

The Novato Historian

The Quarterly Publication of the
Novato Historical Guild, the Novato History Museum,
and the Hamilton Field History Museum

Preserving Novato's History

News Section

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January-March 2012

The Novato Historian

Volume 36, Number 1

Thank You for a Job Well Done



Leaving the board this year are Charlotte Urban, Ron Vela and Pat Johnstone

Novato Historical Guild's Annual Christmas Party

The Annual holiday party which was held on Saturday, December 10, at the Novato City Hall on Sherman Avenue, was even bigger than last year's holiday party, as we had over 80 Guild members and guests, singing along with Rob Sundberg and his combo. Rob provided the entertainment and led the group in the annual singing of "The Twelve Days of Christmas," to the enjoyment of all. We even had all of the 2011 City Council Members singing along.

The refreshments provided by Diana Goebel and Edna Manzoni and Board Members were delicious as always. Morton and Bassett Spices of Novato, once again donated a variety of spices for door prizes.

The members approved the 2012 Budget and the slate of officers for the Board of Directors. Leaving the Board were Ron Vela, Charlotte Urban and Pat Johnstone.

Thanks to all those who attended, the Guild collected 192 lbs. of canned and boxed food, which Bill Almeida delivered to the Marin Community Food Bank. Our thanks go out to the many members who helped make the afternoon a success.



Rob Sundberg and his combo entertain 80 guests at Novato History Guild's very enjoyable 2011 Christmas party

Special Announcements

If you are having a milestone birthday or wedding anniversary this year, or know of another member who is, we would love to know about it. Please call Diane Campbell, our Sunshine Committee Chairperson at 415-883-7265 with the details.

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.

Novato Historical Guild 2012 Officers

President	Mike Read
Vice President	Tom Keena
Secretary	Kathryn Hansen
Treasurer	Kathryn Hansen

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Cindy Motsinger	Roland Fuette
John Trumbull	Ray Dwelly
Yvette Jackson	Diana Goebel
Louise Koenig	Bill McDill
Sheila Brossier	Joe Williams
Janice Bazaruto	

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Eleonora Lafranchi

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Finance	Tom Keena
Fund Raising	Tom Keena
Gift Stores	Pat Johnstone
Hamilton Museum	Ray Dwelly
Hospitality	Diana Goebel
	Edna Manzoni
Mailing	Bill Almeida
Membership	Edna Manzoni
Nominating	Yvette Jackson
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School Tours	Janice Bazaruto
	Anne Lehan
	Cindy Motsinger
Sunshine	Diane Campbell

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Bill Almeida	Jim McNern
Pat Johnstone	Tonie Brown
	Mike Read

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Mike Clancy

City of Novato Staff

Recreation Operations Manager
Kathy Kormos

Museum Curator

Samantha Kimpel

Original articles and photographs related to Novato history are welcomed!

Deadline for June issue is May 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, P.O. Box 1296, Novato, CA 94948.



President's Corner

by Michael Read

President, Novato Historical Guild

I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays and is having a wonderful 2012. The trees are already in bloom and spring is just around the corner.

Our spring general meeting will be held at 1 p.m. on March 10 at City Hall on Sherman Avenue. Our guest speaker will be Lissa McKee, long-time Mill Valley resident and historian. Lissa will talk on the early days of "The Portuguese Dairy Ranchers of Southern Marin: A Landscape of Memory."

Before the war, dairy ranches covered much of the slopes and valleys south of Mount Tamalpais. For nearly a century the majority of those ranches were operated by immigrants from the Azores, nine small islands in the middle of the Atlantic. Colorful and historical slides, maps and drawings will accompany Lissa's presentation.

A new sign in front of our Hamilton Museum should arrive in the next few weeks, as well as signs directing visitors to the Museum. We can thank the City of Novato for their support in this endeavor. Also at the Hamilton Museum, some new bricks have been installed and John Trumbull should have the first tiles going up very soon. Remember, bricks are just \$100 and tiles are \$250 each. They make wonderful gifts and immortalize special events and people in our lives.

