

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 2019

The Novato Historian

Volume 43, Number 1

Meet some of our Guild Volunteers at the History Museum



The Novato Historical Guild, the History Museum and Hamilton Air Field Museum would not be able to operate if it wasn't for the wonderful volunteers who help staff the museums, administer the programs, help with research, lead the tours and update the exhibits.

In picture on left, volunteers at the Novato History Museum are taking a break on a Thursday afternoon. Faithful volunteers pictured are (left to right), Kathy Pereira, Molly Weinfeld (history intern), Bill Damon, and Judi Brady. Volunteer Pat Johnstone does a terrific job of running the gift store at the museum so that visitors can purchase books and other souvenirs. All profits go to the museum.

December Member Meeting



Board Director Susan Magnone presents a "Certificate of Appreciation" to Novato Historical Guild President Jim Crumpler.



Kate Johnston talked about San Quentin Prison. The informative discussion involved the many interesting characters and the fascinating history of the decades old penitentiary.

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Guild Mission Statement

To collect, preserve, and make reasonably available to the public, exhibits and information related to the history of the Novato area..

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Deadline for the June 2019 issue is May 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

Wow, Happy New Year, and it's March already. Hope you all enjoyed the December Members Meeting and the excellent talk by our own Kate Johnston on San Quentin Prison. The informative discussion involved the many interesting characters and the fascinating history of the decades old penitentiary.

The speaker for the March 16th Members Meeting will be Greg Sarris, Tribal Chairman of the Federated Indians of the Graton Rancheria. Greg will be discussing his new book, *How a Mountain Was Made*.

Kate Johnston has a admirable project for 2019, a monthly speaker series. The talks will be on the second Wednesday of each month beginning at 7 P.M. at Novato City Hall. The first talk will be March 13 and the subject will be North Korea. I'm going, hope to see you there.

There have been some changes in the board this year. George Gnos has served his allotted time and is now off to other adventures. George has been a wonderful member with lots of great ideas, he will be missed. Thank you George for the hours you have given to the Board.

The other departure, only officially, is Susan Magnone. Susan has done an incredible job during her time on the Board and now it is time for her to take a well deserved break. However since Susan

is the Manager of the Novato History Museum she will still attend all Board Meetings!

We have three new Board Members this year. Ann Russel, who has been involved with our Third Grade Tours for a few years. Lane Yee has been kind enough to take over the major task of Membership from Edna Manzoni, who been doing a terrific job for many, many years. The third new member of the Board is Theo Madias from next door, the Novato Chamber of Commerce. Theo is the Social Media Guru for the Chamber and for me. When ever I had questions about promoting the Guild, Theo was the one with the answers.

Sharon Azevedo is the new Secretary, stealing the position from Kathryn Hansen. Kathryn has been doing an admirable job of both Secretary and Treasurer for years, and now she only has to worry about finance. One of the changes that "hasn't" happened is President? If any one has any ideas please let me know.

To all the generous volunteers that the Guild is so fortunate to have THANK YOU, and be sure to pick up your "2018 Mug of Appreciation" at one of the museums.

Finally I would like to thank all the volunteers that support the Guild. We wouldn't exist without you. THANK YOU!



Novato History Museum display of early Novato schoolroom items including work books and furnishings.



Novato – 50 Years Ago

(January, February, March 1969)

by Yvette Borloz Jackson

Dear Readers,
We are starting a new year, 1969. So many things to write about, to remind us of what Novato was like 50 years ago. I am finding that many things have not changed much and others have progressed with the times. I want to remind you that the following were taken from the *Novato Advance*; I changed nothing other than to abridge some of the articles. Hope you enjoy.

Yvette Borloz Jackson

- JAMES B. WHITE FIRST NOVATO BABY – James Brian White weighed in at a healthy six pounds at 7:13 a.m. on January 1 at Marin General Hospital and immediately became the first Novato baby born in 1969. James is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John White of 585 Fernando Drive, Novato, and his two elder brothers are Michael, 5 and Steven, 2.
- The gymnasium at San Marin High should be ready for use at least by the first week in February. That's the latest word, according to Hank Mororski, principal at Novato's new high school. He added, "Hopefully it might be sooner but there still are a million and one details to do before it will be finished". The school, including the gym was originally to be ready for the first day of classes last September. Students, after double sessions at Novato High, finally moved into the classrooms December 2.
- In 1850, the total area of San Francisco, San Pablo and Suisun Bays was almost 700 square miles at mean sea level, while today it is about 400 square miles.
- Novato's third postal substation opened Thursday morning on Grant Avenue, to serve downtown residents and merchants. Designated as

Substation No. 1, it is located in the rear of Pini Hardware, 1107 Grant Avenue, and will be open regular post office hours, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday and until 8:30 a.m. to noon on Saturday. Mrs. Baxter Hovis is in charge of the postal station and Mrs. Mae Murray will be her assistant. Pini Hardware has been owned and operated by D. D. Phillips, Clarence Nelson and Baxter Hovis since 1943.

