Sonoma Valley Historical Society
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NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Wow another quarter has gone by and it is newsletter time again.

We are hoping to open the Depot Park Museum as soon as it is safe. We have new exhibits ready to go, including one on the Sonoma Valley Woman's Club.

The City of Sonoma is hoping to use some of its Measure M tax funds for upgrading Depot Park bathroom facilities and increasing signage. sonomacity.civicweb.net. There are several other agenda items in that meeting concerning Depot Park and the Museum.

One notable outcome of the pandemic has been our lecture series. Zoom has made it possible for lecturers from far away to share their information on our history with us.

Robin Lewis talked to us about the Padre Trail in February from Hawaii and there are other long-distance speakers in the future. Not only are the lecturers far-flung, but the attendees have come from across the county and country.

We enjoy sharing our history with attendees who would otherwise miss out on the lectures. Please let us know if you have comments on the timing of the lectures.

Patricia Cullinan

HISTORY & WINE TASTING

With Bedrock Wine's Chris Cottrell

April 22nd at 6:00 pm

We are pleased to announce Sonoma Valley Historical Society's second **History and Wine Tasting Event,** exclusive for our members and donors.

Join us in conversation with **Chris Cottrell**, partner in **Bedrock Wines**, bedrockwineco.com. **live on Zoom** from the General Joseph Hooker House. The event is virtual but the tasting is real.

Limited to 36 attendees who donate $100 or more to the Sonoma Valley Historical Society, participants will receive one of our fabulous gift baskets for the event containing:

- A bottle of Bedrock Vineyard Zinfandel
- Two SVHS logo wine glasses
- Wild Thyme Catering Sweets and Savories
- Vella cheese wedge
- A SVHS gift membership to give to a friend
- Other goodies

If you live in the 95476 zip code, we will deliver the basket to your doorstep on April 21st. If you live outside the area and want to participate, you can pick up your basket on April 21st at the Depot Park Museum.

To sign up for this event, email:
events@sonomavalleyhistory.org

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Sonoma Valley Historical Society is to provide a forum and a resource for the study and dissemination of Sonoma Valley history for present and future generations by identifying, collecting, preserving and sharing artifacts, documents and images.

SONOMA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OFFICERS

Patricia Cullinan, President
Carol Page, Vice President
Cynthia Thomssen, Treasurer
Shelley Hoffman, Secretary

DIRECTORS

Michael Acker
Kathleen Hill
Dr. Peter Meyerhof
Sharon O'Neil
Ron Price
Charlotte Ruffner
Kate Schertz

BOARD MEETINGS

First Wednesday of the Month
12:00 pm via Zoom

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

The Sonoma Valley Historical Society was formed in January 1937 and has served the Valley as a nonprofit organization ever since. It is dedicated to the collection, preservation and dissemination of the historic heritage of the "Valley of the Moon."

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

"Sonoma Valley Notes" is the official publication of the Sonoma Valley Historical Society and is published quarterly.

Editor: Barbara Zukin Heiman, Ph.D.
Assistant Editor: Sharon O'Neil

newsletter@sonomavalleyhistoricalsociety.org

SECOND SATURDAY LECTURE SERIES

All scheduled lectures will be via Zoom at 2:00 pm unless otherwise noted. To register, watch for e-blasts, check our website, or email *info@sonomavalleyhistory.org*.

Dude Ranches...in Sonoma County?

April 10, 2020
Presented by Lynn Downey

Local historian Lynn Downey will tell the story of how dude ranching, that classic cowboy vacation, came to Sonoma County in the 1930s and 1940s.

Antique Maps in Sonoma County

May 8, 2021
Presented by Jim Schein

An informal study, using antique maps in my collection relating to Sonoma County; the Valley; and its development and residents using maps from 1848 to 1950. We'll look at growth in the area through transit and farming via train and steamboat from the Rancho period into the modern age.

"How Dry I Ain't" The Ignoble Experiment that Failed

June 12, 2021
Presented by John Freeman

The year 2021 is the second year of the centennial of the Volstead Act (1920 – 1933): the enforcement legislation of the 18th Amendment. The Prohibition movement originated in the Northeast and Midwest, with little enthusiasm in the West, particularly in the Bay Area. But it was the "Law of the Land" and we had to obey its restrictions.

