly 700 customers. Citizens hasn't been able to attract as many people yet, but with nearly 350 customers, acting bank manager Jack Henn said the bank's holding are expected to exceed \$1 million by the end of the year.

Clyde Eugene Spencer, who is pictured here in an undated photograph standing

outside of the bank, was its first executive. Lechler, who said he was just a boy when the bank was built, gave the following tale about Spencer.

The bank was robbed one afternoon. Apparently, Spencer and his daughter, Bertha, who came to the bank to visit her father after school, were kidnapped by robbers after Spencer refused to be locked in the bank's vault. Spencer told the robbers he

and his daughter would suffocate inside the vault, so instead the robbers took them to Los Angeles, where they dropped them off.

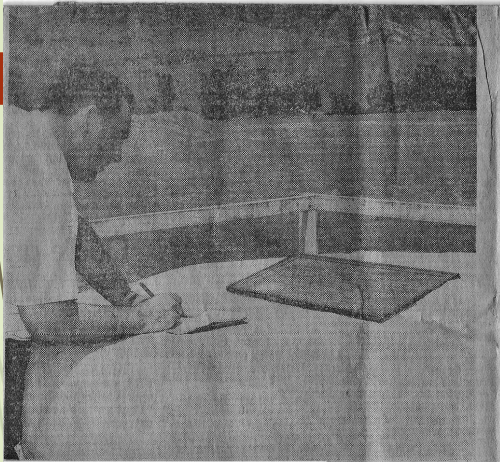
Spencer died sometime in the late 1920s. His daughter married Richard Dunlap, and they now live in a mobile home park in Ventura.

These historical photographs are from the Ventura County Historical Museum's collection of more than 10,000 old photos. Copies of any of them may be purchased at \$4 (5 by 7 inches), \$6 (8 by 10 inches) or \$10 (11 by 14 inches) by making arrangements with the museum's library staff.

Train Depot – 1965 Clipping



Juan Fustero Monument



1965 Clipping

This is a monument to the memory of Juan Jose Fustero, known as "the last of the Piru Indians," buried at this picturesque spot in Piru Canyon. Old Juan was one of Piru's most famous residents because of his contention to being the last of his tribe. He died in 1921.



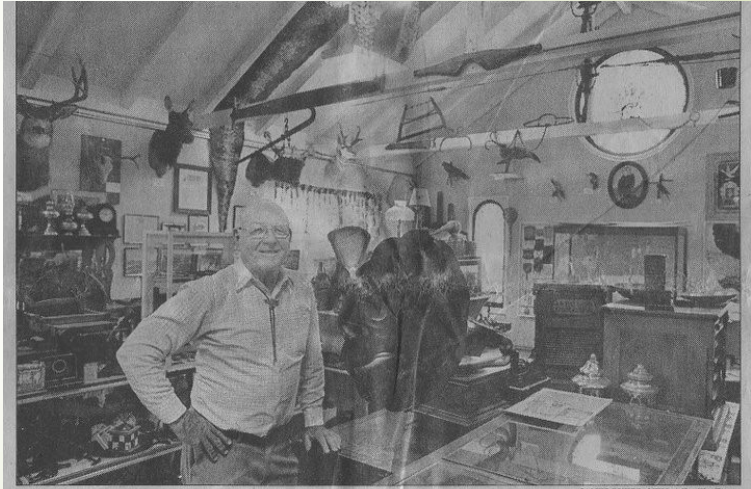
This is a monument to the memory of Juan Juan Jose Fustero, known as the last of the Piru Indians, buried at this picturesque spot in Piru Canyon.

Harry Lechler Page 1 & 2 - 1965 Clipping



William W. Lechler, member of one of the pioneer families in the area, has amassed a private museum of his own in his home. He is perhaps

Piru's greatest historian, constantly roaming the scenic hills and many caves, searching for relics that tell the story of this region.



Harry Lechler, whose parents came to Piru in 1889, stands among the things he's collected over the past 50 years.

JAMES RUBSAMEN / For The Times

Harry Lechler Page 3 & 4 – 1965 Clipping

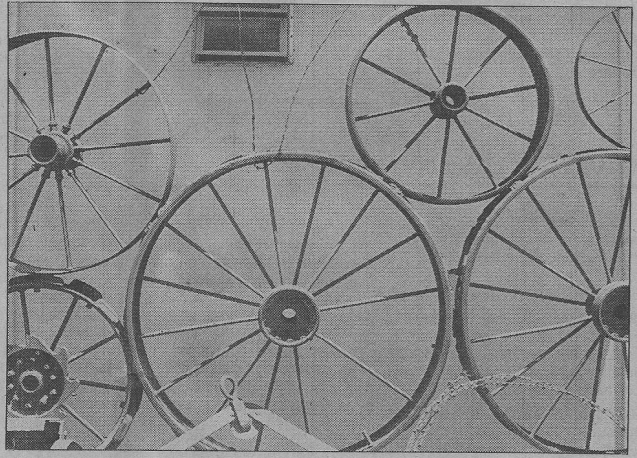


This turn-of-the-century gramophone is one of several old record players that he keeps in his museum.



Natalie Wooldridge / Star-Free Press

Harry Lechler remembers the days when his mother used to operate this antique telephone switchboard for the entire town from her office in the Piru Hotel.



A wall of wagon wheels, above, stands outside the museum, where examples of fine craftsmanship, such as the cash register detail below, are on display.



Harry Lechler Page 5 – 1965 Clipping

Article Highway 126 Page 1 - 1978



Article Highway 126 Page 2 & 3 - 1978

Take one little stretch east of Fillmore that we call Adams Hill. You'll find more history there than any other bit of county road can tell.

In the first place, you're following the trail of the mission fathers, the route of the four-horse stagecoaches, and the covered wagon road of our earliest settlers, for the Southern Pacific railroad didn't go through here until 1887, and not many horseless carriages showed up until about 1911.

LET'S SKIP the oft-told story of the friars who walked through here from the San Fernando Mission to the one at Ventura, and go back to stagecoach days. The unnamed Fillmore site was then mostly a sheep corral, although there was a stage stop on what later became Main Street, with a 60-foot, hand-dug well to furnish water for horses and travelers.

Six passengers per trip could ride from Saugus to Ventura, plus the driver and the fellow who rode shotgun, just like in the movies. Rush Ealy's farm, with a little store, straddled Adams Hill, about three miles east of here, and was a stage stop where the dusty passengers could

wash up at the tank wagon's spigot and get one of Mrs. Ealy's meals. The locale, called, Cienega, west of the now abandoned Cavein crossing, also had a post office then, with Rush Ealy the third postmaster. Uncle Sam had appointed him in 1875 in spite of his conscientious objections to the job, and he had been stuck with it until 1888.

Cienega then had more of the makings of a settlement than the Fillmore area, with even a schoolhouse — or at least a 20-by-30 shack that was used by the local beekeepers for honey storage during the summer. Before even that had been built, the 27 pioneer kids from Cienega and the yet unnamed Buckhorn and Bardsdale areas had walked or ridden their horses as much as seven miles to Cienega's big black walnut tree to learn their three R's in its shade. A

picture of that first schoolhouse along with one of an elegant building in Ventura, was used on our early diplomas. A fancier one replaced it later.

Just east of Ealy's farm there was an S turn in the old dirt road where two elderberry trees grew on the bank above it. These made a good lurking place for the occasional highwayman who was interested in Wells Fargo's cash box. The early drivers, Charlie Baker and later Henry Wilson, were always glad to get past that spot.

Don't look for that S turn now. Fred Ealy always grinned when he told its story. Seems that when the supervisors took bids in 1917 for the construction of the first official Highway 126 the surveyors found two strangely unnecessary curves at the east boundary of the Ealy ranch and had to straighten the road.

Two other surveyors of long ago had started from Saugus and Fillmore at the same time, expecting to meet halfway. But their computers must have stuttered, for their respective road ends came out 100 yards or so apart. Not to worry. They just altered their map to show the curves, buried their bronze marker, and quit. Good thing they weren't the fellows who laid out the railroad track.

That old-time S curve reminds us of one time when any would-be bandit could have missed a bet on that primitive road because the deal was kept quiet. Tiburcio Vasquez wasn't around then, anyway.

made a big sale. Herb says Grandfather loved to tell that story.

BUT NOW TO the time Fillmore almost became Cienega, or Cienega almost became Fillmore. Fred Ealy tells the story.

The Southern Pacific line between Saugus and Ventura was being surveyed in 1888 when a city fellow got off the stage at Ealy's and knocked at the screen door.

"I've come to buy your place, Mr. Ealy," he said as if announcing joyous tidings. "The Southern Pacific has decided to establish a new town on this site because it's about half way between Saugus and Ventura and slopes down pretty to both east and west. When our freight trains stop here it will be easy to start again, downhill either way. Saves coal. So we'll give you a good deal for your 160 acres here."

"The hell you will!" said Rush Ealy, who had painfully homesteaded part of that land and wasn't famous for his even temper. "Well, I drive horses, and they'll start either way, too." And he probably slammed the screen door.

Where negotiations went from there his son Fred didn't know, but Rush Ealy had his way, for the railroad track was finally laid along the river, just below the south boundary of his farm, passing the marshy spot called Cienega and on to the second choice — the present Fillmore site.

It hadn't been only the lay of the land that had interested the Southern Pacific, but also the fact that the Ealy's had a spring, and the new town's water supply could come from apparently never-failing riverside springs where the willows

grew two-foot-thick to the upper spring water wasn't so bitter that the E brought their household pails up from the river in a wagon, filling it with water, dipping into a pool, and pa it beside the kitchen.

Picture that scene as drive down the other s Adams Hill.

Well, the trains came, more got its name fr Southern Pacific official stages disappeared, horseless carriages beg show up — we called "machines" instead of ca but that didn't stop the l stable business for a time.

LET'S HIDE A bit also with one of the drimmers used to visit the county your information, a "d mer" wasn't part of a group, but a traveling s man of yesterday. He t get to Fillmore by train — passenger trains each each day, or ride the cal of a freight if he tipped brakeman. Joel Schw says, if he had finish business here with no coming soon, he'd rest and driver from a local l stable to take him along unpaved dirt road to Pr Santa Paula. The driver a be a teenage boy him bring the rig back, the carrying two bits for a day's job.

Can you imagine Rush (Continued on Page 3)

Article Highway 126 Page 4 & 5 - 1978

Highway 126 in early 1900s

(Continued from Page 5)

for there were several and they had other customers besides themselves. Three of our constables, J.P. "Jack" Trotter, Jack Carter and Owen Miller, had both jobs. Maybe they wanted to be able to round up a quick posse, or maybe they just knew a fringe benefit when they saw one. We'd call it a "conflict of interest" these days, but nobody protested then.

In 1890 Jack Trotter advertised his livery stable as "the only one in town." Jack Carter started his Fillmore Stable in 1894 and was still going strong in 1911 in spite of Model T's.

By then Edly Moore was advertising his stable as "opposite the Southern Pacific Depot" and Bill Ekins, eldest son of Judge Ekins, had his horse stalls on Santa Clara Street with a saleroom through made of an old bathtub with legs. The mystery there is why anyone would discard a real building when most of us were still using government washbasins on Sunday nights. The Mills had only one horse stall on Main Street that had barned doors for those establishments advertised hot and cold baths available at any hour.

There was always a livery stable, too, under a spreading poplar tree on Main Street and Hugh Robbins at his machinery was announcing in 1911 that he had a year double harness set.

Then in 1913 L.L. Warren, with his livery stable, saw the graffiti on the wall and as a footnote to his ad, offered a Dodge and driver for rent as well as horses. The next year he advertised Dodge first, and the horses ran second. Over first rate.

A LATER CONSTABLE, Owen Miller, had long done a

big business renting pack trains to city folks who wanted to go up to the Sequoia Hot Springs to soak a bit, and that went on for many years with no competition from cars — not from a maverick either.

But back to Jack Carter. Still constable in 1904, when Charles Jarrett, of the Fillmore Herald staff was "prentice" Fillmore's mistake. He interviewed Jack about his livery stable of 1890 and discovered that seven men had been working there with his 21 horses.

You'd think these dirty, lumpy roads would have discouraged folks from any kind of but on the train. Not so. Judging from Jack's hay bill for 1890 was a fine, people rented his rigs for most any event, but took them out at town even after 1911.

Carter had 17 one-horse buggies, four surreys, four hackbodies, and two big four-seater tallyhoes, as well as four and six horse teams that hauled oilfield supplies, or grain from Quinn Canyon to the plaster mill. His hangars were Tandy's barns, and he always sent along a lap robe and a new buggy whip.

Once he went 20 rigs to Oxnard for some sort of celebration, and the young bucks who owned one on Saturday night for some fun in Oxnard after his best option had closed all the other saloons in the county. You could drink and dance there. The horse never touched the stud.

Cameronsville had 10 rigs at Siphur Mountain Springs near Santa Paula in summer Sundays, or 11-19 for Saturday nights, and you had to make your reservation before Saturday or get left behind. The traffic went both ways, too,

for when Fillmore had a big July Fourth celebration or a hot hawthorn goose, Jack said, there could be 100 extra rigs here from all around the county.

"Maybe they got there a little faster these days," said Jack in 1961, after Model T's had put his livery stable out of business. "But anybody who never wrapped his harness around the whip on a moonlight night and let the horses find the way home, simply hasn't lived." Know what he meant?

Ray Edly, Edly's older son, would have agreed with Jack. In 1904, even though cars were beginning to come in, Ray had a surprise for Fillmore. He had raised a team of matched bays and had just gotten the latest thing in buggies. It was a convertible model, black with lots of delicate red striping and red wheels.

All the girls simply cooed when they saw that rig for a light buggy like that really needed only one horse and they knew it. Ray had topped all the other fellows with his horse and they had topped him. Who cared if the model road was dusty and rocky?

The father had had a good thing going too. He commuted daily, from the ranch to his place in town, driving himself. Obviously with the buggy. Since the women's two-buggy family, if Mrs. Edly wanted to go to a Ladies Aid meeting later, when Edly reached the shop he just whipped the reins around the buggy whip, headed Queenie toward home and slipped her. Try that on your father.

As you are beginning to guess, our buggies weren't like today's, but we were trying. Water sprinkling was one weren't much of an an-

swer, so someone suggested spraying oil on the county roads. In August 1901 the Ventura Free Press reported that this seemed to be an improvement, and "the roads are now in good shape for the heavy traffic of fall."

The trains were here, but they were hot and dusty, too. The Santa Fe, competing with the Southern Pacific up the valley route, bragged that they oiled their roadbed to keep down the dust.

CAME MORE progress. Someone noticed that the Pacific Ocean wasn't dusty. In December 1911 a big advertisement in the Fillmore Herald announced that the Steam-er Vanguard would sail from the Hueneume Wharf each Wednesday at 3 p.m. on a weekly trip to San Francisco. Directions said, "Take the Hueneume streetcar from Oxnard and walk down to the line." (You carried your own portmanteau.)

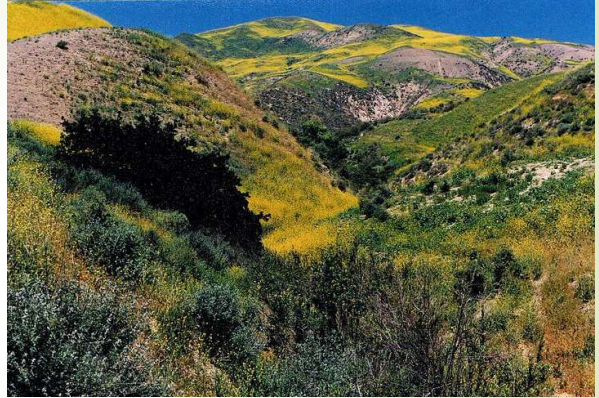
Getting to Oxnard was the problem, for the train just stopped at Montalvo and went on to Ventura. A local man took it upon himself to meet every passenger train at Montalvo with his tallyho to take fares on to Oxnard to catch the streetcar. You could always count on him, Joel Schwartz says.

The steamer fare of \$7 to San Francisco included meals and a berth, but anyone who has sailed that coastwise current can tell you that the Vanguard didn't have to spend much money on groceries for the pre-Dramamine passengers.

So we could take our choice. Ride the dusty, rocky road, ride the dusty, rattling train, or get seasick on the ocean wave. No matter how you traveled in those days, getting there was not half the fun.

Think of that next time you drive your air-conditioned gas guzzler over Adams Hill on that Highway 126 we complain about so bitterly today.

1995 Spillway Overflow



Piru Springtime 1995

Just a pretty picture but triggers another story. Up Piru Canyon, past Disco Sally's about a half mile or so, there is this steep hill that comes down to the road. After summer would start the tall grass, we called it Oat Grass or Straw Hay, would turn brown. That became grass sledding time. We would take a 2 x 8 sheet of corrugated and built a 2 x 6 box out of 2 x 4s and nail to the corrugated, then bend up the corrugated in the front and put a rope handle across the front of the wood frame. Then a bunch of us would drag it up the hill quite a ways to a cross fence. We would hang onto the fence while 3 or 4 of us got in and sat down inside then let go.

The first time down was pretty slow as the grass was all standing, but after that, when the grass was lying down, it was like slick straw. It would really take off then, and I think go a lot faster than a sled would on snow. Down at the bottom was some sagebrush that would stop you before you hit the bottom barbed wire fence and headed off the bank onto the road.

We had to keep making new trails or we would have no way to stop the sled. There was a time or two that we had to bail out as the sagebrush broke down and the sled would go under the fence and clear the two-lane road. Don't know if kids still do it, or even know about it, but since we didn't get snow, we had to improvise.

Piru Snow 1989

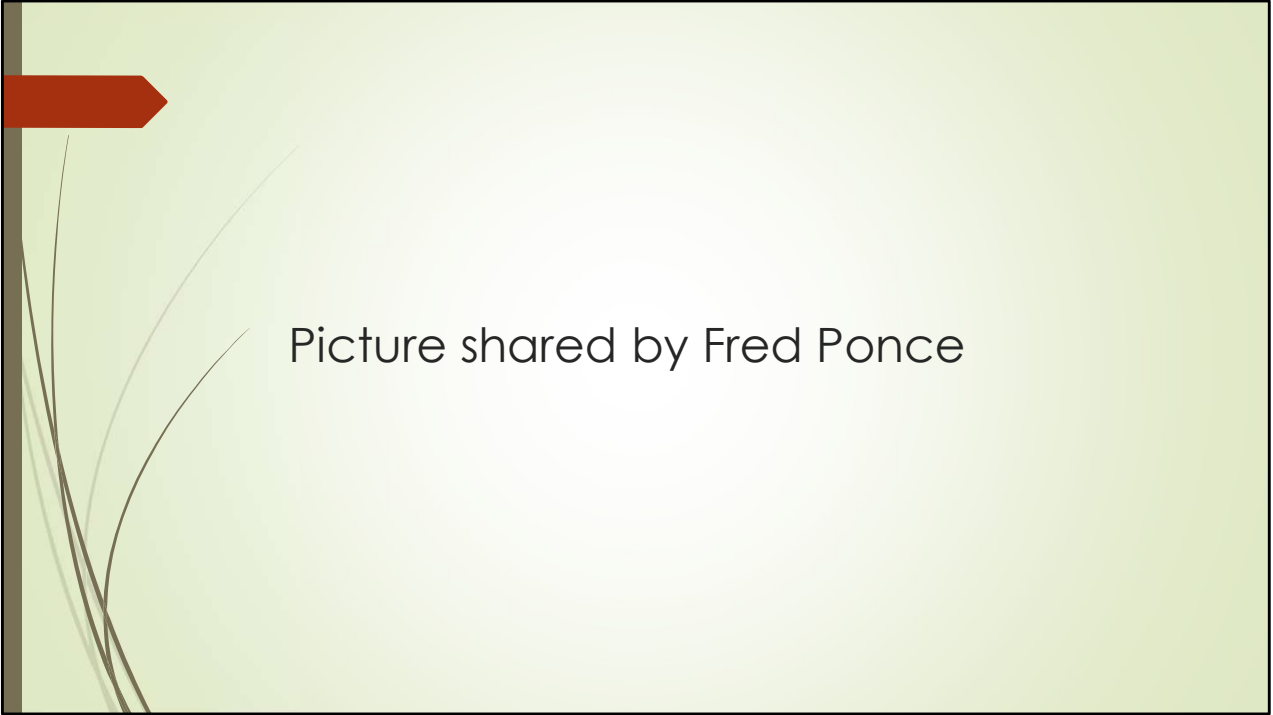


Piru Sportsman Decal



February 9, 1989, Snow in Piru, this is a picture of our front yard. The train depot used to be to the right and the packing house would be to the left. The home is at the corner of Market Street and Telegraph Road, or maybe now it is called Via Fustero.

This is the decal from the old Piru Sportsmen Club. Which it seemed like most of Piru, and half of Fillmore belonged to, for shooting trap shoots, and also using the rifle range. I worked there as a kid in the trap house loading clay birds. Seems like we were having a shoot every weekend for hams, turkeys, and chickens. The shooting range was just as you come into Piru off Highway 126 from the I-5 end of town.



