

# PASO ROBLES PRESS

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### Profile of a pioneering family: Grant Family Homestead

Modified: Friday, Aug 3rd, 2012  
BY: Contributed

PASO ROBLES - This coming weekend Aug. 3 through 5, the descendants of pioneer homesteader John W. Grant will gather in the county for a reunion, celebrating 168 years in America, and 130-plus years in the Paso Robles area.

It will be a large affair, with more than 90 family members planning to attend, some coming all the way from the Midwest and Europe.

Planned activities include a tour and family display at the Paso Robles Pioneer Museum put together by Mathew Grant and Karen Moench, beach parties at Cayucos, and a banquet in San Luis Obispo.

The story of John W. Grant is a sad tale but also an inspiring one. John W. Grant was born into a coal mining family in Scotland in 1838 and came to America in 1844. His parents, Robert Grant and Isabelle Adam, and all of his siblings died in the St. Louis, Misso. cholera epidemic of 1849.

John came west to Salt Lake City with his Uncle John Easton's wagon train, and after 3 years in Salt Lake City, headed further west to San Bernardino with relatives.

At age 18, John left his Uncle George Easton's home in Southern California to seek his fortune. For much of his early



GRANT FAMILY DISPLAY - Karen Grant Moench (left) holds an enlarged photo of the Grant family homestead, circa 1916, located in Annette, 15 miles east of Shandon. The baseball uniform belonged to Karen's grandfather Archie Grant. This is all part of a Grant family display, which will be in place through the middle of September at the Pioneer Museum. The display is directly inside the entrance of the museum, which is located at 2010 Riverside Ave. The museum is open Thursday through Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m. The museum is also open on Saturdays beginning at 10 a.m. through the end of August. Courtesy photo.



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in one place. He farmed in the Gilroy and Redwood City areas, traveled north to Idaho to work as a teamster hauling freight between Boise and the mining camps up the Fraser River.

He quit when his chuck wagon horse drowned in the river. He then drove a herd of cattle back to California, which he sold for a profit at Visalia. He then went to work in the mines at Mount Diablo, hoping to double his profit. He went broke and quit while in debt to the mine.

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He met and married Margaret Nish, daughter of William Nish and Isabelle Henderson, in October of 1868. John's nomadic lifestyle apparently continued after marriage, first residing in San Bernardino, then Bakersfield, then a sheep ranch on the Pacheco Pass between Gilroy and Hollister.

John and Margaret then moved to Santa Maria, buying a farm next door to John's uncle, William Laird Adam, himself an influential man in Santa Maria. John was happy there for 10 long years, even joining his Uncle William in the Hesperian Masonic Lodge No. 264.

About 1880-81, as talk began of incorporating Santa Maria, John grew restless again and moved north to Choice Valley, between the small villages of Cholame and Annette, east of present day Shandon. Despite losing his entire family, moving across the country with relatives he barely knew while only 10-years-old, leaving home at 18 to seek his destiny, only to make and lose his fortune twice.

John became a successful rancher, owning properties in four counties. John W. Grant died in 1914. His wife Margaret died in 1931. John and Margaret had nine children: Isabelle, who married W.W. Holcomb of San Bernardino; Robert Bruce, who married Christine S. Sulau; John Nish, who married Myra Jane Bartron of Santa Maria; Richard, who married Exie Belle Sharpless of Whittier; Viva, who married Frank L.. Anderson; Adam Lucas, who married Clara Sulau; Fred William, who married Ina Fancher; Jessie Marie; and Archie, who married Mayble L. Hammond of Hanford. Even today there are fifth generation descendants of John and Margaret Grant living in the Paso Robles area.

Two other reunions have been held, one in 1980 and one in 2009. For more information contact Mathew Grant at 237-2328 or Kirsten Morris at 818-558-1918.

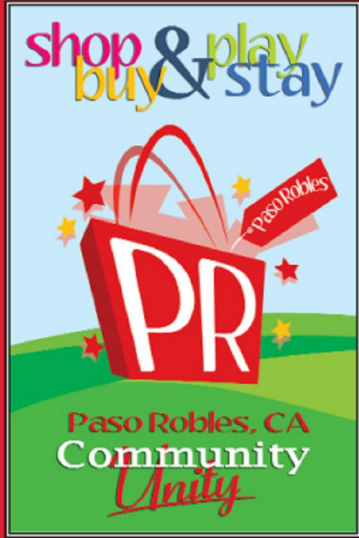
*For the complete article see the 08-03-2012 issue.*

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The Paso Robles Press,  
in collaboration with local businesses,  
announces the launch of the citywide  
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