



# Hamilton History Museum Dedication

By Mike Clancy

After more than 15 long years the Hamilton History Museum is a reality. Years of negotiations among developers, politicians, historians and the public are finally completed and so is the museum—almost.

There are still exhibits to add and finishing touches here and there, but the hard work is done.

And hard work it was. More than 6,000 hours were put in by Novato Historical Guild members and other volunteers. There was lots of heavy construction work done by folks really too old to be doing it. People nearing or past 70 years of age were climbing ladders, digging ditches, knocking down walls, wielding everything from pens, pencils and paint brushes to picks, shovels and jack hammers.

At the dedication all this was documented in dual slide shows projected on the museum walls. Also on the walls are numerous large photos of Hamilton Air Force Base and activity during its heyday.

The lobby level of the museum contains the gift shop, a model of the

Hangar Road area, historical documents and photos, and spacious restrooms.

A long, gentle ramp leads to the lower floor where you find the library,

rate to the units stationed at the base.

There is a well-stocked library/reading room which is an excellent resource for research into Hamilton history and the history of aviation.

Upon entry we were given a program of the day's activities enclosed in a copy of the original Hamilton Field dedication program dated May 12, 1935.

The festivities commenced with the Presentation of the Colors and Pledge of Allegiance by the Novato High School Junior Air Force R.O.T.C.

Our National anthem was sung by the San Marin High School Jazz Choir directed by Emily Gates.

The ceremony featured Novato Historical Guild President Ron Vela as master of ceremonies, speeches by Mayor Jeanne MacLeamy and city council members. Guild members and others also spoke.

Recognition for a job well done was given to all the Historical Guild volunteers, notably Ray Dwelly who was the driving force of the venture, with Roland Fuetter as his second in com-



*Ray Dwelly and Mayor Jeanne MacLeamy cut the ribbon opening the Hamilton History Museum. With them are members of the city council and members of the Novato Historical Guild.*

the model aircraft exhibit and some artifacts including a Link Trainer (a WWII vintage flight simulator used to teach instrument flying).

I was particularly impressed with the display of aircraft models of the planes that operated out of Hamilton. All the models are in the same scale to give an accurate representation of the relative sizes of the planes. All the color schemes and markings are accu-

**The Novato Historian**

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**Guild Mission Statement**

Our Mission is to collect, preserve, and make reasonably available to the public, exhibits and information related to the historical and social development of the Novato valley, Hamilton Field, and the adjacent North Marin area.

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Original articles and photographs related to Novato history are welcomed!

**Deadline for September issue is August 1.**

**Address Changes**

The Novato Historian is mailed by bulk mail and will **not** be forwarded by the Postal Service. Please notify us promptly of your address change, at Novato Historical Guild, 75 Rowland Way, Suite 200, Novato, CA 94945.



**President's Corner**

by Ron Vela

President, Novato Historical Guild

The second quarter of 2010 is one to remember. On the anniversary of the dedication of Hamilton Field, May 12, 2010 we officially celebrated the ribbon cutting. On Saturday the 15th the museum was officially opened to the public. Both days were fantastic events. We had the Novato High School Junior Air Force R.O.T.C. as color guard while the San Marin High School jazz choir sang the National Anthem. We had Mayor MacLeamy and a few council members speak, and finally the ribbon cutting took place with the Mayor and Ray Dwelly cutting the ribbon. We had over 125 people attend. We even had one couple who drove all the way from Ashland, Oregon, to be there. Ret. Col. Harold Bingaman was a jet jockey in the 60's and is one of the guys who kept rattling our windows, remember those days? On Saturday we had the People of Note playing 40's tunes. We even had one couple who danced around the exhibits while the music was playing. We had a steady flow of people throughout the

day. It was supposed to go to 4:00 but at 4:30 people were still coming.

It has only taken 14 years to accomplish opening the museum, but we did it. Of course it would never have happened without many key people leading the charge, people like Bill Palmer, Pat Willat, Bill Kelly, John Trumbull, Lin Hines, Roland Fuette, Elayne Miller and all the other past presidents and board members who supported this project.

Ray Dwelly started construction eight years ago and he and all his merry band of volunteers spent over six thousand hours of their own time to complete the project. There are over thirty-five members who logged hours in the project, too many to list them all. The list of people who have spent hundreds of hours individually I have to mention. They are in the order of the most hours logged by person: Ray Dwelly, Roland Fuette, Robert Lowry, John Trumbull, Bob Manzoni, Tom Keena and Dan Johnstone. We can't thank all of you

Continued on Page N-9



Ray Dwelly received the 2009 Community Service Award from California Park & Recreation Society District 1 for his outstanding service and support to the City of Novato. Ray was honored for his ongoing work at Hamilton Field History Museum at a reception held at Margaret Todd Senior Center on February 27.