Picture shared by Fred Ponce

1920s Piru Dance Hall



Comment by Mike King:

If you look closely at the canopy on the station you can read "Bowdle & Bowdle" Service Station. This building would have been the last building on the south (right) side of Center Street before you crossed the bridge going east. If you look at the floor of the building, you can see the land sloping off toward the riverbed. A corrugated iron building now occupies the spot, or close to it, where the dance hall stood. As a kid I remember seeing the remains of the concrete island where the pumps once stood. The concrete is probably still there.

1920s Piru



1920s PIRU

Piru Fire Department



Ventura County Fire Station, which was located on Market Street in Piru. You also can see the jail house at the rear of the station.

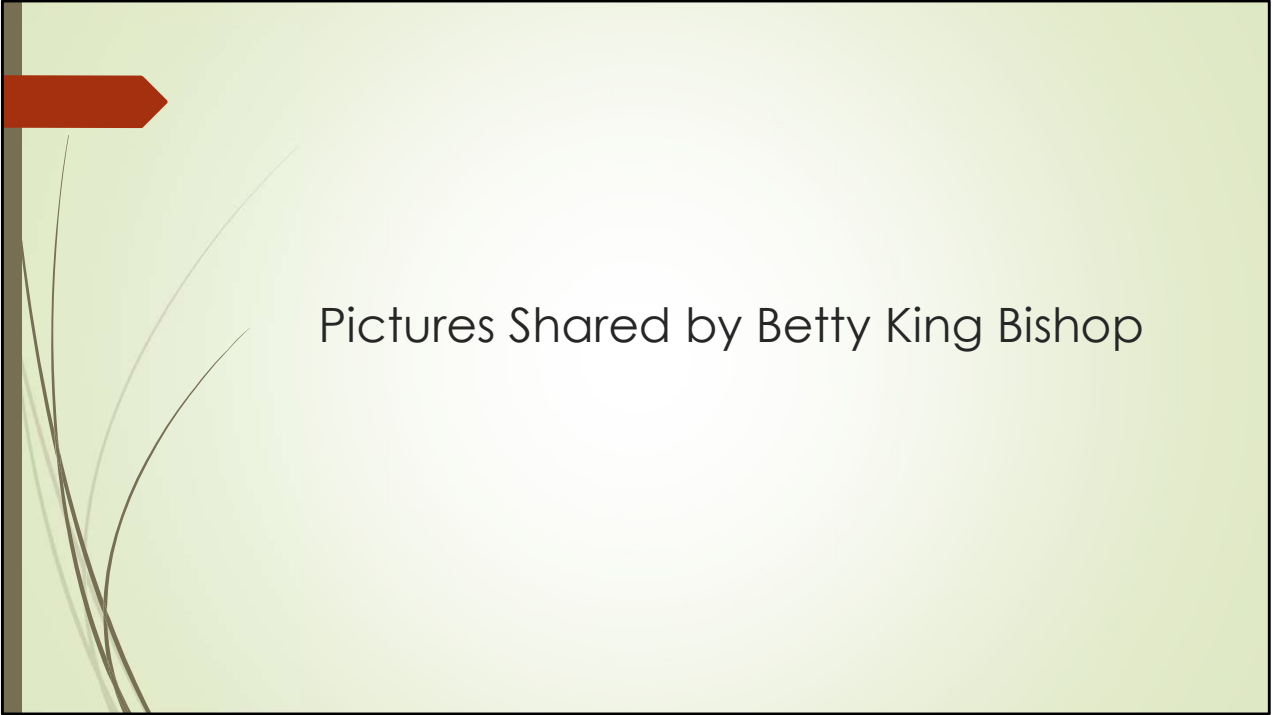
Piru Fire Department



Piru Fire Station Joe Real



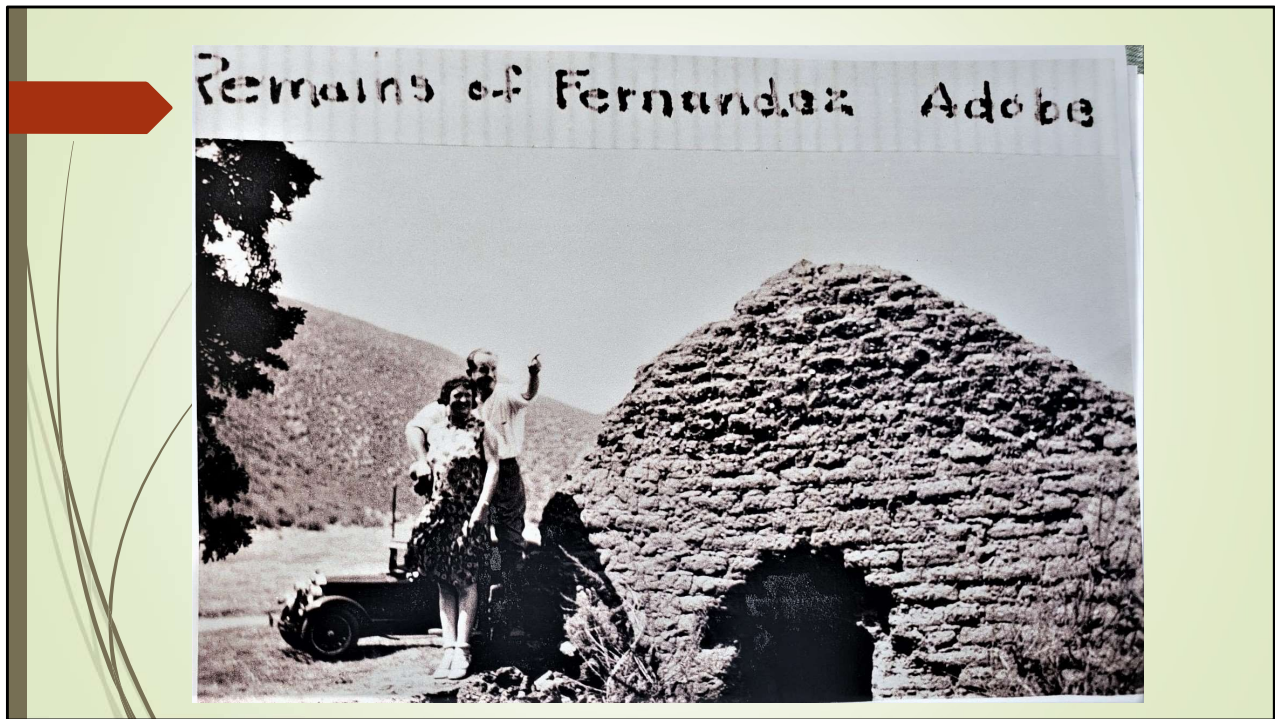
The old fire house is gone. The County tore it down sometime in the late 70's. The jail house is still there. The new station was built in 1950 and is still being used. The station was remodeled 3 years ago. The County plan was to build a new station, but property prices were outrageous at the time; so, they invested money into the old station which is much nicer now.



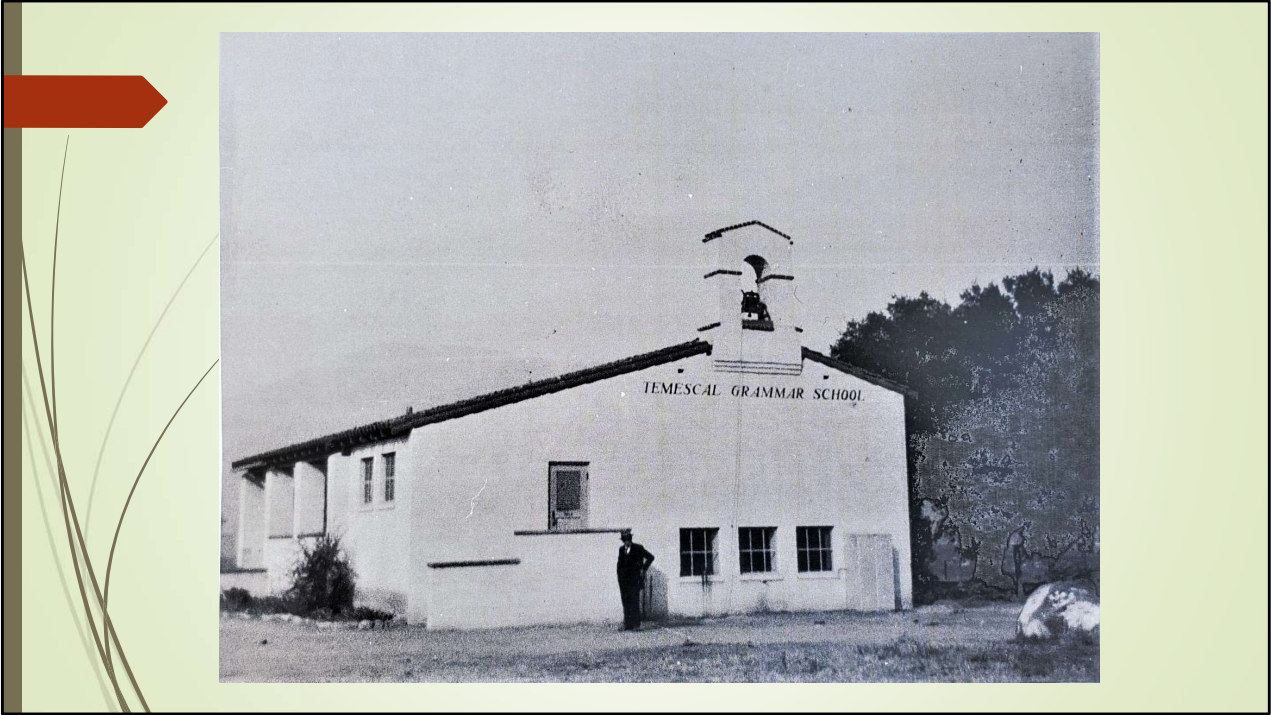
Pictures Shared by Betty King Bishop



Piru Citrus Association



Remains of Fernandez Adobe



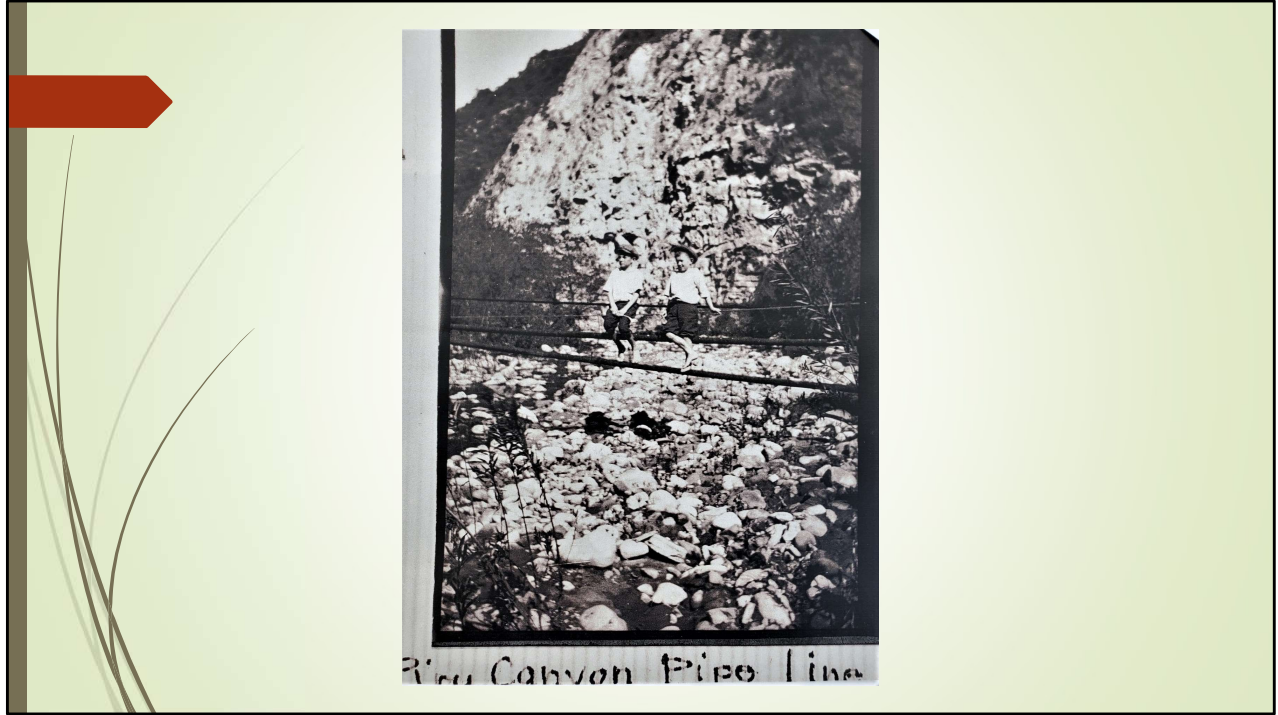




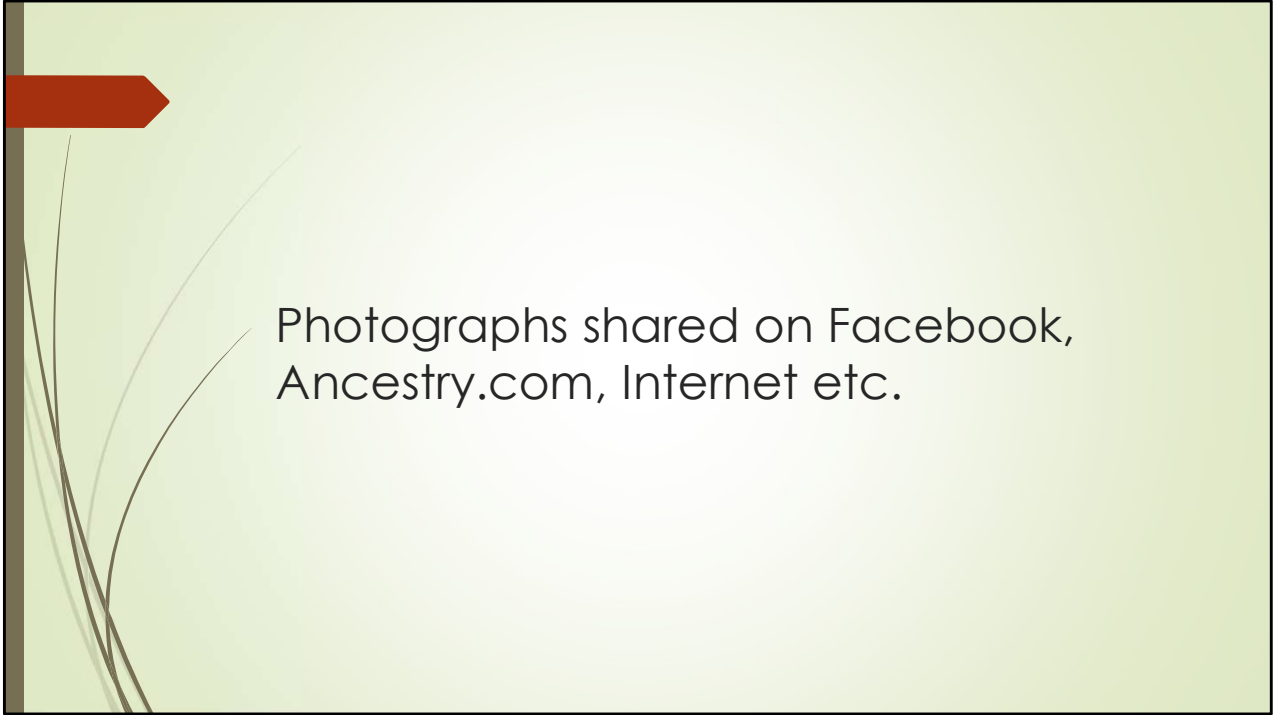
Piru Creek prior to the Dam being built



1899 Temescal School Piru Canyon: Hazel Lechler, Digna Garcia, Maudie Lechler, Lena Fustero, Abbie Lechler and Frances Fustero



Piru Canyon Pipeline, Children Unknown



Photographs shared on Facebook,
Ancestry.com, Internet etc.

Old Piru Mission



Mass for the faithful of Piru was originally held once a month in the chapel at Rancho Camulos. One of the locations where Helen Hunt Jackson researched her novel, *Ramona*. As early as 1918, there was talk of starting a building fund for a Church in Piru. In the 1920s the faithful met at an old public-school building as well as the backyard and hotel of W. W. Lechler, and eventually, in this unique stone Church. "Every stone in the Church was laid by the hand of one man, a stone mason named Juan Villa. During construction (September 23 – April 1924) it is said that Villa would permit no person other than himself to lay a stone. He had one helper, Trinidad Fernandez. His only tools were a trowel and a string by which he kept the walls straight ... It is believed that the Piru Church is the only one of its kind, architecturally in Southern California except one at Corona, which was built by the same stone mason." *The Piru News*, Vol. IV, No. 38, October 1930

When cracks began to appear in 1960, Fr. Joseph Alker informed the Archdiocese that an examination of the Mission Church in Piru had been completed by a structural engineering firm: "I humbly suggest that the Mission Church should be vacated as soon as possible, because the cracks are becoming larger per week due to everyday blasting operations in the nearby hills, together with sonic vibrations emanating from the operation of jet aircraft over the neighborhood. If an earthquake should occur, God forbid, the Mission Church would crumble." On January 13, 1961, one month after Fr. Ravlic's arrival, the Chancellor for the Diocese ordered the demolition of San Salvador Mission.

Old Piru Mission



Mike King's Comments:

The Church building was located at the NE corner of Market and Main Streets. The site is now occupied by a modular home. There are a couple of vacant lots between where the Church stood and the Post Office, which is north of this photo (to the left and behind you in this perspective). The previous picture shows the other direction, and you can somewhat see the distance between the buildings.

The three front stained-glass windows were donated to the church by the Lechler Family (I believe it was Harry's Mother). When they demolished the building, Harry salvaged the windows, and they were used in the museum building that he built next to his home. I remember going to church and catechism here before they tore it down. It was about a block from here to home.

Interestingly, look at the left side of the picture and you will see an old packing house truck in front of the Post Office. It has the old field boxes on it like they used to use.

From my Friend Billie, who lived in Fillmore in the 1930s:

I always thought this Church was so beautiful – My Dad's Cousins lived in Piru, and we were there visiting every few weeks. I loved all the natural stone building. My Grandparents home near Ojai was natural stone – My Grandfather cut all the stones that he used from his property, and he built the house.

Mary & Cruz Wedding 1932



Molly Perez Wedding about 1950



Molly Perez wedding shared by Tina Zermeno Gage Fuller 2nd from left about 1950

1st Holy
Communion
Year Unknown



The two pictures on the right are of a First Holy Communion celebration. The one on the right looks like it might be of the Virgen Mother celebration.

Celebrations at the Rock Church





PIRU CANYON

The Fustero Family



Juan Fustero and his family lived near Rancho Camulos, he died June 30, 1921. Juan was the last full-blooded Tataviam Indian although he spoke Kitanemuk and Spanish his maternal Grandfather spoke Tataviam. Juan is buried under what is now Piru Lake.

The Tataviam Indians, a Shoshone-speaking people, arrived in the Upper Santa Clara River Valley (Santa Clarita Valley) about AD 450. They occupied an area bounded by Piru to the West, Newhall to the South, the Liebre Mountains to the North and Soledad Pass to the East.

The picture on the lower right is of his Mother Sinfrosa Fustero (1834 – 1912) picture is around 1910

The middle is of Juan Fustero himself; he was a saddle maker and rumor is he knew where the gold was in Piru Canyon.

The third picture is of his family which includes wife Martha, and children Terresa (1863), Calendaria (1866), Juan (1882), Joe (1892), Marie (1901), Mike (1903), Frances (1906) dates are approximate ([Ancestry.com](https://www.ancestry.com))

Source: Information from [SCVhistory.com](https://www.scvhistory.com) check their website for more information

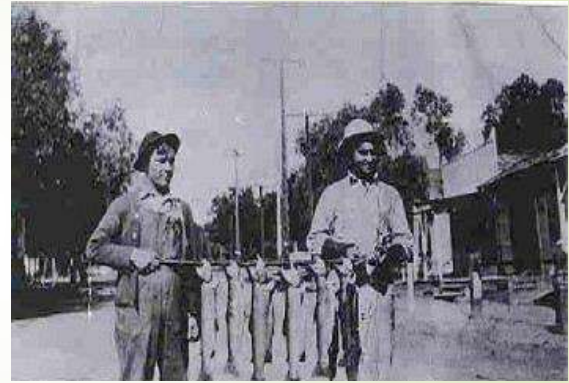
Tataviam Village at La Esperanza now
under Lake Piru



Hunting in the Agua Blanca 1896 Nate Stone



Fillmore Historical Museum



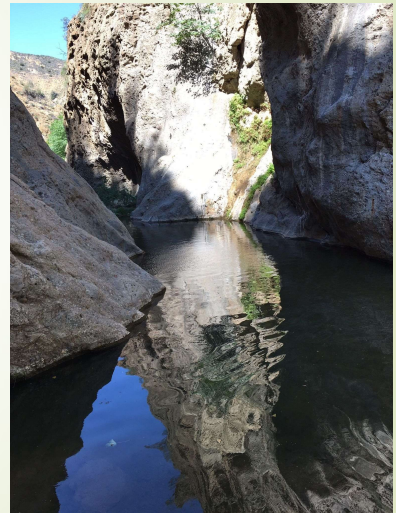
Steel Head caught in the Agua Blanca 1915

The Agua Blanca was quite busy in the early 20th Century with hunting, fishing and camping. Charles Kester ran the Agua Blanca Camp in the 1920s – 1930s. Piru Canyon also had a number of gold mining camps for that time period.