We have two new Guild Board members: Joe Williams, who has been working hard at the Hamilton Museum, and Janice Bazaruto, who has been involved in the 3rd grade program for many years. Speaking of the 3rd grade, the program is starting to gear up and we will soon be setting schedules and contacting schools to arrange the tours. As most of you know, 3rd grade history teaches about the City Government.

The Guild's holiday party at City Hall was the best attended ever, and I think it was the first time all of the Novato city council members were in attendance. We

had delicious treats provided by the Guild Board members and Rob Sundberg's Combo was as wonderful as ever. The combo lead us in carols culminating in "The Twelve Days of Christmas" which I captured on video.

I want to thank everybody who volunteered at the Novato tree lighting where we had a booth on December 3.

A very special thanks to Roland Fuette who, after turning on the outside Christmas lights at the Novato Museum, decided to try and stop a car with his body. He ended up with a few stitches on his head and a bruised leg. We are thankful for his dedication and that his injuries were not more serious.

We are always collecting vintage photos. If anyone has old pictures of Novato or the Hamilton area, but does not want to donate them, we can scan your pictures. You will still have your pictures, and we can make copies and use them in the Museums.

If you have photos you would like to share, call me at 717-1412 or call the museum at 897-4320 to make arrangements. Remember, your photos will be returned and will not be harmed.

I look forward to seeing you at our spring meeting.

Margaret Binggeli

Margaret Binggeli, a dedicated volunteer at the Novato History Museum, passed away on August 31, 2011. She was a docent on Wednesdays. During that time, she would tally all the volunteer hours as well as visitor numbers for the downtown museum. Visitors and volunteers were moved by the stories she told of her life. Margaret taught many years at Novato High School before her retirement. She was buried in Ogden, Utah, next to her husband, Lawrence.



Novato—50 Years Ago

(January, February and March, 1962)

by Bill Almeida and Tonie Brown

“Novato 50 Years Ago” is a collection of items culled by Bill Almeida from the January, February and March 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 1962.

- A proposed policy to suspend high school students who willfully fail their courses was turned down by an opinion from the county counsel’s office. Assistant County Counsel Douglas J. Maloney stated that academic deficiency, regardless of the reason, is not included in legal causes for suspension. The school board of trustees decided to drop the proposal “for the time being.”

- Howard E. Bradley was confirmed by the U.S. Senate to be postmaster at Hamilton Air Force Base. He was a 39-year-old career employee in the postal service. He served as a letter carrier for 16 years at the Sausalito post office.

- A tentative agreement was reached for purchase of the Presbyterian Church property by the city for a city hall. The reported price was \$62,500. A city council committee met with Church elders to reach the agreement. The elders must receive approval from the church congregation.

- Christmas Day has a special significance for Paul and Edna Scheller as it marks the birthday of their two children. Son David John was born in Marin General Hospital on December 25, 1961 while first-born Sharon Ann was born in 1958 on Christmas day. Scheller is a building contractor in Novato.

- The year 1961 was one of the finest in the field of sports in Novato. On the high school scene, two championships were taken, one by the Hornet golf team, the other by the varsity football team. The undefeated Novato Little League

Giants were the talk of the city with 16 straight wins, 5 which were no-hitters. Frank Perachiotti pitched 3 and Tom Owens had 2. In varsity basketball, Bob Sparrow was the third highest scorer in the M.C.A.L. with 263 points. The Cutler wrestling team sported a 5-3 record.

- Al Wilfert, just back from his honeymoon, did the impossible on January 4 in the Novato Merchants Bowling League at Nave Lanes by picking up the “big four” split. Nave Lanes announced that it was the first conversion of the 4-7-6-10 since the lanes opened. Al, who bowled for Novato Pharmacy, received an ABC award for his accomplishment. (American Bowling Congress).