# Novato—50 Years Ago

## (April, May and June 1960)

by Bill Almeida and Tonie Brown

*“Novato 50 Years Ago” is a collection of items culled by Bill Almeida from the April, May and June issues of the Novato Advance newspapers in the collection of the Novato History Museum and microfilm at the Novato Library. Tonie Brown retypes the articles for the newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading the names and happenings of 1960.*

- Burge’s Drive-In at Ignacio was saved early morning April 3 when a fire broke out in the attic. Firemen knocked down the flames with a fog spray and kept the fire confined to the attic. All of the department’s 13 regular paid firemen turned out as well as 17 volunteers. Note: Burge’s was located at the entrance to Entrada Drive.

- Peter J. Ferrarese, incumbent commissioner and local bank manager, defeated Keith C. Craig, 247 to 114 votes, in the April 5 election for Novato fire district commissioner. Craig, a state highway patrol officer, was at one time a fireman in Richmond.

- Pamela Saffores was the winner of the Hill Intermediate School spelling bee in the first round of a Bay Area-wide spelling contest leading to a national spell-down in Washington D.C. Pamela is a student in the eighth grade at Hill School. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Saffores.

- Three city councilmen were re-elected in an April 12 election. Manuel (Babe) Silva, Everett Pozzi and Harvey Vicchio won by wide margins over Gene Trombley and William Loewen. Silva received 1,316 votes, Vicchio, 1,252 and Pozzi 1,232 votes.

- The Marin County Planning

Commission was scheduled to consider a use permit to locate a memorial park next to the Novato Horsemen’s Club on Bugeia Lane.

- Hamilton Air Force Base was named in honor of First Lieutenant Lloyd Andrews Hamilton. Lt. Hamilton was the first American officer to fly with the Royal Flying Corps, and was first in a squadron of 150 men to shoot down an enemy aircraft. He was killed on August 24, 1918 while on a combat mission over enemy territory in Belgium.

- The Novato city council agreed to establish a six-man police force in the upcoming fiscal year which starts July 1. A six man police force, consisting of five patrolmen and one police chief, would cost the city approximately \$50,000, according to administrative consultant Robert O. Bailey.

- Wayne Womack was re-elected as chairman of the city council—an action that made him mayor once again. The motion was made by M.E. (Babe) Silva and approved unanimously by the council. Silva was then unanimously voted to serve as vice mayor.

- The plans of William Jonas of Food Fair for a big new supermarket in the Ignacio area were unanimously approved on May 2 by the Marin County Planning Commission. Jonas said construction would begin in about 30 days with hopes of opening for business by Thanksgiving. He planned to continue his downtown Food Fair Market operation on Front Street.

- With the acquisition of the old Grant Avenue School property on the corner of Grant and Highway 101 (now Redwood Blvd.) for \$110,000 from its Santa Rosa owner, John

Pedranzini, the state committed itself to running an elevated dirt-fill freeway directly through the heart of Novato on its present route. State highway engineers said they intended to get bids immediately for tearing down the old school building, a public eyesore that has been condemned by city and county officials. Note: This freeway plan was later scrapped.

- Members of the Nave family, owners of Nave Lanes, under construction along Highway 101 near Loma Verde, attended a bowling management school in Chicago. The school was conducted by Brunswick Corporation for owners and operators of bowling establishments. Attending the course were William F. Nave, Sr., William F. Nave, Jr., Richard P. Nave and Robert M. Nave.

- Commencement exercises for Novato High School were held June 16 at the high school gymnasium. The 1960 class of 116 graduates was the second to graduate from Novato’s brand new \$1,500,000 high school. Valedictorian was Suzanne Swan and the salutatorian was Paula Heisel. Principal Robert McKeay saw his son, Martin, graduate.

- Lee Bros. supermarket opened its doors at its Patterson Ranch location at Seventh and Grant on June 16. Note: This is the building now occupied by the City Gymnastic Center.

- A new heating and sheet metal business opened in Novato in early June under the proprietorship of David Milano, who has worked for the Howell Plumbing Company the past 9 years. The firm is the Aero Heating and Sheet Metal Co. on Nugent Lane, the alleyway behind the Novato Theatre. Milano will be assisted by Bob Manzoni, also an

*Continued on Page N-6*

# Novato Historical Guild Board Highlights

by Pat Johnstone

## February 2010

*New Business* – The curator position will be eliminated by the City of Novato on 6/30/2010. A motion was made and approved that NHG fund .50 FTE up to \$3,000 per month for fiscal year 10/11 (July 2010 to June 2011). The proposal will be presented to the City.

California Parks and Recreation Society presented Ray Dwelly an award for his ongoing work on the

Hamilton Field History Museum on February 27 at the Margaret Todd Senior Center.

*Curator's Report* – The annual Volunteer Appreciation/Orientation Day will be held on March 2 at 10 a.m. at Hamilton Museum.

*Hamilton Museum* – A new sump pump was purchased for Bldg. 500. Leaks in the tool storage room were repaired.

Sausalito Seniors are visiting the museum on May 27 and the Tuskegee Airmen are visiting in November.

*Membership* – The total membership is 564 of which 380 have renewed so far (includes 67 life members).