- The state highway division estimated that it would cost \$74,206 to install traffic signals on Highway 101 at Lamont Avenue, but it must have got its signals crossed. Last night (1/14/69) the council awarded Steiny and Mitchel of San Francisco, the low bid of \$49,788, to do the job. Based on the city's agreement with the state and with Schuman Chevrolet, Novato's share of the contract cost will be a total of \$11,400, which includes \$1000 in engineering costs. Gas tax funds amounting to \$12,500 have been budgeted for the work.
- The weekend storm spilled a total of 2.87 inches of rain in Novato, according to the weatherman at the Grant Avenue fire station. (1/11/69 -1/12/69)
- The Stumpjumpers square dance group will hold a dance Saturday night from 8:30 to 12 at the IDESI Hall. Guest caller will be Jack Logan. There will be refreshments and prizes. The dance is sponsored by the Novato recreation department. There will be a donation. The Stumpjumpers hold a workshop every Wednesday night at the IDESI Hall. Dave Milano is club caller.
- Taylor Variety stores in Nave Shopping Center and Pacheco Plaza Shopping Center are "in the process" of being acquired by Glen Five & Ten, which has stores in Straw-

berry Town & Country Village, in Sausalito and San Francisco, San Bruno and Pacifica.

- The winds of change in the manner of selecting the mayor of Novato may soon be stirring. Scheduled for the January 28 council meeting is a detailed report from City Attorney Clark M. Palmer describing how the mayor could be elected by the people rather than the city council. In preliminary comment's at last week's council meeting, Palmer said, "Any general law city, such as Novato, can submit to its voters the proposition as to whether the mayor should be elected by the people. If the proposition is passed, there would be a separate filing and race for mayor, apart from the council elections, at the next general election." Palmer said the mayor would be elected for a four-year term. He would serve as the "ex-officio fifth councilman" and would preside at council meetings, but his official post would be that of mayor, not simply another councilman serving as mayor.
- When a savage flurry of hail pounded the city for a minute of icy drumming Monday (1/27/69) just before 10 a.m., it was appropriate music for the past week's weather drama. With snow weighing the crest of Big Rock Ridge yesterday and today as dramatic evidence of arctic visitations, residents were still full of damp thoughts about rainstorms despite today's respite. And vicious winds that joined the rain and boomed across the City Saturday night and Sunday morning were still sounding in some eardrums. The trail of damage will take a lot of mending. Rainfall amounted to 2.85 inches since last Wednesday, less than the 3.55 inches the previous

