# NEWSLETTER

SONOMA VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 48 No. 1 January February March 2017

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

2016 was an exciting year for the Historical Society with the hiring of Annie McCausland as our archivist and the Marcy House becoming the Sonoma Valley Archives and Research facility. This fall we had donations of historic documents including one from Carol DiGuilo that added to the existing Minelli Collection of the original Sonoma Valley Bank documents. The donation was of records and photos of her mother, Helene Minelli, and life in Sonoma Valley from the 1950's to 1980's.

2017 will be even more exciting moving the Society into the digital arena as we plan and proceed in digitally recording our records.

I want to thank the Native Sons of the Golden West Sonoma Parlor 111 for a generous donation of $500 towards the Sonoma Mountain Cemetery Scanning project. Jameson will be back in January to continuing his work at the cemetery and anyone wanting to help with some brush clearing to get better scans is welcome to join him.

The Grants Committee has applied for a California Preservation Assessment Project, managed by the California Preservation Program (CPP)*. This program is designed to help small and mid-sized libraries and archives plan improvements in care for their permanent and historical collections. It is a competitive grant that will allow us to apply for specific grants based on the recommendations of the evaluator.

I want to personally thank all the members, volunteers, docents and board members that have made the Historical Society a success. This would not have been possible without you.

*Patricia Cullinan*

## 2016 Holiday Train Show

The 2016 Holiday Train Show was a great success with the Sonoma Short Line train group supplying a new train track spanning the entire center of the Depot Park Museum. Attendees could run the trains and there were lots of happy young faces. The whistles blew and the engines steamed through the tunnel at the end of the platform. Tours of the caboose alongside most days of the Train Show added to the experience.

### 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
Alice Duffee, Vice President
Polly Baird, Secretary
Ron Price, Treasurer

### DIRECTORS

Fred Allebach
Tamera Honeybourne
George McKale
Carol Page
Yvonne Bowers
Dr. Peter Meyerhof

### MUSEUM MANAGER

Marie McNaughton

### ARCHIVIST

Annie McCausland

### 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 colllection, 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.

Editor: Yvonne Bowers
newsletter@sonomavalleyhistoricalsociety.org
Assistant Editor: Pat Pulvirenti
ppulvirenti@sbcglobal.net

# "SECOND SATURDAY" LECTURE SERIES

All Lectures
2:00 pm at the Community Center
276 East Napa Street, Sonoma
(Unless Otherwise Noted)

**Saturday, January 14, 2017**

*The Story of Formal Dueling in America 1621-1859*

Presented by Jim Danaher and Dave Brummett, the "Dynamic Duo" of Historical Presentations.

The Historical Society will show authentic dueling guns at the presentation.

**Saturday, February 11, 2017**

*To Be Determined*

**Saturday, March 11, 2017**

*"Charmian Kittredge London"*

Presented by Iris Dunkle
2016-2017 Poet Laureate of Sonoma County
Teacher of Writing and Literature at
Napa Valley College

Iris is the co-author of "The Biography of Charmian Kittredge" with Susan Nuernberg, Ph.D. Hear about Charmian's life with and without Jack London.

* * * * *

### UPCOMING SPRING LECTURES

Look for future lectures including "General Vallejo" presented by Alan Rosenus, "Levi Strauss" presented by Lynn Downey and "Gold Rush Stories" presented by Gary Noy.

## WELCOME NEW MUSEUM DOCENTS

*Carroll Stenkemp*
*Dennis Grimes*

### WELCOME BACK
*Caboose Expert John Ralston*

John has returned to our school-tour program wearing an engineer costume and is a fun and educational figure in the memories of teachers and students alike. He is also willing to train other docents in effective story-telling and train lore. Contact us for information about giving school tours and other special events and topics.

*Marie McNaughton*
*info@sonomavalleyhistoricalsociety.org*
*(707) 938-1762*

## BUSINESS MEMBERS OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Sonoma Country Antiques
3 Badge Beverage Corp.
M. Brocco & Sons, Inc.
Body Best Collision Center
Sonoma Community Center
Mr. & Mrs. Frederick Duhring
Broadway Hospitality, Inc.
El Pueblo Inn
Mia's Kitchen
Duggan's Mission Chapel

## DUES ARE DUE!

A reminder: paid memberships expired on December 31st. We've had several renewals but several are still outstanding. Please dig out the renewal postcard you received in November and send your check. Your membership is valued and important to us.

*Don Stevens*
*Membership Secretary*

## SONGS FROM THE ATTIC
*Dave Brummett*

Has the model train show wet your whistle (train talk?) to grab a bite of more info about trains? We've got you covered. Check out some of these books!

