

Sonoma Valley Historical Society
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NEWSLETTER



Volume 47 No. 3

July-August-September 2016

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Patricia Cullinan

The Society continues to be very busy working to upgrade Marcy House. We have been fortunate to receive generous donations in both labor and materials; Raffo Flooring refinished the floors, Rugworks donated the materials for the linoleum in the kitchen, Ron Church Concrete installed the handicapped parking and completed other necessary concrete work. File cabinets and office furniture has also been donated to support an archival and research center. A big thank you goes out to Tom Whitworth for the new Marcy House signage.

We are also excited to announce a generous Community Grant of \$9,400.00 from the City of Sonoma for the Depot Park Museum Railroad Platform Interpretative project. The interpretative Project will illustrate the key role trains played in Sonoma Valley's economy. We are still working to obtain matching funds to rebuild the train platform.

The Society has also received a monetary gift from the Hummel Family Fund (managed by the Sonoma County Community Foundation) that will contribute to matching the Challenge Grant.

This summer remember to bring your family and friends to the Depot Park Museum for an experience of historical Sonoma.

Please plan on joining us at the Marcy House on July 4th for fireworks.



Enjoy the
4th of July
Fireworks

**at the Marcy House
205 First St. West
Starting at Dusk**

Members only

Reserve your place by leaving a message
at (707) 938-1762

Bring your own chairs and blanket
Water and lemonade will be supplied
Private Porta Potty donated by Ron Price

VISIT THE MUSEUM

270 First Street West,
Sonoma, CA. 95476

(707) 938-1762
<http://depotparkmuseum.org>

Museum Hours: Fri. - Sun.
1:00 - 4:00 pm

Office Hours: Tues. - Fri.
9:00 am - 2:00 pm

By appointment
Wednesday and Thursday
Call (707) 938-1762 (Leave Message)
or email
info@sonomavalleyhistoricalsociety.org

NEW EXHIBIT

AT THE

DEPOT PARK
MUSEUM

"Sonoma Valley
Schools"

Opening July
2016

FOR YOUR CALENDAR

Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, July 6, 2016
10:00 am

at the Sonoma Barracks

Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2016
10:00 am

at the Sonoma Barracks

Board of Directors Meeting

Wednesday, Sept. 7, 2016
10:00 am

at the Sonoma Barracks

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

2016 OFFICERS

Patricia Cullinan, President
Alice Duffee, Vice President
Polly Baird, Secretary
Ron Price, Treasurer

DIRECTORS

Fred Allebach
Andrew Gibson
Tamera Honeybourne
George McKale
Carol Page
Yvonne Bowers

MUSEUM MANAGER

Open

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

The Sonoma Valley Historical Society was formed in January 1936 and has served the Valley as a non-profit organization ever since. It is dedicated to the collection, preservation and dissemination of the historic heritage of the "Valley of the Moon."

THE DEPOT PARK MUSEUM

The Sonoma Valley Historical Society's Depot Park Museum is located at 270 First Street West in the city's old train depot one block north of Sonoma's historic plaza. The museum is open from 1:00-4:00 pm Friday through Sunday. Admission is free.

Mailing Address:

PO Box 861, Sonoma, CA. 95476-0861

Telephone: (707) 938-1762

Web Site:

www.depotparkmuseum.org

Email:

info@sonomavalleyhistoricalsociety.org

ABOUT THIS PUBLICATION

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

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"SECOND SATURDAY" LECTURE

The Chinese of Sonoma Valley

*Presented by
Gordon Phillips*

**Saturday, September 10, 2016
2:00pm**

**Sonoma Community Center
276 East Napa St.
Sonoma, CA. 95476**

Gordon Phillips will be discussing the influence of the Chinese culture in Sonoma County. Gordon will present information derived from several sources; census data, the Chinese family structure, tong incidents, response to the boycott and some reported anecdotes that are not common knowledge.

As a result of a tour to China, Gordon took a job teaching oral English in Beijing. After returning from China, he enrolled at Sonoma State University as a graduate student in the History Department and in 2015 acquired an MA in history. His thesis was, "The Chinese of Sonoma County, 1900-1930: The aftermath of Exclusion."

A copy of Mr. Phillips' thesis is available for review at The Historical Society.

**Please note there will be no
"First Thursday" lecture in
September.**

VOLUNTEER FOR THE COLLECTIONS CREW

With the Historical Society's move to the Marcy House, we will be organizing a Collections Crew to assist with the critical task of accurately cataloguing information. This is an essential part of thorough and useful archiving. As an example, the Society has a substantial collection of maps; hand-drawn maps of historic properties, advertising maps used when El Verano was being developed, and railroad maps illustrating the route and owners of the lands the railroad passed through.

Please consider volunteering for this important work. Leave a message at the museum (707) 938-1762.

SAVE THE DATE
"Second Saturday"
Lecture
October 7, 2016

Instead of an educational "Second Saturday" lecture in October, we will have an event with Jim Schein of Schein and Schein Map Store discussing the maps of the Sonoma Valley Historical Society. Jim is also willing to look at and appraise maps that attendees bring ala The Antiques Road Show. Jim Schein & his wife Marti own a map store at 1435 Grant Ave. in San Francisco and are Sonoma Valley residents.