- Delays in mail delivery in early January at the Novato post office were caused by an abnormal absence of letter carriers due to illness, according to Postmaster Harry Overly. As many as five carriers have been absent each day, due to flu. One carrier, James Hallstrom, collapsed at the post office when he reported for work even though ill. He was sent home.

- Sandra Louise Thomas and Ronald Marder celebrated their engagement with a party held on New Year’s Day at the home of her parents, Sam and June Thomas. June 23 was set at the wedding date.

- A \$45,000 fire gutted the interior of Womack’s Variety store the morning of January 10. Prompt arrival of Novato firemen prevented the blaze from spreading to other stores in the wooden frame Town & Country Shopping Center on Grant Avenue. Mayor Wayne Womack, proprietor, estimated loss of inventory at \$25,000 and fixtures at \$8,000. He was fully insured and was set to reopen his business.

- Supervisor William Gness gained a lot of friends in Novato when he changed his vote this week and put the county

board of supervisors on record as favoring the Point Reyes National Seashore Park. After Mr. Gness testified that Novato’s needs would best be served by relocating Hwy 101, four east Novato residents (where he lives) told him he had lost their votes.

- The entire ranch belonging to the Freitas family, some 2,000 acres, was sold in early February and was to be developed into a “city in itself.” The purchasers are the Sunset International Petroleum Co. and National Theatres and Television, Inc., both with offices in Los Angeles. Tentative plans include 4,000 residences, golf course, shopping centers, and a fully planned community like Terra Linda but on a much larger scale. Note: This is the area now known as San Marin.

- Novato General Hospital, 1625 Hill Road, celebrated its first anniversary on January 30. The hospital emergency room fee was \$3.50 but actual cost to the hospital was \$9.

- Ronald Manzoni, son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Manzoni of Novato, who is in his sophomore year at Coalinga College, made the honor roll for the semester from the director of the college. Ron graduated from Novato High School in 1960 and will complete his college education at Humboldt State with plans of becoming an elementary school teacher.

- The Novato post office was swamped with calls inquiring about the new 4-cent stamp commemorating the first orbital flight of a United States astronaut. Postmaster Harry Overly said the special stamps were being released only at the 300 largest post offices throughout the country. Novato was not amongst the 300 biggest post offices in the country. Some 1,000 stamps were sold within one hour after eventually going on sale.

- Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Russell of Boulevard Court announced the engage-

Continued on Page N-6

Novato Historical Guild Board Highlights

by Pat Johnstone

November 2011

Curator's Report – The curator went to a class on Disaster Preparedness for collections. She is designing a plan for the guild. The curator will be out of town November 20-30.

Old Business – There was discussion about protecting the “Patriot’s Memorial Wall” at the Hamilton Field History Museum from vandalism. Kathy Kormos stated that Bill Johnson (Novato Maintenance Dept.) will remove/cover over graffiti. Also a treatment can be put on the tiles to resist graffiti.

Hamilton Museum – The HFHM gift shop is being moved closer to the front

desk and panels are being made for more displays.

Membership – Approximately 60 renewals have been received to date.

December 2011

New Business – Guest Wendy Todd from Marin Community Foundation talked about the foundation and the one year grant that the guild received from them. MCF will not be able to fund NHG perpetually but they will assist in planning for increased revenue through other sources.

The Board accepted a donation of 550 pavers from Diane Campbell’s family. These pavers will be used at Hamilton Field History Museum to create a patio area outside the front doors of the museum.

The board approved \$1,000 for engraved tiles for the “Patriot’s Memorial Wall” at HFHM.

Curator's Report – The draft list of sponsorship opportunities is still in the development stage. A contract between the city of Novato and NHG was last done in June 2007.

Treasurer's Report – November income was \$5,325.75 and expenses were \$3,473.48. Total in all accounts was \$170,673.73.

Old Business – 65 people attended the December General Meeting and 192 pounds of food was collected for the Marin Food Bank. The guild made \$362.25 at the Holiday Crafts Fair at Margaret Todd Senior Center and \$223 at Novato’s Tree Lighting ceremony on December 3.

