

### ***4th of July festival in El Cerrito***

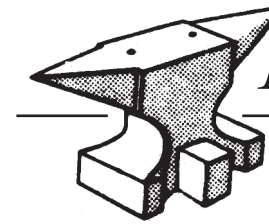
As we have done for many years, the Historical Society will have a booth at the Fourth of July celebration. Our booth will be in front of the Contra Costa Civic Theater. If you have a minute please stop by to say hi!

other American casualties of World War I, most from the same battle. He is buried in Plot B, Row 23, Grave 33. The American poet Joyce Kilmer, best known for his poem "Trees," was killed two weeks later and is buried in the same cemetery.

Hagen was awarded the Silver Star Citation (posthumously) on March 1, 1920, for his gallantry in action near Crezancy, France. The American Legion Post 340, founded in 1928 in El Cerrito, was named the Louis Hagen Post in his memory, and is still active; they meet at the El Cerrito Veterans Memorial Hall on Stockton Avenue. Construction of the Veterans Memorial Hall was begun in 1929 and the building was dedicated on September 24, 1932. (See Vol. 30, No. 1, of "The Forge" (January 2014). Members of the Louis Hagen Auxiliary (women relatives of the American Legion post) included Louis's mother, Katie Hagen, and sister, Blanche Brodt. There are no descendants of Louis Hagen's immediate family.

### ***Harry Kiefer - a brief remembrance***

Harry Kiefer, a businessman, raconteur, and community leader in El Cerrito, was also important in the El Cerrito Historical Society. Harry, who passed away in April at 94, always happily shared his recollections about life in El Cerrito, where he moved at age 14 as a refugee from Germany. For decades he operated Kiefer's Furniture on San Pablo Avenue. He shared his memories about business in El Cerrito at a society program and in a memoir. It is also to Harry that we owe the preservation of the Cerrito Theater, for in all the years that he used the theater as a warehouse he preserved its historic elements. The only thing the theater lost was its marquee – because the city ordered it removed.



## ***El Cerrito Historical Society***

*P O Box 304, El Cerrito, CA 94530*  
*elcerritohistoricalsociety@yahoo.com*

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### ***A Walking Tour of Sunset View Cemetery 2-3:30 PM Saturday, July 7 Meet in the vacant lot across Colusa Ave. from the cemetery***

Join us for a moderate walk through Sunset View Cemetery. Founded in 1908, it is one of the most fascinating places in El Cerrito and Kensington. We'll stroll by the beautiful chapel, a modern design by William Corlett, as we walk up the hill and learn about the interesting history of this cemetery and the people who are buried here. We'll gather in the vacant lot across Colusa Avenue from the cemetery before the walk. Free. 2 PM to 3:30 PM Saturday, July 7, 2018.

The El Cerrito Historical Society is a volunteer, non-political, non-profit corporation that has as its purpose the preservation and appreciation of the history of El Cerrito. It does this by providing educational and research opportunities; by collecting of historic photographs, documents, artifacts and cultural objects; by advocating for the preservation of historic resources in the city; and by encouraging others to help further these aims. Anyone may join; dues are \$25 (Household member), \$60 (Sponsoring member), and \$300 (Life member).

# LOUIS HAGEN, 1892-1918

by Barbara Hill

As the centennial observance of World War I winds down this year, it is appropriate to look back and acknowledge a native son of El Cerrito who was killed in action during “the war to end all wars.” Louis C. Hagen, Jr. was truly a native son, having parents who had also been born here. His father, Louis Christopher Hagen [Sr.], was born in 1859, and according to an article in the Oakland Tribune at the time of his death in 1950, had “spent his entire life practically within a stone’s throw of the ranch house where he was born in the rolling hill area that now is Sunset View Cemetery.” The senior Hagen served 40 years as an undersheriff for Contra Costa County.

Louis Jr.’s mother was Katherine Agnes Sullivan, called “Katie,” who was born in 1864, the daughter of Patrick Sullivan, an early rancher in the El Cerrito area. She died in 1948 and along with her husband is buried in Sunset View Cemetery on a knoll where the Hagen ranch house once stood. Through his parents, Louis Jr. was related to other early local residents such as the Davis and Belfils families.

Louis C. Hagen, Jr. was 25 years old when the United States entered World War I and a military draft was instituted. He registered for the draft in the Stege Precinct, Contra Costa County, on June 5, 1917. He gave his home address as El Cerrito, California (notice that this was before the official date of incorporation as a city), and his birth date as March 3rd, 1892 in El Cerrito. His draft registration indicates that he was a “calker in a ship yard”, employed by Union Iron Works in Alameda. He was single; had nobody dependent on his support; and had no previous military experience. He was described as being of medium height, medium build, with blue eyes and brown hair.

Louis ended up in the U.S. Army’s American Expeditionary Forces, in the 3rd Division, which was organized in November 1917 at Camp Greene, North Carolina. The 6th Infantry Brigade included the 30th and 38th Infantry plus the 9th Machine Gun Battalion, to which Louis Hagen was attached.

After machine gun training, Louis was shipped overseas on the Naval transport *Mexican*, which embarked from Newport News, Virginia on April 16, 1918.

On July 15, 1918, the Germans began the Second Battle of the Marne in France. It was to be the last German offensive in World War I; the Allied forces stalled the German advance on July 17 and launched a major counteroffensive on July 18, which began a series of Allied victories which ultimately ended the war on November 11. Historians regard it as the turning point in the war.



from “Soldiers of the Great War” compiled by W.M. Haulsee et al

The 3rd Division held the south bank of the Marne River for 12 kilometers east from Chateau-Thierry. The 6th Infantry Brigade, commanded by Brigadier General Charles Crawford, defended the right flank. The 38th Infantry Regiment and half of the 9th Machine Gun Battalion were instructed to hold the crossings of the Marne from Dormans east to Damery. The 30th Infantry Regiment and the other half of the 9th Machine Gun Battalion were placed in support of another brigade. The entire front was subjected to heavy German artillery bombardment, and it was during this action on July 15 that Louis C. Hagen, Jr. was killed while remaining with his gun. His parents, sadly, did not learn of his death until mid-October.

Louis Hagen, Jr. is buried in the Oise-Aisne American Cemetery, near Fere-en-Tardenois, Departement de l’Aisne, Picardy, France, along with over 6,000