**Railroad Days in Tiburon**
The Story of Peter Donahue's Southern Terminus
Louis Teather
Belvedere-Tiburon Landmarks Society

**Northwestern Pacific Railroad**
Northwestern Pacific Railroad Historical Society
Fred Codoni, Paul C. Trimble

**Narrow Gauge to the Redwoods**
The Story of the North Pacific Coast Railroad and San Francisco Paddle-wheel Ferries
A. Bray Dickinson

**Rails Sagebrush & Pines**
A Garland of Railroad & Logging Days in Oregon's Sumpter Valley
Mallory Hope Ferrell

**California History**
Railroads in California & to the Far West
Magazine of the California Historical Society

**The Birth of California Narrow Gauge**
A Regional Study of the Technology
Thomas & Martin Carter, Bruce MacGregor

**Great Train Robberies of the West**
Eugene B. Block

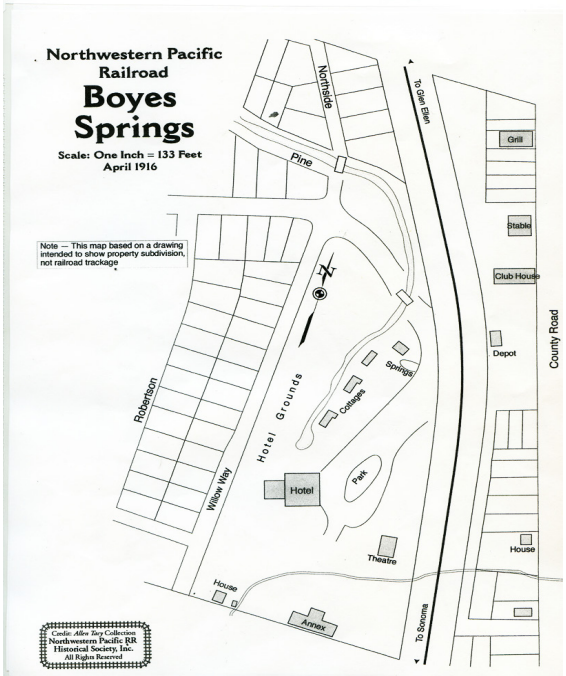
*To Access the Archives, please contact*
*Annie McCausland*
*archivist@sonomavalleyhistoricalsociety.org*
*(707) 343-1335*

# THE BOYES SPRINGS DEPOT

*contributed by Michael Acker*

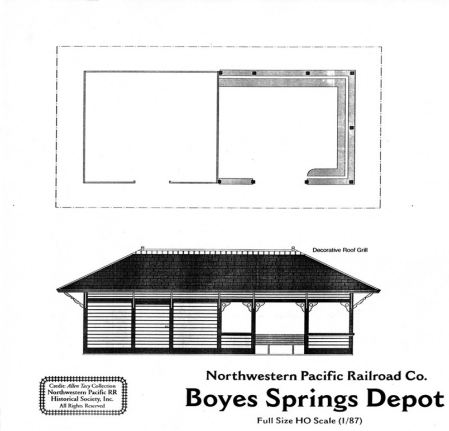
Labeled by the photographer "Street Scene at Boyes," there really wasn't a street in sight in this shot from the 1910's. It's more a casual congregation of well-dressed holiday makers, strolling and standing in groups on the grassy expanse surrounding the depot, at left, center. Tents, perhaps housing vendors of refreshments, with pennants flying overhead, have been set up on the east side of the depot. A sign near the flagpole reads "To the Baths." The "New Hotel" can be seen in the background.

By 1889 there were two railroads serving Sonoma Valley, running on opposite sides of Sonoma Creek. The Santa Rosa and Carquinez on the east side, and the San Francisco and North Pacific on the west side. The San Francisco Northern Pacific became the Northwest Pacific Railroad in 1907 and it served the depots in El Verano, Boyes Springs, Fetters Springs and Agua Caliente.




This wonderful map from 1916 shows the exact relationships of the prominent buildings. Indicated are the depot, hotel, theater, and the club house. At the top, right the "grill" is seen. This was Sam's Grill and exists today. An interesting feature to note is the canal that ran from the hotel grounds, down Pine Street. The house shown at the bottom center left may have been Leavenworth's original home, as shown in his plat.

The depot as it looked in 1921. Destroyed in the fire of 1923, it was rebuilt in 1925. The new building was "…of the standard suburban type, rustic finish and cement floors. The waiting room will be 12x40 feet, the platform 16x48 feet, and the freight shed 12x20 feet. There will also be an agent's office." Index Tribune, June, 1925.



Waiting for the Train, 1928

A depot survived on this site until 1942 when the rail line was discontinued.
Boyes Depot, 1942

*Map and drawing courtesy of the Northwest Pacific Railroad Historical Society.*
*1942 photo courtesy of the Sonoma Valley Historical Society.*

## INTRODUCING OUR NEW ARCHVIST

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I am Annie Lynne McCausland, M.A. the new archivist for the Sonoma Valley Historical Society. I want to express my appreciation to the membership for their continued support of the Historical Society. Without you we would not be able to accomplish our mission and goals. I am very excited to be working with an organization with such a deep rooted, enthusiastic passion and commitment to preserving the history of the Sonoma Valley.

