

# 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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April - June 2018

The Novato Historian

Volume 42, Number 2



Sharon Azevedo and Laurie O'Mara.

## It's Third Grade History Tour Time Again!

By Laurie O'Mara

Well, the birds are chirping, the flowers are blooming and once again Novato's third graders are enjoying time traveling back to the early days of Novato thanks to the fabulous third grade docents at the Novato History Museum.

Thanks to the historical knowledge and generosity of docents: Carol Aregger, Sharon Azevedo, Mary Bicknell, Celinda Current, Joan Davis, Diane Goebel, Laurie Gratiot, Betty Jordan, Bobbie Kettler, Lauren Long, Jim McNern, Cindy Motsinger, Stan Palmear, Anne Russell, Susan Trumbull and Laurie O'Mara, third grade classes are able to visit our wonderful museum from March until June and are transported back to the 1800s and early 1900s with the help of our wonderful exhibits and lively tours to the Carlile House, The First Train Depot, The Novato House Hotel, The Fashion Shop, Mr Carlile's Hardware Stores, Novato's first bank and so much more.

The Buggy Room, Doll House, Train and Dairy exhibits in the museum are huge hits. In the Buggy Room, students can imagine what it would be like to be a child working on the family farm or dairy in 1899. At the school exhibit they are

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## New Museum Display Featuring Novato's Dairy Ranches

A new exhibit at the Novato History Museum features the history of dairy ranches in Novato. The display case features the different brands of dairy products produced in Novato, as well as County Fair trophies awarded for excellence in dairy products and dairy cows. Visitors can learn about the 4-H program for rural youth and learn to identify the different breeds of dairy cows. A map of Novato on the wall shows where all of the dairy ranches were located and guests can find out if they live on the property of a former dairy ranch. The new display was put together by Edna Manzoni.



Novato History Museum's Dairy Ranch exhibit

## 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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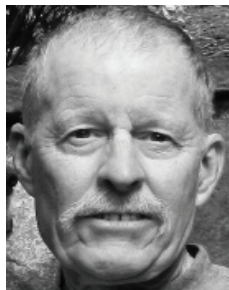
**Deadline for the September 2018 issue is August 1st.**

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### Address Changes

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# President's Corner

**Jim Crumpler**

**President, Novato Historical Guild**

## What's New at the Guild

Hope everyone that was present at the March Members Meeting, at The Margaret Todd Senior Center, and enjoyed the presentation by Paul Drexler as much as I did. Paul gave an entertaining talk on the scoundrels and hooligans in San Francisco's colorful history.

The speaker for the June Member's Meeting is our own John Geoghegan. John, an accomplished author, will be giving a very informative talk on Japanese submarine activity off the California coast during the Second World War. I heard this talk previously and was amazed at the number of subs and the the duration of their presence off our coast.

I recently received a very interesting letter...from Miss Charmaine Burdell (great, great, great Granddaughter of Dr. Galen Burdell). The hand written letter concerned an error that we had made in the January-March *Historian*. The article in question was "Novato's Treasures - Pioneer Memorial Cemetery - Simmons Lane". The error was in listing the Directors of the Novato Cemetery Association (1899), one of which we incorrectly listed as "S.B. Burden." As Charmaine pointed out, it should

have been "J.B. Burdell." Thank you, Charmaine!

This started me thinking, I wonder if Anna Morrison would have caught this error if she had still been a part of our Thursday "proofreaders" as she was for years! More thoughts....did Anna Morrison know Charmaine Burdell? Were they members of the same generation?

One final thought: no Burdells are buried in Pioneer Memorial Cemetery, they are all buried in the Mountain View Cemetery in Oakland.

Thanks to Soroptimists of Novato and Novato Community Television for producing a video of our very talented Laurie O'Mara. Lori, in full costume, is doing her famous tour of "historical" Novato. The video runs about 27 minutes and should be available for viewing on YouTube in a few weeks.

In closing, I would like to thank all of our volunteers for doing what you do, without which we wouldn't have open museums, Third Grade Tours or the *Historian*.

Hope to see you all at our next Members Meeting on June 16.



The March General Membership Meeting featured guest speaker Paul Drexler, crime historian.