## March 2010

*New Business* – Twenty-four 3rd grade classes have signed up for 3rd grade tours.

A motion was made and approved that NHG pay \$30 for storing the negatives from the Novato Township Book for the year 2010.

A motion was made and approved that we pay "People of Note" \$200 to play for 2 hours on opening day (May 15) at Hamilton Field History Museum.

*Curator's Report* – Mayor Jeanne MacLeamy and ROTC cadets from Novato High will participate in the May 12 dedication of Hamilton Field History Museum. A volunteer graphic artist will work on signage. Six people have signed up to be docents at Hamilton Museum and four more are interested.

*Old Business* – 901 Sherman Ave. Project report: Paint the Town Red event lost \$3,000. The second batch of bricks has been installed and the third batch has been sold. The NHG brick project at Hamilton Museum has been delayed because of the rainy weather.

## April 2010

*New Business* – On March 23, the city council authorized the beginning of the process by which the city would sell the Simmons House and the Silva-Kuser House. Unfortunately, the Guild was not informed of this agenda item. The board asked John Trumbull to write the city council stressing the importance of keeping the façade of these two houses in their original appearance if the city sells the houses.

A copy of "The Novato Historian" was submitted to the city to be placed in the time capsule that will be buried on May 22 (Novato's 50th Birthday Party).

A motion was made and approved

*Continued on Page N-9*

## In Memoriam

The Guild mourns the loss of the following members:

- Nancy Phinney Cazzaniga**
- Irene Frey**
- Orville Wrosch**
- Nancy Altman**
- Fred Sand**
- John Arntz**
- Henry Hansen**

### The Guild

#### Extends Sympathy to

- Carol and Mike Clancy** on the death of her mother Myrtle Browne
- Kathryn Hansen** on the death of her husband Henry
- The Family** of Nancy Cazzaniga
- The Family** of Irene Frey
- Sue and Len Volker** on the death of her mother Alice Tripp
- John and Sandy Groff** on the death of his mother Alice Tripp
- Lillian Wrosch** on the death of her husband Orville
- Richard Altman** on the death of his wife Nancy
- Dee-Dee Sand** on the death of her husband Fred
- Thelma Arntz** on the death of her husband John

## MEMORIAL PLAQUE ADDITIONS

You may honor a friend or loved one by having his or her name engraved on an individual brass plate on the Memorial Plaque in the History Museum. Please call the Museum at 897-4320. All contributions are tax deductible.

## MEMORIAL GIFTS

You may make a gift of appreciated securities (stocks, bonds, mutual funds) to the Novato Historical Guild. Your gift is not only tax-deductible, but if you have held the shares for more than one year, your tax deduction will equal the full value of the securities on the date of the gift. By donating appreciated stock investments, you will:

- avoid capital gains taxes,
- receive a sizeable charitable deduction, and
- support the Guild in "preserving Novato's history."

Plaques cost \$250 per person named.

# Novato Memories

By Jim McNern



Ray Dwelly

Ray Dwelly has been the “driving force” in the transformation of the historic Hamilton Firehouse into the Hamilton History Museum. He has personally donated 3,166 hours of his time to this project.

Ray was born in the Ross Hospital. He moved to Novato from Larkspur when he was four years old and has lived in Novato for most of his life. Ray was a member of the 1951 graduating class of Marion School. He shares his Novato memories in this June issue of the Novato Historian. Ray remembers:

- His parents, Vernon and Kay Dwelly, and his siblings; brother Vern and sister Barbara.
- Growing up in a house at the corner of McClay Road and Novato Boulevard. The address was 1901 Novato Boulevard. The house was originally built by the Freitas family as a wedding gift for their daughter, Rose. The cobblestones used on the front porch came from San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake. They had originally come from the quarry on Mt. Burdell.
- His dad pulling out half the pear trees in the orchard, so they could have room for the horses.
- Betty Silva being the family babysitter.



## From the Staff Desk

by Samantha Kimpel  
Museum Curator

### Our Docent Corps

Over the past four months, we have been actively recruiting docents for the Hamilton Museum. We have “hired” many wonderful new volunteers (twenty!), along with some long-time Guild volunteers and friends who will be taking on this new job.

As we talked to potential docents, the question often arose concerning what qualifies someone to be a docent. For both the Novato and Hamilton Museums, the best answer is the possession of an interest in helping visitors to learn about the exhibits and museum resources, and a desire to make visitors feel welcomed.

Many larger museums have rigorous docent training programs, requiring study before becoming an official docent. Because our museums are small, and we rely so much on volun-

teer leadership, our docents are trained on the job.

Most often, we do not expect our docents to know everything about the collections or the histories contained within each museum. What is most important is a willingness to find the answer to patrons’ questions, and for the docent to share his/her enthusiasm and curiosity for the subject (whether it is the early history of Novato, or a specific era at Hamilton). Good storytellers are a plus!

If you or someone you know might want to become a docent, we are always looking for people to help ignite and foster interest in Novato’s local history. Please contact me at either museum, and I would be happy to talk more about our docent jobs—at downtown Novato, at Hamilton, or as a 3rd Grade Tour docent).