Membership – Over 300 renewals and 27 new memberships have been received to date.

January 2012

New Business – The speaker for the March 10 General Meeting will be Lissa McKee. A committee was formed to review the contract between the City of Novato and Novato Historical Guild. Kathy Kormos will send a copy of the 2007 contract to the committee. A motion was made and passed to charge \$20 for each 3rd Grade class tour. Mike Read, on behalf of Randall Brothers, pledged to sponsor the 3rd Grade Class tours for 2012 at \$20 per class for 28 classes.

Curator's Report – Sponsorship Package is nearly finished. There will be a form to identify individual and business contacts. Exhibit signs for HFHM will be installed.

Old Business – 13 new engraved bricks have been received and installed on the patio at Hamilton Field History Museum. Total engraved bricks installed so far is 52. On May 20 a “Thank You to Docents” event is scheduled at Pacheco Ranch Winery. The winery will provide

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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. Plaques cost \$250 per person named.

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.”

In Memoriam

The Guild mourns the loss of the following members:

Louis Saffores

Joan Rose

Frank Berthinier

The Guild Extends Sympathy to

Marge Saffores on the death of her husband Louis.

Pamela Saffores Sieg on the death of her father Louis.

Robert Rose on the death of his wife Joan.

Esther Berthinier on the death of her husband Frank.

Ann Ramsay on the death of her son Stuart.

Mary and Bob Wilkinson on the death of her mother Helena Rodrigues.

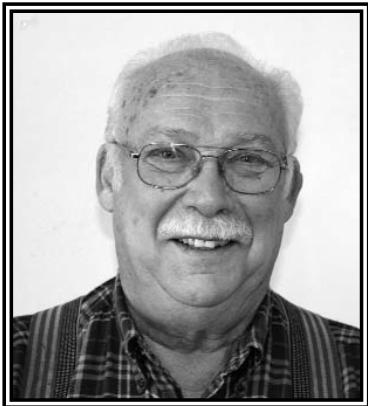
Linda and Dan Parr on the death of her father “Buck.”

Dan and Sharon Azevedo on the death of his father “Buck.”

Aileen and Robert Hune on the death of their son Robert A. Hune, Jr.

Novato Memories

By Jim McNern



Ernie Zunino

Ernie Zunino was born at the Cottage Hospital in San Rafael. He has lived in Novato his entire life. His business, Zunino Shoe Repair, is the oldest continuing family business in Novato. It was founded by his grandfather, Angelo Zunino, in 1908. Ernie was a member of the second graduating class from Novato High School. He shares his Novato memories in this March edition of the Novato Historian. Ernie remembers:

- His parents: Leo and Hazel Zunino; his brother, Richard; his grandparents: Angelo and Asunta Zunino, and Mattie Wilson; his uncles and aunts: Pete, Gino, Julius, Ann and Susie.
- His grandfather, Angelo Zunino, was from Alba, Italy, north of Genoa. His grandfather's first cobbler's shop was located near the railroad depot. The second shop opened up at 928 Grant Avenue where the family expanded the business to selling new shoes, underwear, rain clothes, belts, purses, wallets, etc. as well as continuing to do shoe repair.
- Living at 901 Reichert Avenue and later at 1020 Seventh Street.
- His neighbors: the Simmons, Carlile, Smith, Aston, Weston, Askim, and Wise families, and Pearl Johnson, Ray Lightner, and Mrs. Dingle.



From the Staff Desk

by Samantha Kimpel
Museum Curator

Collection Is Growing

Our Hamilton Field Collection is growing! Since the official opening of the museum in 2010, many more donors have stepped forward with items to donate and to loan to the museum. We also continue to add to the collection of local Novato history objects and archives. We are grateful to everyone who thinks of the museums when deciding to part with cherished family, town, or military memorabilia – our collections are ever stronger as a result. The following items were formally accessioned into the object and archives collections of the Novato History Museum during January 1 – December 31, 2011.

Archive materials and objects from the Estate of Marie Salmina, gift of her family.

