

The Sierran

— A Publication of the Sierra County Historical Society —

Sattley Store

By Virginia Lutes

Information taken from a file at the Kentucky Mine Museum, from a note Rita Bradley wrote in 1998

This historic structure sits on the corner of State Hwy. 89 and County Road A-23 in Sierra Valley. Sattley was called “Church’s Corner” until a Post Office was established there in 1884. The name of the town changed to Sattley, in honor of the maiden name of Harriet Sattley Church, Isaac Church’s mother.



Johnson’s Stage arriving at Sattley. Swigard sold harness and haying equipment as well as general merchandise.

The basic and oldest part of the present Sattley Store was originally the home of the Ezra Church family, and it is believed that it was erected in the early 1870’s, making it one of the oldest buildings in Sattley. The rear part of the building and a north addition, which latter part had been the Sattley Post Office for many years, were constructed later. The building became a grocery and a general merchandise store many years ago. Among those who have been either the proprietor or the operators of the store from the early 1900’s are: Mr. G.W. Swigard, early 1900’s
Frank H. Turner, in the 1920’s

Mr. and Mrs. Dan Welch conducted the store business, after which Captain Humphrey operated the store. Mr. and Mrs. Will Adams conducted the business of the store from about 1927 to 1932. Mrs. Hubert (Sheila) Rast operated the store for several years during the 1930’s, and in early 1939 was succeeded by Mrs. Genevieve Patton who partitioned the store and converted its rear part to living quarters. Irma Miller conducted the business of the store for several years, and Mr. and Mrs. Fitzgerald operated the store for about a year. The store closed for several months during 1940 but was reopened by Willard Church in the fall of that year.

In Feb. of 1941 Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Martinetti purchased the store for their daughters, Rita, Elwina and Dorothy, from Mr. Swigard’s heirs, the daughters being the proprietors and operators for some years, then the sisters married and left Rita alone to own and operate the business.. Mrs. Bradley also had been Postmaster of the Sattley Post Office since May of 1941 through 1976 when she sold the business. Bob and Joyce Bagley had the place for about two years, and then it



Sattley, 1931, when the Adams operated the Sattley Store.
The girl in the street is Hazel Adams Maddalena.

closed. The Post Office was moved to the Sattley restaurant, to the west of the store until that

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— THE SIERRA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY —



The Sierra County Historical Society is an organization of people interested in preserving and promoting an appreciation of Sierra County's rich history. The Society operates a museum at the Kentucky Mine in Sierra City, holds an annual meeting, publishes a newsletter and conducts historical research. Members are sent notices of Society activities, receive THE SIERRAN, and are admitted free of charge to the museum and stamp mill tour. If you would like to become involved in these activities or would just like to give your support, please join us!

Officers and Executive Board of The Sierra County Historical Society

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If you have any suggestions or comments, feel free to contact any board member or email at info@sierracountyhistory.org

Become a Member!

Membership in the Sierra County Historical Society is open to any interested person, business or organization. Members need not be residents of Sierra County. Dues are due and payable each January for the calendar year.

Membership categories are as follows:

INDIVIDUAL	\$20.00
FAMILY & INSTITUTION	\$25.00
BUSINESS & SUPPORTING	\$35.00
SUSTAINING	\$50.00
LIFE (per person/couple)	\$300.00

In addition, Museum Renovation Project donations are gratefully accepted.

Please send dues and donations to:
S.C.H.S.

c/o Don Yegge, Membership Chair
PO Box 336, Loyalton, CA 96118

Sierra County Historical Society Annual Meeting – September 14

The annual meeting of the Sierra County Historical Society will be held September 14 at the Kentucky Mine. The meeting will begin at noon and will include a catered lunch – free for members and \$10 each for guests – and a short business meeting and program. A ceremony will be held preceding the annual meeting at 11:30 to dedicate the bench that has been installed at the Kentucky Mine in memory of David Eugene Smith. Reservations are not necessary, just show up at our beautiful Kentucky Mine picnic area for an afternoon of food, friends and sharing our enjoyment of this area and its fascinating history!



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building was condemned, then it returned to the Sattley Store.

Jeff and Jennifer Engel bought and operated the Store for about 2 years. They moved the modular home in, that is behind the store now. Again, the



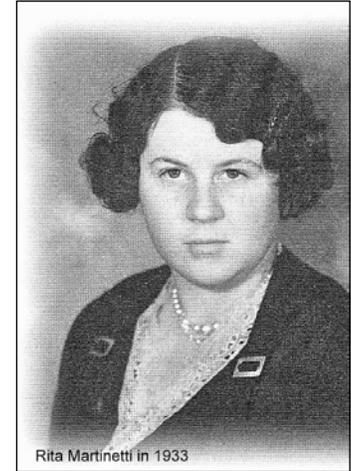
Once again the Store closed and the Post Office was operated by Kathy (Cummings) Kurdupski and others.