# Novato-50 Years Ago

## (April, May, June 1968)

by Yvette Borloz Jackson

*It's April Showers that bring May Flowers & June has lots of graduations & weddings too. Here are a few memories from Spring of 1968, hope it jogs your memory, as it does mine. Let's face it, the only jogging I get is when I am writing this article. I hope I have helped you with your exercise program. I remind you again that the following items are taken directly from the pages of the **Novato Advance**, although some are abridged to give me space for more items. Hope you enjoy.*

- President Johnson's announcement on Sunday that he will not seek re-election caught the nation by surprise. Opinions differ on the sincerity of Johnson's move, but there was almost unanimous agreement that Johnson's withdrawal makes Robert Kennedy a shoo-in as the Democratic candidate and the next President. However, most of those we talked to would like to see Eugene McCarthy as the Democratic nominee.
- The citizens beautification advisory committee, which met for the first time Monday night, got off to a memorable start with a message of encouragement from the mayor, advice from the city manager, the requested support for the proposed dog control law, a plea for help with the wildflower project, and a 30 minute interview with a citizen who had been looking for the recreation committee meeting.
- The spring garden bazaar, sponsored by the Novato Garden Club has been scheduled for Friday and Saturday at the downtown shopping Center, 7th Street and Grant Avenue. All proceeds from the annual event will be used in the club's city beautification projects during the coming year.
- The weather became a major topic of conversation here this week when I long, cold dry spell was broken by a two day storm that got underway Monday and reached its height last night, dumping 2.08 inches of rain and doing some damage.
- Three Novatans and a fourth, who formerly lived here, received "Grand Cross of Color" awards in a recent ceremony held at Druids Hall in Novato for members of the Order of the Eastern Star and International Order of Rainbow for girls. The recipients were Mrs. Murl S. Mahler; Ellen Bussman, Marilyn Waldrop, and Mrs. Roger Hicks. The Grand Cross, highest award given by Rainbow Girls, signifies distinguished service to the Rainbow Girls organization.
- Novatans were shocked and concerned over the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King last week, but outside of the anxious gazing at newspaper headlines and viewing of television programs, life pretty well went on as usual here in Novato, like most white suburbia, is removed from the direct anguish of racial conflict and it's doubtful the barriers will soon be breached.
- Two incumbents and a candidate, who probably rang more doorbells and met more people than the other candidates combined, won election in yesterdays Council race. Winning were Mayor Wayne Womack, who led the field; councilman Douglas Merrill, who was close behind, and Joseph Gargiulo, principal of the school districts continuation school. Voting at nine polling places were 3123 voters out of 7644 registered. The percentage voting was 40.9, with the highest reached at San Marin where 49.8% voted at the San Marin No. 3 fire station. Semi official results of the election were Mayor Womack-1378, Councilman Merrill-1326, Gargiulo- 1097, Robert Lagle-1013, Wilfred Lieb- 943, Wayne Hathaway-811, Donald Telford-760, Joseph Bonomolo-621.
- Alice Jean Sandbach, 63, a resident of Novato for 25 years, suffered a heart seizure at 8:35 p.m. last night while sitting in the lobby of the Community House and was pronounced dead on arrival at Novato General Hospital shortly before 9 p.m. The couple was waiting for the council to dispose of the proposed dog leash law before taking up the question of the 66- unit mobile home park, which the Sandbachs have been attempting to establish on 11.8 acres in San Marin. The city planning commission Monday night, echoing it's unanimous negative vote on January 22, turned down a new design for the Sandbach plan, again unanimously, because of the cuts that would be required and in the hilly terrain. Mayor Harley McAskill announced, regretfully to the large audience at 9 p.m., when he received word, that Mrs. Sandbach had died. The following announcement that the public hearing on the Sandbach mobile home park would be continued until the councils April

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## 50 Years Ago

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30 meeting, but did not seem very important at that moment. Shock and sadness was evident on the faces of many in the audience who are present to oppose the Sandbach application. Mrs. Sandbach was born in Red Bluff on December 28, 1904. Survivors include her husband George E. Anthony Sandbach, three sons: Henry A. Sandbach, William F. Sandbach, and Michael J. Sandbach, eight grandchildren; and her sister, Mrs. Henry D. Roulet of Los Angeles.

- Mail patrons offended by pandering advertisements can now take steps to curb such mail, Postmaster Overly said today in announcing plans for administering a new law which gives each family the right to decide that and ad is "erotically arousing or sexually provocative." Postmaster Overly said: "This new law should give some protection to American families offended by advertisements they believe to be morally harmful, particularly to their children.

- **\$4,000,000 WORTH OF SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION:** It wasn't exactly ordinary to see three major school construction projects underway simultaneously in the Novato Unified School District- nor to accompany fast-stepping Eugene DeBrecht on a progress tour. DeBrecht is the school district's assistant superintendent in charge of business services. We trailed after him Monday afternoon to view the nooks, crannies, classrooms and exteriors of San Ramon elementary school and San Marin High School, both in San Marin and Sinaloa Junior High School at Wilson Avenue and Vineyard Road.

- **FOR MOTHERS DAY:** Stan's offered: SUMMER COOLERS by Ship 'n Shore \$3.00, in different

styles such as "Split Bermuda Collar; "Daisy Patch Shirt"; Tee-Tab Golfer.