Archive materials from the Estate of Margaret Binggeli, gift of her family.

Assorted early 20th century childhood objects, gift of Eleanora Lafranchi.

Spanish-American War grave marker, originally in Pioneer Cemetery, gift of John Sammons.

Bronze plaque from Hamilton Field Officer's Club honoring Captain Howard B. Nurse, 1935, gift of Howard L. Nurse.

Objects from Col. Wintermute, gift of

• Attending Novato Grammar School and Marion School and having Mrs. Stewart, Mrs. Hulme, Miss Dolcini, Mr. Gragg, Mrs. Busher, Mrs. Moore, Mr. Mareck and Mr. Denegri as his teachers.

• Novato High School teachers: Mr. Fountain, Mrs. Binggeli and Mr. Rodack.

• His classmates and friends: Jon Pronzini, Bob Guerra, Joe McNern, Tim Dyckman, Frank Smaw, Vic Lubinoff, Dan Parr, Hans Warner, Fred and Manuel Corriea, Toni Redding, Shirley Johnson,

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Gerri Wintermute.

Photographs of Hamilton Air Force Base, gift of Richard Mikulan.

F6F Hellcat aircraft engine, gift of Redwood Landfill, Inc.

Flight jacket, gift of James C. Schulze.

Flight boots and library materials, gift of Lee Janover and Nancy Peters-Janover.

Copy of handwritten diary of Calvin Hanlyn, gift of Cal Hanlyn.

Plane models, air show posters, and Hamilton memorabilia, gift of Craig Murray.

Air Force trunk, gift of Phil Gravitt.

Wings of Victory air show posters, gift of W. C. McDill.

USAF uniform, gift of Albert Alexander.

Hamilton Air Force Base scrapbook and commander's plaque, gift of James D. Melton

USAF uniforms, hats, US flag, and books, gift of Frank O. Gravitt.

Donors of Library Materials, Collection of the Novato Historical Guild

- Dick Altman
- Jim Davenport
- Joe Giari
- Claire Golan
- John Trumbull

Thank you to donors who have loaned us items for Hamilton exhibits

Serigraph of F86, loaned by Robert Dries.

Plane models, loaned by Raymond Cloutier.

Official USAF photo of B25 over Golden Gate Bridge, loaned by M.T. Collins.

Thank you to all the donors!

50 Years Ago

Continued from Page N-3

ment of their only child, Bonnie Jane Russell, to Howell L. Broxton II of San Rafael, son of Mr. and Mrs. H. L. Broxton of Colorado Springs, Colo. Bonnie and Howell are graduates of Novato High School.

- A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Walter Sundberg on February 18 at Novato General Hospital. The new mother and father were San Francisco residents. Note: The son, Rob, is now a physical education teacher in the Novato school system.

- Westwood Homes, Inc., was issued building permits for 19 Arbor Circle, \$16,350 and 20 Arbor Circle, \$17,650.

- Novatan George Gness, 52, became the first Marinite to file as a candidate in the June 5 county-wide election, when he tossed his hat in the ring for the post of County Clerk. Gness, married and father of two sons, was raised in Novato and resided on Olive Avenue. He was a graduate of St. Mary's College.

- Mrs. Lillian DeMaestri, 54, mother of retired New York Yankee shortstop Joseph DeMaestri, died early morning on March 15. She suffered a seizure at her home on Fairway Drive where she lived

with her husband, Silvio, son Joseph and his wife, Margot.

- J. Wayne Womack, Novato's youthful mayor, on March 15 filed his intention to run for the office of County Supervisor from the fifth district, a post then held by William A. Gness who filed for re-election the previous week.

- George H. Gness, a native of Novato, was appointed to the post of county clerk on March 14 following the sudden death of George S. Jones. Jones had been county clerk of Marin since 1936. Gness was the only candidate to have filed an election petition to run for the post of county clerk, which was to have been vacated by Jones's retirement next January.