You might ask, what is the role of an archivist? Here is a quick overview:

I am responsible for appraising, acquiring, arranging, describing, preserving, and providing access to the Sonoma Valley Historical Society collections. In order to make the collections more accessible, I am spearheading an entire collections digitization project into our database, Past Perfect. The ultimate goal is to have the collections safely stored for long-term preservation and to provide easy access, so the collections can be utilized by the society and the public to benefit the community which includes private research, museum exhibits, online exhibits, and education projects.

*Annie McCausland*
*archivist@sonomavalleyhistoricalsociety.org*
*(707) 343-1335*

## DRAWINGS BY BARBARA WHITE PERRY

**BLUE WING INN**
*(How it grew from a small single story adobe)*
**133 East Spain**
**Street, Sonoma**

**California Historical Landmark Number 17**

**1836-1840** The original structure was a small single story adobe, with two-foot thick walls across from the Mission. There is good evidence that the middle room of the Blue Wing was constructed first and this was probably close to 1830. Adobe buildings were not built with interior hallways so to get from room to room, you walked outside. That is why there are so many doors.

**1841-1846** The Blue Wing Inn grew from a simple one-story, one-room structure into a two-story, six-room configuration. The building had the appearance of a typical Monterey style adobe.

**1850's** In 1852, a 35' by 35' two story adobe addition abutted the west end of the original structure. The dining room and kitchen were located in the east room of the first floor. The central room served as the gambling room and the westernmost housed the saloon and business office. On the second floor, the west and central rooms housed overnight guests.

**1888** An insurance map indicates most of the adobe building was used for making and storing wine. The same map shows that the central room on the first floor was occupied by a grocer named Monferdini and the east room housed a clothing store.

**1906** The Blue Wing withstood the great earthquake of 1906 with little damage except for the original chimneys that crumbled and fell.

**1911** A fire threatened to wipe out many of the Plaza's buildings. At that time, Agostino Pinelli owned the inn and used it as a winery. He let firefighters pump 8,000 gallons of his wine to quench the blaze and the Blue Wing Inn saved the town. (Now, it may be time for our community to return the favor.)

Agostino Pinelli died in 1925 and left the property to his wife Rosa. During this period the Sonoma Chamber of Commerce moved into the first floor where the 'Blue Wing Museum' began operating. The Inn was not maintained and was soon in disrepair.

**1941** Rosa Pinelli sold the Blue Wing for $2,500. The building was repaired and partly restored by Elmer M. Awl and Alma de Bretteville Spreckles Awl. They sold it to William and Eleanora Bosworth Black in 1948. The Blacks began a series of restoration projects over 20 years. They patched missing adobe brick then applied stucco and whitewash to the walls. They added a new concrete slab and installed new wood floors. The second floor became residential units. After restorative work, the Blue Wing became a retail center on the first floor with residential rentals on the second.

**1968** The Blacks sold the Blue Wing to the State of California. The building has been the subject of a near-constant conversation about the meaning of history and the cost of preservation and restoration of the community's many architectural treasures. The California State Parks intended to make it into a house museum, but funding problems prevented this from happening. The state repaired and re-roofed the Blue Wing in 1984.

**1990** The unreinforced masonry of the Blue Wing was designated as potentially hazardous. It has been shuttered and vacant since 2001, when the California State Parks ceased using it as apartment housing.

**2010** The Blue Wing Adobe Trust was founded and the following year formed a partnership with the California State Parks to fully restore it and repurpose the Adobe.

The seismic and roof repairs were accomplished using funds from Proposition 84. The new roof wasn't completed but the seismic improvements had been completed just before the October 2014 earthquake.

Over the last several years, the State was amenable to forming some sort of operating agreement with the Blue Wing Adobe Trust, but it has never become a reality.

**2016** The Blue Wing Inn is falling back into disrepair. The interior is gutted in several rooms, the floor is missing, the distinctive blue paint on the doors is faded and peeling, and the exterior second-floor balconies, which run the length of the building front and back, now conspicuously droop. And the fear of vandalism is constant.

We as a community need to save the Blue Wing Inn and identify an adaptive reuse that is self-supporting. The State has conducted several studies on potential uses for the Blue Wing Inn but these decisions are controlled by the State and the economic reality of restoring the building.

Let's save the Blue Wing Inn before it is too late.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

John & Sara Donnelly * Moira Burke
Sarah Ford * Nicholas Weeks
Eugene & Ethel Daly * Dennis Grimes
Frances & Chester Arnold * Tada Darsie
Laurie Decker * Sidney Hoover
Bonnie Joy Kaslan * Jim & Sharon Lynch
Robert Mosher

Sonoma Valley Historical Society
P.O. Box 861
Sonoma, CA. 95476-0861

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## 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

## FOR YOUR CALENDAR

### Board of Directors Meetings

12:00 pm
Depot Park Museum

Wednesday, January 4, 2017
Wednesday, February 1, 2017
Wednesday, March 1, 2017

## MARCY HOUSE ARCHIVES AND RESEARCH CENTER

205 First Street West
Sonoma, CA. 95476
9:00 am to 4:00 pm Mon.-Fri.

Contact Annie McCausland
archivist@sonomavalleyhistoricalsociety.org
(707) 343-1335