The 13 years of Prohibition have been sensationalized, especially because of gang violence and dramatic law enforcement methods in big cities and smaller communities in other regions of the nation. In the Bay Area there was a less dramatic response to what President Herbert Hoover called the "noble experiment". Bay Area residents found ways to circumvent the rules and enjoy libations with a more relaxed attitude.

KITCHEN CORNER *© Kathleen Thompson Hill*

First American Cheese Grater Made From Shower Drain

The most exciting result of my Kathleen Hill Culinary Collection exhibition at the Sonoma Valley Museum of Art was listening to everyone's stories and tears about which implements their mothers or grandfathers used, including cheese graters. We heard lots of giggles over the graters like the ones used to grate cheese over Sunday spaghetti, or "my mother had that one," along with many first knuckle-grating experiences.

Left: Plastic framed froggy 2019 cheese grater by Boston Warehouse's Animal House, gator cheese grater complete with ergonomic handle and non-slip feet.

Right: One of the original 1930s cheese graters made from a shower drain, complete with a lip at the upper end to hang over a bowl or other container to catch the cheese.

François Boullier of France and Isaac Hunt of England both took credit for inventing the cheese grater in the 1540s. Boullier originally aimed to use up an overabundance of cheese in Paris. An avoidance of meat led French farmers to convert their herds to dairy-producers, which led to more milk and even too much milk, which led to a market flooded with cheese. Boullier made his first cheese grater out of pewter to grate hard, sometimes dried out cheeses, which turned them into a sort of condiment.

Isaac Hunt wanted to stretch cheese because of a shortage of milk in England, so he grated and melted it for Welsh rarebit, allowing for more even distribution of the cheese.

During the Great Depression of the 1930s, Philadelphia cheese monger and entrepreneur Jeffrey Taylor wanted to stretch cheese for tight budgets and to bulk up cheese features (even vegetables) to make them look like more food during difficult economic times. Taylor read about Boullier's invention, and made his own by sharpening the holes of a metal shower drain.

For the last century many companies have tried to improve the cheese grater and invent a new "latest" one that we all must have. Cheese graters are made of bamboo, wood, and various metals, and some are decorated with clowns' heads or shaped like frogs. One is even called a Knuckle Saver.

Top: Bromwell's Greater Grater "Knuckle Saver" cheese grater. Made in Cincinnati, Ohio, USA, 1930s.

Bottom:: Artbeck Dial-a-matic grater and shredder. Made by Arthur Beck Co, Chicago, Illinois, USA.

The late and adored Charley Malkassian, former Head Cheesemaker for Vella Cheese Company, developed and produced their many national prize-winning cheeses such as Mezzo Secco, Dry Jack, and Asiago — all good cheeses for grating.

Kathleen Thompson Hill is a Compagnon of the Guilde Internationale des Fromagers (Paris), a member of Les Dames d'Escoffier, and Food & Wine Editor of the Sonoma Index-Tribune.

THE SPRINGS: Valley Watch Repair © *Michael Acker*

Antonio Juan, who took over Johnny Mazza's barber shop in 2017, found this clock in the back of the shop.

Valley Watch Repair was started in 1954 by George R. Trueman, who previously ran a jewelry store in Sacramento. The shop was located in the Kinucan building at first. This building, once called the Central Building, was located on the highway, on the land that now features the Sonoma Mission Inn employee parking lot.

At the time Trueman moved in, part of the building was used for the Boyes Springs Variety Store, run by the Polidori family.

In this post card photo by Zan Stark, the Variety Store is at left. The Woodleaf Store is seen on the right. The cars date the scene to the 1950s.

George Trueman became active in the business community. In 1955 he was elected vice president of the newly formed Boyes Springs Merchants Association. President was Tom Polidori. Zan Stark and Babe Gallo were directors.
In 1956 Trueman moved his business to the former Saul Becker real estate office adjacent to Gallo's Service station on the east side of the highway, near Arroyo Road.

In yet another post card by Zan Stark, the Becker building and Gallo's Service Station are seen on the right. On the left side are the buildings that housed Pine Wagner's Valley Drug and Lawrence "Bud" Castner's real estate office.