- Novato had a new resident in March – a 7-month old lioness cub. "Cleopatra," a playful furry 55 pound pet, was purchased from a pet store in Tacoma, Washington in September, by Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Scott. Scott is an airman first class just assigned to Hamilton Air Force Base. Cleopatra was 25 pounds when purchased. Her diet includes mashed potatoes, spaghetti, carrots, and ice cream. She was expected to tip the scales at 400-500 pounds at maturity.

Spring Third Grade Museum Tours

Beginning in March, our Novato History Museum is again scheduling third grade tours on the early history of Novato. Docent-led tours are in three parts.

In part one, a small group visits the exhibits in the museum.

In part two, that group overlooks downtown from a vantage point, comparing old photographs with the view today. They also visit the Buggy Room and end with seeing artifacts in Grandma's Trunk.

Part three is a guided walking tour of Old Town Novato with copies of old photographs for each student to compare historic buildings.

Prior to the class's visit, a DVD on Novato's history is sent to the school. It is called "City of Novato, the Early Years." A timeline of Novato's past and teaching suggestions and activities are also included.

This couldn't be done without the help of our wonderful docents who give of their time and knowledge to share Novato's history. If you are interested in being a third grade docent, please contact Janice Bazaruto at jnbazaruto@sbcglobal.net.

Joe A. Williams New Board Member

I grew up in south Texas and entered law enforcement at the age of nineteen.



After ten years I moved to the Bay Area and began a career in corporate security. I retired as Executive Vice President of The Sharper Image Corporation after almost twenty-three years with the company.

I developed an interest in aviation as a kid and worked summer jobs as a teenager at a crop dusting business in the Texas cotton fields. I am a licensed pilot and have interests in military aviation history in the Bay Area, which led to my involvement with the Hamilton History Museum.

Welcome New Guild Members

Membership Report March 2012

Individual Memberships:

Sherriann Deisher

Family Memberships:

Val & Gene Carter

Van White & Linda Land

Please support our Guild

Business Members:

Acme Digital and Screen Graphics

Bank of Marin
Marin Landscape Materials
McIsaac Dairy
Novato Horsemen
Pini Hardware
The Wright Salon
Trumbull Manor Inc. – Novato
Zenith Instant Printing

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

**If you haven't renewed your membership for 2012
IT IS TIME TO DO SO!**

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

Novato Memories

Continued from Page N-5

and Carol and Susie Killian.

- Miss Sutton was a very tough principal at Novato Grammar School, but was very nice to him.

- Dressing up in Halloween costumes and having the annual parade around the school playground.

- Handing out valentine cards to school friends. (He still has every valentine card given to him over the years.)

- The day at Novato Grammar School when his suspenders broke and his pants fell down to his ankles and Toni Redding saw his underpants. He was so embarrassed he ran off the school grounds to his family's store across the street where his dad made him a new leather belt to hold his pants up.

- Novato Grammar School was on the small hill at the corner of Grant Avenue and the 101 Highway. The steps up to the school were right across the street from his family's shoe store. There were large pine trees in the front and highway side of the school. One huge pine tree on the corner was decorated with holiday lights each Christmas.

- Playing kickball and dodgeball and playing on the merry-go-round and rings at school.

- Constable Fred Nave would help the kids cross the 101 Highway to the other side of Grant Avenue. Boys would hide in the pine trees and yell, "Freddy, Freddy, two-by-four couldn't get through the bathroom door."

- Kids made their own fun hunting birds and fishing for trout in Novato Creek. Boys would walk all the way up Novato Creek to Stafford Dam to fish. (It would be an all day trip.)

- Roller skating on Grant Avenue.

- His dad was very popular with the boys in town because he would fix their bike tires when they were flat.

- Playing in the forts and tunnels that were carved out in the blackberry bushes that covered the huge lot at the corner of Machin and Grant Avenue where the First National Bank was built.

- The day he threw a rock at a train going through town and breaking a window in the caboose. His uncle, Glen Hall, was the conductor on the train and saw him do it. (He never did that again.)