In the 1930s the U. S. Forest Service, using C. C. C. (Civilian Conservation Corps) labor, improved an old Chumash trail that followed the Agua Blanca Creek up the Canyon. It was a popular trail because of the good hunting and fishing in the canyon. The trail begins at Fester's Camp at the junction of the canyon with Piru Creek. Following up the canyon it comes to the Devil's Gateway which is a narrow cliff cut through a conglomerate rock ridge. There is a trail over the ridge, but it is rocky and steep. It is best to go up through the pools at the bottom of Devil's Gate. Just beyond the Narrows is a junction with the Pot Hoe Trail that crosses the creek and clings to reach the old Whitaker cabin and Pot Hole. Just beyond the trail junction is Log Cabin Camp. The cabin is long gone but a trail camp it located at the site. Continuing on up the Agua Blanca Creek the trail will pass a historic campsite called Hollister Camp. It was named for an early day U. S. Forest Ranger who had a camp beside the creek. Next comes Cove Camp on the left side of the creek. A short distance beyond Cove Camp is the Big Narrows. Here the creek cuts through a ridge of cobblestone to form a "U" like narrows. The walls of the cliff are very tall and numerous pools form as the creek descends through the Narrows. Further up the creek the trails reaches Ant Camp where a trail comes in from Dough Flats and Fillmore. The Agua Blanca uses to continue up the creek passing two old hunting camps to finally climb to the top of Cobblestone Mountain, but the trail beyond Ant Camp has not received any maintenance and is now a wall of dense brush and washouts from floods.



Devils Gateway Piru Loop Trail



Devils Gateway

Kester Camp in the Agua Blanca



In the early 1900s, Piru Canyon and the Agua Blanca were bustling tourist locations, for fishing, hunting and camping. This is one of the remnants of that bygone era

Dale B. King & Vernie Mae Austin King



Frost-King Rites Read On Sunday

By SETTI VLADIC
Ojai Correspondent

The First Community church was beautifully decorated with yellow and bronze chrysanthemums and tall ferns in baskets for the afternoon wedding yesterday of Miss Edith King, attractive daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dale B. King of Firu, to Norman Edward Frost of Oxnard.

The bride wore a wine colored velvet afternoon gown fashioned with high neck and puffed sleeves, a black pill-box hat and black accessories. Her corsage was of white chrysanthemums. Miss Viola King, her cousin, was maid of honor, wearing a navy blue dress with navy blue hat and a corsage of yellow chrysanthemums.

The groom is the son of Mr. and Mrs. James B. Frost, of Alta Monte. Joseph Friedrich, of Oxnard, was best man. The Rev. Mr. Roberts officiated.

Preceding the ceremony, Mrs. Leslie Warring played an organ prelude. Soloist was Miss Mary Ann Borchard of Oxnard, who sang "Oh Promise Me."

Kenneth Frost and William King, brothers of the couple, were ushers.

The reception following the ceremony was held in the church parlor with 120 guests present. The bride's mother, in a garnet jacket ensemble of wool, was assisted by Miss Caroline Friedrich, Miss Alice Shearer and the Misses Borchard of Oxnard, and Miss Mary Jane Mitchell and Miss Annabel Mitchell of Santa Barbara.

For their wedding trip, Mr. and Mrs. Frost have gone to Boulder dam. Upon their return they will live on the L. G. Maulhardt ranch in Oxnard where Mr. Frost is employed.

The bride is a graduate of Fillmore High school and attended Ventura Junior college, while the groom is a graduate of Ventura Junior college.

The Dale King Ranch is at the entrance to the Dominguez Canyon, their children include Edith King, William "Bill" King, Dale Jr "Bumms" King, and Wallace "Wally" King.

Morris & Viola Carter King



Brother to Dale King, also had a working Ranch in Piru Canyon

Anson Lisk & Lisk Ranch



Mike King Comments

Anson Lisk's Ranch was located at the mouth of Jaynes Canyon to the left and Stockton Canyon to the right. Lisk had constructed an irrigation system there to irrigate his fields. There was/is a concrete lined reservoir in Jaynes Canyon that supplied the water to concrete irrigation lines on the ranch. All that was destroyed by the lake. There was also a house, a barn and corrals there that I remember. Over time vandals destroyed everything.

Lisk Ranch



Comments Hal Matthews:

The Lisk Ranch was located at the upper end of Piru Lake (above the narrows making up the upper end of the lake). There used to be a house, barn and corrals and other out-buildings at the ranch but have since all been destroyed. These structures were located at the mouth of Jaynes Canyon. Just a ways up Jaynes Canyon, to the west, at the end of the flat adjacent to the Piru Canyon Road, there is a reservoir that was used to irrigate the farm fields. Water was piped across Piru Creek where it was distributed by concrete pipelines. I believe the source of the irrigation water was from springs located in Jaynes Canyon and piped down to the reservoir. If my recollection is correct, Lisk worked as a bookkeeper, or some similar capacity, for Edward Doheney, an oil baron, who at that time owned the Temescal Land Grant. If you remember your history, Doheney was accused of offering a \$100,000. "gift" (bribe) to Harding Administration Secretary of the Interior, Albert Fall, to secure the leasing of 32,000 acres of the Elk Hills near Taft. Interestingly, Doheney was acquitted of offering the bribe, but Albert Fall was convicted of accepting it. Go Figure! This all occurred at the same time that Albert Fall was convicted of taking other bribes in connection with the Tea Pot Dome oil field in Wyoming. Incidentally, the Lisk Ranch was bought/taken/sold??? By the UWCD when the dam was built.

Lisk Ranch Location



Comment Mike King:

My Dad told about a local man taking Mr. Lisk up the canyon many years later to look around. This man told my Dad, "When old man Lisk saw his ranch, he cried".

Right at the end do the lake water in this picture, 18 feet of fill came in there in 1969, turning the land into a sand pile. Blue Point Campground is just beyond that last stretch of water that you can see.

The old Ranger Station would have been in the canyon in the foreground of this photo. Whitaker Peak is the last mountain center right in the photo. There was a fire lookout there for many years. I believe it is closed and dismantled. There are some microwave repeaters there now.

Hal Mathews Piru Creek 1943

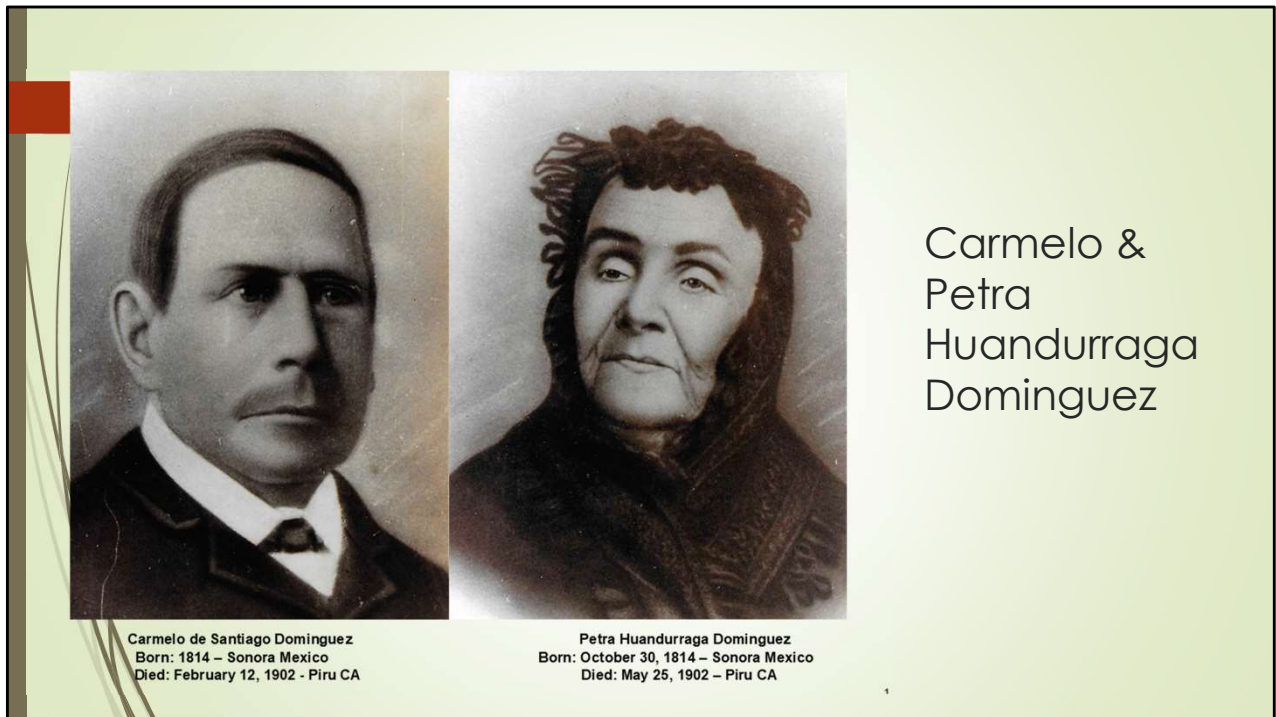


The Narrows of Piru Creek in back.

Loren Janes Sr. & 1st Wife at the Jaynes Ranch



This is at their ranch prior to the dam being built.



Patriarch and Matriarch of the Piru Dominguez Family, both are buried at Rancho Camulos.
Their children included:

Amparo Huandurraga Dominguez married Charles Kuhn
Juan Huandurraga Dominguez married Francisca Tapia
Petra Huandurraga Dominguez married Luis Fulmore
Jesus de Carmelo Dominguez
Estevan Huandurraga Dominguez married Carmen Carmelita Rubio
Dolores Huandurraga Dominguez married Francisco Morales
Miguel Huandurraga Dominguez married Margarita Tapia
Francisco Huandurraga Dominguez married Guadalupe Ruiz



Juan H. Dominguez
1853 - 1937



Francisca Tapia Dominguez
1854 - 1931

Juan & Francisca Tapia Dominguez

Juan Dominguez settled in what is today known as Dominguez Canyon in 1870 and filed for homestead in 1878 and was granted the homestead of 160 acres of land that they used for farming. They raised 14 children, 3 other children died either at birth or shortly after. Many of Piru's residents are descendants of Juan and Francisca.



This is the gate to Dominguez Canyon Road, the sign on the left is just outside the gate. The sign on upper right is just past King's Ranch.

Dominguez Ranch Cross



This cross was on the mountain above the Dominguez home, a story that has been passed down is that my Grandmother's twin who died at birth is buried there, but we have no proof. The cross at one time was covered in abalone and seashells. One of the fires that burned through the canyon took it.

Dominguez Ranch



They farmed the land to feed their family, and of course made wine, this picture of the house was taken in the 60s.

The wine press currently resides at Camulos Ranch Museum.



A Painting of the
Dominguez
Home by Susan
McConnell
Moreno

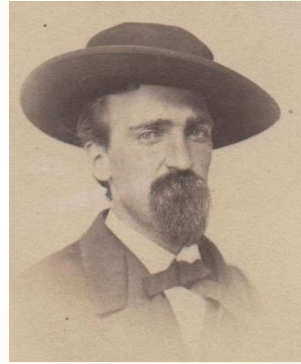
My Aunt Susan painted this picture for me to give to my Mom as a Christmas present. She used old pictures and my Uncle's memory to paint it.



Francisco &
Guadalupe Ruiz
Dominguez

Francisco Dominguez, settled and homesteaded property later at the end of Dominguez Canyon Road. Francisco and Guadalupe had 14 children, many descendants still live in Piru today.

Lechler Adobe aka Honey House



George Washington
Lechler

Abigail Jean
Hazard Lechler



George Washington Lechler built this house in 1876, located across the dam on the Lechler Ranch Property. George and Abigail were Harry Lechler's Grandparents.

Reasoners

Benjamin



Frances & Son John



Anna – Marybelle - Elizabeth



Benjamin Reasoner homesteaded in Piru Canyon in 1883, the Reasoner Ranch was located in the Canyon that bears his name. The old Reasoner Ranch Homesite is under the Piru Lake behind the Santa Felicia Dam.

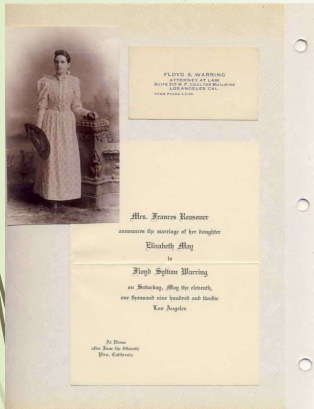
Benjamin and Frances Floy Reasoner had 4 children, Anna, Marybelle, Elizabeth and John.

Anna Reasoner



Anna married Alfred Stone

Elizabeth Reasoner Warring



Elizabeth married Floyd Warring.

Reasoner Obituaries

Obituary.

REASONER.— Benjamin E. Reasoner was born in Ohio, November 25, 1826, and died near Piru City, Ventura county, Cal., January 26, 1898. He came to California in 1855, and for thirty years was a resident of Nevada county. For the past thirteen years he has been a resident of Ventura county. His many friends in various parts of the State will be glad to learn his trust was in Jesus.

C. W. F. NELSON.

Piru Settler's Rites Arranged

PIRU, Oct. 29—Funeral services for Mrs. Frances Floy Reasoner, 97, who came to this community as a homesteader in 1883, will be conducted at 2 p.m. tomorrow in the Piru Methodist Church.

Born in Indiana, Mrs. Reasoner came to California in 1873 with her parents who settled in Forbstown, Butte County. They later came to Piru.

She leaves two daughters, Mrs. Elizabeth R. Warring of Piru, and Mrs. Anna Stone of Los Angeles; and a son, John R. Reasoner of Los Angeles.

California Pioneer Mrs. E. R. Warring Succumbs in Piru

Mrs. Elizabeth Reasoner Warring, 79-year-old member of a pioneering California family, died yesterday in Foster hospital, Ventura, after a long illness.

She had been a resident of the Piru area for 76 years.

Mrs. Warring was born in a mining town known as Blue Tent in Butte county, the town no longer in existence. Her father, Benjamin Reasoner, was a miner who turned to farming and brought his family to the Piru area when Elizabeth was three years old.

The Reasoner ranch was located in a canyon off Piru creek which bears that name. The old Reasoner ranch homestead is now under the water of Piru lake behind Santa Felicia dam.

Mrs. Warring is survived by her husband, Floyd F. Warring; two daughters, Mrs. Alice Giddings of Ventura and Mrs. Frances Talbert of San Diego; a brother, John R. Reasoner of Phoenix; a nephew, Roy L. Stone; and several nieces and nephews, two granddaughters and two grandsons.

The Rev. Alfred C. Abbe will officiate for services at 2 p.m. tomorrow in the Memory chapel of the H. P. Skillin funeral home, Santa Paula. Interment will be in Santa Paula cemetery.

The family has requested that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to a favorite charity.

Temescal School 1880



Comment Mike King:

This is the Temescal School that was near the mouth of Reasoner Canyon.

New Temescal School

April 3, 1930



NEW SCHOOL FOR PIRU DISTRICT

Work is to start in the near future on the Temescal school, six miles up Piru Canyon, it has been learned from R. S. Raymond, Santa Paula architect.

The building, which is to cost approximately \$6,500, is to be a one-story affair of masonry. It is to be of stone tile with a fire-resisting roof.

Outside of the regulation school interior, there is to be a small stage. Water supply and sewage disposal systems are to be connected with the school.

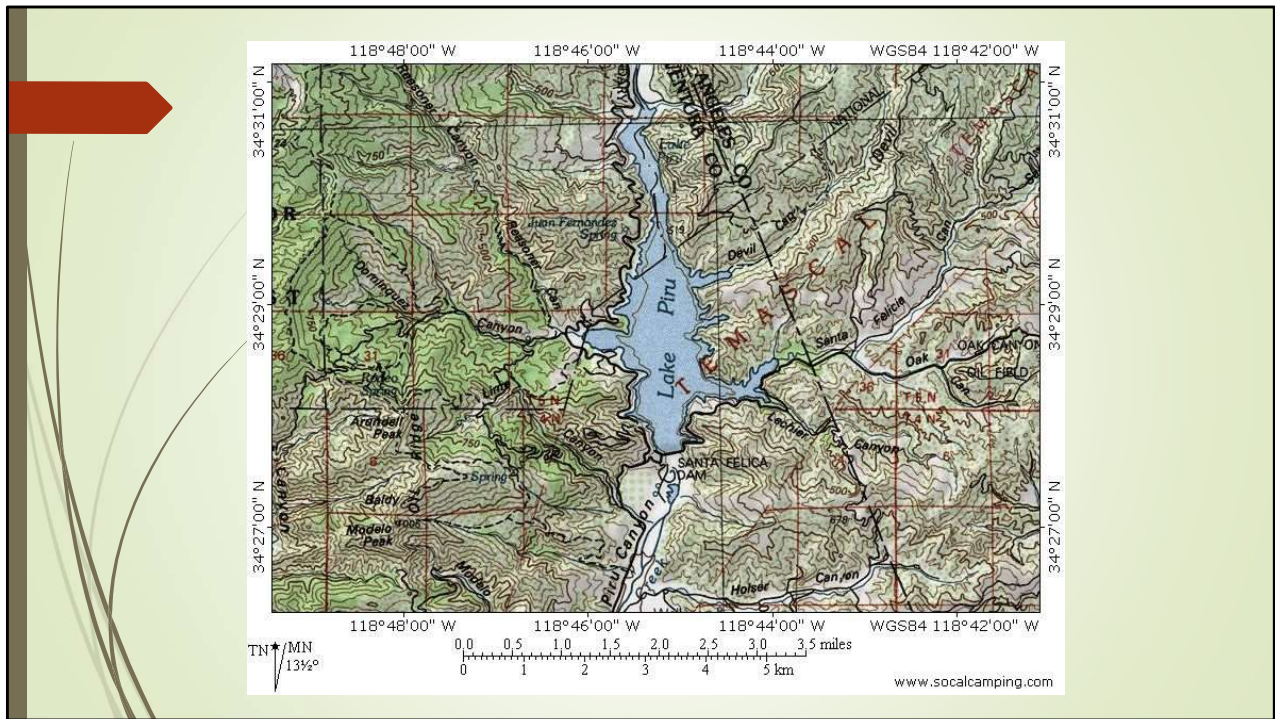
The new school will be located near the site of the old Piru Canyon school, one of the oldest in the county, established 43 years ago.

This is the new Temescal School, the picture is of my Aunt Josie Videgain and Cousin David Martinez her nephew. My Aunts Belen Dominguez, Josie Videgain, Elmira Videgain and Uncle Mike Videgain attended this school. I was told that Alex Navarro took the roof tiles to add to his house, he lived across the street from the Post Office.


Comment Mike King:

There were more than three families. The long-time families that I know of are the various Dominguez Families, the Wilsons (owned the property where Sheppard and Mary Layman later owned), the Lechler Families, the Dale King Family, the Morris King Family, the Enos Shawback Family (lived in the middle ranch and was a foreman for Doheny). I also believe the Fustero children attended the school at one time or another. I am sure that I am missing other area families. You also have to remember that there were very active cattle and farming operations at the upper end of the latke the featured and extensive irrigation system. There was a house, barn, and corrals located there at one time.

There was also a very active oil industry at the time too, again producing children. At some point, conditions changed and families with children dwindled to the point that the school was not cost effective any longer. I do remember my Grandfather talking about it eventually being closed down due to lack of children to attend. My Dad William A. King, Uncle Dale B. King Jr. and Aunt Edith King Frost attended school there. My Grandfather, Dale B. King was a trustee of the school for a period of time. There is not building there now, I am sure it was razed when they built the dam.



Map of Piru Lake showing canyons.



Piru Dam Spillway Overflow Year Unknown



Piru has had its share of floods, in my memory 1969 was one that flooded parts of town, with the spillway overflowing and the river overflowing its banks.

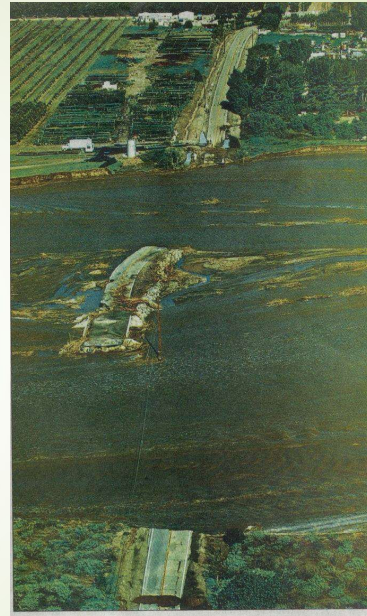
Flooding Piru Creek 1998



Piru Dam Spillway April 2005



Debris in Piru Lake 2005



Torrey Road 2005

Some pictures of the flooding of 2005

Piru Lake March 7, 2019



Piru Lake March 28, 2019 – Taken by Art Lugo



Nice to see the lake full.



