



# Murrieta Valley Historical Society Newsletter

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*It is our mission to identify, preserve and promote the historic legacy of the Murrieta Valley and to educate the public about its historical significance.*

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On May 27, 1918, the 143rd Field Artillery marched north on Front Street in Temecula as part of a training exercise during World War I.  
(Source: Gene Knott Collection)

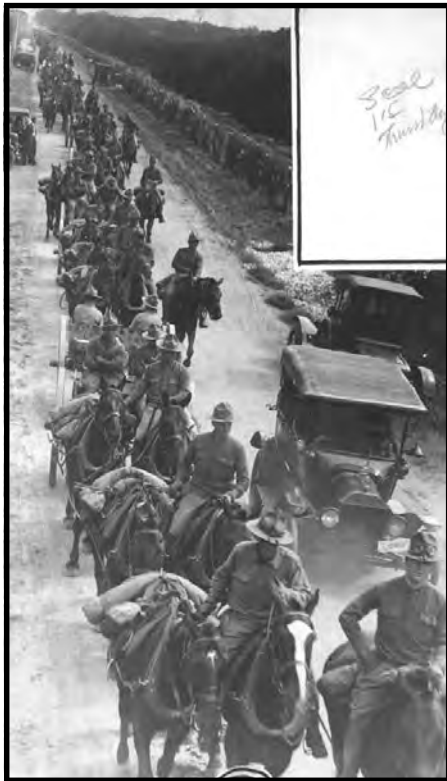
## The March of the 143rd Field Artillery

By Jeffery G. Harmon

America had been at war for over a year when the 143<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery marched into Murrieta at 12 noon on June 10, 1918. The area residents had prepared a bountiful lunch for the traveling Liberty boys, who were returning to Camp Kearny near San Diego. For over a hundred years, Murrieta residents have been supporting the American troops and the war efforts.

When President Woodrow

Wilson declared war on Germany in April 1917, America needed to raise an army. Young men who volunteered or were drafted by the government were sent to military training camps prior to their deployment overseas. The new recruits were taught military tactics and use of weapons and equipment. In May 1918, the 143<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery conducted a roundtrip hike from Camp Kearny, San Diego to Los Angeles as part of their military



The 143rd Field Artillery on the march. (Source: Los Angeles Digital Library)

training.

The troops marched out of Camp Kearny on Saturday, May 25<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 a.m. They reached the town of Bernardo by noon where the residents greeted them. After a brief rest, the men marched north into Escondido and arrived at the baseball fields a little after 3:00 p.m. to make camp for the night.

When the officers dismissed the troops, awaiting residents taxied the men in wagons and cars to Grand Avenue in the heart of Escondido's business district. A dance floor 400 feet by 80 feet wide was constructed in the street in order to provide evening entertainment for the

weary soldiers. The regiment had only traveled twenty-two miles the first day, but the officers wanted to condition the men before the extensive hike.

Sunday morning, a local minister conducted a makeshift church service at the camp and a prayer was given for their safety on the coming journey. The men packed their tents, gathered their gear and continued their march north. The regiment marched twenty-two miles and made camp at the Red Mountain Ranch, also known as Houk's ranch. This was located a short distance southwest of the community of Rainbow and east of Fallbrook.

On Monday, May 27, 1918 around 10 a.m., 1400 men marched into the Temecula Valley heading north to Elsinore.

"The town (Temecula) was gaily decorated in flags of the allies. No program of any kind was carried out, but the women showered the boys with flowers as they passed through.

At noon the soldiers went into camp at the Bonnett (Barnett) ranch, where they lunched from their rations and watered their horses. They expect to reach Elsinore by evening, where they will go into camp for the night." (May 27, 1918, Riverside Daily Press)

After lunch, the men assembled and resumed their march north.

"The 143d U.S. artillery passed through Murrieta at one o'clock Monday. They made a good impression on the people of the valley and helped us to realize the country is at war." (Source: May 31, 1918, Lake Elsinore Valley Press)

A small advance group of officers and staff arrived in Elsinore on horseback to meet with civic leaders and to inspect the campsite. Members of the Women's Land Army also greeted the men. The young single ladies were volunteers of an organization formed to meet the farm labor shortage during the war. The Women's Land Army was stationed in Elsinore and made a strong impression on the troops.

"The 143<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery, 1400 strong, arrived here at 2:30 this afternoon and immediately went into camp for the night. The artillery pitched camp on the Stewart ranch at the junction of the Elsinore-Perris and the Elsinore-Corona highways." (May 27, 1918, Riverside Daily Press)

Once the tents were established, and their gear secured, the troops were taxied to Elsinore's Main Street business district. Officers attended a dance at the Amsbury Auditorium. A street concert provided music as men danced with the local women.

