

Vaca street named after early builder

By Kristin Delaplane

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As a young man of 21, Peabody landed in Benicia in 1850 having made the trip on a clipper ship around The Horn. A carpenter by trade, he bought with him several frame houses and engaged in the business of selling and setting those houses to lots.

In 1851, he moved to the Suisun Valley. There he built the Berry and Segerwood houses. The Berry house, which still stands, was said to be the first house to be built in that section.

After building these houses, Charles settled down in the business of farming. He bought land and ended up owning what became the great Hatch orchard.

In 1854, he married Sarah Hewitt, daughter of General Joseph Hewitt. The couple had four sons: Charles E., George H., Frank J. and Earnest A.

Charles and Sarah were among the founders of the old church in Suisun Valley, which later was turned into the first Gomer Schoolhouse. It burned and was replaced with the current Gomer School House.

Sarah died two years before Charles Peabody passed away. When he was looked upon as an honest and upright citizen. The funeral took place at the Methodist Church in Fairfield.

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The Vacaville Museum received a \$50,000 anonymous donor grant, and \$4,000 from the Solano Irrigation District, to fund an oral history project focusing on the fruit industry in the Vaca and Suisun valleys.

The project will investigate through interviews, documentary research and photography the historic and contemporary role of the orchards.

Oral historian, Kris Delaplane Conti, photographer-archives technician Philip Adam and local educator Barbara Bessemer will be working with museum staff to produce an oral history collection, photographic collection, historic publication, exhibit, video production and curriculum design.

People with experience in or knowledge of the orchard industry in Solano County, or

who have photographs that relate to this subject matter, are encouraged to contact Conti at 447-6604 or the Vacaville Museum at 447-4513. People who would like to be volunteers in this project should contact the Museum.

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About last week's street names: Yes, I did catch it, but thank you to the readers who also advised me. Yes, Wilson Street in Vacaville - as well as Mason and Luzena streets - was named after the pioneers Mason and Luzena Wilson.

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