*Continued on Page N-8*

• His neighbors; the Ruzick, Rose, Meyers, Silva, McDowell, Wilfert, Costa, Flugger, and Balz families.

• Attending Novato Grammar School and having Mrs. Hulme, Miss Larkin, Mrs. Olson, Mrs. Busher and Mrs. Steele as his teachers. He moved on to Marion School in the upper grades and had Mr. Farris, Mr. Slepnikoff and Miss Sutton as his teachers.

• Playing marbles with Miss Sutton at Novato Grammar School and having her break up his only fight in school over a marble game.

• His friends and classmates; Rich Burgi, Jim Hovis, Dean Tresch, Ken Rose, George Bacigalupi, Louise Gness, Barbara Thompson, Carol Tresch, Patsy Kniser, Ann Fredrickson, Bill Haymart, Peggy

Roberts, Esperanza Salazar, Ed Flugger, Bob Worden and Terry Siess.

• Learning to diagram sentences in Miss Sutton’s eighth grade class. She was a very strict disciplinarian.

• Getting caught throwing homemade darts at the corkboard at Marion School.

• All of the construction going on at Marion School during the time he was there.

• Dressing up for Halloween and riding his bike all over west Novato trick-or-treating. The houses were far apart in those days.

• Celebrating May Day with maypole dances at Novato Grammar School.

• Playing sports on the upper hill

*Continued on Page N-7*

## Matt Cerkel Guest Speaker At June Meeting

I've been a Park Ranger on the Marin Municipal Water District's Mount Tamalpais Watershed where I've patrolled for the past 15 years. I've also had a life-long interest in local history.

About five years ago I wanted to learn more about the World War II era military plane crashes in the Mount Tamalpais area and started researching them. While researching these fairly well-known crashes, I came to realize there were a lot more military plane crash sites in Marin and most have been largely forgotten.

Just during the World War II period in Marin there were at least 60 crashes and at least 116 pilots and air crews killed. Many crashes also occurred before and after the War. These crashes occurred in all parts of Marin from near the Golden Gate in the south, to the Sonoma County line in the north, Point Reyes in the west and San Pablo Bay in the east.

Nearly every major community in Marin seems to have had at least one military aircraft crash near it. Novato, because of Hamilton Field, has the highest concentration of crashes.

Learning more about the crashes made me realize that the story of these crashes and of those involved or lost should be told. So far this year I have located two "new" crash sites, a Korean War era U.S. Navy Corsair fighter in Nicasio and a World War II era USAAF P-38 Lightning that crashed in Novato on July, 4, 1942.

My goal is to write a book on these Marin crashes, but much research remains to be done. With the book, my presentations and my research I hope we can tell those lost in Marin, in the service of their county, that "We will remember them..."



# 50 Years Ago

*Continued from Page N-3*

experienced sheet metal man. Milano will deal with individual home owners or subdivision contractors.

- Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Silveira were married in St. Vincent's Catholic Church on June 11. She was the former Evelyn Affonso of Novato. The couple was congratulated at a reception in Sausalito following the wedding which was attended by hundreds.

- John J. Angeloni, Novato's newest city council member, was named to replace Harvey Vicchio in a surprise move at the city council meeting on June 20. Vicchio submitted his resignation a week earlier because of an impending transfer to Sacramento by his company, Pacific Telephone & Telegraph Co.

- Robert Porteous was elected president of the Miwok 4-H Club at its final meeting of the year on June 18. Others who will head the Miwoks

this year are Sheila Keena, V.P., Patricia Ferrarese, recording secretary; Kathy Taylor, corresponding secretary; George Johnson, treasurer.

- A daughter was born on June 5 to Wayne and Eva Westcott, at Marin General Hospital.

- Novato High School was granted full accreditation by the University of California in late May. The accreditation came as the result of a thorough analysis of the high school by a Cal inspection team.

- Water district directors were divided on whether to purchase water from Marin Municipal Water District. Water from M.M.W.D. cost \$50 an acre foot. Stafford Lake cost the district \$20 per acre foot. Stafford was at 75 per cent of capacity with a little more rain expected.

- Ross Wright, manager of the

*Continued on Page N-8*

## Hamilton Museum Dedication

*Continued from Page N-1*

mand and Bob Lowry as volunteer professional contractor.

The political godparents were Colonel Bill Palmer, U.S.A.F. retired, who was the first curator of the Hamilton collection in the 1980's and 1990's; Pat Willat, Elayne Miller, Lin and Maryke Hines and John Trumbull who carried the torch from the 1990's to completion.

John also contributed to the library and, with E.E. Ewry, to the model aircraft display. Bill Glass, Tom Keena and Bill Kelly, AFA were also deeply involved in the development. The museum is projected to include both documentary and artifact types of exhibits.

The work done in both saving the building and rebuilding the interior is a real credit to conservation of historical places.

The exterior of the building is preserved as it was originally built and

the interior retains a touch of the original style of other Hamilton buildings.