At dawn, the men left the

Stewart ranch and continued marching north through the Temescal Canyon. The regiment halted at 11:00 a.m. and had their lunch at E. T. Earl's ranch. Afterwards the troops marched north into Corona. They traveled down Ontario Avenue and then turned on Main Street.

Colonel Faneuf and staff headed the cavalcade. Then came the hundreds of men and horses, with guns and auto trucks loaded with the camp baggage. In the rear came the hospital corps. (May 28, 1918, Riverside Independent Enterprise)

A huge arch was constructed over the street with the word "welcome" painted on it. After a quick military concert and a few words, the troops marched out of Corona and headed west to the small town of Prado. Near the banks of the Santa Ana River, the men rapidly pitched their tents. A small rain had begun, but soon turned into a downpour. Undaunted, the troops assembled and saluted as the American flag was raised over the camp briefly, and then lowered.

Spectators were impressed as the drenched men stood at attention until the officers dismissed them. Once the call was made, chaos began as men made blind dashes to waiting automobiles to taxi them back to Corona. Eight hundred men were taken to four hundred residential homes and enjoyed a family dinner. Each home

served between two to twelve men. The men entered the homes soaking wet with mud caked boots, and were treated as members of the family. Later there was a dance at the Women's Club before the men returned to camp.

On Wednesday, May 29<sup>th</sup>, the men broke camp at dawn and began marching north to Pomona. When they reached the town at noon, it appeared that the entire population had turned out to see the troops. They were relieved of duty for two hours and ate lunch in the city park. They were served sandwiches and over 1500 pies and cakes.

After the reprieve, the regiment reassembled and turned west marching to the town of Puente. The forty-five mile hike was the longest day's march that the men had conducted. However, they were excited as each step brought them closer to Los Angeles.

The next day, acclaimed

silent screen actress, Mary Pickford, greeted the troops. She had been chosen as the regiment's mascot or godmother and had been given the honorary title of colonel. After meeting with Col. Ralph J. Faneuf, she led the 143<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery into the City of Los Angeles. Over 150,000 people lined the streets as the troops paraded through the city triumphantly. Their final destination was Exposition Park where they established their base camp.

While in Los Angeles, the 143<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery was entertained by throngs of people. Despite all the attention, the troops continued their military training during their week long visit. One day a tragedy occurred during a rehearsal exercise. Four men were practicing a Roman style race, where each man rode two horses. During the race, the horses became frightened and collided with each other. The collision resulted in a pile up of horses and riders. H. B. Costello, of Los



The 143rd Field Artillery near Camp Kearny (Source: History of the Fortieth (Sunshine) Division)



Col. Ralph Faneuf and Honorary Col.  
Mary Pickford (Source: Internet)

Angeles, suffered a skull fracture and was taken to the local hospital. The next day, on June 2, 1918, Costello succumbed to his injuries.

Costello's funeral was held on June 4<sup>th</sup>. It was the first military funeral in Los Angeles since America entered the Great War. Costello was given full military honors and laid to rest in the Rosedale Cemetery.

After the funeral, the 143<sup>rd</sup> marched from Exposition Park to Universal City. The men were scheduled to be filmed conducting warfare maneuvers for a military movie produced by Mary Pickford. While at the Universal ranch, Col. Faneuf received an urgent telegram from Major General Frederick S. Strong ordering the 143<sup>rd</sup> back to Camp Kearny immediately.

The mood shifted quickly, and the faces of the men showed mixed emotions. Whisperings circulated that maybe they were finally being sent to France. The celebratory nature of the hike dissipated and many began to wonder what would happen to them once they reached the battle lines.

Raffele Saracino, an Italian immigrant, became restless and deserted the camp. He headed east until he was captured at Indio and transported to the Riverside County jail. Because he was absent for only a few days, no desertion charges were filed and he was returned to the ranks at Camp Kearny.

On June 6<sup>th</sup>, the 143<sup>rd</sup> camped at Brook-

side Park in Pasadena in preparation for the forced march back to San Diego. The next morning, the troops broke camp and marched thirty miles to Pomona. On Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, the unit left Pomona at 8:00 a.m., and marched twenty miles southeast to Corona. They arrived at 12 noon and made camp on the boulevard west of the circle. Once again there were food and festivities for the troops provided by the local residents and civic groups. Spirits were high until orders were sent out at 9:00 p.m. that the 143<sup>rd</sup> was breaking camp and taking a night march to Elsinore.