- Being scared to death when Bruno chased him around the old store at 928 Grant Avenue shaking his cane when he was three or four years old.

- Bruno would sit on the right edge of the center section of the Novato Theater and fall asleep with his mouth wide open. (Ernie would put a handful of popcorn in his mouth and then run.)

- Going to the soda fountain at the Novato Drug Store with his grandpa when he was quite young. Grandpa Angelo had a very thick Italian accent and said he wanted, "A honey coupa for my grandson." The girl behind the counter didn't understand him, and he said, "It's a high scream."

- His grandfather was known as the "canary shoemaker" because he raised

Janice Bzurto New Board Member

My name is Janice Bzurto and I have been with the 3rd grade tours as a docent and now as a co-coordinator for the last eight years.



I've lived in Novato for 25 years. As a parent of a 2010 NHS graduate, I have been involved with the schools since my son entered school in 1997 having various responsibilities including PTA President and, most recently, the editor for the NHS eNews email newsletter.

Shortly after moving to California in 1975 from the Chicago area, I became very interested in the historical architecture of SF, which then led me to my interest and love for the local Marin history, leading to my involvement in the Novato Historical Guild.

canaries as a hobby and to raise extra money. People would travel to Novato by train from San Francisco and pay \$5.00 for a singing canary. It was quite profitable because the charge for repairing soles and heels was only \$1.25.

- The day he cut his hand open while playing down by the old cheese factory near the Pini Mill. He didn't want to go to the doctor's office and get a shot, so he wrapped his feet and hands around a pole behind Dr. Weseman's office. Dr. Weseman came out and promised him he wouldn't give him a shot, so he then went in and had the wound cleaned.

- Getting his tonsils taken out in Dr. Weseman's office on Grant Avenue.

- The Halloween night he accidentally slammed the car door on Fern Weseman's hand.

- Breaking his ankle and getting six casts in six weeks because he would get them wet.

- The day Mike Stafford brought a bat to school in a jar for "Show and Tell."

- Mr. Carlisle was a great man. He was a stamp collector. His hardware store had a smell of old wood. He always wore a cap with a brim on it. In his home he had a kaleidoscope that sat on a table in the parlor that was fun to look into.

- Most of the stores in town were on

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March General Membership Meeting

The March 10 General Meeting at Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue, will feature Lissa McKee as guest speaker. Her theme will be a look back at the Portuguese Dairy Ranchers of Southern Marin and Mill Valley. Lissa is a fifth generation Californian who has an MA in History and who has worked for thirty years as an historian and environmental planner on numerous projects.

The meeting starts at 1 p.m. All members and guests are invited to attend, and refreshments will be served.

Board Highlights

Continued from page N-4

their red wine and the guild will provide other beverages and food.

Reports

Hamilton Museum – 40 docents volunteered 1,291.5 hours of their time in 2011 and 1,471.5 hours were logged in by maintenance and research volunteers (700+ hours belong to Ray Dwelly).

Gift Shops – 2011 total sales for Novato Museum was \$2,231.77 and total donations were \$174.77. Total sales for Hamilton Museum were \$3,911.55 and total donations were \$1,799.25. So far the *Novato, Then and Now* book has made a profit of \$4,262.03 and the *Hamilton Field* book has made a profit of \$5,096.07.

Novato Memories

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the east side of Grant Avenue.

- Graduating from Marion School in 1956.
- All of the boys wanted to be “brick-layers” at the new high school gymnasium because you had a direct view into the girls’ shower room.
- Playing saxophone in the Novato High School band.
- The day it snowed in Novato and the kids cut school to play in the snow up in the hills behind Novato High before any homes were built up there.
- Breaking his foot in 1955 while helping move the shoe shop from 1928 Grant Avenue down the street to 1904 Grant

when a big piece of finishing equipment rolled on his foot.