The firehouse doors were recreated from drawings created by Bill Kelly from the original pictures. The \$50,000 tab was a donation from the Taylor-Woodrow Company. The chandeliers were salvaged from the Officer's Club, which has been closed as an earthquake hazard and will probably be razed at a later date.

In attendance at the dedication were several people who had been stationed at the old base including two officers in their 80s, wearing their old uniforms which still fit well!

There was coffee and a beautiful "Hamilton" cake served after the ceremonies.

It was a very enjoyable day and all of you who were not there should make an effort to visit this museum. Novato and the Novato Historical Guild can include this project as one of their best efforts.

## Novato Memories

*Continued from Page N-5*

and the smell of the pine trees at Novato Grammar School.

- Graduating from Marion School in June 1951 in the Community House.

- Playing “Kick the Can” and “Hide ‘n’ Seek” with friends.

- Damming up Warner Creek.

- Riding in the first Novato Horsemen’s Parade in a buggy with his family.

- Buying eggs from the Ruzick family.

- The day he shot a fox on Mt. Burdell and brought the tail home.

- Getting his driver’s license at age 14 and driving his blue 1939 Ford Coupe to San Rafael High School his freshman year.

- Taking guns up on Mt. Burdell for target practice.

- Walking down Grant Avenue with a .38 special revolver strapped to his waist and then going up to Wright’s Mill for target practice and shooting bottles floating in Black John’s Slough.

- Shopping at H. Pini and Co., Rayburn’s and Ascherman’s Market.

- In the early days, all stores were

on the east side of Grant Avenue.

- Getting haircuts from Ray Lightner. One day while getting his haircut, the town’s fire whistle blew and Ray Lightner had to close the shop to go fight the fire. He told Ray to come back the next day so he could finish the job.

- The Dwelly’s first phone number when they had a crank phone was 2 longs and a short; it then changed to 60-J, and then to TWInbrook 2-2500.

- Belonging to the Cub Scouts, Novato Junior Horsemen and the Miwok 4-H Club.

- Worden’s Auto Wreckers on Simmons Lane.

- Having lots of fun at Los Posados 4-H Camp in Angwin, Napa County.

- Dr. Ralph Weseman was the family doctor who would make house calls when you were sick.

- A special mixed breed family dog named “Wags,” who was delivered by a milk truck from a Novato dairy ranch.

- The Dwelly family had the second swimming pool in Novato—so there were always lots of friends at the house during the summer.

- An angora goat named “Bogardus,” who was moved up to the Kingsley’s place after he discovered he could jump.

- The baby fawn his dad found at the side of the road and brought home for the family to raise in a horse stall.

- At one time the family had 26 cats until Ray and Vern started to drive and then the cat population started decreasing.

- The time 20 miniature donkeys arrived and were left at the Dwelly’s place because the truck carrying them from Mexico to Santa Rosa broke down. The donkeys stayed a week.

- His dad, Vernon Dwelly, was a member of the California Highway Patrol for 39 years and wore Badge S-1. He patrolled all over Marin County.

- Riding with the driver of the Marin Dell milk truck as he picked up milk from local dairies.

- Early jobs were riding with Louie Garaventa on his garbage truck; working on Reno Pronzini’s hay press at age 14; and feeding cattle at Sil and Louise Oliva’s Rancho Del So Lo on Novato Boulevard.

- The family raised Arabian show horses and participated in many local, state, and national parades. Their favorite parade horses were palominos named Ahmed and Lady. Other Dwelly Arabians were named Cloverman, Abu Hamad and Ghalil.

- His dad rode Ahmed in President Eisenhower’s Inaugural Parade in Washington, D.C., and took him by train to New Orleans to ride in the Mardi Gras Parade. He also rode in the Rose Bowl Parade and a big parade in Reno, Nevada. One year Ahmed was shipped by freighter to Hawaii for a parade a week ahead of the family, who traveled over on the Lurline.

- His dad was the first president and founding member of the Golden

*Continued on Page N-10*



*At the March General Meeting guest speakers Cathy Gowdey (left) and Esther Mott from the Marin County Genealogical Society gave helpful hints on how to trace your family ancestors to members and guests.*

## Staff Desk

*Continued from Page N-5*

### Some special thanks

Although there are now nearly 100 active volunteers who keep two museums operational, there are a few people who have contributed extra time in the past few months as the Hamilton Museum opening approached. There are too many to list here, but I would like to mention a few people with whom I have worked directly in recent days.

Of course, not enough thanks can go to Ray Dwelly, Roland Fuelle and the entire amazing build-out team who made that space possible. John Trumbull set up the library and model plane exhibit, Pat Johnstone set up the gift shop at Hamilton, as well as serving as the lead contact for signing up prospective docents. Iva Young is working many extra hours to set up the new home of the Hamilton archives.

Kelsey Monahan, anthropology major at SFSU, worked with me to scan and index Hamilton archival material in preparation for exhibits. Silas Valentino, San Marin H.S. senior, helped transport all the archives and artifacts from the Novato Museum and from collections storage to Hamilton.