It was midnight when the soldiers marched stoically down Main Street heading into the dark Temescal Canyon. Residents lined the streets until the last man left at 1:30 a.m. During the night march, four men, a caisson and horses went over the bank on the road where it was narrow. The men suffered injuries, which included one being knocked unconscious. Despite the accident, they along with the rest of the troops, made the trek to Samuel A. Stewart's ranch in Elsinore before the crack of dawn.

Once again, the troops were taxied to Elsinore's business district, but there was little celebration. Soldiers, exhausted from the night hike, took naps under trees, on the lawns of the hotels and the city park, and wherever they could find rest. By noon, they visited the bath houses and the lake, and began to feel refreshed. The troops enjoyed Elsinore's hospitality and returned to Stewart's ranch for the night.

The next morning, the troops marched down Main Street and then headed south towards Murrieta.

In Wildomar a resident reported, "The 143<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery passed through here Monday morning on their return trip to Camp Kearny. Some of the people congregated in the shade of the trees by the school yard and waited to see them, taking pictures as they passed and they were worth going many miles to see. Every true American feels a thrill of pardonable pride when he thinks of our soldiers and sailors, as they are most handsome and healthy looking specimens of young American man-



hood.” (June 14, 1918, Lake Elsinore Valley Press)

Meanwhile, a scout was posted on Chaney Hill to signal the Murrieta residents that the columns of artillery men were approaching the town. Once spotted, the scout raced to Murrieta with the news.

“... when they (the troops) reached Murrieta at 12 o'clock they found sandwiches – 2000 of them – egg, ham, beef and cheese, also coffee, cream, sugar and dill pickles. There was a plenty of every kind of food and the boys declared that the offering “hit the spot”, and was the best of any feed they had served them on their hike.” (June 11, 1918, Riverside Daily Press)

Residents in the surrounding communities also contributed to the hearty feast.

“The people of Wildomar, Murrieta, Temecula, and Hugo Guenther of Murrieta Hot Springs gave the boys of the 143<sup>rd</sup> Artillery a fine dinner at the Temecula River Monday noon, and Mrs. Mouren and Mrs. R. Arviso and the Indians from the Pechanga reservation contributed chicken and money and Mrs. Mouren made tamales which were served to the officers of the artillery.” (June 14, 1918, Lake Elsinore Valley Press)

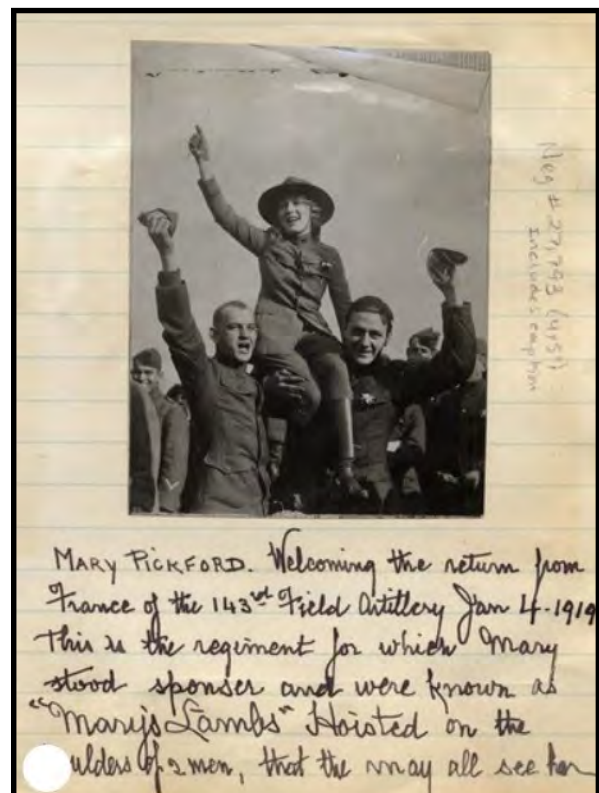
After lunch, command ordered the men to assemble and continue the march. That night they made camp at Red Mountain Ranch. On Tuesday, they marched to Escondido to camp. Then at 10 a.m., Wednesday, June 12<sup>th</sup>, the 143<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery marched back into Camp Kearny, completing their 275 mile hike. As they arrived, the soldiers gazed eastward with excitement and apprehension. They knew that soon they would be heading towards war.