SCHOOLS IN TOWN

Grammar School at Piru



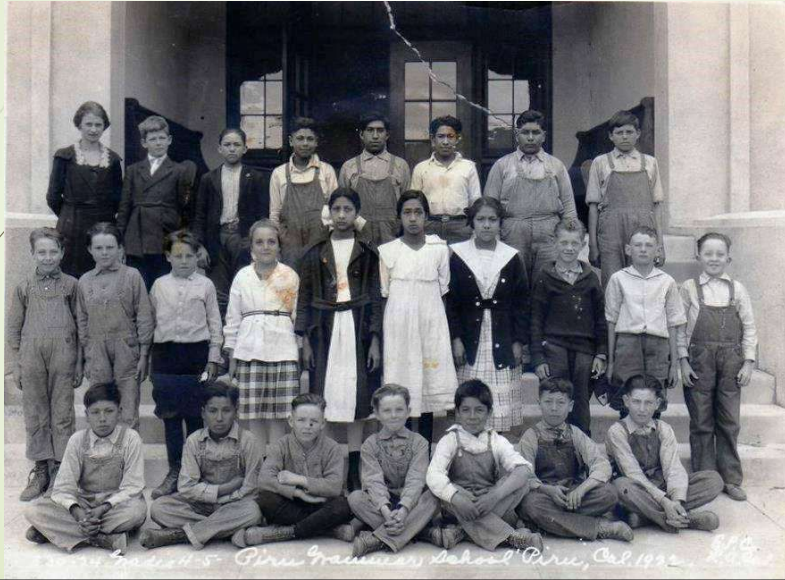
GRAMMAR SCHOOL AT PIRU.

Piru School between 1915 - 1918



Luis Gutierrez son of Petra Fulmore Gutierrez and Luis Gutierrez Sr. Petra Fulmore is the Granddaughter of Carmelo and Petra Dominguez.

Piru Grammar School 1922?



Piru Grammar School 1926



I found a Piru Grammar School picture from 1926, possibly the entire student body. My dad, Woodrow McDowell, first one on left top row. Fifth one in looks like he might be a Sloan?

Louise McDowell

Piru Elementary School 1926 - 1928



Comment and Share Mike Berrington

Recently found this old photo of my Grandmother Ethel (Everson) Berrington and Great Uncle Clarence Everson with their classmates at Piru School. I'm guessing this photo must have been taken in about 1926 – 1928 based on my Grandmother's apparent age.

Piru Elementary School 1929



Piru School 1935 – 8th Grade



Piru School 1937 – 8th Grade



Piru School 1938 – 8th Grade



There are two pictures listed as Piru School 1937 – 8th grade, I know they are both Piru school just not sure of the year on the other picture.

Piru Elementary School Year Unknown



Piru Elementary School Year Unknown



Piru Elementary School Year Unknown



Piru Elementary School Year Unknown



Shared by Louise McDowell

Piru Elementary School Year Unknown



Buckhorn School



Some of the Piru Newspapers had a Section devoted to the Buckhorn News written by some of the students, to identify some of the students, I compiled a list of the students who wrote small news information in the papers while this may not be a full list of attendees it will provide an idea of the families that attended the school and the years they attended, March 5, 1931, was called Buckhorn School Notes, the rest were called Buckhorn Junior News:

March 5, 1931: Wilfred McKendry, Reba Hickey, Clyde Wileman, Anita Warring, Donald McKendry, Minnie McConkey, Jewel Lawson, Charles Felsenthal, Josefina Rangel, Donald Vedder, Donald Barker, Thelma Tate, Thelma Wileman.

April 16, 1931: Thelma Lawson, Eugene Baker, Charles Felsenthal, Donald Barker, James Powell, C. A. McConkey, Donald Vedder, Julian Rangel, Thelma Tate, Billing Warring, Clyde Wileman.

April 30, 1931: Thelma Wileman, Mary Myrl Barker, Margaret McKendry, Minnie McConkey, Vallie Hickey, Billie Warring, Thelma Tate, Thurman Tate, Jewel Lawson, Cecilia Manriquez, Alberta Rangel, Marion Johnson, George Aguirre, Charles Felsenthal, Clyde Wileman (The Riddle Man).

May 28, 1931: Anita Warring, Minnie McConkey, Donald McKendry, Mason Powell, Margaret McKendry, Cecilia Manriquez, Marion Johnson, Ruth Truesdell, Alberta Rangel, Thurman Tate, Mary Myrhl Barker, Joyce Wileman, Josefina Rangel, Thelma Tate, Thelma Lawson, Julian Rangel, Vallie Hickey, Eugene Baker, Jewel Lawson, Thelma Wileman, Ray Barker.

Continued on next slide

Buckhorn School Class 1912 - 1915



List of children continued from previous slide:

November 5, 1931: Vernon Johnson, Donald Barker, Wilfred McKendry, Billie Warring, Minnie McConkey, Love Needham, Julian Rangel, Charles Felsenthal, Ray Barker, C. A. McConkey, Shirgiru Tkgiri, Jewel Lawson.

November 26, 1931: Margaret McKendry, Steve Manriquez, Ruth Truesdell, Jennie Rangel, Bill Henning, Eugene Warring, Cecilia Manriquez, Mary Myrhl Barker, Marion Johnson, Wilfred McKendry, George Aguirre, Minnie McConkey, Anita Warring, Thurman Tate.

December 3, 1931: Donald Vedder, Billie Warring, Vernon Johnson, Shigira Spigiri, Lovie Needham, Julian Rangel, Josie Rangel, Jewel Lawson.

December 17, 1931: Minnie McConkey, Anita Warring, Cecilia Manriquez, Ruth Truesdell, Donald McKendry, Eugene Warring, Thurman Tate, Marion Johnson, Wilfred McKendry.

January 21, 1932: Charles Felsenthal, Julian Rangel, Donald Barker, Billie Warring, Vernon Johnson, Eugene Baker.

October 19, 1933: Eugene Warring, Alberta Rangel, Bill Henning, Johnny Rangel, David McKendry, Yoshiro Nogawa, Alice Milton, Ruth Truesdell, Jennie Rangel, Betty Kellerman, Steve Manriquez, Imo Jewel Smith, Evelyn Aguirre, Johnny Kellerman.

Buckhorn School 1948



John McKendry

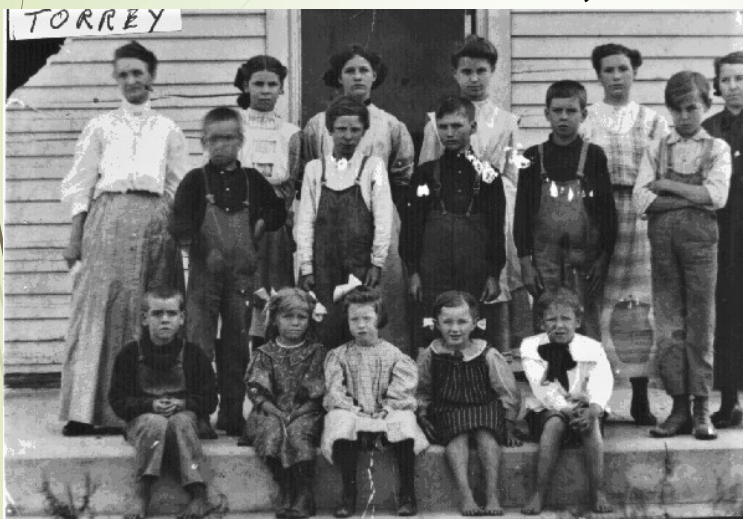
My Dad went there many years ago. They had a Buckhorn band that played on the radio. He said that it was a mess.

Gayle Georgi

The Buckhorn Rhythm Band. Alice Milton was the teacher. She told me, "Your father wouldn't know how to read if it wasn't for me".

Torrey School

Article – Piru Newspaper July 31, 1941



OLD SCHOOL BELL IS RETIRED FROM ACTIVE SERVICE AT TORREY

After 40 year's service, the old bell of Torrey elementary school has been placed among the honored relics of the Ventura county school system in the office of Superintendent W. Kirk Cobb in Ventura.

It has called the children to study since the school was established April 10, 1901 to supply early education for the small sons and daughters of Union Oil company employes on the Torrey lease near Piru.

The tiny institution of learning was closed Wednesday of last week due to lack of the five aver-

age daily attendance of pupils required by state law and will probably never be reopened, since a new state law requires 15 students to open a school.

The bell is battered and scarred with the hard knocks of long service and has a hole in its side the size of a finger nail, but its tone is still good, and with gentle treatment it might be good for another forty years of service.

I found this on the internet, I have no way of confirming this is the Torrey School in Piru. I did post it in the Growing up in Piru Group, and had Gil Lewis confirmed it was a school for Oil Workers Families.

Per Gil Lewis:

I would suspect my uncles were among the last 5 at Torrey School. My Granddad Coin Lewis worked on Torrey until 1940 or 1941. My Dad Leland and his brothers Floyd Eugene and Clarence Lewis were born on Torrey.

They all went to school 1-8 at the School located there.

My Dad Graduated from Fillmore class of 40. His brother Floyd Eugene Lewis, went down with his ship, 3 March 1945 just off Okinawa. The youngest was Clarence Lewis better know as Pete. my Grandparents moved to Santa Paula during the summer of 1940 when Union Oil moved Grandpa to the south mountain lease.

My Dad went to work for Union Oil in January 1952. His first assignment was Torrey. He retired 20 years later as a foreman. You guessed from Torrey. Torrey has played a lot in my family.

Piru School 1956 – 1957 Faculty



Sitting Left to Right:

Miss Collins, Mrs. Brady, Unknown, Mr. Hurt, Mrs. Wilson, Mrs. Whipple

Standing Left to Right:

Mrs. Whalen, Mrs. Bryant, Mr. Bryant, Possibly Mrs. Sample

Thank-you to Margaret Perea, Sandra O'Connor, and Marsha Dollar Crockett for identifying the faculty.

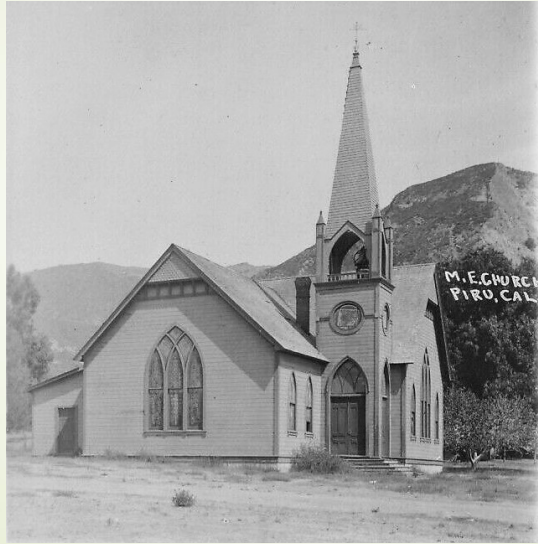


BUILDINGS & THE COMMUNITY

Piru Via Fustero Year Unknown



Piru Methodist Church



Piru City Hotel



PIRU CITY HOTEL.—Mrs. Alice Gay, Manager.

Mountain View Hotel circa 1907



Mountain View Hotel 1910



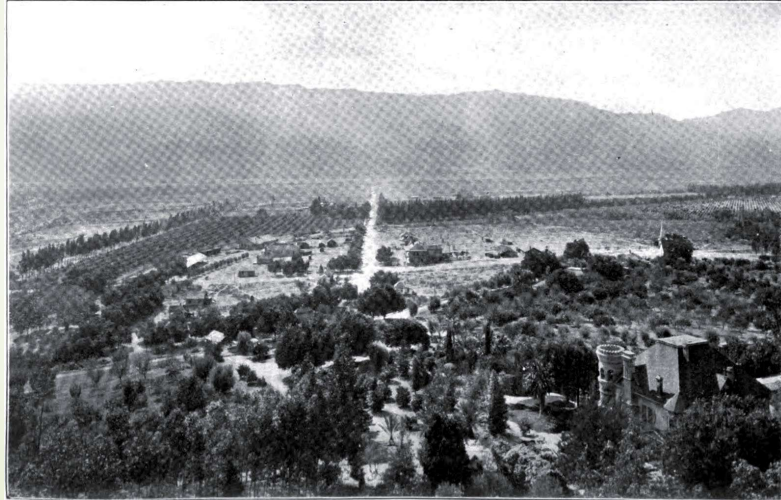
Piru Year Unknown



The Piru Valley – Ventura Free Press July 28, 1899 – Fruit Drying Yards



Old Photograph possibly Post Card of
Piru 1900



Shared by Mike King

Piru circa 1900



Garden City Photo Co.

606 E. Fifth St.,
Los Angeles, Cal

Piru circa 1905



Piru circa 1905



Birdseye View of Piru 1910



Birdseye View of Piru 1947

Piru 1906



Piru Circa 1907



Piru circa 1907



Side of Piru Co-Op 1910



Courtesy of Fillmore Historical Museum

A wagon and horses at the side of Piru Co. Op. circa 1910

Piru circa 1910



Piru July 4, 1910



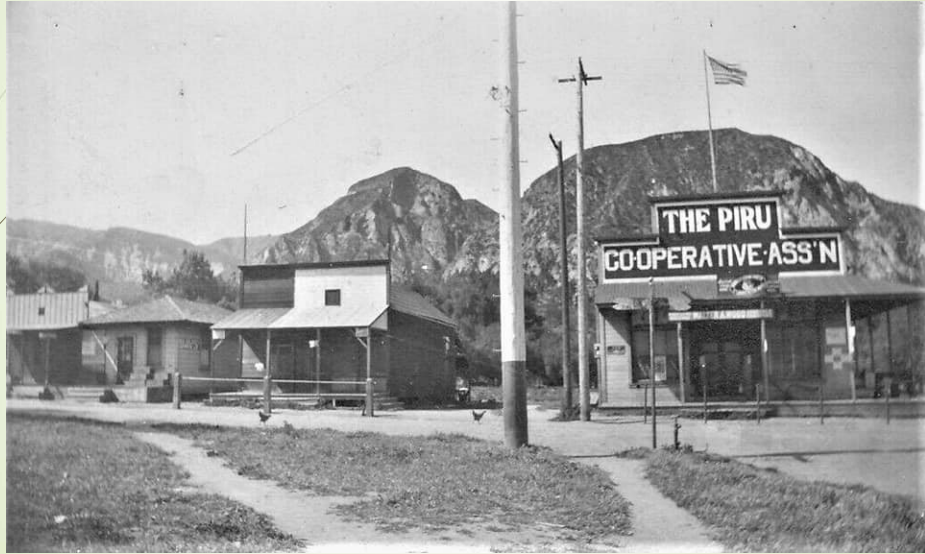
Piru circa 1911



Piru 1914 – Margarita (last name unknown)



Piru 1920



Piru 1920



Piru – Don Grimes in All White



St. Francis Dam Disaster Temporary Morgue 1928



Piru 1929



Courtesy of Fillmore Historical Museum

The Mission Inn on Center Street at the intersection of Telegraph Road next to the Piru Garage on the North side of the street.



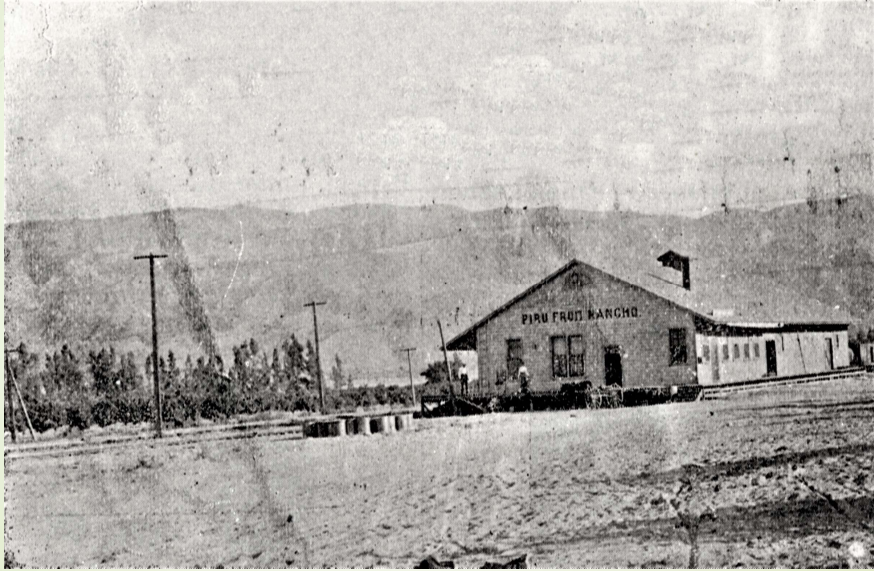
Pismo Calif. ^{Circa} 1907-1918

L. M. Sullivan
Livery
Building

Blue
Bird
Cafe
S. D.

Luciano Siquedo
Livery
B. D.

Piru Fruit Rancho



PIRU FRUIT RANCHO.

A Magnificent Property under a Perfect System of Irrigation.

MAMMOTH ORCHARDS.

Becoming Famous for its Large Shipments of the Finest Oranges, Lemons, Olives, Apricots, Apples, Etc.

RICH IN OIL AND MINERALS.

Result of the Indomitable Energy and Huge Enterprise of David C. Cook of Elgin, Ills.

The Piru Fruit Rancho contains 14,000 acres. It formerly belonged to the Del Valle brothers and was patented to the Temescal Land Grant.

David C. Cook of Elgin, Ill., and well known as the proprietor of one of the greatest publishing houses in the United States, bought the ranch in 1887 from the Del Valle brothers and for the last 12 years has spent large sums of money in bringing it to its present high state of cultivation.

A large fortune has been spent in pipe lines, flumes and canals, thus establishing a perfect system of irrigation.

One thousand two hundred acres have been planted to trees. Every acre of this mammoth orchard receives

heavy growth of cottonwood, sycamore and willow, but as the mountain walls, close to on either side almost meet, no idea of the picturesque Piru valley beyond can be obtained. A glimpse is had of the elegant Cook mansion on high bench land, at the foot of the mountain, with a wonderful profusion of flowers, shrubbery and ornamental trees, and stately gables in the background; while below on lower land, appear a fine olive orchard, large pepper trees, cottonwoods and weeping willows.

The train quickly passes through a double row of pepper trees hiding the town from view. At the depot the traveller gets a glimpse of the town. The hotel, church, stores and houses are all near by. The town seems buried under the shade of pepper, willow and cottonwood trees, and borders of olives. The numerous derricks on the mountain side, to the south, tell of the oil industry.

As the train leaves Piru City the traveller quickly realizes he is in a horticultural section. On the way to Buckhorn, two miles distant, a succession of beautiful orange, lemon, apricot, almond and olive orchards are passed, lined with windbreaks of eucalyptus and olive trees. Patches of alfalfa are grown along the railroad. Here are to be found happy homes and flower gardens.

Oranges and lemons require irrigation. In ordinary years apricots and almonds produce well without irrigation. Among the orchardists of this section, oranges, lemons and apricots are the three favorites.

BEES.

Piru City is an important point for the shipment of honey. In good seasons the output reaches 10 carloads. Bee food is abundant in all the country. There are numerous apiaries. Piru and vicinity is an ideal honey country, producing the finest honey in the State.

STOCK.

There are several stock ranches in the eastern part of Ventura county, and in good seasons the shipments of cattle are numerous. The many thousands of acres of mountain land are excellent ranges and furnish abundant feed.

A large fortune has been spent in pipe lines, flumes and canals, thus establishing a perfect system of irrigation.

One thousand two hundred acres have been planted to trees. Every acre of this mammoth orchard receives the best of care, and the Piru Fruit Rancho has become celebrated in Southern California, and in good seasons more than 100,000 bushels of fruit are shipped annually.

By the prodigious enterprise of David C. Cook, Piru City, formerly known as a honey and stock region, is now noted for its excellent oranges, lemons, olives, apricots, apples, almonds, etc. The great Piru Fruit Rancho is planted to trees as follows:

VARIETY	ACRES
Apricots	20
Olives	175
Oranges (principally navels)	120
Peaches	125
Peaches	100
Lemons	75
Apples	25
Nectarines	10
Quinces	3
Almonds	5

Fifty acres more will be set to almonds next spring. There are also a few acres in vines for table grapes. In the apricot orchards 75 acres are not yet in bearing. Forty acres more of that fruit were set last spring. When the large acreage in oranges was first planted the best varieties were not furnished by the nurseries. Since then the trees have been budded to navels. Last spring 28000 orange trees were planted; also 250 lemon trees. A few Oonshui oranges of Japan, imported by B. B. Barney of Riverside, have been tried as an experiment. It is a Mandarin orange of medium size, and a good keeper.

STOCK.

There are several stock ranches in the eastern part of Ventura county, and in good seasons the shipments of cattle are numerous. The many thousands of acres of mountain land are excellent ranges and furnish abundant feed.

