

Cityhood of Suisun petitioned

By Jerry Bowen

Sunday, February 24, 2008

In my last column I talked about nearby Cordelia receiving a post office in 1865 because it was on the stage route from Benicia to Sacramento and Suisun received its mail from that source until receiving its own post office in 1887.

Next door is the Suisun Valley of more than 30,000 acres that that later would produce highly prolific bearing fruit trees. Cattle and sheep ranges and grain farms to the north and east began to sprout up and the marshland south of Suisun was to become one of the greatest duck hunting districts in the West.

The year 1868 was pivotal for the thriving village of Suisun and the original town of Cordelia.

One hundred forty years ago, in June 1868, the railroad connected Suisun and Vallejo and the event was highlighted by an excursion in which the Masonic Lodges took part. Cordelia moved from its original 1850s site to its present location and was named Bridgeport. The move came about in order to be close to the newly opened railroad line. The route passed through Jamison Canyon to Napa Junction.

With reliable transportation at hand, the Solano County Board of Supervisors that consisted of three men - John Brownlie, Samuel Breck and J.W. Howard - who were presented the following petition on Oct. 9, 1868:

“To the Honorable Board of Supervisors of Solano County, California.

“Your petitioners herein respectfully show to your Honorable body and state:

“(1) That they compose a majority of the inhabitants of the Town of Suisun in said County and State,

“(2) That your petitioners have resided in the said Town of Suisun for more than thirty days next preceding the presentation and signing of this petition,

“(3) That the inhabitants of said Port of Suisun exceed two hundred in number,

“(4) That your petitioners are qualified electors under the Constitution and the laws of this State,

“(5) That the boundaries of the said Town of Suisun are shown on attached map - which is on file in the Records office - including less than an area of three square miles.

“Your petitioners therefore pray the said area above described be, by your Honorable body, incorporated, and a Police established for its local Government, and for the preservation and regulations of the Commons appertaining to said Town of Suisun, and that the inhabitants thereof be constituted a body Corporate and public, under the name and style of the ‘Inhabitants of the Town of Suisun City’ with all the powers and privileges granted to such Corporations by act of the Legislature of this State entitled ‘An Act to provide for the Incorporation of Towns,’ approved April 19, 1856. And that your Honorable shall designate some day on which an election in said Town of Suisun for Trustees and other officers made necessary by said act of the Legislature, above mentioned.”

Some 103 qualified residents of the Town of Suisun signed the petition. Among them were: Samuel Breck, P.J. Chrisler, O.B. Powers, F.B. Roberts, Wolf Cerkel, E.D. Perkins, W. Ovens, R.D. Robbins, C.E. Edwards, James Trainor, E.F. Gillespie, J. Frank H.T Stoclonon, GA. Gillespie, J. H. Marston, E.. Conoldy, Benjamin Hoxie, F0. Staples, Lewis Pierce, Dell Stoekmon, M. Dinkelspiel, Asa Crocker, J.H. White, E.P. Hilborn, H.B. Sheldon. W.J. Costigan

The minutes of the Board of Supervisors on the same day set the election of officers for the new city for Nov. 17, 1868 at the Union Fire House in Suisun.

Sixteen years after, on May 4, 1884, the city of Suisun was re-organized under “The General Laws of the State of California relating to Municipal Corporations of the 6th Class.” This act gave greater autonomy to the thriving city on the embarcadero of Suisun.

I'll continue with this story in my next column.

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