- McDonald's Jewelry Store had: "Fanciful flower design...superbly made in 14Kt gold overlay and accented with a large cultured pearl. From our fine quality jewelry. Brooch \$19.50; Earrings \$20.00 by Krementz" in bringing peace to the world."

- Judy Volandri, a pert 22 year-old with red hair and green eyes, is Novato's first lady mail carrier. Hired Saturday, she was broken in on a downtown mail route. Reactions to the cities first pretty postman range from double takes, to whistles. "People tell me it's a nice change," said Judy. Judy gets quite a bit of teasing from her fellow mail carriers. The new post office regulations against long hair don't apply to the lady mail carriers, which is fortunate, since she has very long hair. Her uniform, which hasn't arrived yet, consist of pants, gloves, jacket, and beret. In the summer she can substitute a skirt or culottes for the pants..

- It was a lot windier Monday than it was rainier, but gray skies still managed to give the Novato streets a gentle dousing of .05 inches of the wet stuff.

- Signs and mobile home parks, which seem to typify the transient tastelessness of the Los Angeles area, continued to agitate the community this week, filling up the news columns and letters to the editor column. The county planning commission by a tie-vote turned down the Sandbach mobile home park but recommended the 1800-unit monstrosity at Black Point. The Council vote approving the over sized Denny's sign this week produced an unusual development; the filing of taxpayers suits to prevent erection of the sign. (5/22/68 issue)

- Friday and Saturday have been proclaimed Poppy day by Mayor Harley McAskill Members of the three veterans organizations will be selling them to "honor the dead and help the living."

- Disbelief, then shock overcame Novatans this morning as the news of the tragic assassination attempt on Senator Robert Kennedy swept through the community. Horror, anxiety and the need for stringent gun control laws were expressed by people interviewed in Novato in the wake of the shooting of presidential candidate Robert Kennedy.

- Sen. Ted Kennedy left the San Francisco Bay Area this morning from Hamilton Air Force Base, to join his critically wounded brother Robert Kennedy in Los Angeles. (05/05/68 issue)

- Walter & Michael Halkovich, two brothers, rescued 18-year-old Thomas Snyder from a fire Friday evening which was raging in the upstairs bedroom of his 698 Cherry St. home. Norman Snyder tried to rescue his son, who is mentally retarded, but was able to get up the 14 stairs, which led to the second floor. He then went outside and tried to get to his son through a window. That's the time the Halkovich boys, of 795 Cherry St. arrived and learn that Thomas was still in the house. The two Brothers covered their faces with damp towels and managed to make their way up the stairs despite smoke and intense heat. They found Thomas in a chair and dragged him down to safety. Walt, 23, was discharged from the Army last April 13, after serving for three years and Mike, 21, is in the Navy and has returned to the destroyer USS Ingersoll which will leave next week for a six month tour of duty off the coast of Vietnam.

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## It's Third Grade History Tour Time Again!

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transported to a time when learning and playing in school was much different than it is today. They get to create the sound of the train whistle at the train exhibit and marvel at the contents in "Grandma's Trunk." Students ring the original school bell for all to hear on the front porch of the museum. And they can discover which dairy their house used to be on and learn how many stomachs a cow has!

On the downtown tour they learn how our town was made with the hard work and sense of community of the Carliles, Hamiltons, Porcellas, Scotts and all the other amazing citizens who made our town what it is today. And afterwards the students all leave, excited to return one day with their friends and families.

I must also say that on behalf of all

the third grade classes we would like to say how much we love the new benches! The students can now sit in comfort while they learn all about the history of the museum (they are amazed that it used to be the postmaster's house and how it was moved here on a truck from the other side of Novato!) Students also learn how a two page letter could be written and mailed using only one piece of paper!

This is such a positive program enjoyed so much each year by students, teachers and families and we certainly couldn't do it without our docents!

If you would like to docent next year and join in on all the fun we would love to have you! Just email Laurie O'Mara at [laurieomara124@gmail.com](mailto:laurieomara124@gmail.com).



Laurie O'Mara at the start of the Third Grade Tour introducing students to the museum and the story of Novato's first postmaster.

## 50 Years Ago

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- The Community House was jammed last night with opponents of gun control legislation and the council, despite strong support from Novatoans who favor strict anti-gun laws, declined to pass a local gun control ordinance proposed by the county. Instead, the council set up a committee to explore legislation it might support in the future. (06/26/1968)

- Members of the Novato High Schools class of 439 seniors marched onto the football field for Saturday's graduation ceremony. The commencement program, held under the hot sun, lasted one hour and 40 minutes.