FRUIT.

Dried fruit on the Piru Fruit Rancho is all A1. The product cannot be excelled for color, flavor, quality, and cleanliness. The fruit is hand-picked, clean, cut, sun dried and cured, in the best manner.

Apricots are ready to pick soon after the middle of June.

About 50 men are usually employed by the Piru Fruit Rancho. During the fruit season this number is increased to from 400 to 500.

R. W. Miliken has been foreman of the Piru subdivision for nearly eight years.

The general manager is kept very busy. He is the busiest man of the rancho. Many car loads of supplies have to be purchased. Every year a large fruit crop must be marketed. Buyers must be found for immense quantities of oranges, lemons, olives, apples, peaches, etc. It requires tact and skill to make buyers understand that their bids must be satisfactory. In the office there is much routine work and a large correspondence. Tax bills must be paid, abstract and title to property looked after, and disputes and litigation about water rights attended to. The Piru Fruit Rancho does a large business with the outside world. The duties of the superintendent are entirely different from that of the general manager.

to give numerous acres of water to this mammoth orchard, have come into bearing. The oldest trees are 10 years of age.

The rancho has extensive fruit drying yards and cutting sheds; the largest in this part of the county. It can accommodate 500 operators, and handle readily 50 tons of green fruits daily. There are numerous sawdiggers, or sulphur houses. Sulphur is used to give color and destroy insect life.

The rancho also contains 300 acres alfalfa land, 67 head of work horses, besides numerous sawdiggers, and colts to replenish stock. The orchards extend from Piru City westward, a distance of one and a half miles, and up the Piru valley, a distance of six miles. The rancho has five subdivisions. The Piru or home division extends around the town and westward one and one-half miles. The other four divisions are named: Generala, Temescal, Calera, and Esperanza; and follow each other (in the order named) up the Piru canyon. A foreman has been assigned to each subdivision, and suitable residence, barns, etc., erected for the use of the ranch hands. The foreman and each lot of men in all the subdivisions are under the immediate direction and inspection of W. H. Fleet, the superintendent.

THE PIRU OR HOME DIVISION.

Soon after the traveller leaves the beautiful Camulos rancho, and the train crosses the bridge over the Piru river, on entering Piru City, the first impression of the town, are very favorable.

At the river crossing there is a

ROBERT DUNN.
Robert Dunn is a native of Edinburgh, Scotland, and for 28 years farmed extensively four miles from Edinburgh. Farming a large acreage in the vicinity of a large city like Edinburgh, indicates, of course, a large business, with great capacity and much valuable experience. When he came to California, 13 years ago last January, Mr. Dunn, for a while, rented a part of the Newhall ranch, or what is now known as the Robert place. He soon bought a large farm, about four miles from Piru City, on the south side of the Santa Clara river, where he has lived for nearly 12 years. He named his farm the Boardman Fruit Ranch, which is the name of the place on which he lived so many years in Scotland. Recently Mr. Dunn decided to go into mercantile business, and now carries on a general merchandise store at Piru City. He is also proprietor of the meat market and livery and feed stable. Mr. Dunn is a popular merchant, greatly esteemed in the community in which he lives. He receives a liberal share of the public patronage. The number of men employed and the large and increasing volume of business carried on by Mr. Dunn is a great surprise to most people. He does a large business, not only at Piru, but also receives a liberal patronage from Bardsdale, Fillmore and other districts.

W. H. MOORE.
W. H. Moore is an experienced farmer, having worked on a farm since he was ten years old. He is the efficient foreman of the Esperanza subdivision, and has been on the ranch five years. Mr. Moore, formerly of Colorado, came here from Eastern Oregon, where he had valuable experience, irrigating and raising fruit. The view of the valley and mountain scenery from Mr. Moore's home, is picturesque and beautiful beyond description. He takes great pride in the excellent condition of the orchards. There are some fine on the ranch. His work shows he is competent and reliable.

Piru Railroad Depot



Wood Burning Stove
From
The Piru Train Depot

Manufactured by
Smith System Heating
Company,
approximately 1910

Courtesy of Fillmore Historical
Museum

No year listed for the picture of the Depot

The Wood Burning Stove was donated to the Fillmore Historical Museum, and they were gracious to allow me to take a picture to share for the history of Piru.

Piru Jail Today



Piru News August 26, 1937 - Joe H. Wilson passed away Thursday evening at the Cottage hospital in Santa Barbara, at the age of 46 years. He had been in poor health for the past year, and his passing will leave a vacancy hard to replace in the community. He moved to Piru in 1923 and for the past four years has served as Constable of the Piru Township. He was an executive of the Boy Scouts and a member of the Fillmore Masonic lodge. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Nota Wilson, a daughter, Miss Faye Wilson, of Santa Barbara, and a son. Jack of Piru. Funeral services were held at the Piru Community church Saturday afternoon, Rev. C. W. Roberts officiating at the church service and the Fillmore Masonic lodge conducting the graveside service. Interment was in the Piru cemetery.

Ray Davis was also a local constable for Piru, was born on March 27, 1898. He died in August 1971 at 73 years of age. I don't have his years of service.

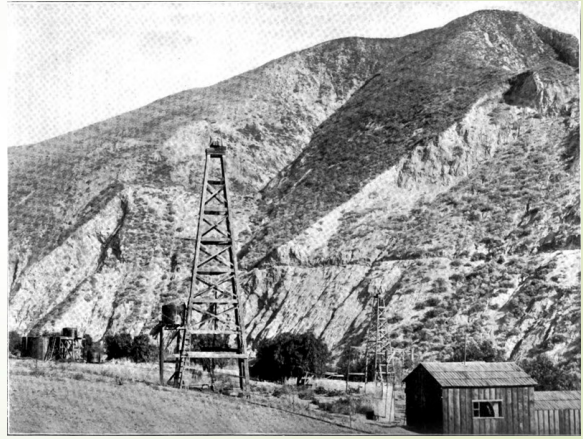
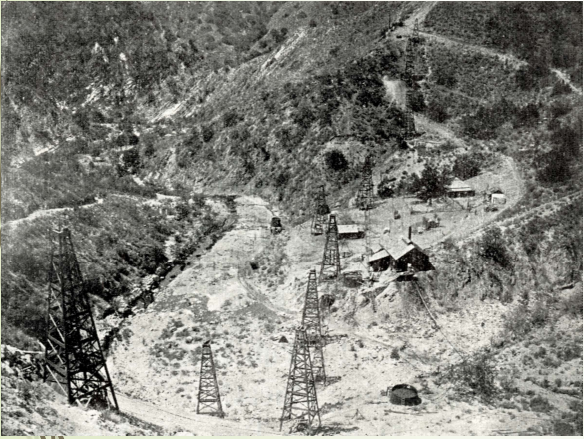
Old Bank of America Today



Comments Mike King:

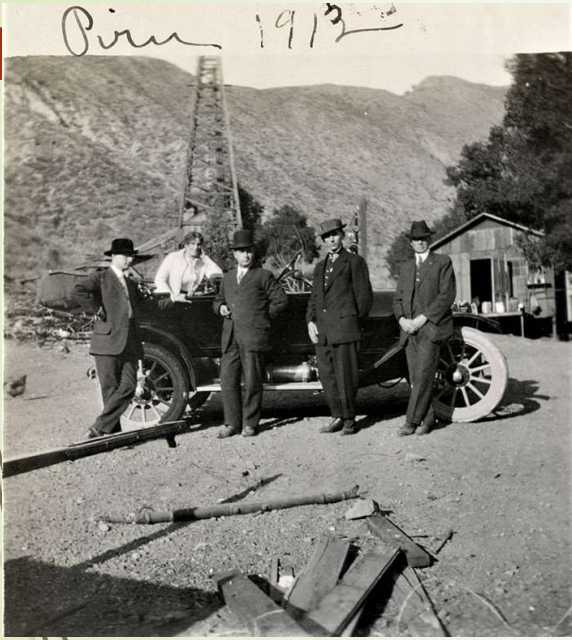
The brick building on the corner was the old Bank of America, now an ice-cream store. Next is the old pool hall, now or was a laundromat. Next in line was Lechler's Grocery Store with the adjacent building being connected and housing his hardware store. The last building in this complex is the Warring Water Company office, seen at the extreme left of this photograph.

Piru Oil Field



Left Picture:

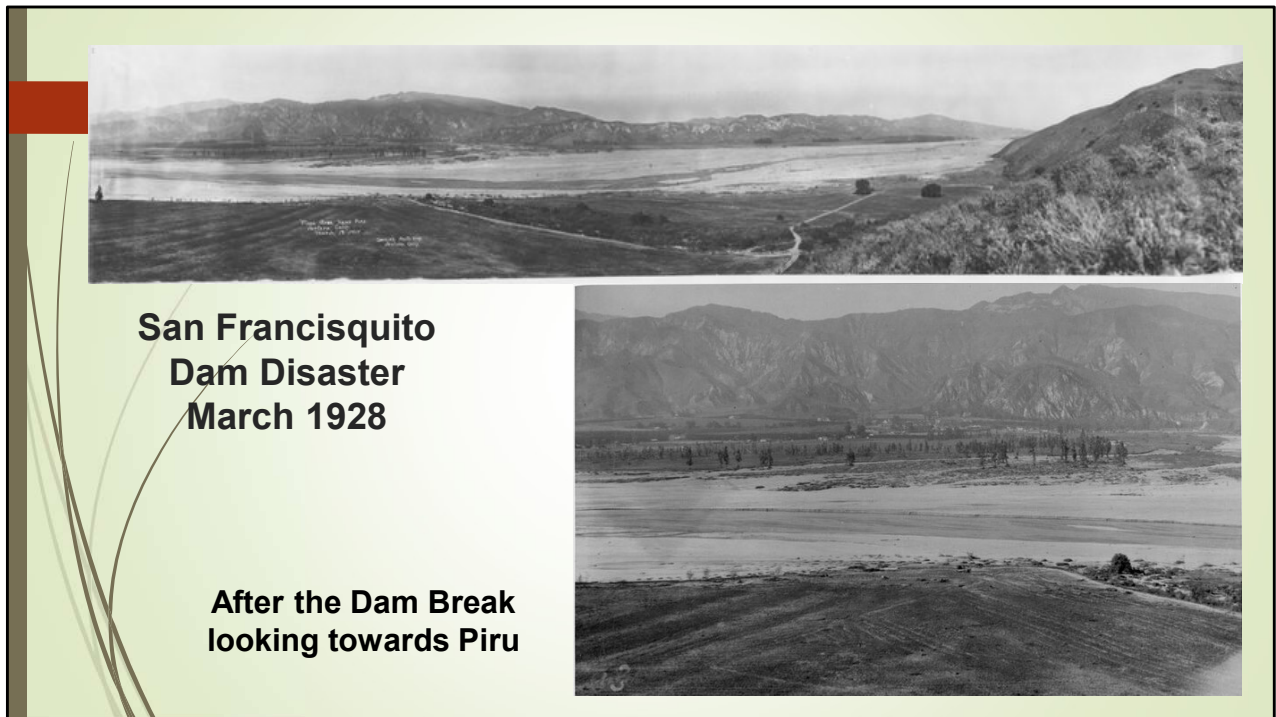
Near Buckhorn station, in Hopper Canyon, the oil industry was assumed considerable importance. Two companies are operating, and pipelines extend to Buckhorn station where there are two large tanks and sidetrack at which the oil cars load. The Fortuna Oil Company is pumping 11 well and drilling the 12th. The wells are two miles up the canyon. A pipeline has been laid from the wells to four large tanks on the hill above the Buckhorn Ranch House. It extends to Buckhorn Station where there is another tank. At this point the cars are loaded. Oil in Hopper was first discovered in 1890.



Piru Visitors to Oil
Field 1913

Highway 126 Old Telegraph Road East
of Piru 1928



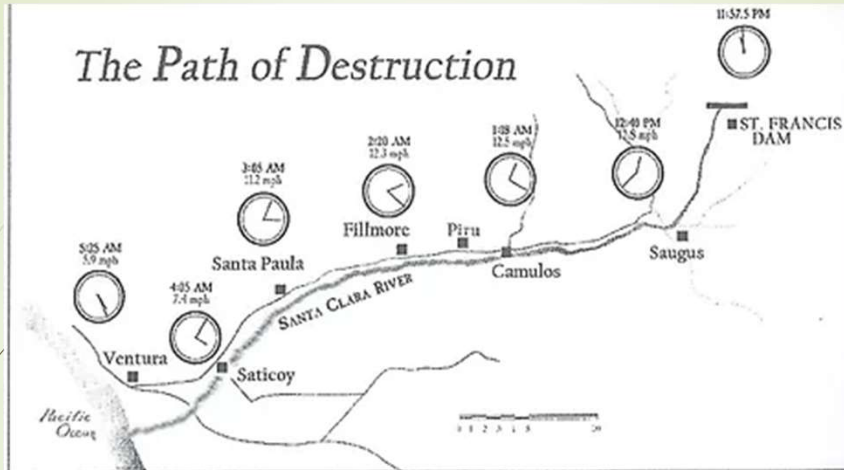


Seven miles up San Francisquito Canyon Road from today's Copper Hill Drive, construction on the 700-foot-long, 205-foot-high St. Francis Dam started in August 1924. With a 12.5-billion-gallon capacity, the reservoir began to fill with water on March 1, 1926. It was completed two months later.

At 11:57:30 p.m. on March 12, 1928, the dam failed, sending a 180-foot-high wall of water crashing down San Francisquito Canyon. An estimated 431 people lay dead by the time the floodwaters reached the Pacific Ocean south of Ventura 5½ hours later.

It was the second-worst disaster in California history, after the great San Francisco earthquake and fire of 1906, in terms of lives lost — and America's worst civil engineering failure of the 20th Century.

The Path of Destruction



THE PATH OF DESTRUCTION. This map shows the 54-mile path of the flood from the dam site in Los Angeles County and down the Santa Clara River Valley through Ventura County to the Pacific Ocean. The clocks show the time that the flood reached each community. The speed is also indicated.

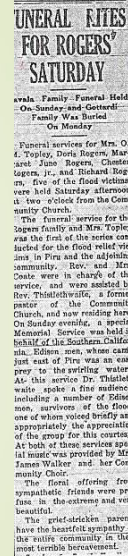
From the book, "Images of America – St. Francis Dam Disaster" by John Nichols

Fillmore Historical Museum

People of the Disaster

Services for Savala family
 Services for the Savala family, victims of the flood, were held at San-Salvador Church, Monday, March 18, at 5 o'clock p.m.
 The family of Stephen L. de Savala, consisting of eleven members, of whom only four survive, four are still missing and the three members for whom the services were held were Mrs. Carlota L. de Savala, aged 24 years; Mrs. Enusta L. de Savala, aged 23 years, and Rosita, aged 4 years. The floral contributions were very beautiful and in abundance and the services were very well attended.
 The bereaved members surviving this once happy family have the sincere sympathy of the community in their sudden affliction.

- Matteo Costamagne
- Pete Pegorare
- Librado Velasco
- Carlotta Savala
- Rosa Savala
- Lucy Savala
- Concepcion Savala
- Juanita Savala
- Jose Savala
- Enriquetta (Sarabia) Savala
- Chester R. Rogers Jr.
- Doris Rosetta Rogers
- Margaret June Rogers
- Richard O. Rogers
- Frances Abalos Gottardi
- Renold Reno Gottardi
- Joe Gottardi Jr.
- Richard Gottardi
- Pauline Gottardi
- Eleanor Lenore Gottardi



SCVHistory.com | [St. Francis Dam Disaster](#) | [FILM: Fillmore After the Flood, March 1928.](#)

The flood carved a disastrous path following the Santa Clara River, people who lived along or close to the river were impacted. There are a great many articles and videos that have detailed and recorded the events of that horrible night. Most lived on the Newhall Ranch.

Gottardi Family

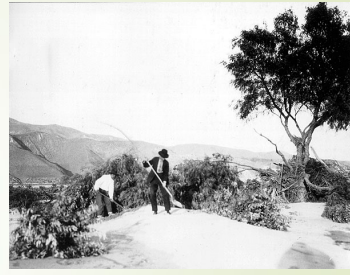


**Joe & Frances
Abalos Gottardi**

**Alvina Gottardi sole child
survivor**



**Joe Gottardi & Friends searching
for family members**



The Francis Dam Disaster during the wee hours of Tuesday, March 13, 1928, when the floodwaters hit the infamous Blue Cut near the Los Angeles-Ventura County Line. That's where the water hit a mountain of solid rock and bounced back to do some of its most ferocious damage, killing 84 men in a nearby Edison camp.

It's also where the Gottardis made their home and rented farmland from The Newhall Land and Farming Co. The Gottardi family members lost in the flood are buried alongside each other in the Piru Cemetery at 3580 Center Street where another child, Paulina Gottardi, was already buried. Born July 5, 1916, Paulina died in infancy one month later on Aug. 18, 1916. Joe Gottardi would join them in a nearby plot 34 years later. He died Jan. 13, 1962.

Killed in the flood were: Frances Abalos Gottardi (mother), born in Texas on March 13, 1890, married January 13, 1912, Reno Gottardi, born Sept. 9, 1914, Joe Gottardi Jr., born July 23, 1917, Richard Gottardi, born July 23, 1919, Pauline Gottardi, born March 7, 1921, Lenore Gottardi, born Dec. 24, 1923.

In their report of March 24, 1928, on the St. Francis Flood for The Newhall Land and Farming Co., company co-owners Almer and George Newhall write:

"West of the Blue Cut Promontory lies what is known as the Blue Cut Field which was being farmed by Joe Gotardi [sic], one of our tenants, all of which to the south of the railroad was totally destroyed. It was in this field that Joe Gotardi had his home which was carried away and from which he and only one of his daughters were saved.

Apparently, they escaped when the house touched ground near Pepper Avenue, the approach to our Orange Orchard on the south side of the river, because on Sunday [March 18] we found him with several of his friends trying to find the bodies of his wife and his family in or around some of the destroyed trees of that area."

According to the 1930 U.S. Census, Joseph Gottardi (as Guttardi) emigrated to the United States in

1906. His occupation was listed as bean rancher.

The 1930 Ventura City Directory shows Alvina as "Elvina." It lists Joe as "Jose" and identifies him as "laborer."

Alvina (b. Dec. 5, 1912, in Piru) married a train conductor named Victor V. Guadagno (b. May 7, 1910, in Illinois) in Ventura County on January 7, 1934. They had at least two children (daughter Frances and son Ronald) and were living in Los Angeles in 1940.

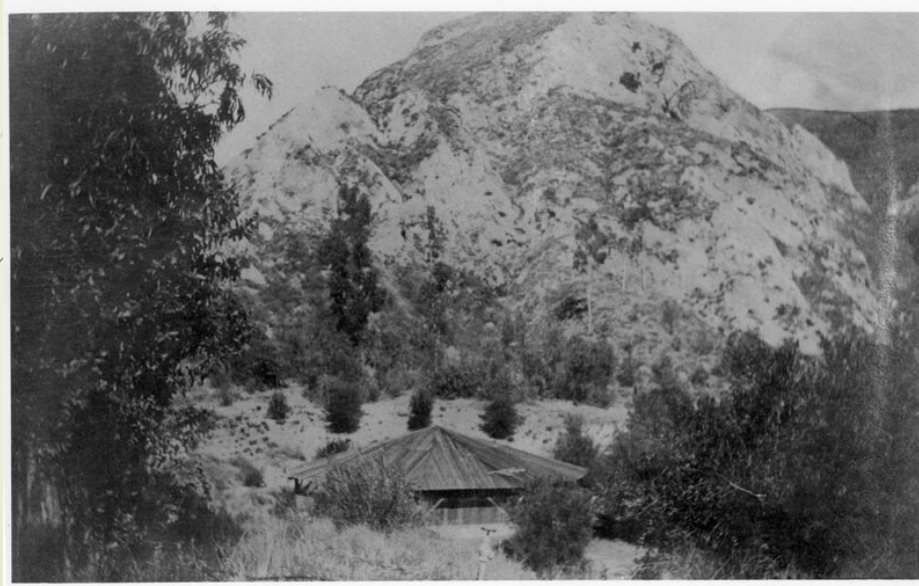
Victor died Feb. 22, 1999, in Santa Paula. Alvina died August 7, 2003, in Camarillo.

San Francisquito Dam Break Monument March 18, 2018, Piru Cemetery



Goodie Morales pictured on the left, built the monument by hand choosing rocks he found in the riverbed. This was dedicated on March 18, 2018, at the Piru Cemetery on the 90th anniversary of the dam break and flood that took so many lives.

First Reservoir behind Cook Mansion



First reservoir built behind Cook Mansion. It is a wooden structure with cone shaped roof. There is a tall mountain in image background taking up the top half of image and a faucet in the foreground of image.