Mrs. Trueman opened her yardage and clothing store next to the Valley Watch Repair, "opposite the Mission Inn entrance on Highway 12" in 1958.

DONATE TO THE SONOMA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY QCD from IRA

If you are at least 70 -1/2 years old and have a traditional IRA, there's a smart way to give to the Sonoma Valley Historical Society. You can make a contribution known as a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from your IRA that is 100% tax-free. Even if you do not itemize your deductions on your tax return, it is possible to apply your donation and you will not pay taxes on this donation if it is sent directly to the Sonoma Valley Historical Society, P. O. Box 861, Sonoma, CA 95476. Please consider a distribution from your IRA to the Sonoma Valley Historical Society. ***Thank you!***

MURDER AT THE HI LO LAUNDRY © *Dr. Peter G. Meyerhof*

During the 30 years following the Gold Rush, many single men who were Chinese citizens came to settle in Sonoma. Some found work in American-owned businesses through employment agencies such as the Quong Hie Sing office located on Spain Street west of Weyl's Hall. Others found employment in the Chinese owned laundries of Sonoma.

In 1890 there were two Chinese laundries on First Street West facing the Plaza. One was the Sing Tai Laundry located at the approximate site of Eraldi's store. The other was the Hi Lo Laundry which occupied the ground floor of the building that is today the Fairmont Gallery.

Site of the Hi Lo Laundry in 1890

Around 11:45 pm on a Saturday evening late in November 1890, Mr. Marion Patrick, entered the Hi Lo Laundry to pick up his laundry. His friend Mr. J. H. Donleavy remained in a buggy outside until he heard a fight going on. As soon as Donleavy entered, he heard a gunshot only to find his friend lying mortally wounded.

Donleavy claimed he saw the youthful and unarmed Patrick shot by the elderly owner, Ah How, better known to most Sonomans as Hi Lo, the name of the laundry. But there were also many other witnesses; Chinese workers who were ironing clothes in the same room. They vigorously denied Donleavy's claim and blamed a fellow worker who had fled the building with the gun. Ah How was nonetheless arrested and taken to jail in Santa Rosa where he was held without bail.

In March of 1891, a trial was held. The defense subpoenaed the Chinese witnesses, but lacking clear evidence, it was the large number of character witnesses who determined Ah How's fate. The defense called out a veritable who's who of influential Sonomans who had been loyal customers of Ah How over many years and declared he was a quiet and peaceable man. These character witnesses included physician Dr. H. Davis, winemakers Carl Dresel and Camille Aguillon, merchants Solomon Schocken, Frederick Clewe, and Henry Weyl, resort owner Henry. Boyes, constable Louis Breitenbach, banker Jessie Burris, and more.

There were other witnesses summoned from Napa to attempt to show the bad character of Marion Patrick. A jury found the defendant not guilty. It was concluded that the fight was initiated by Patrick over a disputed 10 cents in his bill. Patrick punched Ah How in the face whereupon a fellow worker came to How's aid and shot Patrick before immediately escaping out the back door, never to return.

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SONOMA VALLEY

In spite of his many friends in Sonoma, Ah How still felt it would be too unsafe for him to return to Sonoma, and he wasted no time in taking a train and ferry to San Francisco. The Hi Lo laundry was soon purchased by Charlie Hoy from Oakland. Ah How became another one of the hundreds of forgotten Chinese in the history of Sonoma whose name was only recorded because his life story had intersected with the American narrative.

DRAWING SONOMA © *Barbara White Perry*

Swiss Hotel and Barn

18 East Spain Street, Sonoma CA

California Historic Landmark 496

In 1840, Don Salvador Vallejo, General Vallejo's brother, completed his adobe dwelling on the northwest side of the Plaza. In 1850, he added a second frame story to his one-story adobe building, and at the same time added the adobe wing to the east. That addition became known as the Ticino Hotel. Four years later, Salvador's Sonoma land holdings were auctioned off in a sheriff's sale and a succession of owners followed.