- WEDDINGS April-June 1968  
Linda Wright-Mark E. Heisel; Robert Buckwalter-Cheryl Jones; Margaret Ellen McFarland-Eugen Graf, Jr.; Spec.4 Kenneth Jack Hankel-Patricia Ann Lanthier; Lt. Samuel Eugene Young Jr.- Brenda Gail Patterson; Peggy Marie Bennison- G.R. (Bob) Dinkle; Carolyn Sue Smith-Richard E. Simmons; Linda Ann Wilson-Dennis Chase; Donell Marie McLean-Cpl. William Paul Weekly; Denise Klapperich- PO/3 Neil McIsaac, Jr.; Carmen Marie Regalia-Henri Etienne Raab; Michael Joseph Silva- Patricia Elise Bennison; Kathleen Croughan-Joel August; Ensign Robert Neill Sparrow-Constance Luana Dameron; Debbie Huntly-Richard Worden; Sandra Henry-Joseph Piazza; Marylou Glosser-John Rubke; Lynne Marianne Walline- John Joseph Winters; Virginia Marie Lesieur-Denis James Jester; Dr. Jack Croughan-Marjorie Ann Bergendoff; Mary Frances Rein-simar-Alfred James McElroy; Gloria Jean Reynolds-Richard Gordon Froyen; Caroline Ann Hasz- James Jackson.

Yvette Borloz Jackson

# Novato Memories

Jim McNern



## Mike Pechner

*Mike shares his Novato memories in this June issue of the Novato Historian. Mike grew up in Novato and became a meteorologist and worked for radio stations such as KSFO, KYA, KNBR with Frank and Mike, and KCBS. The photo (at left) is of Mike and his daughter Jessica. Mike shares his Novato memories in this June issue of the Novato Historian.*

The biggest and most important memory of growing up in Novato is accompanying my father, Fred Pechner, as he walked house to house in Novato getting voters to sign a petition to incorporate Novato. With my brother Richard and I in tow, my father would come home from his job in San Francisco at James S. Baker, Import and Export Co., and we would eat a fast dinner and head out to collect signatures.

My dad would sometimes spend two hours convincing a voter about why they should sign the petition. My dad and the great Betty Machado single-handedly collected enough signatures to put the incorporation of Novato on the ballot in 1959. Novato became a City in 1960.

My earliest recollection in 1948 is driving down a muddy Fourth Street in my grandfather's Studebaker looking at John Briggs' homes under construction. We bought the home at 1109 4th Street in the winter of 1948. As I recall the price was \$7000 and with the GI bill, and a CalVet loan, my Mom and Dad were proud homeowners.

My father was a Marine Corp. staff sergeant in World War II in the Pacific theater and was in the Korean War before coming back to Novato in 1953.

I barely recall my first year at the old Grant Avenue School. As a first grader who was, as my mother put it, "Sick as a dog" I was out half of the school year due to illness, so I don't recall much that year. I had the mumps, measles, chicken pox, pneumonia, a collapsed lung and appendicitis.

My reward for getting all of my childhood diseases out of the way was doing the 1st grade over. It was here that I lost track of the class of 1964 with the likes of Gene Helbing and George Scherba who lived nearby on 6th Street.

When I was growing up in Novato, as early as elementary school, my brother Richard and I would go out and play and tell my mother Rhoda where we were going and when we would be back. Novato was a very safe place for young boys and girls roaming the streets of town back in the 1950s. It's still very safe today. No cell phones and no worries about where we were or when we will be back.

Often we would be across town watching Mr. Novak building a new sub-division. As early as I remember, my father would take my brother and me down to the Grant Ave. Depot to see the Northwestern Pacific freight and passenger trains. I made friends with crew members who lived in Novato and got rides on the engines and cabooses all the way to Willits.

Down at the station I met two fellow rail fans, Tom White, class of 1962 and Roger Graeber, class of 1961. This started my life long interest in railroads and transit in general.

I presently work part-time for both the Northwestern Pacific RR in Schellville and for SMART as weekend Ambassador at the Petaluma platform.

There were many things to look forward to in Novato as a young boy growing up in the 1950s and 1960s. I remember the flood of December, 1955, that flooded Fourth Street and other parts of Novato. Many of you know that I am a meteorologist and the owner of my own business, Golden West Meteorology. A significant event in Novato's weather history was the "snowstorm" of January, 1957.

I remember my mother and family telling me it never snows in Novato because we are too close to the Pacific Ocean. So, walking to Marion Street School sparked my interest in the weather and the start of my career which led to being the Staff meteorologist on KSFO, KYA, KNBR with Frank and Mike, and finally, KCBS.

The Western Weekend Parade was #1 on my fun list. The pancake breakfast with Chief Cavallero was a highlight before the festivities began on Saturday morning. Old Town was always a nice place to cycle to and from Fourth Street. Even though I am Jewish, I enjoyed going to the bakery

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# Audio Guides at Hamilton

The Audio Guides are up and running at Hamilton Field History Museum. Sixteen of the museums displays were selected for the audio guide tour.