Store closed until Stewart and Kathy Cummings purchased the building, they were there about a year, and then leased it to Shirley Warner and her daughter Shawna to operate. The Post Office was now moved back to the Store, and Shirley Warner became Postal Clerk and Kathy Cummings filled in. Once again the Store closed and the Post Office was operated by Kathy (Cummings) Kurdupski and others. Lottie Price from Calpine took over the Post Office for about four years, until the property sold in 1997. The Hovercamp family purchased the Store, their son Jeff and wife opened it for a few years, and then it closed and has remained closed since that time.

If the building could only talk, what wonderful history we would hear.

**Rita Faith Martinetti Bradley****One of our favorite
Sierra Valley Historians****Born August 1914, Passed May 2003***By Virginia Lutes*

Rita was always a favorite in Sierra Valley, she greeted everyone with a smile, and she enjoyed her family and friends. Rita spent many volunteer hours with the Sierra County Historical Society and at the Kentucky Mine Museum. She was an icon of Sattley, California, a devout Catholic, and a



Rita Martinetti in 1933

participant in many local associations. On her mother's side, her grandfather Alessandro Guidici, came from Switzerland, to join his father in Virginia City in 1872. He did not stay there long, venturing instead to Clover Valley where he took work as a ranch hand. He purchased a ranch in that area with partners, sold it, then moved to Sierra Valley. He purchased the "Bobo Ranch"; it became known as the Adams Neck Ranch, then The Last Chance Ranch (on the Frenchman Lake Road from Chilcoot in Plumas County). Rita's grandmother, also from Switzerland, Rosalia Sofia Roberti-Maggiore (called Sophie,) came to the Valley and worked on the Arms Ranch. They met, married and settled on Alec's dairy ranch. The Guidici's had six children, Fred who stayed on the ranch; Alex who bought a ranch nearby; Chester moved to Clio area where he purchased a ranch; Frances who went to college in the Bay area and took up stenography, she returned to the Valley to a job at Sierra Valley Bank and married Marcel Bony, they settled in Sierraville on the old Nichols Ranch; Irena (Canonica) and husband moved to Richmond, and Delia, Rita's mother married Isaac Martinetti and first moved to Verdi, Nv. Then to the Dixon Ranch near Sattley. The Guidici family members were all hard workers.

Rita Faith Martinetti Bradley - (Continued on Page 4) —

Rita Faith Martinetti Bradley - (Continued from Page 3) —

They would take their cows to Frenchman Lake in the summer. They called it the Last Chance country. The milking was done there, and Rita believed they did the separating there, bringing the cream and milk back to the ranch, where it was made into butter and cheese. Whatever was left over was used to feed the hogs. Twice a year Alessandro would take a wagonload of cheese and butter to Reno or Virginia City to sell. This was in the early 1900's. In 1900, the family took a four month trip to Switzerland, visiting family. Then, in 1917 the elder Guidici's retired and moved to Richmond, CA. Fred continued to run the ranch, and switched from dairy to stock cattle, his son Don still has the ranch. Rita's father Isaac Martinetti came with his brother to America in 1905. Isaac was a hydraulic miner at Sierra City. He later came into Sierra Valley with a white Percheron stallion to breed with mares. He would take the horse from ranch to ranch, and wherever night found him, he stayed over then continued on the next day. At that time all the ranches had work horses, they did all the harvesting, haying, everything with horses. Some had buggy horses, which were smaller than work horses. Isaac met Delia when he was taking this stallion around, and they were married in 1913. They may have lived in Reno for a year or so before renting a small ranch in Verdi, NV. The ranch had apple trees, so they sold apples, and milked a few cows and made butter to sell. At times, Delia would milk the cows if they did not have a milker; that was in addition to all the other work. Rita and her sister Elwina were both born in Verdi. When Rita was two years old, and her sister six months old, they wanted to expand to a larger ranch so they moved to Sierra Valley in 1916. They traveled from Verdi by wagon over the Dog Valley Grade. They located at what was then known as the Miller or Dixon Ranch near Sattley. The Martinetti's borrowed money for the ranch. In 1924 a forest fire burned most of the outbuildings; Rita recalled the bucket brigade that the neighbors and family organized to get water from the creek to save the home. The family lost nine buildings, and the house needed repair. Then the person who loaned the money to buy the ranch demanded his money. They had to then borrow from the Federal Land Bank until they could pay off the ranch. Rita had two sisters, Elwina and Dorothy, and a

brother Elver. Growing up, the children always had chores. Around the age of eleven Rita started milking cows. She and her sister helped milk six or seven cows apiece, twice a day, and they helped by washing the separators as they grew older. Then there was barn cleaning most every day, pushing hay out to the cattle and taking care of the calves. As they grew, so did the amount of cows to be milked, Rita was now milking ten a day. Isaac would milk forty-five to fifty cows a day, with hired help, usually Swiss men. Rita remembered the cows started out as mostly Durhams, then Guernseys, and in later the brown Swiss cows. After that they had Herefords for a long time.