50 Years Ago

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- week, but the January total through today is 9.31 inches – which is equal to the entire amount of rain that fell from the start of the 1967 - 68 rainy season through January 1968. The total so far in the 1968-69 rainy season is 21.79 inches, more than double last year's amount.
- The annual St. Patrick's Dance sponsored by the Novato Volunteer Fireman's Association will be held March 22 in the two IDESI Halls on Sweetser Avenue. The association selected the date and confirmed the location at its meeting night at the main fire station. Music will again be provided by Tino Granucci and his band.
 - Toll free telephoning between Novato and San Rafael will start April 10 – almost three months ahead of the deadline, according to W. Ross Wright, Novato district manager of Western California Telephone Company. The starting date was moved up to coincide with the delivery of the new telephone directories, Wright said. The California public utilities commission approved the extended area service (EAS) in May 1967, and ordered it to be put in effect by July 1, 1969. Starting April 10, toll free calls can be made between Novato and San Rafael numbers (prefixes 453, 454, 456, 457, 461, 472, and 479) served by Pacific Telephone Company. It will not be necessary to dial "1" before calling San Rafael, but it will be necessary to dial all seven digits in the new free call area.
 - When the death of an individual shocks a whole community, it is apparent a man of stature and strength has passed away. Such a man was Fire Chief George J. Cavallero, who died Sunday morning on his way to a fire. The fire that Chief Cavallero was rushing to was at the historic Burdell mansion now housing a hippie commune on the Rancho Olompali. The mansion was gutted.
 - A funeral cortege from Our Lady of Loretto Catholic Church led by Fire Chief George Cavallero's "pet" vehicle, the Novato fire department's new snorkel truck accompanied the chief's casket late this morning past the main fire station at the corner of Grant Ave. and Highway 101. A modest wreath on the fire station's glass door signified the death of Chief Cavallero, 50, early Sunday morning – 16 years and one day after the short, energetic, blue-eyed, fire fighter assumed the position of Novato fire district chief on February 1, 1953, following his official appointment on January 29 of that year.
 - An estimated 14 occupants, 10 of them children, were only a few breaths away from asphyxiation when they managed to escape from the disastrous fire that devastated the historic Burdell mansion early Sunday morning at Rancho Olompali. "The big loss was the fire chief," said Coman. "The fire department deserves a lot of praise for saving so much of the building. The adobe walls still remain and we want to protect them during clean up and salvage operations". There are five wooden structures at Rancho Olompali, which is rented by the utopian colony headed by Don McCoy: Three houses, a dormitory and a small cabin. The mansion, built in 1915 by Burdell family and incorporated a three-room adobe structure erected in the 1830's (succeeding the first adobe house built about 1776) has been variously described as containing anywhere from 20 to 26 rooms.
 - The dark cloud, which has hovered over the Olompali Ranch since the historic mansion was destroyed by fire last week, has turned out to have a silver lining. Preservation of the ancient adobe, which is encased in the walls of the mansion, was practically assured and public ownership to boot in a dramatic revelation to the Marin Board of supervisors Tuesday. The matter appeared on the supervisors agenda as a request from the Marin Historical Society that the board prevent the destruction of the adobe, erected in the 1830's on the site of the first adobe building constructed north of San Francisco in 1776. Helen Van Cleave Park, vice president of the historical society arose to plead with the board to save the adobe because of its great historical value. She said it is considered by California history buffs to be "the most important historical remnant in Northern California" even when considered along side Sutter's Fort and the Vallejo mansion. Charmaine Burdell Veronda, a descendant of Dr. Galen Burdell who built the first version of the mansion in 1863, (it was remodeled and enlarged in 1915) rose to ask the board to impose a stop order on any effort to raze the adobe. Then up rose Roderrick Robinson, Mill Valley councilman, who said he is the attorney for T. W. O'Donoghue Jr., of Novato, who has a contract to purchase the Olompali Rancho from the present owners, and whose intent is to preserve the adobe walls, and turn the building site and surrounding grounds, including the swimming pool, over to the county, the City of Novato, or a non-profit corporation to preserve it as a park and historic monument. *(Excerpts from an article by Alice Yarrish Wed. 02/12/1969)*
 - The most pressing problem facing Novato this year is streets, said Mayor McAskill, when questioned this week about what's ahead for Novato.
 - The historic Trumbull mansion – a landmark in the Trumbull Estates area – will soon be circled by a ring of tract homes. The two-and-one-half acre site of the imposing home is being subdivided. Builder John Novak, who made a small fortune building subdivisions in Novato and lost it during the credit squeeze, has owned the house for the last decade. He has now been forced to sell off most of the land around the house. The house, built by the Sweetser's, a pioneer Novato family, in the 1870's will occupy a small island of land in the center of the subdivision.

50 Years Ago

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- Jack Kidder, 47, assistant chief since 1965, has been appointed Novato Fire chief by the fire commissioners. Acting chief since the death on February 2 of Chief George Cavallero, Kidder has been a regular with the district for nearly 14 years. Commissioners named him to head the department in a personnel session last Wednesday night. Commissioners also promoted Richard Beyer and Al Butti, two captains, to assistant chief. Beyer will handle personnel and Butti will be in charge of operations. Kidder's salary was set at \$1040 a month and Beyer and Butti will receive \$935.
- Rainfall since last July is now 31.61 inches, more than double the total of 15.39 for the same period last year. The weatherman at the Novato fire station reports that it has rained on 33 of the 57 days of the new year, and on 61 days since last July.
- Mr. and Mrs. Rene' Borloz, 1851 Marion Avenue, recently were visited by their son Sgt. Rene' M. Borloz, and his wife and children, Michelle and Paul. Sgt. Borloz is now stationed at Vandenberg Air Force Base. His wife is the former Judy Mc Ginnis of Novato. On their visit they met the newest addition to the family – the newly adopted son of Rene's brother-in-law and sister, Mr. and Mrs. Max Jackson, 31 Lomba Vista. Their three-month-old son is named James Russell.
- Plans for \$700,000 expansion of Novak Square at Novato Boulevard and Wilson Avenue have fallen through because Fish Contractors of Oxnard lost their financing under the knife of sharpening interest rates. According to Johnson, interest rates are so prohibitive that there would be no possibility of Fish Contractors making a profit on the investment. "There are too many points under the table," says Johnson. "Seven points above the table and seven points below. It will kill all the profit possibilities." Novak Square presently is occupied by Roger Wilco