The visitor will simply put the handset strap around the neck, listen to some quick instructions from the docent, put the headset on and they are ready to go.

Entering on the handset the number associated with any of the museums 16 "points of interest," will provide additional background information for that specific display.

Stop by and try them out.



## New This Summer: Adult Walking Tours

The Novato Historical Guild is pleased to be offering walking tours of downtown Novato and Hamilton Air Field this summer. The walks will be led by Laurie O'Mara and Kate Johnson. The walks will start at 9:00 am on the last Saturday of the month and will start at each museum. Each walk should last about an hour. Anyone interested in the tours should phone the museums to reserve a spot. Call (415) 897-4320 (Downtown) or (415) 382-8614 (Hamilton).

The schedule is as follows.

- 6/30 - Laurie O'Mara, Downtown tour
- 7/28 - Kate Johnson, Hamilton tour
- 8/25 - Laurie O'Mara, Downtown tour
- 9/29 - Kate Johnson, Hamilton tour

Put on your walking shoes and be prepared to step back in time, learning about earlier times in the Novato area.

# Novato Memories

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next to Zunino's to get hot cross buns during Lent. Other establishments I recall are DeBorbis (still the anchor of Old Town, First National Bank, Pini Hardware, Andersen's Chevrolet, Dean's Rexall Drug Store, Ken's TV and Radio, Perachiotti Realty, Dr. Weseman's Medical Office, Pete's Barber Shop and Wayne Womack's store.

I had an *Independent Journal* paper route when I was 11 years old. I remember spending the huge sum of \$7 to buy a railroad book at Wayne's Place. I think it was about three quarters of my entire paper route salary at that time. I went to Hill Elementary School but do not remember off the top of my head any of the teachers.

On Fourth Street we lived across the street from one of the great Novato families, Louie and Marie Salmina.

Louie was a on the Board of Directors of the Novato Fire Dept. and was a long time volunteer. He worked at Pini Milling. Marie lived into her 90s and I gave to THIS Historical Society an Interview I did with her when she was 92 about her earliest remembrances of Novato.

I had a German Shepherd dog when I was around 6 years old. The dog loved to go across the street into Salminas property and kill his chickens. Eventually, we had to get rid of the dog to keep the peace between us. Marie and Lou gave us fresh fruit and eggs and were the best neighbors you could have. In 1960, I was released from Hill Elementary and got my ticket punched to attend Novato High in 1961. In Part two of this missive, I will tell you about my close friend, Jim Crumpler, one of the BEST Dipsea runners over many years and his love for Novato.

## Remembering May Rodgers Ungemach



A new placque has been installed in the Novato History Museum in honor of May Rodgers Ungemach who wrote the "Novato Township" book. Many Novatans called it the "Novato Bible." May donated all profits from the sales of this book to the Novato Historical Guild. May passed away in December

## Call for Board Member Applications

Guild members are invited to apply to serve on the Novato Historical Guild Board of Directors for 2019-2020. The term of office is for two years.

### Requirements and Process:

- Have been a Guild member for a year prior to the election on Dec. 15, 2018.
- Complete the Guild Board Application and return it by August 31, 2018.

Board Applications are available at each museum or by email to Susan Magnone NHG1850@yahoo.com.

Interested members are encouraged to attend the Board meeting on August 14 at 1:30 at the Margaret Todd Center and to talk with board members about the role, responsibilities and reward of serving on the Board.

# A Case of Bad Timing

By Michael Corlett

A flight of B-17's left Hamilton in early December of 1941, bound for Hawaii and then on to the Philippines. What was supposed to be simply a transfer of bombers to a new location, turned out to be a heart-pounding, life-threatening journey.

In the fall of 1941 the US Army Air Force, because of rising political tensions in the area, felt it necessary to bolster its air defenses in the Far East.

Air units of the 7th Bombardment Group, stationed at Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City were selected to be moved to the Philippines. The aircraft would leave the West Coast, stopover in Hawaii, then proceed to Manilla. The aircraft and crews involved were transferred to Muroc Army Airbase in Muroc, California. At Muroc, the aircraft were made ready for the trip. (Muroc was in the area now known as Edwards Air Force Base). Once ready, the aircraft were to be flown to Hamilton Army Airfield. The aircraft would then depart on the first leg of the trip, a refueling stop at Hickam Field near Honolulu.

To make the 2400-mile trip to Hickam Field required a maximum fuel load. To save fuel, the trip was to be made with "skeleton" crews, and although equipped with machine guns, to reduce weight, the aircraft carried no ammunition.