Join us for this fun event.

MISSION SAN FRANCISCO SOLANO CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION 1923

"Andy and Theeda Borie were glad it was over, the week-long Centennial of the founding of Mission San Francisco Solano. The crowds, the pageant and the noise were about all the new resident caretakers of Sonoma's Mission could handle. As a retired Southern Pacific Railroad dispatcher, Andy had not been prepared for the thousands of people that would invade the Mission (that's where Andy and his wife were living) from Saturday, June 30, 1923, through Wednesday, the Fourth of July.

No sooner would one thing stop than something else started. There were band concerts, fiestas, a Spanish Ball, parades, High Mass (conducted right in front of the Mission by Archbishop Hanna), singing choirs, theatrical performances, a rodeo, a fandango. There were black and white, beauty and girl reviews, the Chicken Pickers' Musical, receptions, vaudeville acts, the library dedication, stunts, commercial bands and - the most momentous of all - the Sonoma Mission play, produced by Garnet Holme, presented right in front of the Mission before bleachers constructed in the street. Four hundred people participated in the cast, made up of both local and professional actors. Enough seats were provided for 3,500 people.



Elford Eddy of the San Francisco CALL newspaper reported the pageant as follows. "Without making comparisons, without qualification, without any explanation of the reason why, it can be stated with authority that Sonoma's celebration was the best thing of it's kind any of the visiting newspaper men had ever seen. And visiting newspaper men always credit themselves with having seen considerable. That Sonoma, a small city, could stage such a show was a big surprise to these same visiting moulders of public opinion. They came intending to consecrate a lot of time to sleep, but after seeing the show they decided they could do their sleeping after their return home and tried to remain in circulation 24 hours a day for fear of missing something."

Other than being tired, the Bories had enjoyed the event except for one circumstance: just before the Centennial the California Automobile Association, painting "El Camino Real" signs from Santa Barbara north, did their job in Sonoma, and having some bright green paint left over, painted the time-stained antique Sonoma Mission bell the same bright green. Andy let them paint the bell because he thought the Automobile Association had State orders to do so, but the sight brought tears to Theeda's eyes. Jessie Prestwood, president of the Centennial celebration, with the help of L. J. Graham, scraped off the green paint as best they could in time for the Centennial.

With things returning to a more peaceful pace, Andy remained curator of the Mission until he died in 1929. Theeda continued the job alone until retiring in 1933. They often reflected that the Centennial had been the most eventful, if tiring, event in their lives."

Written May 22, 1979

Contributed by Robert Parmelee

THE SPRINGS
THE WOODLEAF STORE/BIG THREE CAFE

Woodleaf Park is the name of one of the many subdivisions platted in the Springs around 1910.

The building on the southwest corner of Boyes Blvd. and Highway 12 was built, by B. Cabanot, shortly after the great fire of 1923. It was known then, and until the 1950s as the Woodleaf Store. The store was operated by Marion Greene, a community leader, for 28 years. Greene sold the store to George Riccomi in 1951, and he installed a modern soda



fountain and a horse-shoe counter in a "brilliant formica yellow design," according to the Sonoma Index Tribune.

The interior was remodeled by architect Hugh Duffy and became the Big Three Market in 1959. Presumably, the wonderful neon sign was removed then. (Duffy was also the architect of the Plaza Center building and the Boyes Food Center.)

In 1980, the Sonoma Mission Inn Corporation, under Edward Safdie,

bought the building and continued operation of the store and soda fountain. A later iteration of the Inn converted the store into a café. In 2016, the Fairmont Corporation closed the café permanently. Future plans for the site are unknown. (Photograph by the author and courtesy of the DPM.)

Contributed by Michael Acker
2016



THANK YOU, JEAN AND JO MILLER

Jean and Jo have been long time members and officers of the Sonoma Valley Historical Society. They served as Secretary and Treasurer for many years continually providing support for and leadership of the Society. The successful Attic Sale was spearheaded by this dedicated pair of women. The art collection located in the refrigerator car was organized and designed by Jean and Jo and is enhanced by the accompanying reference catalog they created. Our current exhibit "A Brush with the Past" was created with planning and references supplied by Jean and Jo. They also curated our exhibits on the Sonoma Valley Woman's Club in 2001 and the Chris Jorgensen art exhibit in 2002. This team for several years chaired our Christmas parties and although the parties have been scaled down, until 2015 they continued to plan and decorate for our Christmas celebration.

Jean and Jo recently moved to Santa Rosa and we hope to continue to see them at Society functions. Their effort and support over the past twenty years have helped to sustain the Sonoma Valley Historical Society. We wish them the very best in this transition and new chapter of their life.

Thanks, Jean and Jo!

SIMMONS PHARMACY SCALE

Thanks to a generous donation from Melissa Redmond, the Simmons' Pharmacy scale has a new home at the Depot Park Museum. The National Novelty Co. Minneapolis scale from the early 1900's was included in the 1970 purchase of the business by Melissa's parents. The Historical Society sincerely thanks Melissa for her donation.