The Wednesday and Thursday docents of the Novato History Museum held down the fort while I needed to be primarily at Hamilton the past months. And finally, the Novato Historical Guild board members did outstanding work on making the Hamilton dedication and opening day events such wonderful days.



## Welcome New Guild Members

Through June 2010

### Individual Memberships:

Winnie Coleman  
Georgia Tiefer

### Family Memberships:

Peggy McFarland  
Sara Steck & Gary Trenchard

### Patron Memberships:

Debby and Dan Nowlin

### Please support our Guild business members:

Acme Digital and Screen Graphics

Bank of Marin  
Heirloom Storage  
(House of Daniels, Inc.)  
Marin Landscape Materials  
McIsaac Dairy  
Novato Horsemen  
Now and Then Antiques  
Pini Hardware  
Suburban Alternatives Land Trust  
The Wright Salon  
Trumbull Manor Inc., Novato  
Zenith Instant Printing

*If you have questions about membership, call Edna Manzoni, Membership Chairman, 415-892-9603.*

*A gift membership always meets the need for that person who has everything.*

## Jacqueline Moore Moves to Arizona

Jackie Moore, longtime volunteer museum director of the Novato History Museum, has moved to Chandler, Arizona to be nearer her family. Now 96 years old, Mrs. Moore retired from teaching at Olive School in 1974, after teaching in the Novato School District. She taught grades 4, 5 and 6.



Mrs. Moore, a graduate of Washington State University where she majored in Botany, moved to Novato in 1951 with her husband, Bill. She became the volunteer museum director in the mid 1970's. In 1992 she received a medallion and certificate in honor for her many years of service to the Historical Guild. Jackie is very happy in her new surroundings.

## 50 Years Ago

*Continued from Page N-6*

Western California Telephone Company in Novato, became the seventh president of Novato Rotary Club on April 19, replacing prior nominee, Sidney Kerston. Kerston was scheduled to replace the current president, Don Donohue, but told the Rotary board he intended to take an extended school course and asked to be relieved.

- It was rumored that Helen Gray, owner of Modern Eve, has sold her Middlefield Farm on McClay Road for more than \$200,000.

- One of the dairy ranchers, whose dairy borders the Indian Valley Golf Club, gets very angry when a golfer strays over the fence looking for a lost golf ball. He once reportedly fired a shotgun blast over a poor lost hacker's head. As a result, not many climb the fence to look for their ball.



## President's Corner

*Continued from Page N-2*

enough. I am going to recommend to the board we double your hourly wage.

Samantha did a great design for the exhibits and I can't wait until we complete the lighting and the rest of the exhibits. It is going to be first class. We have a new group of museum docents lined up. We are looking for more so if you are interested don't be shy we want to hear from you. The museum will be open like the downtown museum, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday from 12 noon to 4 p.m. Pat Johnstone has her gift shop set up and ready for business.

Talking about business, I would like to talk about our brick sales. Even in hard economic times, we still have to try and do fund raising. It costs money to operate the museums and we need to be able to bring in monies any way we can. The brick sales can start in earnest now that we are open and the patio where the bricks will go is nearing completion. The memorial wall is also near completion. In the last newsletter you should have received your application for the bricks as well as the memorial wall plaques. The bricks are sold for \$100 and the memorial wall plaques are sold for \$250. We strongly encourage you to buy a brick and help support the Hamilton Museum. You will also be buying a place in history; your family name will live forever at the entrance to the museum. The same is true for the memorial wall.

During open hours, please take some time and check out the new museum. You won't be disappointed.



*Dedication Day—Hamilton Museum*

## More Memories from Lorrie

*By Jim McNern*

*In our last issue of the Historian Lorrie D'Ambrogio-Kidder shared her Novato memories with us. She had so many memories we ran out of space and so we are continuing them in this issue.*



*Lorrie D'Ambrogio-Kidder*

homes once a month for food and drink. They paid dues and then took their husbands out to dinner once a year. Members were: Joan Connell, Kathleen Panfiglio, Margaret Anhorn, Val Hansen, Myrna Sjoblom, Penny Cavallero, Marge Saffores and Molly Tharsing.

• The many movies seen at the Novato Theater—and the day she won \$50. in a drawing!

• Her Aunt Marie Salmina teaching her to drive. They would practice by driving from Reichert to DeLong to Railroad and then turn on Grant. They would do it over and over. When she went to the D.M.V. office to get her license, the clerks just threw up their hands and said, "We might as well give her the license because she has been driving for months."

• Uncle Louie Salmina lived on 4th Street and would plant a huge vegetable garden every year, and would grow the best tomatoes. He planted 100 plants each season and would give away his vegetables to his many friends.

• Marie Salmina worked as a grocery clerk for many years in Ambrogio's Market, Food Fair, Aschermans, and R & W Market.

• Buying fruits and vegetables at Nave's Cabbage Patch on South Novato Boulevard.