- The traffic on the 101 would back up to San Antonio Creek on busy holiday Sundays making it difficult to cross over to the other side of Grant Avenue.
- Going to get the mail out of Box 27 at the Post Office before mail delivery.
- The shoe store was on a party telephone line and the ring was one long ring and two shorts.
- Taking Arthur Murray dance lessons at the Community House and having Barbara Dwelly as his dance partner.
- Working at the shoe store and at Jim’s Sports Shop during his teenage years.
- The shoe shop was a gathering spot for many old timers like Chip Lafranchi, Paul Renati, Bruce Askim, Bill Vaughan, and Tony Schmitz.
- The day he was declared a hero, by Constable Fred Nave for finding a man passed out in the blackberry patch at the corner of Machin and Grant Avenue. He got to wear Fred’s badge and hat.
- His dad’s shop was at 928 Grant Avenue when the huge Pini fire broke out in 1955. A bunch of boys in town went into the shop and carried the shoes out across the street to the school wall and guarded them. His dad gave each of the boys a new pair of field boots in gratitude.
- Fire Chief George Cavallero telling him and Jimmy Cavallero to get bricks and break out the windows of Rayburn’s store when that fire broke out. His dad and uncles helped fight the Rayburn fire.
- Watching the annual Portuguese parade each year and supporting their annual livestock auction.
- Working for the Marin County Roads Department for six years from 1960 to 1966 with Mac Manzoni, Fred Butler, Frank Scheckenbach. Tauno Sjoblom, Harry McDonald, Arthur Alberelli and Bill Bird. (He had to quit that job after getting hurt.)
- Sewing the seats at the Novato Theater.

Novato’s Treasures ATHERTON HOUSE



c1900 Owner John Atherton



2012 Owner Centennial Homes

John William Atherton, purchased 333-1/3 acres from Sweetser and DeLong on March 9, 1865, for \$5,167 in gold coin. In 1893, he had this fine home built for his family. In 1918, the Atherton Ranch was purchased by Wilhelm Andersen. Their son Gordon inherited the home and around 1926, the ranch was purchased by Anthony Soares. The Marin County Fair and Harvest Festival took place on the ranch from 1926 to 1928. In 1940 the property and house were acquired by Frank Pinheiro. In 1946 they had the home moved about a block south, when Highway 101 (now Redwood Blvd.) was widened. The widow of Mr. Pinheiro resided in the home until it was moved by the new owners, Centennial Homes, to its present location, which is pretty close to where the home was when first built in 1893.

Continued on Page N-9

Novato Memories

Continued from Page N-8

• All of the repairs in the shop today are pretty much the same as in the old days. Shoes today are not made as well. The shop keeps very busy with customers coming from Petaluma, Sebastopol, Rohnert Park and Sonoma.

• The many Novato families he has known over the years as friends and cus-

tomers with the names: Lafranchi, McNern, Keena, Pozzi, Manzoni, Antonio, Stafford, Enyeart, Wise, Smith, Askim, Worden, Moats, Tharsing, Thorsson, Almeida, Cash, Tobin, Hansen, Hill, McDonald, Cardoza and Ruzick.

• He has seen many changes in Novato

over the years. Some of the standout improvements are the new state of the art hospital, paramedic services, fire department and improved streets and roads. A few negatives are the Whole Foods Building and the loss of parking spaces on Grant Avenue.

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* \$3.00

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) \$18.00

- Novato History Museum (blue or green)

Ornaments

- Novato City Hall \$12.75

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 \$12.50
- 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, P.O. Box 1296, Novato, CA 94948.**

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

- | | | |
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| <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 |
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Notice

General Membership Meeting *Novato Historical Guild*

Saturday, March 10, 2012, at 1 p.m.

Old City Hall
901 Sherman Avenue

Lissa McKee will speak on "Portuguese Dairy Ranches of Southern Marin"

Members and prospective members are welcome

Novato History Museum—815 Delong Ave.—897-4320
Hamilton Field History Museum—555 Hangar Ave.—382-8614
COME VISIT AND BRING A FRIEND!

The Museums are open three days a week—Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday—Noon to 4 p.m.

Closed Major Holidays