Transportation was by horse and buggy for travel for the family until 1920, when Isaac purchased a little truck. The children would ride on boxes in the back of the truck when they visited their Guidici grandparents across the Sierra Valley. Then in 1928 or so, the family purchased a passenger car, which the Martinetti children loved. Later, around 1931, Isaac purchased a big ton and a half truck and started hauling with it. In the late 1930's a John Deere tractor was purchased, it was used to pull a hay wagon full of hay, and they sawed wood with the power take-off. They used a crosscut saw to cut wood to burn in the stoves. The blacksmith shop on the ranch was used all the time. Kerosene lamps were used for light, and candles used to go to bed. When electricity came to the Valley in 1939, which was a big thing for the family. A new item was the radio, powered by electricity. Fancy work was done by the girls and their mother while listening to the radio. For entertainment at home, card games were played or played the phonograph. A Swiss Milker played the accordion, and the family enjoyed that. Isaac did most of the irrigating on the ranch himself. Behind the ranch there was a natural spring; the house water came from that. Water was also piped to the milk house, where he placed a water wheel in the late 1930's to run the separator to separate the cream from the milk. Before that, it was hand turned by a crank. There was also a steam boiler to heat the water for washing all the milking equipment. In 1940 a milking machine to milk the cows was installed.

Rita Faith Martinetti Bradley - (Continued on Page 6) —

Rita Faith Martinetti Bradley - (Continued from Page 4) —

When it was haying time, Delia would cook for about ten men who worked the hay fields. Neighbors helped each other, and in turn the Martinetti's helped their neighbors. Whoevers place the work was being done put up a meal for all who helped. H. F. Turner had the Sattley garage. He had a mechanic there and he also ran the Sattley store and post office. There used to be a blacksmith shop in Sattley just across from the store. It stopped operating in the 1930's. On several occasions there were programs and dancing above the old blacksmith shop.

Harry Turner had a sawmill business, the Sunset Mill. They put a portable sawmill in the back of the Martinetti Ranch, and they logged and brought the timber down and sawed it up for lumber. The sawmill was run by a tractor, but the logs were snaked off the hill with horses.

When it came time for the Martinetti children to attend school, they still spoke mainly Swiss, but gradually they learned "American". Her early years of school was in the Alpine School District, the school set on the hill northeast of Sattley, known as Rocky Point. They rode in a horse-drawn buggy. Later the school was moved nearer to Sattley, and then to its present location in Sattley, not far from the Store. It is now the home of Delores Turner. The teachers Rita recalls at the School were Mrs. F.H. (Helen) Turner, Rosa Merrill and Miss Jean Ennis, who became Mrs. Hugh Herrington of Sierra City. When Rita went to the school it had an awning cabinet on the left side, outside. This was for books and materials. The right hand side had a bucket of water, with cups hanging for drinks of water for the children. The little school gave programs in which all children participated, and there were refreshments after. Rita remembered that they must have been the only Swiss family living in the Sattley area at that time; the neighbors were the Churches, the Turners and the Strangs. 1932 or 33 was the last year the school was open with students - one, Elver Martinetti. The next year the school didn't open and Elver went to school in Calpine. He was transported by teacher Margaret (Copren) Burelle, who travelled from Sierraville to teach in Calpine. High School was in Sierraville for Rita for two years, and then Loyalton, but Delia did not seem to want Rita to go to Loyalton, so Rita went to Reno to stay with her

Uncle Marcel Bony's aunt, Ella Norton. When she graduated she returned to the ranch doing the same things as before she went to Reno.

Then the Sattley Store came up for sale. It had been owned by the Swigard's since the Martinetti's moved to Sattley. Mr. Swigard sold harness and haying equipment - anything that people needed on the ranches. The store closed for a time, then Willard Church opened it up again and stayed a year, and then he wanted to get out, so talked the Martinetti's into purchasing it from the Swigards. In 1941 the store was purchased for the three girls. The folks also purchased the house near the store from the Swigards. Rita was postmaster, and her sisters Elwina and Dorothy were store clerks. One of the sisters lived in the house for a while, and then the other, until both got married and left. Rita moved in the house, where she lived until her death in 2003.

