

Historic Building The Old Bonita Store 1891

E. P. Walters established the original Bonita Store in 1891. Similar to a trading post, it sold groceries, hardware, tack, hay, feed, grain, men's clothing, boots, hats, Levi's and later, when the need arose, gasoline. The store became a meeting place in the valley, and a train stop for the "Otoy Limited" (National City & Otoy Railroad). On November 19, 1898, it became the site of the first Bonita Post Office with Mrs. Ilda L. Walters as postmaster.

Originally on the north side of Bonita Road, the store was moved across the road after the 1916 flood caused a fair amount of damage. The store was replaced in the 1920's with a stucco building on the south side on Bonita Road. Wood and Howard Berkey owned and ran the store until C.A. Haffley took over the store in 1921. When a new Bonita Store was built (still on the South side), the Haffleys fixed up the old building and rented it out as a residence.



Bonita Museum & Cultural Center Collection

1. In what year was the original Bonita Store established?

2. Who became the first postmaster of the Bonita Post Office?

3. Why do you think the Bonita Store became a meeting place in the valley?

4. How might the addition of the post office have affected the store's importance to the community?

5. How did the Bonita Store's role in the community change over time? Provide evidence from the text to support your answer.

6. Compare and contrast the original Bonita Store with modern convenience stores. What similarities and differences can you identify?

7. Imagine you are a customer visiting the Bonita Store in 1900. Write a short diary entry describing your experience and the items you purchased.

8. If you were to design a historical marker for the Old Bonita Store, what key information would you include, and how would you make it engaging for passersby?

9. Write a short story from the perspective of a person going to the Grand Opening of The Bonita Store.

10. Draw a picture of the Grand Opening of the old Bonita Store