The Ticino Hotel was acquired by Bartolomeo Toroni in 1892 and was sold to Mose Mastellato in 1922. The original Swiss Hotel, on the west side of the plaza, was destroyed by fire in 1927. Mose purchased the surviving signage from the owners and changed the name of the Ticino Hotel to the Swiss Hotel.

In 1930, after the death of their daughter Eunice, Mose's daughter Antoinette, her husband Henry Marioni and their two children, Helen Marioni and Dario Marioni moved to Sonoma and took over operation of the Swiss. Henry and Antoinette Marioni purchased the Swiss Hotel in 1936 from the estate and heirs of Mose Mastellato.

In 1946, Marioni's daughter, Helen, and her husband Ted Dunlap, purchased the Swiss Hotel and restaurant from Henry and Antoinette Marioni. In 1981, the ownership was transferred to Dr. Tom Dunlap, his wife Ingrid Dunlap and his sister Tedi Dunlap Respini.

Helen and Ted Dunlap continued to operate the business until 1989 when the Swiss Hotel closed for a two year retrofit because of the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake. This event led to a mandate by the state to either tear down the Swiss Hotel or perform a seismic retrofit.

The Dunlap family with the help of local architect, Victor Conforti, developed and completed an extensive seismic retrofit and building upgrade. This skillful retrofit preserved the historical adobe construction, the shipwright redwood frame construction of the second floor, and the original look of the building while making it seismically stable.

Hank Marioni, grandson of Henry Marioni and Tom Dunlap's cousin, took over as the proprietor of the restaurant, bar, and hotel business and helped guide the final stages of the seismic retrofit construction.

Under his master restaurateur guidance, the Swiss Hotel reopened in September of 1992. Hank has operated the business since that time. Kristin Dunlap Schantz, Tom and Ingrid Dunlap's daughter, is the manager and will be the fifth generation of the family to operate the Swiss Hotel.

The redwood barn was built around 1926 by Mose Mastellato for the horses that worked in the fields and vineyards. The barn had four large stalls, and areas for hay and storage. During Prohibition one of the stalls had a false floor that held bottled wine. The false floor is now gone.

The Swiss Hotel property remains today, as it has for 100 years due to the dedication of five generations of the Mastellato, Marioni and Dunlap families who have been its stewards and will continue to remind us of Sonoma's intriguing and colorful past.

SWISS HOTEL AND BARN is part of Drawing Sonoma 2nd Edition. A chapter in this book is dedicated to properties in Sonoma Valley that were lost to time, neglect or development.
Barbara White Perry is a Sonoma Treasure Artist. *Contact: Barbara@BarbaraWhitePerry.com*

Brrrrr

© Kate Schertz

We have not had heat in the museum for many months now due to a construction accident during a public works project.

It is too cold to work in the archives so no report this quarter. Hoping the city gets it fixed soon so we can resume our work there.

SONOMA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Join, renew, or donate today and support the Historical Society's efforts to be a repository of all things Sonoma (including significant documents and artifacts) and a place of exploration and learning.

Members enjoy the Quarterly Newsletter, free admission to interesting lectures on local topics and invitations to other members-only events. Watch for your renewal notice in the mail. You can also give a membership as a gift!

Individual: $45 Family: $75 Business: $200
Patron: $500 Benefactor: $1,000 Docent: $15

BEQUESTS AND ESTATE PLAN GIFTS TO THE SONOMA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

A *bequest* is a gift from your estate—a transfer of cash, securities, or other property made through your estate plans. You can make a bequest to the Sonoma Valley Historical Society by including language in your will or living trust leaving a portion of your estate to the Historical Society, or by designating the Historical Society as a beneficiary of your retirement account or life insurance policy. A bequest costs nothing now, yet gives you the satisfaction of knowing you have provided for the preservation of Sonoma's history

We are happy to help you explore options for designating a bequest to the Sonoma Valley Historical Society. Those considering a planned gift should consult their own legal and tax advisors and we will also be happy to speak with such advisors.

Gifts to the Historical Society from your estate are exempt from federal estate taxes The Sonoma Valley Historical Society Inc. is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization ID# 94-2430797.

For assistance or questions, please email Patricia Cullinan: ***president@sonomavalleyhistory.org***.