A Brief History of the American Penny Scale by Christopher Steele:
American penny scales stood watch like sentries across the American landscape reminding everyone to watch their weight and keep healthy. Pitched as trade stimulators, known as silent salesmen, these "robots of trade" evoke nostalgia for simpler,

healthier times and have all but vanished from the American landscape.

For nearly 50 years, penny scales were the most popular machines for monitoring weight. In their heyday, 1930s and 40s, these mechanical wonders brought in over 10 billion pennies or over \$100 million annually. That's equivalent to \$1.5 billion. In the late 1880s, the first American penny scales made their way on to the scene to offer the public their first chance to monitor weight and health without visiting a doctor's office. The penny scale distinguished itself from earlier vending machines that dispensed products such as gum or peanuts by their very lack of product. They offered a service not a product. This is how the penny scale earned the designation, America's first vending service. Today, there are many service-oriented, coin-operated machines in operation. Laundromats, car washes, and bowling ball polishers are just a few.



It wasn't long before the scale designers added products, as incentives. Along with innovative engineering, real ingenuity was required to attract passers-by and "turn pennies into gold."

Inventors outdid each other coming up with gimmicks to entice people to drop in a penny – some scales told your fortune, some gave you pictures of movie stars, others gave your penny back if you guessed your weight or hit a mark.

Bring your pennies and take a trip back in time.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS
Arlene & Kon Balin
Suzanne Berube
Carole & Robert Nicholas

SONGS FROM THE ATTIC
by Dave Brummett

Do you want to learn more about the bear flag and the people involved? Our pamphlet archives have some interesting stories.

To view these records, please call (707) 938-1762 and leave a message requesting an appointment.

Rosie & the Bear Flag

(Stories of California's flags from end of Spanish rule to the beginning of the United States & the story of the Bear Flag Republic from Rosalia Leese, who was there)

Harry Knill
Bellerophon Books
Santa Barbara, CA
1979

The Henry Beeson Story

The Last "Bear Flagger"

Julia L. Mougovan, M.A.
Mendocino County Historical Society
May, 1968
1982-236

William B. Ide

The President of California

George Kirov
The Senate of the State of California
California State Printing Office
1994
1996-1.5

Bear Flag Lieutenant

The Life Story of Henry L. Ford (1822-1860)

Fred B. Rogers
California Historical Society
San Francisco, CA
1951
1978-83

**A Roster of Living Descendents
of the Bear Flaggers,**

Some California Batt Relatives & Neighbors
1975

**Bear Flag Country
Legacy of the Revolt**

**A History of the Towns & Post Offices of
Sonoma County, California**

Richard Paul Papp
Analecta Publishing
Under the auspices of the Redwood Empire
Collectors Club
Petaluma, CA
1996-1.4

Mark Your Calendar

MARCY HOUSE
GRAND OPENING RECEPTION

August 18, 2016

Details to Follow

MOUNTAIN CEMETERY PROJECT

Beginning July 17, 2016 and continuing through August 2016, Jameson Reeves will resume the scanning at Mountain Cemetery. If you are interested in volunteering for this project, please contact the museum (707-938-1762) or view the Sonoma Valley Historical Society Facebook page. Jameson also plans to review the Society's numerous historic resources and conduct interviews with the families of the cemetery 'residents'. The Historical Society has in its archives the Bates and Evans Funeral Home records beginning in the 1870's.

This Cemetery Project not only includes scanning the gravesites but also GIS input. Volunteers will also be needed for that part of the project.

Next year, Sonoma Valley High School plans to initiate a photo competition for students that will use the Cemetery as its subject matter. Jameson is returning from his job in Spain to begin a master's degree in landscape architecture with an emphasis in environmental planning at UC Berkeley. He is using this Mountain Cemetery project as a centerpiece of the degree he is pursuing.

EL DELIRIO, CIRCA 1852

Spain Street West at Third Street West, Sonoma



As you walk west past General Vallejo's home, Lachryma Montis, you will come upon a forest-like setting and a little structure I think would make a perfect house for fairies. This small, elaborate cottage is a Victorian Carpenter Gothic named El Delirio. The steep pitched roof is decorated with elaborate carved wooden trim along the eave and lattice work surrounds the cottage on all sides.

When social callers came to visit the General and his family, they entered through a gate to the west of the main home passing by the swan fountain, and El Delirio. They would then cross the garden and enter the main house, Lachryma Montis, with its sweeping staircase ahead, the parlor to the right and the dining room to the left.

During the summer, El Delirio served as a retreat for the Vallejo family and also guest accommodations. A visitor might have found all six children at El Delirio writing letters and doing needlework, children that were as privileged as any in California because their father was still wealthy and powerful. It is believed that the General wrote his famous "History of California" in El Delirio.

I found the little house and its name, El Delirio, to be very mysterious. To me, El Delirio means frantic with delight because the family was happy there.

Barbara White Perry, Drawing Sonoma
Barbara@BarbaraWhitePerry.com