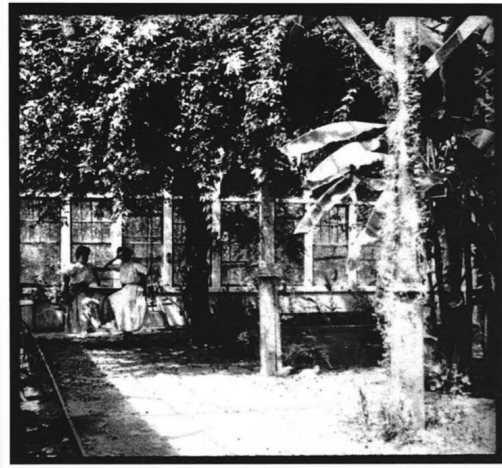
Mansion Driveway circa 1910



Warring History provided by Missy Pennington Cervantez

Owners of the Piru Mansion in 1910 were William & Addie Ramsay, who bought it in 1907, and then who sold it to Hugh & Orrie Warring in 1912.

Mansion Conservatory 1910



The Mansion was sold a total of six times from 1900, when original owner David C. Cook sold it to Piru Oil & Land Company, through the time it was purchased by the Warrings in 1912.

The sale of the Mansion by the Warring Family to Scott & Ruth Newhall, in 1968 would be the 7th and final transaction that the original-historic home would undergo due to a tragic fire in 1981 that burned it to the ground.

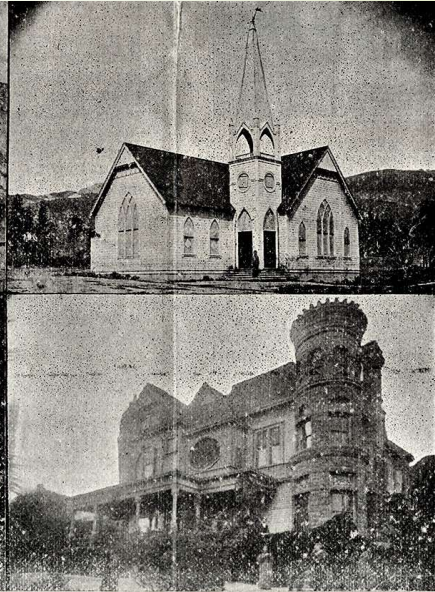
Piru Mansion circa 1920



Piru Mansion circa 1920 from Harry Lechler's Collection 1990

Piru Mansion with attached conservatory, as David C. Cook had it built, photo taken around 1920.

By 1925 the conservatory had been completely removed by Hugh Warring with only the transom windows saved and reused in the covered porch that he built in its place.



Public School Building.
Grounds of David C. Cook.

SCENES IN PIRU CITY.

The Methodist Church.
Residence of David C. Cook.

Piru Mansion 1970



Benjamin Franklin & Missouri Dorcas Easley Warring



Benjamin and Missouri Easley/Warring both arrived in San Jose around 1851, where they met and then married in 1854. They traveled down from San Jose, California to Ventura County, to visit her sister and brother-in-law, who had settled 2 miles West of Piru, in the Santa Clara River Valley.

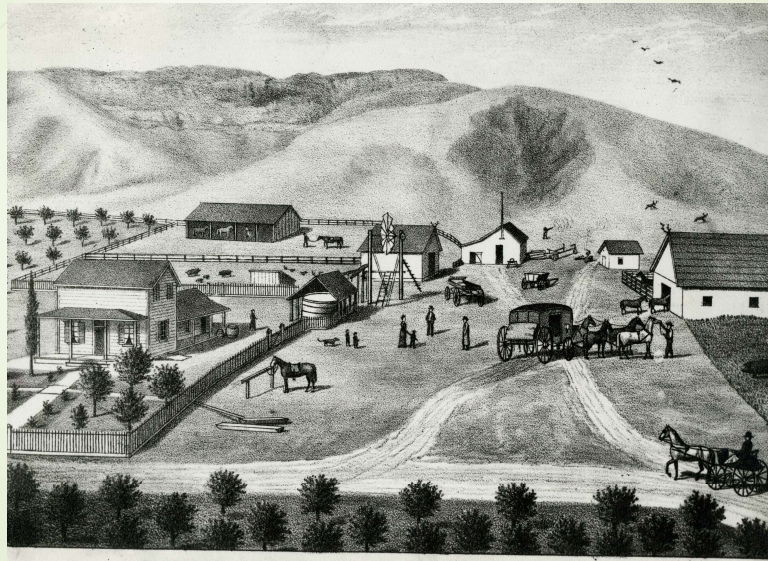
They arrived in September of 1869, with their three children, Hudson, Hugh, and Emma. After an extended stay on the Hopper Ranch, Benjamin Warring secured the rights to apply for entry on the 160 acres that bordered the Hopper's property. After obtaining the rights and homesteading there, Benjamin and Missouri had two more children, Walter and Lottie. The couple made the Piru area their permanent home, as did two of their sons, Hugh and Walter.

The were the first members of the Cienega Methodist Church, which was established in 1873 and located near Cavein Road. They left the Cienega Church to attend Piru Methodist Church once its last structure was built in 1890.

Benjamin F. Warring died at home on Buckhorn Ranch, June 30th, 1903.

Missouri D. Easley/Warring died at home on Buckhorn Ranch, December 31, 1915.

Buckhorn Ranch

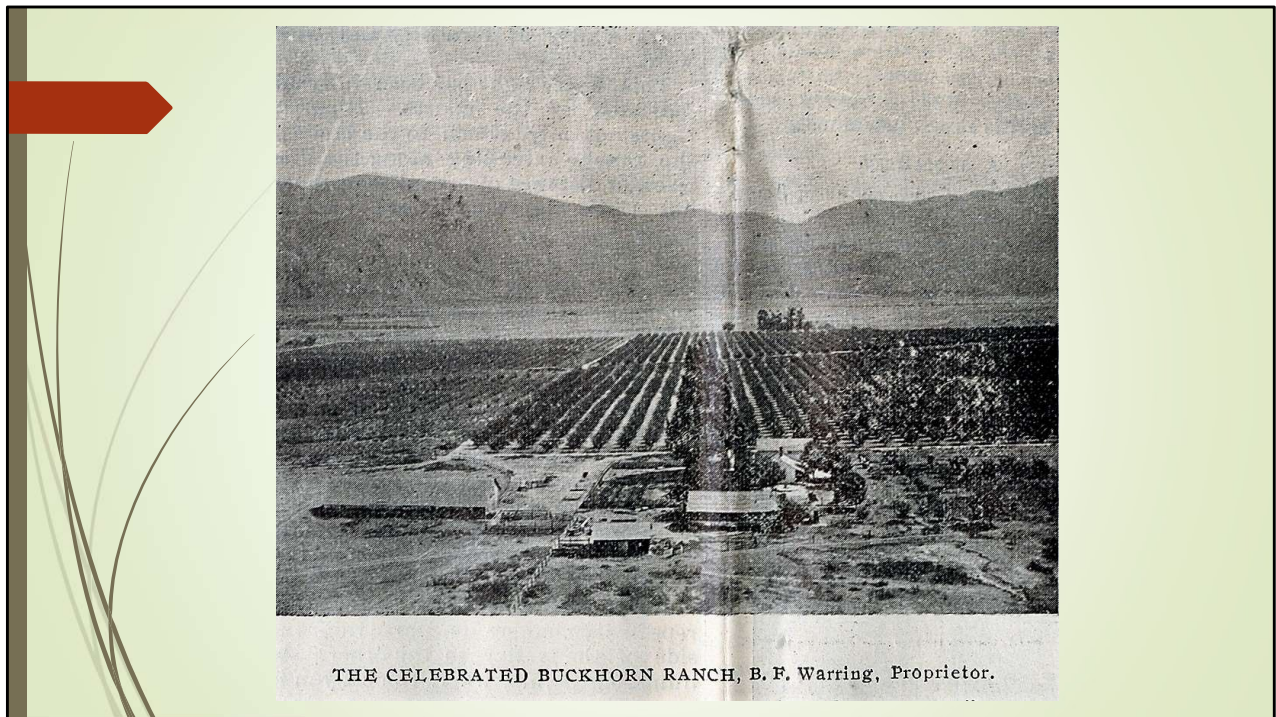


BUCKHORN RANCH, VENTURA COUNTY, B F WARRING PROP.

The first crops on Benjamin Warring's Ranch were hay, wheat & barley, then came fruits and walnuts. Hog and cattle raising followed, along with a honeybee apiary. Citrus came to the Warring Ranch by 1890, becoming the largest, most profitable crops Buckhorn had produced.

Besides their fulltime ranching/farming duties, the Warrings also ran a full-service hospitality stop that provided food, drink, shade, rest or help of any kind. Their place became well known to the commuters along the stage road that connected Los Angeles to Santa Barbara.

In time the Warring Ranch became better known as the Buckhorn, because of directions given by the travelers of how to find the place. They would describe the many buck horns on display, and so it became, "The Buckhorn Place". The family embraced the name and Buckhorn Ranch was established.



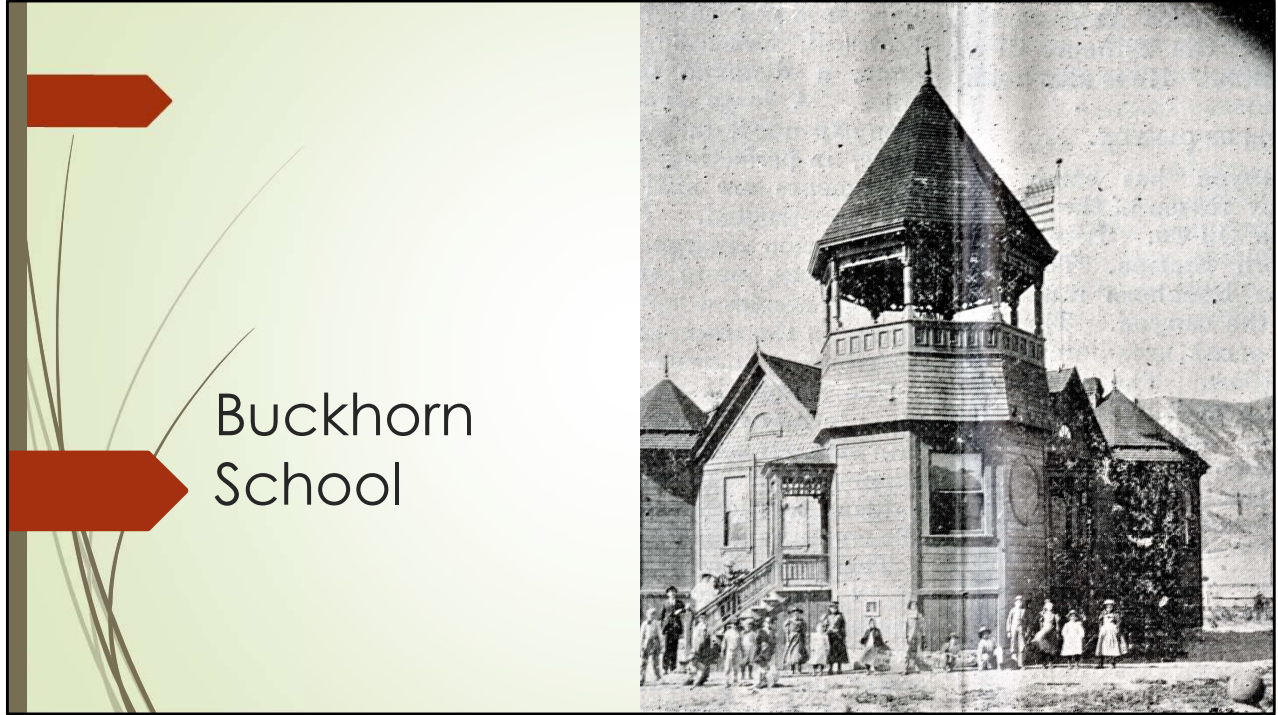
Not only was Buckhorn Ranch providing service to individual travelers, but the stagecoach line placed a relay stop there on their property as well.

Next came the U. S. Post Office, who set up a small mail stop on their property.

To add to the growth of this little village, Benjamin's son Hugh built the first Piru Schoolhouse on his property at Buckhorn in 1882.

When the railroad came through, it established a spur line and depot for oil transport, naming it Buckhorn Station.

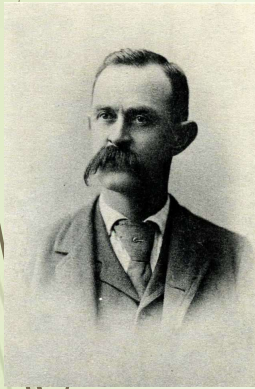
Buckhorn is still considered an "unincorporated populated place" that shows on most online maps of today.



Piru Schoolhouse built on Buckhorn property, by Hugh Warring, in 1882. It burned down before 1913, with another structure nearby.

It got a name change to the Buckhorn Schoolhouse in 1916.

Hugh Elihu & Alice Conway Warring & Sons



Edwin Cecil



Floyd



Alfred



Lester

Hugh Warring & Alice P. Conway married in 1881. They had four sons; Edwin, Floyd, Alfred and Lester. Alice died from illness in 1896.

Hugh and his sons had several businesses in Piru including the Warring Water Company, Piru Fruit Rancho, and the Ventura County Co-Op Store. They were big investors in Piru Citrus Association and the Piru Packing House. Both Hugh and his son Floyd served as director for the Piru Citrus Association.

With the help of fellow Piru Townsmen, they formed their own roads committee. Other Piru Townsmen formed the lights committee where the Piru Chamber of Commerce derived from. Hugh's son Floyd and his brother Walter were very active in the Piru Chamber of Commerce, both serving as its President.

Hugh served on the board for both the Piru Cemetery and the Piru Methodist Church, as director for many years.

Hugh Elihu & Orie Comfort Warring & Sons



Benjamin
"Benny"

Chester & Honor



Hugh married his second wife Orie J. (Comfort) Eaton in 1903. They had two sons together Benjamin (Benny) and Chester (Chet).

Hugh Warring and his wife Orie bought and moved into the Piru Mansion in 1912. Hugh Warring died in the Mansion on October 15, 1939, his wife Orie J. Warring also passed away in the Mansion on March 20, 1954.

About five years before Orie's death, her son Chester moved he and his family into the Mansion to help care for his ailing mother.

He and his wife Honor continued to live there until 1963 when the estate between the Warring Brothers Inc. was divided. Chester chose to take Buckhorn Ranch; his brother Floyd obtained the Piru Mansion, Warring Stone House and Warring Water Company.

The third brother Lester got various Piru Fruit Ranch properties in and around Piru.

With the passing of Floyd Warring, his two daughters inherited the Piru Mansion which included the Warring Stone House and the Warring Water Company, selling the Mansion to the Newhalls in 1968 and continuing the management of the water company until they sold it in 1992.

The Warring family's ownership of the Mansion spanned over the course of 56 years, making them the longest running proprietaries of the historic estate in its history, both before and after the fire.

Warring Stone House



The photo on the right includes, Elizabeth Warring, her Mother Frances Reasoner & Floyd Warring

The Warring Stone House was built in 1934 adjacent to the Piru Mansion on the Warring Ranch. Floyd Warring had it built as the personal residence for he and his wife Elizabeth (Reasoner) Warring.

Warring Water Company



Left Photo - Chester and his nephew Jack Warring, working on the streets of Piru for the Warring Water Company circa 1950s.

Right Photo – Taken on September 13, 2022, the before the official name change.

Hugh Warring took over the Piru Domestic Water Company in 1924, after the company became defunct and behind on its taxes. Up until 1930 the water company business was conducted out of a shack sized office that Hugh built.

He had the small office hauled up to the Piru Methodist Church property and donated it to the Boy Scout Troop of Piru.

Before its use was discontinued and donated, Hugh purchased the lot next to the Post Office where he built the brick building that exists today.

He and his sons ran his 3 newly incorporated businesses from this office, one of which was the water company. Hugh had the name changed the name from Piru Domestic Water Company to the Warring Water Company upon incorporation.

It remained in that name and at that same location up until this year, when the new owners officially change it on September 14, 2022.

Hugh Warring and sons were responsible for installing all Piru's first fire hydrants when the town received its first pump action fire truck.

Under their management, all the water mains were replaced, the outdated water system was revamped with a new well and pumping station.

The Warring Water Service Pump House, located at 3880 Camulos Street was recorded on a 1987 list of historical sites and buildings.

Warring Park




Hugh Warring donated a portion of his Piru Fruit Rancho property to the County of Ventura for the sole purpose of providing a park for the town of Piru.

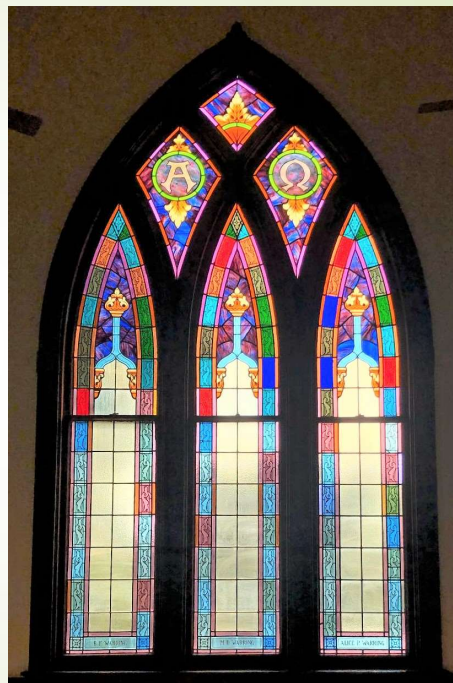
The process was completed with the transfer of the title of land certificate to Ventura County in February of 1937. It is stipulated on the deed that the park was to be named "Warring Park".

Warring Park is a California Historical Landmark as it is the site that Portola Expedition found the Chumash People group known as the Piru Indian tribe on August 11, 1769. The site became California Historical Landmark number 624 on October 31, 1957.

The Landmark read: On August 11, 1769, the explorers and priests accompanying Portola found a populous village of Piru Indians near this point. Carrying their bowstrings loose, the Indians offered necklaces of stones, in exchange for which Portola presented them with beads.



One of the windows
donated to the Piru
Methodist Church by the
Warring Family

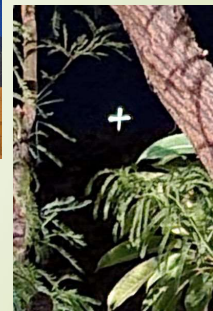
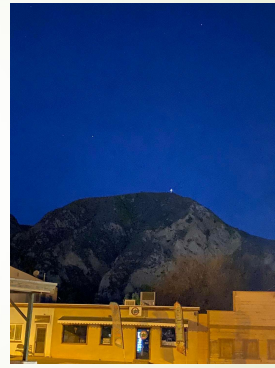


In 1935 members of the Piru Methodist Church donated funds to have art glass windows installed inside the sanctuary, that honored their loved ones or most prominent contributors of the Church.

This window was donated by Hugh Warring and his three oldest sons, Edwin, Floyd, and Lester. The names at the bottom of the window are B F Warring, M D Warring and Alice P Warring – Hugh's Father, Mother and first Wife.

During the same year Hugh was celebrated for donating a massive and beautiful pipe organ that was built in the 1860s by the William A. Johnson Organ Company of Westfield Massachusetts. He had it shipped from the east coast, where it made its way around Cape Horn, then delivered at the port of San Francisco. Hugh saw to its safe transport from there, down to its new home at the Piru Methodist Church.

Piru Cross on the Hill



Picture on the left shows John Avila, Harry Lechler and John France atop the hill at the Cross in April of 1985, as you can see it is a wooden Cross, town history states that the first wooden Cross was placed on the hill in 1964 in memory of President Kennedy. Julio Perez Jr., David Campos, Manuel P. Torres, Danny Torres, Tom Rodriguez and others erected the wooden cross.

A metal one was made later and erected after a fire burned the wooden one.

On December 19, 2020, Veterans Julio Perez Jr. and Roy Ruiz attached lighting to the Cross so it could be seen at night.

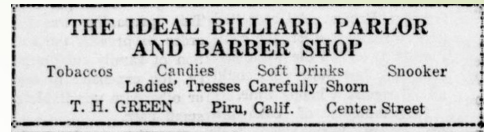
Thank-you to all who had a hand in placing and caring for the Cross that sits atop the hill overlooking our town.



Businesses

“What Piru Has” from Piru News circa 1930

Bank
Drugstore
General Store
4 Grocery Stores
6 Gasoline Filling Stations & Garages
3 Combined Barbershops & Pool Rooms
2 Restaurants
Gent’s Furnishing & Notions Store
Furniture Store
Other Smaller Business



Courtesy of Fillmore Historical Museum

Piru has a bank, a drugstore, four grocery stores, six gasoline stations, and garages, a furniture store, a general store selling almost every article in common use. A gent’s furnishings and notions store, three combined barbershop and pool rooms, two restaurants and other smaller businesses.

The Bank of America, a branch institution until last week under the name Bank of Italy, has been operating as a part of the great banking chain since February 8 when it was taken over from the Fillmore State Bank. The state bank started here in June 1918 as a branch of the Fillmore institution. In good times deposits at the local bank have reached a total of \$350,000. Owing to business depression deposits just now are under that figure. The bank was started as a one-man affair by W. L. Ramsay who operated it for six months. Clyde E. Spencer then took charge and managed it for three years when he resigned to enter the real estate business. James Brady is the present manager and is assisted by Leo Sheffield. teller. Brady declares that all charges for various transactions are unusually low at the local bank. The bank owns its own building, a neat brick structure at Center and Main streets.