On December 6th, 1941 there was a dinner and briefing for the flight crews at the Hamilton Officer's Club. Part of the briefing was made by Pan American Airline's navigators discussing winds aloft and other general navigational



B-17 at Bellows Field.

information about flying to Hawaii. Coincidentally, Major General Hap Arnold, on the base for other reasons, attended the briefing.

That evening at 9:00 pm, eight B-17C aircraft of the 38th Reconnaissance Squadron and eight B-17E aircraft of the 88th Reconnaissance Squadron were scheduled to begin the 14-hour trip to Hawaii. Two aircraft from each squadron had to abort the mission because of mechanical problems. Spaced about 10 minutes apart, twelve B-17 bombers began the trip to Hickam Field in Honolulu.

The Navy had positioned ships along the route to aid in navigation. The trip was uneventful, but as they neared Hawaii, all that was about to change.

As the bombers neared Hickam, a flight of fighter aircraft came out to greet them. The initial thinking was that the fighters were American planes on their way to escort the bombers to the airbase. Instead, the fighters were Japanese, and they started firing at the unarmed

bombers. The bombers crews had no idea what was going on, but they knew they were "sitting ducks" and took evasive actions to get out of harm's way. The B-17's had arrived in Honolulu on the morning of December 7th, 1941, about a half an hour after the Japanese had begun their attack on the U.S. Naval Fleet at Pearl Harbor.

In the 1977 movie, *Tora Tora Tora*, one of the Bomber Pilots, Major Truman H. Landon, was portrayed by actor Norman Alden. His movie line was, "Damn it! What a way to fly into a war---unarmed and out of gas!" (I suspect the actual language was a bit more colorful).

Lt. Roy Reid was a copilot on one of the first bombers to arrive on the scene. As they approached Hickam they saw the smoke and burning aircraft on the ground and knew that a war had begun. The crew began to raise the landing gear to abort the landing when tracer bullets, fired from two trail-

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## A Case of Bad Timing

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ing Japanese fighters, struck magnesium flares stored in a locker onboard. This caused an intense fire that filled the cockpit with smoke. Lieutenant Schick, a flight surgeon on board had been hit in the leg. With a fire raging, there was no choice now but to lower the gear and attempt the landing. The plane came down hard and barely under control. Reid said, "Once the tail came down, almost immediately, the plane began to buckle and collapse, and breaking in the middle where the fire had burned through." All crew members got out of what was left of the plane, safely. While running for cover, Lieutenant Schick was hit by a bullet from a strafing Japanese Zero and died the next day.

### Lieutenant Reid's Aircraft

Lt Reid's B-17 became the first US airplane downed by the enemy during World War II.

Twenty-six-year-old Staff Sergeant and Army Aerial Photographer Lee Embree was a passenger on one of the B-17's. He was being transferred from Albuquerque, New Mexico to the Philippines. He brought his Speed Graphic camera and as they flew into the maelstrom, Embree started taking pictures. He took photographs of the billowing smoke from the USS Arizona and the Japanese planes flying by his bomber. "They passed so close on the left, I could see the pilot's faces," he said. "They were grinning ear to ear."

"The plane was hit several times, but we weren't." We were very lucky". On the third circle over Hickam, Embree's plane ran out of fuel and landed.

Embree had taken the first air combat photos of the attack on

Pearl Harbor. Once on the ground and after the attack was over, he took several photos of the damage done. Some of his photos taken that day appeared in *Life*, *Time* and other publications. Copies of the photographs are kept in the National Archives. His Speed Graphic camera, goggles and dog tags are on display at the Museum of Flight at Boeing Field in Seattle.

Seven of the B-17's were able to land at Hickam. Two landed on the 1200-foot runway of an auxiliary strip at Haleiwa on the northwest coast of Oahu. Another made a downwind landing at Bellows Field, it came in too fast and ended up in a ditch at the end of the runway. Another was forced to land on Kahuku Golf course and a third plane landed at Wheeler Army Field near Honolulu.

Nine of the twelve B-17's were listed as "in commission" and were returned to service, one was rated as "destroyed", one was "repairable"

and one was used for spare parts.

Many in the bomber crews were wounded, but all recovered.

