



Perris News

Contact: Joe Vargo, Perris Public Information Officer
Phone: 951-956-2120
jvargo@cityofperris.org

Historic survey wagon comes home to Perris

A piece of Perris history, a horse-drawn survey wagon that made history in the 19th and early 20th Centuries, rolled into the city recently on a decidedly different mode of transportation—on top of a modern-day tow truck.



Workers unload and roll wagon into the Perris train depot.

The wooden wagon, restored by a grant from Riverside County, hauled railroad surveyor Fred T. Perris, the man who the city is named for and a pioneer who mapped out rail lines from Perris to the Cajon Pass and laid out the city of Temecula.

City Councilman Mark Yarbrough, who owns Champion Towing, used his tow vehicle to haul the wagon from a Menifee farm to the historic Perris Depot on 4th Street.

"It's an honor to bring part of Perris' heritage back to the city," Yarbrough said. "It's certainly the oldest vehicle we've ever towed."

The wagon will serve as a centerpiece for the Perris Valley Historical Museum Association, which is working to open a museum at the depot by January. The newly restored depot will be dedicated in a ceremony slated for Oct. 30. Among the dignitaries scheduled to take part in the dedication is the last depot's last station master.

Fred Perris lived a long and colorful life.

He surveyed land throughout much of the west, including Utah, before arriving in California. He served as a newspaper publisher and editor and eventually became the chief engineer for the California Southern Railroad, which later became part of the Santa Fe Railroad system. In 1882, Perris helped complete a transcontinental rail line to San Diego. He supported moving the railroad's switching station from Pinacate to a new settlement two miles north—the site of the future city of Perris. Grateful townspeople named the community after him.

The survey wagon was one of several Perris and his crew used to haul around their gear. After his death in 1916, the wagon fell into disuse and eventually ended up at Knott's Berry Farm in Buena Park, which boasts a collection of California memorabilia. It stayed there for decades before the historical association took possession in 1984.

Restoration of the wagon cost \$28,000 and was completed by hand at a Menifee farm. When all was ready, Yarbrough loaded up the wagon and drove it to the Perris Depot. Traffic along 4th Street was briefly stopped while the wagon was unloaded and hauled to its new home. Perris Valley Historical @ Museum Association volunteers were ecstatic. "It's a significant part of Perris history and one of the most important things we'll have at our museum," said Katie Keyes.



City Councilman Mark Yarbrough used his towing company truck to load and bring the historic survey wagon to its new home in Perris..

###

Close this Page

Print this Page