

Do You Remember?

By Anne Homan
Livermore City Historian



Tankhouses

more High School parking lot. The fancy cornices identify the house as being in the Italianate style. In an early photograph owned by the Livermore Heritage Guild, a large tankhouse is to the rear of the house. It is being used currently as a small home. The old photo shows the now vanished water tank; the deck railing is still the same as in the photo. The owners have painted the house and the tankhouse in the same tasteful yellow and white. California's Historical Resources Inventory, conducted in 1988, called the home "one of the top ten landmark houses in the city."

The old Duarte house, now the caretaker's cottage for the Highway Garage, was built around a tankhouse. This can be seen most clearly on the north side. The two Duarte sons' bedroom was located in the upper floor of the tankhouse. Many of the existing tankhouses have been similarly made into living spaces. At the southeast corner of East Avenue and Hillcrest, another tankhouse, built by the Jorgensen family about 1917, is also modified into a little home. It has been painted gray and white to match the bungalow and other buildings on the property now owned by Gene and Pat Taylor Broadman. A small addition has been attached to it; a fence remains around the deck.

At the Retzlaff Winery, the 1882 home and tankhouse of the Patrick and Margaret Kelly Connolly family were restored by Gloria and Bob Taylor.

Again, the tankhouse has been converted into a home. The original Concannon family home, built in 1884, still stands in the middle of the winery complex. Connected to its rear is an unusual two-story tankhouse that is not built in the pyramid style but is rather a rectangular solid with square ends.

At 2536 Sixth Street just east of South Livermore Avenue, there is a tiny home built out of a tankhouse, with an added entryway and small pointed roof. It is painted white, with dark green window frames and decorative cornices. The Ravenswood Estate includes a tankhouse which was used for servant quarters and also for the kitchen, where the Chinese cook, Hee Gong, worked. This is the only tankhouse in Livermore with the water tank still on top.

Outside of town, the one-room Highland School, built in 1922 at the southeast corner of Carneal and Highland Roads, still includes a rather fat little tankhouse that was used traditionally for storing and pumping water. However, the bottom area was used for storing coal. There was a hole on the north side, a chute for coal delivery. Older students carted coal for the school stove from the tankhouse. At the Valentine and Josefa Livermore Alviso house, on a knoll to the west of North Livermore Avenue just north of Interstate 580, there is a tankhouse behind the house. An architect who dated the house at about 1892, said that the dilapidated tankhouse is



Tankhouse/house on Sixth Street

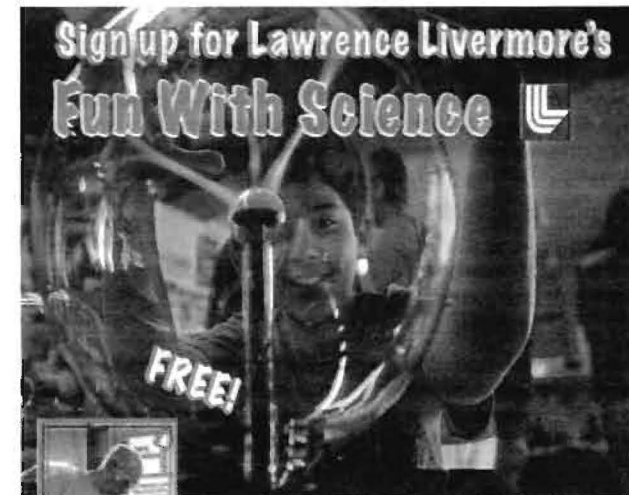
much older.

The only remnant of the lovely Mendenhall estate is the tankhouse, built in

1870. Like the Concannon tankhouse, this one is not a pyramid, but rectangular. Custom-home builder George Jensen transformed it into a four-story home, with a built-in spa on the top where the water tank would normally fit. Jensen used the original round redwood water tank as a garage next to the tankhouse. He ended with 3,400 square feet of house, now in the Forest Glade development off College Avenue.

The only tankhouse with its original water tank and a working windmill beside it in our area is the David and Eliza Glass house at 19953 San Ramon Valley Boulevard, built in 1871. It is worth taking a drive to see it.

(Readers can reach me at am50homan@yahoo.com.)



Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory is holding a summer series of its popular "Fun With Science" shows at the Discovery Center.

Designed for children at the fifth grade level (though it can also be enjoyed by children younger and older), Fun With Science is intended to spark kids' interest in science through entertaining demonstrations and hands-on activities.

Space is limited; registration is required. Call 925-423-3272. Children must be accompanied by an adult chaperone. The Discovery Center is located in an open area at the Laboratory. No badging is required.

The "Fun With Science" summer show schedule is:

Saturday, July 14, 10:30 a.m.-noon
Thursday, July 26, 1:30-3 p.m.
Saturday, Aug. 4, 10:30 a.m.-noon
Thursday, Aug. 16, 1:30-3 p.m.

Watch the video at:
<https://www.llnl.gov/images/education/fun-with-science.mov>

925-423-3272 or superscience@llnl.gov

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