• The "Deer Wives Club" was a group of Novato women who met for 50 years to keep each other company while their husbands were out hunting deer. They met at each other's

• When she worked in San Francisco and people learned she was from Novato, they all said, "That's where you can get a traffic ticket."

• Sam Marzell playing Santa Claus each year at the fire house on Grant Avenue. The children were given a candy cane and orange.

Attending Louie and Marie Salmina's big 4th of July Barbecue each year.

• Old Novato families with the names: Salmina, Cain, Tresch, Westlund, Almeida, Murray, Gness, Briggs, Manzoni, Pronzini, Renati, Panfiglio, and Busher.

• She has seen many changes in Novato over the years. Among the best is Novato's nationally recognized state of the art fire department and paramedic services. Another is Novato Community Hospital. Among the negatives is the huge Millworks Building that is out of place in Novato's historic oldtown. The increased traffic congestion on several streets can be a challenge.

## Board Highlights

*Continued from Page N-4*

that NHG will make monthly payments for the alarm system at Hamilton Field History Museum.

*Old Business* – The Historical Guild will have a booth at Novato's 50th Birthday Party from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on May 22.

*Hamilton Museum* – Display cases and boards are finished and accent lights for the gift shop have been installed. 3,938 volunteer hours have been logged.

*Museum Store* – NHG received a royalty check of \$801.44 from Arcadia Publishing for the "Hamilton Book" and the *Novato, Then and Now* book. The Guild receives 8% of net receipts twice a year from Arcadia.

# Novato Memories

*Continued from Page N-7*

Gate Arabian Horse Association, as well as the Northern California Arabian Horse Association. He was the acting captain of the Palomino Club of California.

- Working as an electrician at San Rafael High School and College of Marin while a student for school events.

- His dad was a charter member of the Marin County and Contra Costa County Sheriff's Posse.

- Getting hamburgers at the Hi Fi and Carousel and later at Burge's Drive In in Ignacio.

- Hearing the fire whistle blow each day at noon.

- Getting goodies at Torassa's Bakery.

- The Community House always being the place for important events in town.

- The ranch hands who would come into town on Saturday by horse and wagon.

- The Marin Dell milk trucks that stopped by the house.

- Dad dressing as Santa Claus every year for the Novato Horsemen's Christmas party.

- The Dwelly family sitting down together for dinner every day. Family Sunday dinners were always a big deal.

- Serving as a volunteer fireman for 33 years after joining the department in 1971.

- Driving the auxillary water tender for 10 years before becoming the department's photographer.

- Becoming the N.F.D. photographer in 1985.

- The day he drove the water tender into a septic tank on Atherton Avenue.

- Fighting many local grass and structural fires around town. Some of the memorable ones were the yearly grass fires on Cherry Street hill in June when school let out; the fire on the hill on Middlefield Farm on McClay Road fought with wet gunny sacks; the Young Brothers' Furniture Store fire; and the airplane burning in a hangar at Gness Field.

- Working with Steve MacCubbin for eight months in developing the Jeffrey Meston Fire Museum at 95 Rowland Way.

- Old Novato families with the names: Glass, Nolan, Silva,

*Continued on Page N-11*

## Novato's Treasures THE SILVA-KUSER HOUSE



The "Silva-Kuser" home was built in 1903 for Dr. and Mrs. John Kuser by Capt. Leon Hiribarren. Dr. Kuser lived with his wife and son in the upstairs level of the home and had his medical office in the lower level.

Mr. John Silva, custodian for IDESI, would be the next resident of the home until the late 1960's.

By 1976, the home was called "a fire hazard" by the Novato Fire Protection District who suggested that it be torn down.

The city-owned building was restored in 1980 by general contractor Mike Sterling for Ed Goliti who leased the building for 25 years at \$1 a year. The restored building now had four offices in the 1,000 square foot top floor and a 400 square foot storage area underneath. A side door, porch and stairs were added at this time.

An antique shop / art gallery was the first tenant to move into the building in February 1981. Later it would become a medical office.

In April 2010, the city put the building up for sale.



### Help Wanted

Docents for  
Hamilton Field History Museum  
Positions available for  
Wednesdays and Saturdays  
from 12 noon-4 p.m.  
Please call Museum Curator  
Samantha Kimpel  
at 899-8236 or email at  
skimpel@ci.novato.ca.us.

# Novato Memories

Continued from Page N-10

Simmonds, Garaventa, Ruzick, Rose, Hovis, Burgi, Briggs, Silva, Paladini, Bacigulupi, Leveroni, Oliva, Gness, Cole, Rayburn, Zunino, Manzoni, Wright, Crandall, Tresch, Cain, DeBorba, Busher, Lieb, Freitas, Nave, Angeloni, Corda, Hall, Marzell, Lafranchi, Rudolph and Arp.

- Seeing many changes in Novato over the years. The “state of the art” fire department and paramedic services are the best improvements, along with the decrease in injuries in auto accidents because of seat belt laws.
- The increased population is a negative. Novatans used to know

almost everyone they would see when they went to town to shop. It would take a long time to get your shopping completed because you spent so much time talking with friends. Now, it is a rare occurrence when you see people you know.