In 1943 Rita married Harry Bradley, a cowman. Rita met Harry in 1928, in Sattley; he was working at the James Cavitt Ranch. She stated that he was one of "those lower country cowmen that came into the valley, and when the snow got deep, they left". When



Rita Bradley

they married, he stayed. They started acquiring land, and got into beef cattle ranching. Harry had a few milk cows, which he milked then finally quit that. Harry passed away in 1992.

Rita ran the Sattley Cash Store by herself beginning around 1945 or 1946. It was then also the local post office. Rita was postmaster until 1976 when she retired. She worked the Sattley Cash Store and Post Office for 35 years.

She sold the store, but continued to stay active. Rita and Harry had three children, Romilda, Nancy and David. The children grew up in the store, time spent between the store and the house. Nancy Harnach and David still live in the Sattley/Calpine area. Romilda lives in Yuba City. The Martinetti Ranch is still in the family, Elver and Bobbie purchased it and have lived and worked the ranch for many years. Elver passed in 2013.

Sierra City Celebrates 150 Years!

Sierra City's Sesquicentennial on June 21-22 was a resounding success. Saturday's events began with speeches on the balcony of the Old Sierra City Hotel, where several dignitaries bestowed honors on the Sierra City Post Office for her 150th birthday. Within minutes of the completion of these formal ceremonies, some of those same dignitaries found themselves down the street in the hoosegow. The jail was hopping all day long as were the booths at the craft fair, the vintage portrait studio, and the pasty-making demonstration. Highlights of the day were chats with old-timers C.K. Smith, Jack Rose, and Howard Hayes as well as narrated cemetery tours. The day was topped off with a BBQ and melodrama at the Kentucky Mine. "Never Trust a City Slicker", presented by the Sierra Turnpike Players and the Sierra County Arts Council, was a huge hit. In contrast to Saturday's excitement, Sunday's more relaxed format featured services at the Methodist and Catholic churches, a lecture about Bill Meek, stagecoach driver; and a town picnic complete with wagon rides and a community photo. The weekend culminated with a magnificent birthday cake depicting the Sierra Buttes that was created by Amber Sainsbury. Folks went home with a renewed sense of community in our beloved Sierra City.



Amber Sainsbury created an amazing 150th birthday cake.



"Sheriff" Bryan Davey and "Judge" Rich Nourse.



Gunfighters Incorporated robbing the Wells Fargo Building.



Lee Adams at the cemetery.



Cory Peterman, Kathy Breed, and Christie Brzyszc leading the cemetery tour.



Owen and James Behlke had their vintage portraits done by Mary Davey.



At the opening ceremony: Tim Holabird, rep. of Congressman Doug La Malfa; Supervisor Paul Roen; Assemblyman Brian Dahle; Senator Ted Gaines; Supervisor Lee Adams; SCHS Pres. Mary Nourse; and Supervisor Peter Huebner.



Beverly and Howard Hayes. Howard, who was born in Sierra City, celebrated his birthday at the sesquicentennial.



The Lawmen: Tommy Dines, Bryan Davey, and Hunter Davey.

LAST CHANCE!

To order your Sierra City 150 commemorative items:

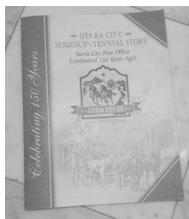
- Visit SierraCountyHistory.org on the Sierra City 150 tab and print out the online order form. Complete and mail it to: Mary Nourse, P.O. Box 350, Sierra City, CA 96125
- Or Call Mary Nourse at 530-862-1123



We are putting together a Tee Shirt order of special sizes, styles and colors. Deadline Extended to August 30th.



Sierra City 150 caps are available at the Sierra Country Store and the Kentucky Mine Museum.



Commemorative booklets are available at the Kentucky Mine Museum.



USPS Sierra City 150 cancellation stamps are available at the Kentucky Mine Museum.

COMMUNITY PHOTOS ARE NOW AVAILABLE.

See previews and Information at the Kentucky Mine Museum, on the Facebook page "Sierra City 150", or on the Sierra County Historical Society website.

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Sattley Store Story (*Not Historical but Hysterically Funny!*)

By Judy Lawrence

Several years ago I had an elderly golden retriever named Buddy. One dark and rainy night he escaped from my yard and headed down the side of Highway 89 towards Sattley before I realized he was gone. He had a collar and tag which identified him and had my phone number. Some kind folks came along and picked him up. They were travelling through the valley on their way to Truckee and didn't want to be detained from their trip for a long period of time while they located me and we met up for the dog exchange. So I received a phone call from them letting me know that they had picked up Buddy and they had put him in the Sattley post office! They were mailing him back to me!

I headed over to the Sattley store and opened the door to the small post office area and there was

Buddy sitting in front of the mail boxes waiting to be picked up, just like the mail!



Buddy, second dog from the right, arrived in the "mail" at the Sattley Store Post Office.