The Drugstore: An up-to-date drugstore carrying a complete line of articles usually sold in a modern pharmacy is operated by E. C. Brehm, who has been in the drug business for 31 years and who has been a registered pharmacist 24 years. A large line of soft drinks and ice cream concoctions are sold at the soda fountain. All kinds of drugs, drug sundries, patent medicines, toilet articles, stationery, clocks, magazines, etc., are sold here. Brehm makes a specialty of filling prescriptions. The owner came here three years ago and about a year ago built the red brick structure that houses the store. The business was purchased from A. L. Wilkie, who gave Piru its first drugstore on November 25, 1925. Brehm has been a druggist in Missouri, Kansas and Texas.

Situated beside the bank is the Ideal Billiard Parlor and Barbershop of T. H. Green who built the brick structure in which the business is housed four years ago after operating in another structure for three years. Two barber chairs and a soft drink, tobacco and cigar counter are located in the front room. In the rear there are two pool tables and two snooker tables which usually are kept busy especially of evenings.

Macy's Grocery Store, operated by Mrs. Laura Macy and her son, Les, stands beside Green's barbershop and is housed in a brick building erected by the Macys about the same time the barbershop structure was built and is the same size. The business is one of the Blue & White stores, which means that it is owned locally by an Independent dealer but that goods are purchased from the Blue & White concern. A high-grade line of groceries, canned goods, fruits, some vegetables, cigars, tobaccos and candies are handled here.

The Macys took over the store seven years ago from T. T. Kirkham who operated across the street, where Mrs. Delia Trotter now has a furniture store. The grocery enjoys a large trade from both the town and country people.

Cornelius Store: W. G. Cornelius operates the next store down the street in conjunction with the post office. Everything from post cards to radios and from clocks to overalls are sold in this store but especially gents furnishings, notions, confectionery, cigars, magazines and tobacco.

Cornelius built the store building this year. It is a neat stucco structure with cement floor and is one of the coolest places in town on hot summer days. The proprietor has been in business here ten years.

At one time in partnership with Hugh Warring, he started a store in the Buckhorn district, had one in Piru and later bought a third here and started what was known as the Ventura Cooperative association. Cornelius managed the three stores until his health failed. For a time after coming to Piru, he had a health resort in Lechler canyon, but this was destroyed by fire and a flood.

The Piru Furniture Store, operated by Mrs. Delia Trotter, had a unique beginning. Mrs. Trotter says that she and her husband had so many household articles that they did not know where to keep them. These things were stored in their garage and everywhere possible. One day she had a bright idea. She suggested that if her husband would put a floor in the garage, she would open a secondhand furniture store and sell the belongings. This proposal was carried out at once and "things went like hot cakes," Mrs. Trotter said, because there were so many oil workers in town then. The neighbors took advantage of the opportunity and bought furniture and other articles they didn't want, and Mrs. Trotter sold them.

After that Mrs. Trotter went into the business in earnest. She moved into her brick building on Center street and has increased her stock to include both new and used furniture, kitchen utensils, dishes, rugs, etc. Her store is now in its fourth year.

“What Piru Has” from Piru News circa 1930 Part 2

United Mercantile Store The Pioneer Market

Belty's Barber Shop The Mission Inn The Piru Garage

Ruiz Barbershop Highway Market

Bowdle & Bowdle Service Station Harry's Lunch

Stewart's Garage The Ramona Garage Tate's Garage

La Victoria Store Physician's Office

Shoe Repair & Harness Shop



Clyde E. Spencer

Courtesy of Fillmore Historical Museum

Piru News, Volume IV, Number 41, 20 November 1930

The United Mercantile store is a branch of a Fillmore concern of the same name. Here it had its origin in the Ventura County Cooperative association, organized by W. G. Cornelius and Hugh Warring and which for a time operated three stores in this district. George Alltis is the present store manager. A general line of dry goods, clothing, notions, shoes, groceries, paints and hardware is sold. What is now the United Mercantile store was started more than a quarter of a century ago by W G. Cornelius and Hugh Warring.

Cornelius explains that after the Piru Land and Oil company bought the interests of David C. Cook here, a general merchandising store was started by the company with W. H. Fleet as manager.

Then Cornelius and Warring, who already operated a store at Buckhorn, came into Piru and launched a general store and butcher shop. Fleet sold his interests in the company store to a firm called La Point and Lawrence.

A price cutting war ensued between the two stores with Cornelius and Warring meeting the competition with even lower prices until finally such a method was deemed folly and La Point and Lawrence sold their store to Cornelius and Warring.

Lacking funds sufficient to carry on the new owners organized the Ventura Cooperative association with twenty-five members paid up at \$100 each. Cornelius acted as store manager.

The enterprise proved highly successful, and it expanded and opened a branch at Fillmore after buying the stores of George Tighe at Fillmore and Sespe. Many new members were then taken into the association from Piru. Fillmore and Bardsdale. In later years and under new management the concern was incorporated, and it became the present United Mercantile company.

The Pioneer Market which recently was purchased from A. Nelson by Clays and Nary and which later was bought by Clays and Clays, sells all kinds of fresh and all meats and vegetables and ice. Mr. and Mrs. Clays owned the market some four years before it was sold to Nelson.

Belty's Barbershop, R O Belty claims to have been operating a place of business longer than any other person

in Piru. He has been in the barber business here for 31 years. Belty has three pool tables, two barbershops and sells candy, cigars, hair tonics, etc.

The Mission Inn operated by Mr. and Mrs. B. A. Clough is located on Center street at the Intersection of Telegraph road in its own building. The Cloughs were proprietors first nine years ago and then were out a year. They returned in January of this year. Four years ago, the owners doubled the size of the building. Short orders, meals, soft drinks, candies and cigars may be obtained here. The cook is Miss Lillian Davis and Miss Elizabeth Wagener is the present waitress.

Next down the street is the Piru Garage operated by J. P. "Slim" Davis, handling Standard and Edington gasoline, Willard batteries and doing a general auto repair. Davis has been in the garage business there for two and one-half years. The garage is headquarters for the Piru volunteer fire department, the apparatus being housed there gratis.

Ruiz' Barbershop: For three years G. T. Ruiz has been conducting a pool room, barber shop, soft drink place and card tables in a building belonging to the Eastside Brewing company. Tobaccos, cigars and candies also are sold there.

Highway Market: A general line of groceries, meats, vegetables, fresh fruits and nuts are sold at the Highway Market, of which Clyde E. Spencer is the proprietor. A real estate and insurance business is also conducted in this store. Spencer, who formerly was the local bank manager, has considerable trade from motorists as well as townspeople living in that section of town. He takes a pride in keeping his store looking "shipshape" and clean. The Bowdle and Bowdle service station is 100 per cent Richfield in gasoline and oils. Tires and various auto accessories also are sold there. Five cabins for tourists are operated in connection with the service station and during the tourist season a road business is done in rentals. The Piru dance hall is situated on the Bowdle property. This structure is 40 x 80 feet in dimension. Across the bridge from Bowdles a gasoline station was installed this summer and is operated by Tom Dominguez.

Harry's Lunch: "T-Bone" Harry Ridenbaugh conducts a restaurant at the intersection of Telegraph road and Center street. Meals and short orders, soft drinks and ice cream products are sold here.

Opposite Harry's lunch is Stewart's Garage, oil station, and machine shop. The proprietors are Albert and his father, A. J. Stewart. General automobile repair work is done here.

The Ramona Garage which soon is to be the home of the Piru Ford automobile agency in a new building now under construction, is conducted at the Telegraph road and Main street intersection by James and Ace Wallace, brothers. This is another 100 per cent Richfield station. In addition to doing a general repair business, soft drinks, candies, tobaccos and oranges are sold here.

Tate's Garage: On the dairy road south of town, Oliver Tate does a gasoline, oil and automobile repair business at a place known as Tate's garage.

La Victoria Store is a Mexican chain store situated on Main street doing business in a general line of groceries. One of the latest additions to the business section is a physician's office which was opened a few months ago by Dr. Hart D. Wilson, a young man who came here after serving his internship in an Oakland hospital.

For twenty years William Chessani has had a shoe repair and harness shop in Piru. His shop is now on Center street. He formerly conducted the business in a room at his home.

Brehm's Drug & Dry Goods Store



Piru Couple Married In South

Wee Kirk o' the Heather in Forest Lawn Memorial park in Glendale was the setting last Tuesday morning for the wedding of Miss Marjorie Brehm and Leo Sheffield, popular Piru couple.

The bride was attended by Miss Alice Warring and given in marriage by her father, E. C. Brehm. Charles Miller was the best man and Rev. E. H. Haydock, pastor of the Piru M. E. church, heard the vows.

After a honeymoon trip to Kansas and Missouri, the couple will reside in Piru, where Mr. Sheffield is manager of the United Mercantile store. They will visit the latter's parents at Fort Scott, Kansas.

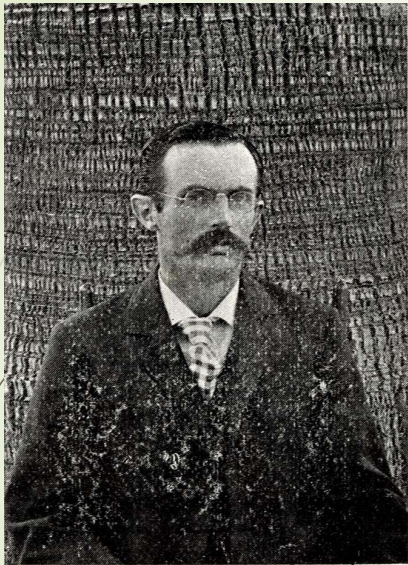
* * *

Missy Pennington Cervantez shared this picture of her Grandfather Chet Warring at Brehm's Drug & Dry Goods Store.

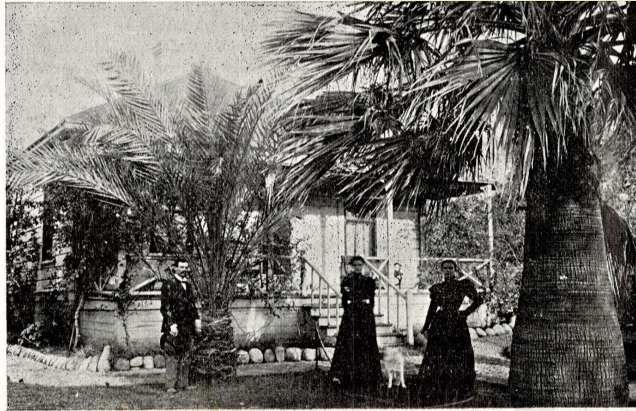
Edmund Brehm owned the store during the 1930s, not sure of date range at this time, followed by the Murphy's who owned in in the 1960s.

People's memories of the store include the pharmacy/soda fountain area and a sundries department on the other side. Sodas were made upon order, they also had hamburgers to feed the hungry people in town.

Per Harry Schumacher's posting in Facebook, his Grandmother Ora Van Epps managed the store when the Brehms moved away. He believes Ed Brehm dies relatively young of a heart attack. The store had a slight upper level where cloth material was sold, hence the store had Drug and Dry Goods in its name. His Grandmother was proud that she did all the buying for the store, driving to L.A. twice a month. She retired around 1960.

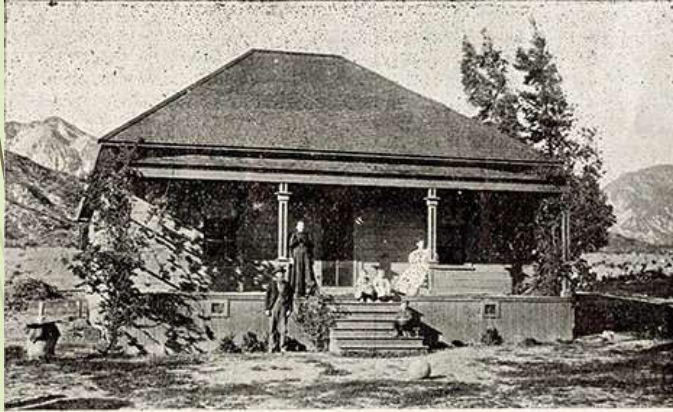


W. H. FLEET.
Superintendent Piru Fruit Rancho.

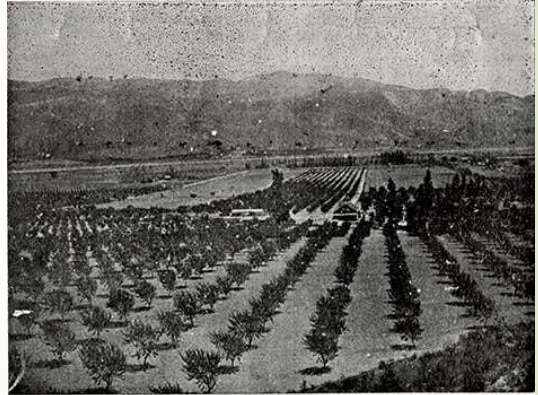


RESIDENCE AND PROPERTY OF W. H. FLEET.
Superintendent Piru Fruit Rancho.

W. H. Fleet also managed the United Mercantile Store.



RESIDENCE, J. M. HORTON, PIRU CITY.



FRUIT RANCH OF J. M. HORTON.
Pioneer Settler. As seen from the hills on the north.



Dr. Hart &
Thelma
Wilson

Piru had 3 physicians, 1st recorded was Dr. Blackledge, then Dr. Sogard and lastly Dr. Hart Dudley Wilson

BANK IS ROBBED, HEAD KIDNAPED

Leisurely Bandits Get \$6000
in Ventura County Raid

Lock Doors, Darken Offices
and Ransack Vaults

Child and Father Brought to
Los Angeles in Auto

Four tender-hearted bandits who pocketed their revolvers because the guns made a little girl cry yesterday robbed the Piru branch of the Fillmore State Bank of \$6000 and then forced C. S. Spencer, manager of the bank, and his 8-year-old daughter, Mary Ella, to accompany them to Los Angeles.

Arriving here after a leisurely drive, the bandits requested Mr. Spencer to name his destination and let him out at the home of his sister-in-law, Mrs. Guy Davidson, 240 South Bonnie Brae street.

Mr. Spencer immediately telephoned the sheriff's office, and Deputies Allen and Savage were assigned to investigate.

PREPARING TO CLOSE

At 2:45 p.m. yesterday, according to the manager's story, he was preparing to close the bank, having allowed the rest of his staff to go home. His little daughter had stopped on her way from school and was waiting in the bank for him to take her home. Three men entered, one carrying a suit case and another a handbag.

Stopping up to the window, one of them asked, "Did Jenkins leave any money here for us?"

Mr. Spencer knew no one by that name and told them so. Then he was confronted by three large-caliber revolvers and ordered to put his hands up, which he promptly did. One of the men kept him covered and the others methodically locked the doors of the bank and drew the shades.

RANSACKED BANK

The pair ransacked the open vaults, taking plenty of time to the job. Mr. Spencer states that they took \$5000 in currency, all small bills, \$500 in silver from the trays and \$100 in postage stamps. Bonds, money orders and travelers' checks were left untouched.

While the systematic looting was going on, two customers tried to get into the bank, Spencer learned later. The fourth bandit, driver of the automobile, told them they couldn't get in. When they expressed surprise, saying that it was not yet time for the bank to be closed, he told them that Spencer had gone home.

When the three bandits inside the bank had finished looting it, they informed Spencer that he and his daughter must come with them. Two of them escorted the manager and little girl into the car, while the third carefully locked the bank.

DROVE TO LOS ANGELES

They then drove slowly to Los Angeles, traveling, Spencer declared, not more than twenty-five miles an hour. Little Mary Ella, who was frightened, began to cry. The bandits questioned her, and she told them the revolvers frightened her. The men then put their guns away, and when she complained of feeling cold, wrapped her in an overcoat, giving another to Spencer.

During the forty-nine-mile drive, Spencer declared they discussed the robbery, laughing over how easy it had been, and expressing relief that they had not been forced to hurt anyone in getting the money. The man who drove the car then told him about the two customers having tried to get in.

They politely asked him where he wished to get off, and drove to South Bonnie Brae street, stopping their car two doors from Mrs. Davidson's home. Holding Spencer in the car a moment, two of the men got out and changed the license plates of the car. Then they released him and sped away.

Piru Bank Robbery December 11, 1922

IN VENTURA COUNTY

The village of Piru, where the robbery occurred, is midway between Saugus and Fillmore and is in Ventura county. News of the robbery was not known there until several hours after it happened. The robbers' plans were apparently so well executed that no disturbance was caused and no alarm given.

L. F. Sullivan, father-in-law of Mr. Spencer, said last night that he knew nothing of it until about 5:30 p.m. Others in Piru and Fillmore were amazed at the news when notified.

Spencer said last night that the bank's loss was fully covered by insurance. In describing the four bandits, he stated they were from 24 to 45 years old; two wore brown corduroy trousers and two wore khaki trousers; three had soft felt hats and the fourth, the driver of the car, wore a Scotch plaid cap; two were about five feet ten inches tall, the other two about five feet six inches tall.

Forced to Take Ride With Bank Looters



C. F. Spencer and His Daughter, Mary Ella

Asserted Leader and Member of Criminal Gang



Nabbed in Huge Round-up
Above is Harold Gillette in one of his poses as an actor and below is a
study of Jesse ("Doc") Harsh, reputed leader of the gang.

Belty Barbershop



Richard O. Belty married Clara Dominguez, one of Juan Dominguez's daughters.

THE TOWNSHIP of Piru is located at the sloping base of high hills which border the mouth of the canyon through which Piru creek flows to its junction with the Santa Clara river by. The location commands a fine scenic view and the climate of the locality is excellent. It has a fine graded school situated on an

elevation overlooking the whole valley and the educational features are well looked after. Religious services are regularly held by the Methodist minister resident here, and the generally progressive spirit of Southern California is abundant.



GRAMMAR SCHOOL AT PIRU.

Many years of experience has fully proved that the agricultural lands immediately adjacent to Piru are as fertile as any part of Southern California. This is especially true of its citrus fruit areas, and injury to its fruit groves is very rare even when other districts suffer serious loss. This fact is now generally becoming known and appreciated.

During the past year much progress has been made in the development of its citrus and deciduous fruit lands. The establishment of a packing house here has also done much to stimulate the extension of its citrus fruit areas and the output for this year of 1917 will probably exceed 100 cars of oranges alone. The district is noted also for its immense production of the finest apples known on the market.

The future holds large possibilities for the establishment of a running factory here, for every variety of small fruits as well as apricots thrive and produce generously without climatic hindrance of any kind. Tomatoes, peas, beans and all other vegetables are most prolific in bearing and without question this locality offers a fine opportunity for the operation of such a plant as nearly continuous throughout the year as any other locality.

R. O. BELTY.

One of Piru's Pioneer Business Men. Mr. Belty commenced business in Piru in 1898; he is by way of being a native son also having been born in Los Angeles in 1860. He has been a resident of Ventura

county since 1887. He married about twelve years ago, a Miss Dominguez, a member of the famous California family of that name, and are now the parents of three children. Mr. Belty was first attracted to Piru by the reports of the activity in the nearby oil fields. When this excitement proved abortive and died away,

he elected to make Piru his home and went into business. He has prospered since that time and is still entirely satisfied to remain in Piru. He has perhaps as large a circle of friends and acquaintances as any man



R. O. BELTY.

In one section of Ventura county, and his place in Piru has long been a sort of a general meeting place. He has a well appointed billiard and pool hall, a handsomely fitted up barber shop and one of the best stocks of cigars and soft drinks in the county. He has added during the past year a gasoline dispensing station, a stock of auto accessories and a stock of fancy groceries.

Mr. Belty is a booster always for his home section and this is one of the reasons for his many friends.

PIRU CITRUS ASSOCIATION.

This association was formed about three years ago by Mr. C. S. Johnson, who has long been identified with the citrus interests of the county. The association allied itself with the Shubert family, becoming a member of the California Orange growers



Association and markets its fruit under the Shubert label. Their own individual labels are "Home of Valencia," "Mansion" and "Piru." About 125 cars were sent to market during the last shipping season and it is expected that some 150 cars will be marketed during the present season, of which 50 cars will be Valencia. The association so far has packed no lemons but expects shortly to do so, as the young lemon groves in their territory come into bearing. The quality of the fruit packed has been much above the average for the state and the price realized to the growers have been correspondingly good. The officers and directors of the association are as follows: D. Peabody, president; T. P. Del Valle, vice-president; C. S. Johnson, secretary. These gentlemen with A. N. Fairbanks and J. H. Alcock, make up the Board of Directors. The active affairs of the association are in the hands of Mr. Cecil Bell, manager, who gives his entire time to the affairs of the association. A new packing house is contemplated in the near future, and as the planted acreage comes into bearing, this exchange ought to grow to one of the county's important industries.

PIRU'S MAGNIFICENT SETTING.