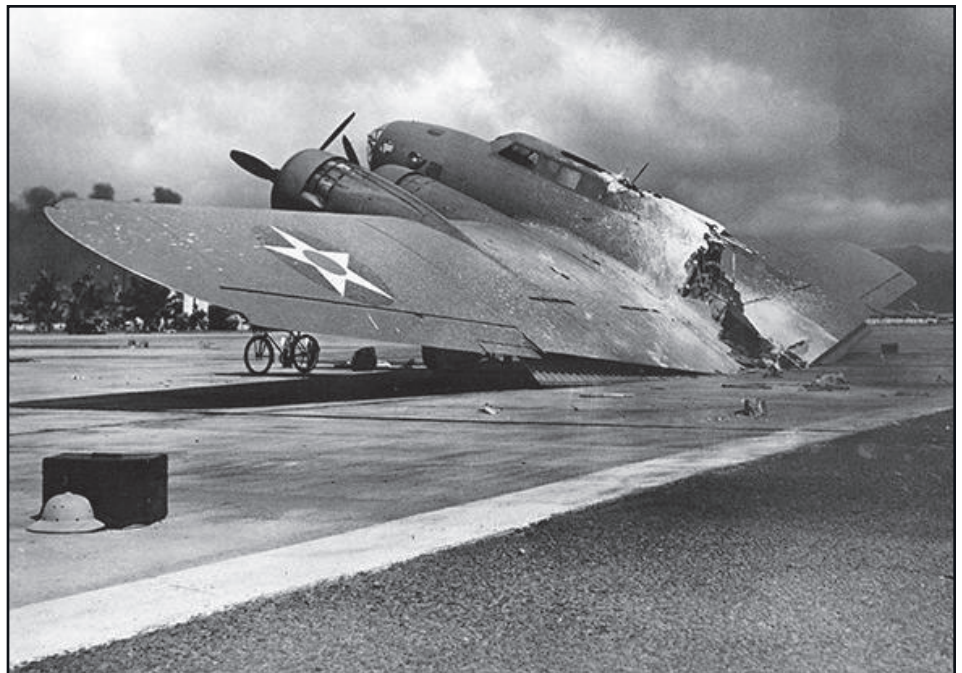
Before leaving Hamilton, Embree wanted to make the trip on a B-17 that allowed him to connect camera gear in to the aircraft's 24-volt electrical system. Flight Surgeon Lt. Schick's B-17 had that capability, so they swapped planes. On that flight of B-17s that left in peace and arrived in war, Lt. Schick was the only fatality.

*Sources:* The B-17 Flight, Jack McKillop, <http://www.etherit.co.uk/ww2home.htm>

KCTS 9 Video, Lee Embree Interview, 2007

Shot Down at Pearl Harbor, Lt. Roy Reid, *Air Force Magazine.com*, Dec. 1991

*Hamilton Field Diary*, Major General F.H. Oberding, 2011



Lieutenant Roy Reid's aircraft became the first US airplane shot down by the enemy in World War II

## Novato Historical Guild Board Highlights

by Kathryn Hansen

### February 2017

#### City Report :

- Docents can get Life Scan at the Police Dept. on Wednesdays from 3-4:30PM
- Still working on the phone issue (carrier is Frontier)
- Hamilton Field H.M.'s e-mail went down. It was a virus, not Sonic.com.

#### Unfinished Business:

**Strategic Plan** – review of the plan. Next steps Kathryn volunteered to oversee the progress. Progress will be measured with monthly updates on each goal. In six months the plan will be reviewed, updated and modified if necessary. In one year the plan will be reviewed and updated for the following year

**Volunteer Appreciation** – Fifty four people attended out of sixty four. Thanks to Judi Brady & Sharon Azevedo for a lovely event.

#### New Business:

**Eagle Scout Project** - The Eagle Scouts have permission to install two new benches outside of the Downtown Museum for the Third Grade tours. Sawyer Rasmussen is leading the project.

**March Member's Meeting** – March 10th at M.Todd Center 10:00AM to noon. The speaker will talk about historical mysteries of San Francisco. Hospitality requests breads for refreshments.

#### Hamilton Museum

- Hamilton Field H.M.'s e-mail went down. It was a virus, not Sonic.com.
- The audio tours have a bug in them. They have traced the vendor back to France for repair. This has been a three year project.
- The oral history CD's play on the computer but on the picture frame.

### March 2018

#### City Report

- Still working on the phone issue –problem is not in the building but bad wiring at the street.
- Will ask for recognition from the City for the Eagle Scout project at the Downtown Museum and Coast Guard Project at the Hamilton Museum..
- Volunteer Agreement for volunteers is at the City Attorney to be approved.

#### Unfinished Business:

##### Strategic Plan:

- Document updated with added boxes
- Need to work with the City regarding liability and waivers for those on walking tours. Thanks to Ray for opening the Hamilton Museum for the Hamilton Walking Tour last week.

##### New Business:

**Plan for Depot** – There is a workshop to develop ideas for the depot. George suggested contacting the Landmark Society in Tiburon for ideas.

**Annual Report** – The Board did not think it was necessary to have Annual Report in newsletter because the information was handed out at the General Meeting last week.

##### Downtown Museum

- A Girl Scout volunteer is working on a photo project.
- Someone wanted to donate a human skull found at Deer Island years ago by her father who just passed away. The Coroner's Office determined it was a Native American. The local tribe was contacted and it will be reburied by the local elders.