Market owned by William Jonas and a Shell Service station. The 8½ acres of Novak Square, previously owned by John Novak, were acquired by Santa Rosa Savings and Loan by foreclosure.

- Weddings in the first three months of 1969.

Susan Joyce Jacob – David F. Bequette; Kathleen Marie Hughes – Edward Asami Oshiro; Cheryl Ann Trigon – Philip August Morris; Barbara A. Skinner – Ronnie Leland Whitworth; Kathleen Marie Wright – Jack Allen Lambson; Kathleen Bryan – Kenneth Murphy; Karen J. Folster – Melvin T. Magliocco; Margaret Louise Terry – Dennis R. Smart; Laurel Grover – Thomas Michael Mc Gruder; Linda Lee Levine – David Lindon Katlarz; Jolene Marie Fedrick – Roland Brent Vandenbroek; Janet Norene Cox – Oscar Justiniano Gonzales; Lynn Guion – Richard R. King; Linda Ann Durham – Richard Fredrick Cole; Janice Kidder – R. Wayne Lint; Gayle Lillian Abbott – Donald Bostdoreff; Patricia Maureen Slater – Charles Cole Ashworth; Terry Fly – Phillip L. Johnson; Susan Stone – John A. Trumbull; Sandra Rosella Hicks – Ritchie Charles Weer; Connie Giddens – John Robert Russell; Margaret Ann Dennis – Donald R. Keller; Linda Gilmore – Gary Aycoc; Margaret Giubbini – Paul Giuliani; Jean Frances Meserole – Rudi Otto Rokitta; Linda Jean Merrill – Michael W. Garsva.

Its Third Grade History Tour Time Again!

by Laurie O'Mara

Well, we are rapidly approaching yet another beautiful Spring Season which means another season of fabulous third graders pouring through our beloved History Museum's doors eagerly learning all about our wonderful town's colorful history!

The excited third grade teachers have already chosen their tour dates and I am currently finalizing this year's list of docents. I would like to take a moment to

Welcome New Guild Members

Novato Historical Guild Membership Report March 2019

Individual Membership

Terry Witzel

Family Membership

Jacquie Rolle

Business Membership

Pacheco Ranch Winery

If you have questions about membership, call

*Lane Yee,
Membership Chairman,*

415 – 898 – 0444

thank last years incredible group of third grade docents for making it one of the most successful seasons I think we've had so far. So a huge heartfelt thank you goes to Carol Aregger, Sharon Azevedo, Mary Bicknell, Celinda Current, Joan Davis, Diana Goebel, Laurie Gratiot, Bobbie Kettler, Jim McNear, Laurie O'Mara, Stan Palmear, Anne Russell and Susan Trumbull.

Unfortunately a few of last year's docents had to step down so we need to step up the search for new docents so we can keep this amazing program alive!! If you would like to be a third grade history docent or know of anyone who you think might, Please email Laurie O'Mara at plomara@earthlink.net.



Novato Memories

Jim McNern



(Part II – Continued from June 2018 issue)

I don't remember a lot about Hill Middle School, but I do remember my first day at Novato High School. My first thought was that I was small.....5' 61/2." But I already knew some folks from the class of 64 and Tom White from the class of '63 and Roger Greaber, class of 61. I thoroughly enjoyed all four years at NHS. I had great classmates and friends. These are the same folks I enjoy seeing at the reunion in Petaluma every 5 years: Louise Skowroneck, Maureen Giari, Lorraine Moberg, Harry Lehman, Kathy Smith, Lyn Walline, Pat Houge, Jack Lambson, Bryan Whitney, Tom and Kathleen Keena, John Noonan and Dan Morrison, fastest guy at school...