On July 26<sup>th</sup>, the troops were entrained and transported across the continent to New York City. There they boarded a ship and traveled across the Atlantic to the European shores. They reached Cherbourg, France on August 24<sup>th</sup>. They were then transported to La Guerche, where they established their base camp and remained until November

2<sup>nd</sup>. The artillery brigade and the ammunition train was detached from the division and sent to the training camp at De Souge.

After all the hard work and training, the 143<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery did not see any action. Three days before they were to be deployed to the trenches, the Armistice was signed and the war was over. Within two months, the soldiers were back on American soil. On January 17, 1919, Colonel Mary Pickford led her boys as they marched down Market Street in San Francisco amid the cheers of thousands lining the streets to welcome the troops home.

The March of the 143<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery is a reminder of the men and women who train each day and then stand on the line to protect our freedom. The march is also a reminder that Murrieta has a long standing tradition of supporting American troops.



MARY PICKFORD. Welcoming the return from France of the 143<sup>rd</sup> Field Artillery Jan 4-1919  
This is the regiment for which Mary stood sponsor and were known as "Mary's Lambs" Hoisted on the shoulders of 2 men, that the many all see her

Actress Mary Pickford welcoming home the 143<sup>rd</sup> in San Francisco.  
(Source: California State Library)

## Museum Update

By President  
Jeffery Harmon

On February 23, 2018, the Historic Hunt House was officially leased to the Murrieta Valley Historical Society in order to establish an area museum.

As part of the agreement we made with the City, we will be installing a new ADA ramp to meet current code standards. I'm excited about this challenge. The Hunt House and Hunt Memorial Park were established through donations and fundraisers. By installing this ramp ourselves, it continues the legacy of the can-do spirit in Murrieta. Thanks to Pat and Annette Jennings who have been meeting with several contractors and city employees to determine the best course of action. We have settled on an aluminum ramp that will be installed in front of the museum. It will cost around \$8,000 and currently we have \$1,000 raised so far! Thank you!

On March 14, 2018, the first Executive Board meeting was held at the Murrieta Museum. There were many items on the agenda and many decisions to be made for the museum. The biggest decision was the naming of the museum. After a three way split, a compromise was finally suggested. Everyone was thrilled with the name and it passed unani-



mously! The name of the museum is . . . The Murrieta Museum, A Center of Culture and History. A temporary banner has been installed until a permanent sign can be created.

Pat Jennings has been making repairs at the Murrieta Museum. He first had to change the locks on the house. Then a Knox box had to be installed so that the fire department has access to the house in case of an emergency. There is a leak in the roof around the air conditioning unit that has caused damage to the ceiling. Pat is making the necessary repairs so that the museum stays nice and dry.

Pancho Mayoral, a professional contractor and painter, has volunteered his services to repaint the exterior and interior of the museum. He will be assisting Pat Jennings as they make several drywall repairs and begin preparations to paint. Paint colors have been chosen

and the paint will be purchased. Soon the museum will look amazing!

Volunteers from [justserve.org](http://justserve.org) have offered their services in helping us get the museum spruced up. They will be assisting us in painting, making repairs, and helping us in several areas. Again, volunteerism is part of the spirit of Murrieta. This museum is for the residents and visitors of Murrieta. We need to work together to make this dream a reality.

Now we need to roll up our sleeves and get back to work. Please consider making a donation today. If you are a business owner, please consider sponsoring our efforts. We need to raise \$7,000 in order to open this museum. If you are skilled in fundraising efforts, please step forward, we need your help. Together we can preserve and protect our history. Join us today!



## Happy Birthday Alice Vose!

At 90, Alice is the oldest  
Murrieta Pioneer Resident

Served on the Ground Observer Corps

Member of the P.T.A for 20 years

Charter Member of the  
Murrieta Garden Club for 44 years

Member of two Model A Ford Clubs

1986 Named "Mother of the Year"  
by the Rancho News



## \$8,000 Donation Goal

The Society needs an estimated \$8,000 to install a new access ramp to the museum. The museum cannot open until the ramp is installed.

Donations can be made through our Go Fund Me page. If you are a business owner and you would like to sponsor or contribute to the project, please contact us.

Thank you for supporting our City's heritage.

If you have an questions or suggestions please let us know. Phone: 951-387-4862

**gofundme**

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**Next Monthly Board Meeting:**  
Monday, April 2, 2018 at 5:30 p.m.  
Murrieta Museum  
41810 Juniper Street  
(At Hunt Memorial Park)  
All members welcome to attend

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION 1918-2018

## MURRIETA'S GRAIN ELEVATOR

PRESENTED BY THE MURRIETA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND  
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