### April 2018

#### City Report

- Still working on the phone issue – wires inside the building were the problem
- Can get recognition from the City for the Eagle Scout project at the Downtown Museum.
- Hamilton Brick Patio Project – City approved the project; now Rotary's Board has to approve.
- AED installed at Downtown Museum without Guild's knowledge. A request from the Guild for training on using the defibrillator.

#### New Business:

**LPL Investment Portfolio** – Review portfolio performance summary

**Simmons House** – Jim was approached by someone who would like to rent the Simmons House from the City and would let the museum have the front space. More discussion/research need to be done before a decision is made.

#### Hamilton Museum:

- Hamilton Museum – Ray Dwelly
- Request to purchase a kiosk. Board approved.
- The City cut down trees that were diseased

## Welcome New Guild Members

### Novato Historical Guild Membership Report June 2018

#### Individual Membership

Mari Avedano  
Gary Edwards  
Tony Ferreira  
Jim Rolka  
Lowell W. Smith

*If you have questions about  
membership, call*

*Edna Manzoni,  
Membership Chairman,  
415-892-9603.*



### Please support our Guild Business Members:

Acme Digital and Screen Graphics  
A. D. Scott Building  
Andrew McAgnon Landscaping  
Bank of Marin  
Goltermann Garden & Country Inn,  
Petaluma, CA  
Indian Valley Golf Club  
Marin Landscape Materials  
Marin Trophies  
Marin Volvo/Saab  
Mclsaac Dairy  
Nave Enterprises  
Novato Builders Supply, Inc.  
Pini Hardware  
The Wright Salon  
Trumbull Manor Inc. – Novato  
Valley Oak Wealth Management  
Zenith Instant Printing

**2018 Board Meetings**

Second Tuesday of the Month

**Margaret Todd Senior Center**

1560 Hill Road

Time: 1:30- 3:30 PM

Jan. 9	July (no meeting)
Feb. 13	Aug. 14
March 13	Sept. 11
April 10	Oct. 9
May 8	Nov. 13
June 12	Dec. 11

**Membership Meetings**

March 10	Margaret Todd Center
June 16	City Hall
Sept. 15	Hamilton Field Museum
Dec. 15	City Hall

Guild members are welcome to attend the Board meetings. Please check with the President, Jim Crumpler at NHG1850@yahoo.com or 415 897-5705, in case a meeting has been changed.

**In Memoriam**

**In Memoriam**

**Edwin Grundstrom  
Mary Jane Guerra  
Michael Patterson**

**The Guild Extends Sympathy to**

The Grundstrom family on the loss of Edwin Grundstrom

The Guerra family on the loss of Mary Jane Guerra

The Patterson family on the loss of Michael Patterson

**MEMORIAL PLAQUE GIFTS**

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.

**Contact Us**

**Hamilton Field History Museum**

Manager: Ray Dwelly  
Museum phone: 415-382-8614  
Email: Hamilton\_museum@att.net  
<https://www.facebook.com/HamiltonFieldHistoryMuseum/>

**Novato History Museum**

Manager: Susan Magnone  
Museum phone: 415-897-4320  
Email: NHG1850@yahoo.com  
<https://www.facebook.com/NovatoHistoryMuseum/>

WATCH FOR INFORMATION IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE *HISTORIAN* FOR NEWS ABOUT A CHANGE IN THE COLLECTION OF MEMBERSHIP DUES



**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

- |   |        |      |                                   |
|---|--------|------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student (full time) membership | \$10   | year | Name _____                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual membership          | \$20   | year | Address _____                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family membership              | \$30   | year | City _____                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron membership              | \$100  | year | State _____ Zip _____             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting membership          | \$200  | year | Phone _____                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life membership, individual    | \$350  | year | Additional donations? _____       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life membership, joint         | \$500  | year | Interested in volunteering? _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor                     | \$1000 | year | Email address: _____              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business membership            | \$50   | year |                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate membership           | \$1000 | year |                                   |



Novato Historical Guild  
P.O. Box 1296  
Novato, CA 94948



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## YOU ARE INVITED

**General Membership Meeting ~ Novato Historical Guild**

**Saturday, June 16, 10:00 am - 12:00 noon**

**At Novato City Hall**

**901 Sherman Ave, Novato**

**John Geoghegan, author and Guild member, will be discussing The Japanese Submarine presence off the coast of California during The World War II**

Come enjoy refreshments, good company, and an interesting presentation.  
Guild Members and anyone interested in Novato are welcome.

**Novato History Museum**

**815 Delong Avenue**

**(415) 897-4320**

**Hamilton Field History Museum**

**555 Hangar Avenue**

**(415) 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**