The view in this home taken in Piru, notably those of the grammar school and those of "The Mansion," the residence of Mr. Hugh Warding, show what a magnificent background of mountains is north of the town. They form a beautiful setting for the town.



AUGUST HAEUPTLE PASSED AWAY AT PIRU ON TUESDAY

Was a Well Known Resident of This
Section Many Years.

Between 1 and 2 o'clock Tuesday morning, at his home in Piru, occurred the death of August Haeuptle. The passing on of Mr. Haeuptle was not unexpected. In his passing this section loses one of its oldest and most respected residents. He would have been 66 years old this coming September. He is survived by his widow.

Mr. Haeuptle was a native of the state of Ohio, where he lived many years. He came to California 35 years ago. Most of this time he lived in this section. He was engaged in the butcher business for many years, both at Fillmore and in Santa Paula. Of late years he has been living in Piru where he pursued the business occupation of butcher and grocer.

The funeral services were conducted on Thursday afternoon

SDTA

Piru Meat Market

FRESH SMOKED AND SALT MEATS
Oysters and Fish Every Friday

PHONE MAIN 191

GUS HAEUPTLE - - - - Proprietor



LOOKING BACK

Slice of life in Piru meat market

The tiny town of Piru, a town that insists on calling itself a city, had just about one of everything once upon a time. Above is an old photo of the Pioneer Meat Market in the old Piru Co-op. Nobody knows for sure exactly when this picture was taken, but the Ventura County Historical Society's librarian, Patricia Sales, speculates that it was in the early '30s, or possibly earlier.

Peggie Lechler, wife of Piru historian Harry Lechler, concurs with the librarian. At left, she said, is the late George Miller, who, according to Mrs. Lechler, was a mighty fine carpenter and

handyman about town, who was known for his good cooking as well. At right behind the marble-faced counter is M.V. Greys, who owned the market. No one could identify the man on the right. The co-op was patterned after a larger co-op in Filmore, and for decades it thrived, Mrs. Lechler said. Harry Lechler, who was Piru's grocer until his retirement some years ago, landed his first job in the place. By the late '30s the market and co-op was losing business, and eventually the enterprise went bust. It became the Piru Theater, which burned to the ground in the late '40s.



Vera Ruiz Ortega & Kate
Martinez Pillado in front of
the Piru Theater



Sanchez Grocery 1946
or 1947 -
Barbara Mason

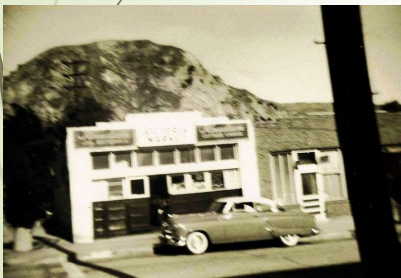
This was when the store was across the street where the San Salvador Mission Church is now. Arnulfo Sanchez owned and operated the store.

Sanchez Grocery



Sanchez Grocery where it stands today, Arnulfo Sanchez was the owner operator, followed by Louie, Jimmy and long-time friend John Avila.

La Victoria Store



La Victoria Market in Piru CA, owned by the Molina Family

Inside La Victoria Store



Ben Molina and the inside of his store.

La Victoria Store



Ben Molina and his Sister Del Molina Cadena

Bowdle Service Station



Frank Bowdle, Piru Resident, Succumbs

Frank W. Bowdle, a resident of the Piru area for 28 years, died last night at his Telegraph road home after an illness of several months' duration.

Mr. Bowdle had been a member of the county fire department for 20 years. He was born Aug. 4, 1879, in New Sharon, Iowa.

Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Helen Bowdle; a son, Lawrence, North Hollywood; two daughters, Miss Gertrude Bowdle, Piru, and Mrs. Doris Lindsay, Redlands; three grandchildren; and a sister, Mrs. Gertrude Vickers, Pasadena.

He was a member of the Inglewood Masonic lodge for many years.

Funeral arrangements will be announced by the H. B. Skilling mortuary in Fillmore.

The Bowdle and Bowdle service station is 100 percent Richfield in gasoline and oils. Tires and various auto accessories also are sold there. Five cabins for tourists are operated in connection with the service station and during the tourist season a good business is done in rentals. The Piru Dance Hall is situated on the Bowdle property. The structure is 40 x 80 feet in dimension.

Across the bridge from Bowdle's a gasoline station was installed the summer of 1930 and it was operated by Tom Dominguez.

Information courtesy of Fillmore Historical Museum.

Taken from the Piru Newspaper articles in 1930, "What Piru Has"

Loren &
Fern
Campbell



Lupe &
Eleanor
Arias



Arias Gas Station



Lupe Arias purchased the Texaco Gas Station from Loren and Fern Campbell in 1959 and sold it to John McKenna in the late 1980s. The station started out as a Texaco Station and in the 1970s became Exxon.



Arias Gas Station

Lupe Arias standing with his in-laws, CO & Litie Delano

The Miller's Bait Shop



Lee Miller wife Callie Miller Grandson Don Riddle



Provided by Vicki Henderson Jimenez

Vicki's Grandparents Lee and Callie Miller owned Miller's Bait from about 1953 to 1968. It was located at the entrance to Piru Canyon, across from the Torrey Vista (current day Disco Sally's).

Vicki remembers her Grandparents owning a house on the West side of their home that they used for storage and for Red Worm beds. She vaguely remembers her Grandmother packing worms for sale, thinking how fresh they were.

The 1970s it became Arnold's Bait Shop Wagon.

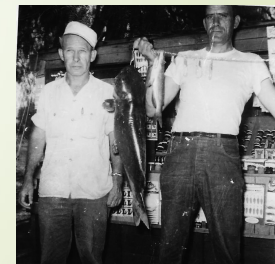
Fisherman at Lee Miller's Bait Shop



**Salvador Chavy
Martinez**



**Unknown Fisherman
with Callie Miller In
the Back**



Customers of the Miller's Bait Shop:

Chavy Martinez and his family were long-time members of the Piru Community.

The others are not known but a nice catch.

Piru Fire Station Year Unknown



Piru Citrus Association



Frank Acariz Packing House



2nd from Left: Grampy (Frank Acariz) with coworkers at orange packing plant



(on left) Grampy (Frank Acariz) at work at the orange packing plant

Frank Salcido is in the picture on the left.

Packing House Ladies



Lucy Aguirre is in this picture

Piru Packing House Ladies



Mid 1950s

Picture on the Left:

Sitting: Unknown, Unknown, Lucy Rodriguez Alverdi, Lupe Cardona Dominguez

Middle Row: Dolores Alcozar, Unknown, Alma Jackson, Mamie Henderson, Unknown, Unknown, Josie Riviera Dominguez

Back Row: Unknown, Unknown, Unknown, Connie Ortega Ruiz, Esther Nunez

Packing House Trucks



Comments Mike King:

The old field boxes and truck used at the old Piru Packing House. The new Packing House (in the background) used the new bin system.

Roy Grover:

Remember them well. Could always hitch a ride on an empty one. Of course, you had to jump off while moving in front of your house or walk back from the packing house!

Mike King:

These were the highway trucks that held two rows of bins. The field trucks held only one row of bins and had the “Cherry Picker” to pick up the bins and stack them. Then they would back up to the highway trucks and roll the bins onto them – two field truck loads to fill one highway truck then off to the packing house.

Vance Johnson:

When they built the new packing house they went to that new bin system, and these were all set up for that ... before that they were Glenwood Green Chevy flatbeds.

New Sunkist Packing House



Piru Cowboys



Hoping to get a clearer picture Left – Right Per Betty Bishop:

Guy France (The France Family lived in the first little brown house as you enter town, next to the gas station)

Alfred Moreno (My Grandfather) married Damiana Dominguez of Dominguez Canyon.

Lenord Shellenberger (A cousin of her Dads)

Morris King (Betty's Dad)

Marvin France (Son of Guy France)

Lucille Riggs (Maiden Name Black owned the Ranch up Holser Canyon)

Guy did amazing rawhide work.

Lucille was a big woman and cowboy'd right along with all the rest of them.

Piru Merchants Baseball Team



Piru Merchants Baseball Team



Piru Softball Teams



The Piru Devils

The Piru Indians



The Piru Devils:

Back Row Left - Right:

Jeri Dominguez Perez – Liz Saldino – Roseanne Qualls – Henry Perez (Coach) – Yvonne Alverdi – Judi Ortiz – Penny Kozar

Bottom Row Left – Right:

Valerie Golson Villa – Dina Martinez Preciado – Rosie Zavala Hurtado – Mary Katherine Yzaguirre – Michele Ybarra McKinley – Sandy Ponce Molina – Debbie Ortega Alcozar

The Piru Indians

Back Row Left – Right:

Bino Aguilar (Coach) – Cris Alcantar Aguilar – Maria (Cha Cha) Alcantar – Sandy Ponce Molina – Debbie Ortega Alcozar – Angela Cervantez (I think) – Isabel Marquez – Henry Perez (Coach)

Bottom Row Left – Right:

Michele Ybarra McKinley – Lucinda Dominguez Walsh – Dina Martinez Preciado – Ella Perez – Lani-Kay Ybarra Silva



Piru Townspeople

Manuel & Sabina Preciado



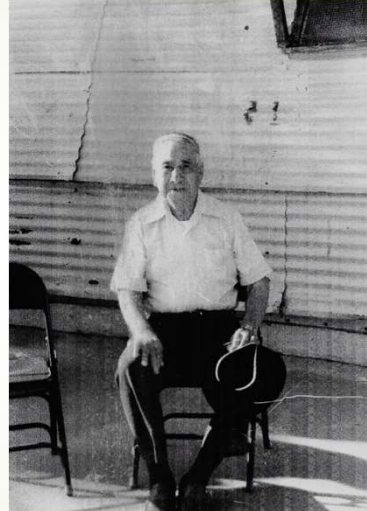
Submitted by Julia Preciado

Manuel and Sabina Preciado were immigrants from Mexico and as a couple moved to the community of Piru in the late 1930's. Manuel worked for George Lechler, an early pioneer rancher and apiary businessman in Piru. By 1954, Manuel had become a knowledgeable and arduous beekeeper and expert in the field to many who knew him. He became a successful apiary businessman and proprietor.

Manuel and Sabina had nine children: Frances, William, Jessie, Helen, Julia, Dolores, Rosie, Alicia, and Ernie.

After raising the children, Sabina was employed by the Piru Citrus Association, and as a housekeeper for the Nielsen's, former owners of the Piru Mansion.

Gonzalo Garcia Solis



Submitted by Julia Preciado

Gonzalo was born in Abasolo, Guanajuato, Mexico in January 1900. At the age of 14 his father Francisco Solis and his brother Felix Solis, set out for the United States, to reside in the small town of Piru, California where his other family members resided. His mother, Juana Garcia Solis, later made the trip to Piru to join the family.

Gonzalo and family members arrived in Piru in 1915 where he settled for the next 85 years. He was well known in the Piru Area. At an early age Gonzalo worked jobs with various ranchers including the Baker Ranch and Camulos Ranch. In 1918 he was employed by the Felsenthal Ranch until 1924, when he went off to Mexico to marry Isabel Robles, also from Guanajuato, Mexico. Gonzalo then found employment at the Johnson Ranch and the Piru Citrus Association and worked there for 14 years. In 1951 he returned to work with the Harry Felsenthal Ranch until his retirement in 1965. Gonzalo and Isabel Solis never had children but had cousins and many nieces and nephews in the area: name the Manuel Preciado, Jose Aguilar, and Genaro Gaitan Families.

Gonzalo's Mother passed away in 1922 and is buried at Camulos Cemetery along with his Aunts, Eulalia Garcia Gaitan, Francisca Garcia Silva, and his Grandmother, Magdalena Ramirez. Magdalena was the last person to be buried at the Rancho Camulos cemetery in 1946.

Gonzalo Solis applied for United States Citizenship in 1997 and in October 1999, was sworn in as a naturalized citizen at the Los Angeles Convention Center at the age of 99.

Gonzalo died four days after his 100th Birthday, January 2000.

Lupe & Jesus
Ponce



Submitted by Sylvia Casarez

Lucy and Jesus Ponce moved to Piru in the 1930's they lived and built their house on Main Street right below the big mountain where the cross sits.
Submitted by Sylvia Casarez (Great Granddaughter).

Bud Sloan &
Nellie



Bud Sloan had a ranch at the end of Guiberson Road, past Torrey Road to the East.

Piru the Filming Town

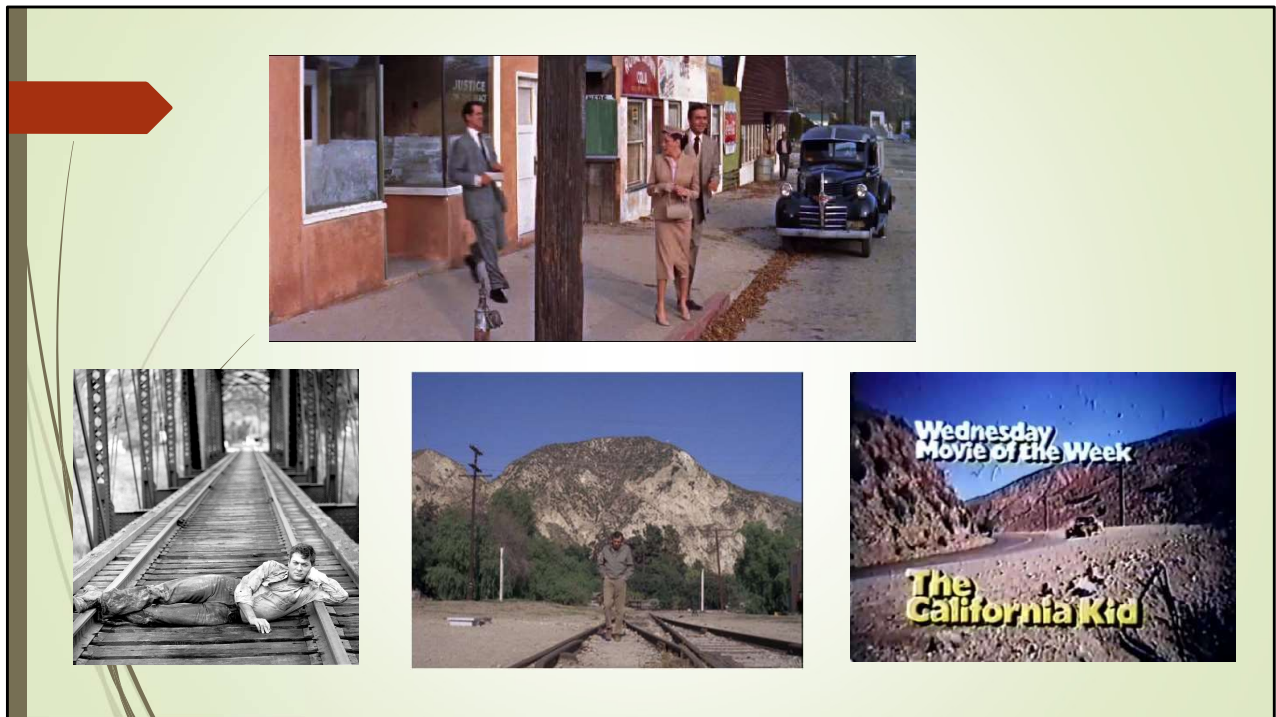
- Desert Fury 1947
- A Star is Born 1954
- The Defiant Ones 1958
- Incident at Phantom Hill 1966
- The California Kid 1974 (TV)
- Rockford Files 1974 (TV)
- Scenes in:
 - The Fugitive
 - The A-Team
 - The Dukes of Hazzard
 - Murder She Wrote
 - NCIS
 - Monk
 - Reno 911
 - True Blood
 - The Lady in Red
- The Ghost Busters 1975 (Children's Filmation Series)
- Charlies Angels 1979 (TV)
- Dark Night of the Scarecrow 1981 (TV)
- The Twilight Zone: The Movie 1983
- Rhinestone 1984
- Silent Night Deadly Night 2 1984
- Cobra 1986
- Hot Legs Video (Rod Stewart) 1978
- Mom & Dad Save the World 1992
- Happy Texas 1999
- Bubble Boy
- Big Momma's House 2001
- Enough 2002
- Toque 2004
- Van Helsing 2004
- The Amateurs 2005
- The Love War 1970
- Race to Witch Mountain 2009
- Atlas Shrugged: Part 1 2011
- Don't Stop 2011 Music Video (Foster the People)
- The Dexter Season 6 Episode Nebraska 2011
- Wake Me 2013 Music Video (Avicii)
- Water for Elephants
- Unthinkable Music Video (Alicia Keyes)
- Swelter 2014
- Lucky 2017

Piru has been used for shooting film and television productions over the years, including Desert Fury in 1947. Location scenes were shot with the Northwest side of Center Street, at Main, used as the exterior of Fritz Haller's saloon and casino; the Piru Mansion was used as the Haller home and the historic Piru Bridge, crossing Piru Creek on the east side of town, was used as the locale of the car crash. (some exterior scenes were also filmed in the old Town section of Cottonwood Arizona, especially where Burt Lancaster enters the old town jail.

Piru was also featured in the 1966 film Incident at Phantom Hill.

With the exception of a few scenes, the entire comedy Happy, Texas 1999 was filmed in Piru, it was also used for scenes of the Bubble Boy. The exterior of the Piru United Methodist Church was used in Big Momma's House 2001. The chase scene in Enough 2002 starring Jennifer Lopez was filmed in Piru along with scenes from Torque 2004 and the final scene for Van Helsing 2004.

The 2005 movie the Amateurs starring Jeff Bridges was largely filmed in Piru – as was much of the television movie the Love War 1970 starring Jeff's Father Lloyd Bridges with Angie Dickenson (with Piru serving as location and setting). The town has also served for some of the scenes on TV's Reno 911! And for scenes set in the fictional town of Bon Temps, Louisiana in True Blood.



Piru was also used in the scene in a *Star is Born* 1954, starring Judy Garland and James Mason where Jack Carson's character, Libby finds them after they are married.

The movie *the Defiant Ones* was filmed in Piru, the picture of Tony Curtis on the Piru Bridge is from that movie 1958.

Piru stood in for a fictional town Clarksberg California in the 1974 TV movie *the California Kid*.

Charlie's Angels, filmed *Angels on Vacation* in Piru in 1979. Scenes in *the Fugitive*, *the A-Team*, *The Dukes of Hazzard*, *Murder She Wrote*, *NCIS* and *Monk* were filmed in Piru.

In 1981 made-for-TV horror film *Dark Night of the Scarecrow*, several of the primary locations in the film, including the café, post office, and service station are in Piru.

In *the Twilight Zone: The Movie* 1983, the scenes in the rest home in the "Kick the Can" segment were filmed at the historic building that is now the *Heritage Valley Inn*.

Dolly Parton and Sylvester Stallone filmed scenes for *Rhinestone* 1984 in Piru, also *Silent Night Deadly Night 3* was filmed here in 1984.

The opening scene of *Mom & Dad Save the World* 1992 shows them driving on Piru Canyon Road.

The Disney Movie *Race to Witch Mountain* 2009 starring Dwayne the Rock Johnson, scenes where the alien boy and girl go into a small town, *Stony Creek*, where they have repairs done on his taxi and to a restaurant/country music club, were actually shot in Piru, which continues to be a popular location with film companies.



**Rod Stewart's Hot
Legs Video**

Piru was used as a location for the 1974 Rockford Files episode "Caledonia, Its Worth a Fortune". It was used for exterior shots in the 1975 Filmation children's series Ghost Busters.

The town served as the fictional San Remos countryside in the movie Cobra, starring Sylvester Stallone, Reni Santoni, and Brigitte Nielsen (Picture upper right 1986).

Piru Mansion was used as the home of Ellis Wyatt in Atlas Shrugged: Part 1 2011, the first segment in a three-part movie adaptation of the novel by Ayn Rand.

The Dexter Season 6-episode Nebraska which aired in 2011 was partially filmed in Piru, with Piru standing in for parts of Nebraska.

Water for Elephants was also filmed in Piru, as well as the 2014 action-drama film Swelter, starring Jean-Claude Van Damme, Lennie James and Alfred Molins, was filmed entirely in Piru, per the DVD credits with the town substituting for Baker, Nevada.

The 2017 movie Lucky starring Harvey Dean Stanton was filmed in Piru.

Piru has also been used in music videos, Rod Stewart's Hot Legs used local townspeople and kids in the video.

Piru was also used to film the 2011 music video Don't Stop (Colour on the Walls) from the band Foster the People and featuring actress Gabourey Sidibe., also the 2013 music video for the hit Wake Me Up by Avicii, starring the Russian model Kristina Romanova and the young Californian model Laneya Grace. Alicia Keys Unthinkable music video was also filmed in Piru.

Local Townspeople as Extras



The Lady in Red used some local townspeople:

Picture on the Left: Al Gaitan, Roy Molina and Art Chessani.

Middle Picture: Trini Ortiz, Roy Molina, Monica Arias, Danny Molina.

Picture on the Right: Unknown Actress, Roy Molina and All Gaitan.

Piru Fire October 1970



Southern California is no stranger to wildfires, and there have been many through the years that have burned surrounding mountains and canyons.