## THE GIFT SHOPPE

The Museum Gift Shoppe has the perfect unique Novato gift!

### Books & Pamphlets

- **Novato Township\*** the definitive history of Novato by May Ungemach . . . . . \$30.50
- **Novato, Then and Now** by Novato Historical Guild \$21.00
- **Hamilton Field** by Novato Historical Guild . . . . . \$21.00
- **Hamilton Airfield History** . . . . . \$2.00

### Videos & DVD's

- Hamilton Field History (VHS or DVD) . . . . . \$15.00
- Novato History (VHS or DVD) . . . . . \$10.00 (available only through the museum)

### Sweatshirts (S, M, L, & XL) . . . . . \$20.00

- Novato History Museum (blue or green)

### Ornaments

- Novato History Museum . . . . . \$7.00
- Hamilton History Museum. . . . . \$10.00
- Novato City Hall . . . . . \$10.00

### T-Shirts (M, L, & XL) . . . . . \$11.00

- Guild Historic Buildings (3 designs):  
*Postmaster's House, City Hall/Church, Railroad Depot*

### Miscellaneous

- Novato Historic Buildings Notecard Sets . . . . . \$10.00
- Guild Tote Bags . . . . . \$5.00
- Ceramic Thimble . . . . . \$1.00
- Novato History Collector Cards . . . \$3 per pack or 30¢ each
- Hamilton Field Historic Picture Reproductions. . . . \$10.00
- Mugs. . . . . \$5.00
- Laminated Place Mat (11 x 14) . . . . . \$5.00 (available only at the museum)

### Leather Goods

- Coin Purse . . . . . \$15.00
- Business Card Holder. . . . . \$12.50
- Small Purse. . . . . \$23.00

We accept VISA or MASTERCARD

\* All proceeds from the sale of **Novato Township** go directly to the support of the History Museum. All prices include sales tax. To Order: Call the museum at 897-4320 or email patjohnstn@aol.com for shipping charges and information. Supporting and Life Members receive a 10% discount at the Gift Shoppe!

## Membership Form

Please mail checks to **Novato Historical Guild, 75 Rowland Way, Suite 200, Novato, CA 94945.**

Yes, I want to join the Novato Historical Guild and help preserve Novato history!  new  renewal

- |   |         |      |
|---|---------|------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student (full time) membership | \$10    | year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual membership          | \$20    | year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family membership              | \$30    | year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron membership              | \$100   | year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting membership          | \$200   | year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life membership, individual    | \$350   |      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life membership, joint         | \$500   |      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor                     | \$1,000 | year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business membership            | \$50    | year |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate membership           | \$1,000 | year |

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City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Additional donations? \_\_\_\_\_

Interested in volunteering? \_\_\_\_\_

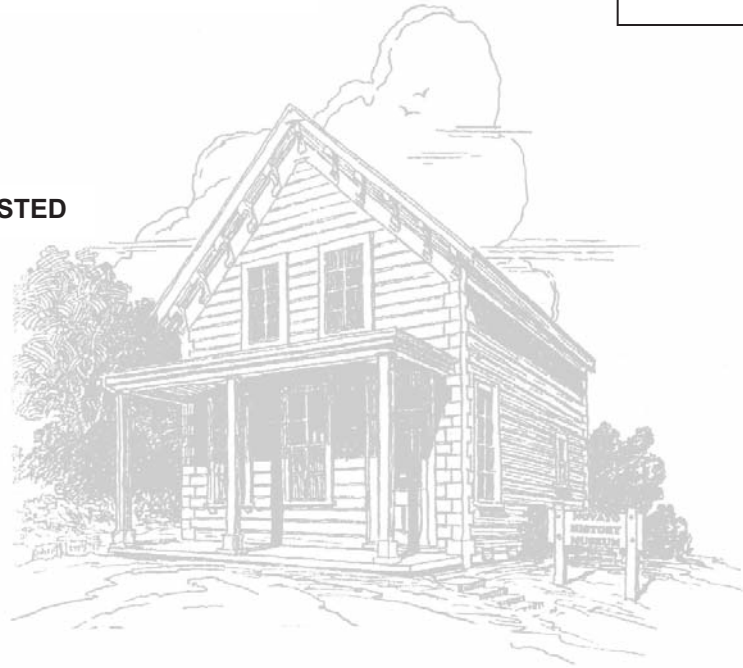


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Notice  
***General Membership Meeting***  
of the  
*Novato Historical Guild*

June 12 — 1 p.m.  
Hamilton History Museum  
555 Hangar Avenue, Novato

Our guest speaker will be Matt Cerkel. Topic will be "Military Plane Crashes in Marin County."

**NOVATO HISTORY MUSEUM**

**COME VISIT AND BRING A FRIEND! • 815 DeLong Avenue**

The Museum is open 3 days a week—Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday—Noon to 4 p.m. • 897-4320

**Closed Major Holidays**