American Graffiti came out in 1972. It's no mystery that it is set in 1965. Especially the portion of the movie that dealt with Richard Dreyfuss going off to war. George Lucas came from Modesto and those memories were fresh in his mind. I never get tired of seeing it and marvel at the symbolism in it as well as the feel of what high school was like in the 60's.

Mike Pechner

Mike shares Part II of his Novato memories in this March 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.

I will tell you that I had a great time at Novato High despite some tragedies. My father saw his fair share of carnage in both wars and as tough as he was, the demons of war were more powerful than his will to live and he committed suicide in August of 1963. I was an incoming high school junior in September.

This brings me to the second tragedy – I did become aware of Scott Bullfinch, a name that to this day is as clear in my mind as November 22nd, 1963. I am a life – long Democrat and I remember Scott as one student that wore his political affiliation on his sleeve! I think it was third period or fourth period English class in Ms. Epler's class and I asked for permission to go to the bathroom. I was half way down the hall and Scott Bullfinch was running the other way and yelled at me as he passed in a light hearted manner "JFK is dead..."

Of course I didn't believe him. (A little side note – my fathers job in the early 60's was to bring Japanese imports into the United States and he presented me with one of the first small 4 transistor radios in 1961.) I was a big baseball fan and I brought the radio to school to listen to Giants day games between classes and sometimes in class!

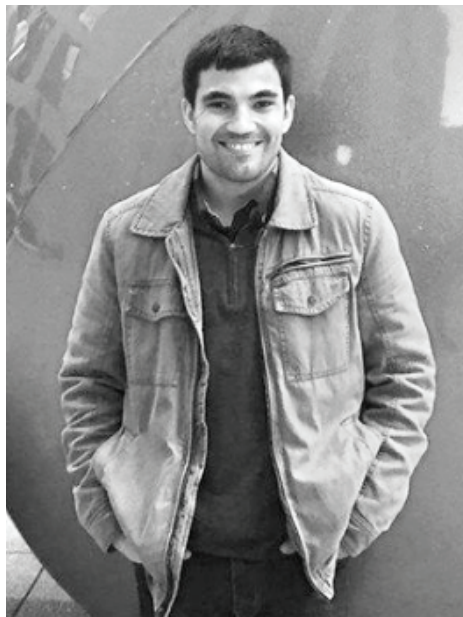
I would plug in the ear piece and run the cord down my sleeve and into the radio and sit in class with my head resting in my hands to hide the earpiece. I would keep the radio in my locker even after the baseball season)

I ran to my locker first to pick up my radio and turned on KCBS, the station I would eventually work for, and heard Walter Cronkite say the President passed away at 1:52 pm Central Standard Time. Needless to say, I was shocked by what I heard and after a brief bathroom stop, I ran back to the classroom just as the announcement came over the intercom from the office. Class was dismissed for the day and for the next 2 1/2 days, I sat transfixed in front of the TV following the events after the assassination and funeral of John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

These two events, just months apart in many ways made me who I am today. To this day I wonder what my Father would have done maybe go into local politics and what this country may have been like if JFK had continued as president. Anyway, after graduating from Novato High in 1965, we sold our Briggs home which we bought on 4th Street for \$7000 and sold it for \$22,000 and moved to a condo in San Rafael.

I have never forgotten my roots and find myself in Novato at least once or twice a month. I marvel at the city it has become and am pleased that much of Grant Avenue is still preserved as it is today. I look forward to our reunions every five years and seeing friends like Jim Crumpler. Jim and I never lost touch with each other as we both did the Dipsea race every year from the 1970's into the 2000's. Jim would regularly do the Dipsea year after year after year – well into his 60's, truly an amazing effort!

New Guild Board Members



Theo Madias

Theo brings four generations of Marin County blood to the Museum and with that a sense of North Bay pride and culture. Theo is also the grandson of Greek immigrants who settled in Novato after World War II. He grew up in Novato and was heavily involved in several volunteer organizations. He left Marin in order to attend college, but after graduating from the University of California, Santa Barbara with a BA in Global Studies and focuses in economics, environmental sustainability, and human development, he decided to return to his native North Bay.

He began working for the Chamber of Commerce in 2015 and brings a strong sense of pride to his work. As a proud Novato native, he brings a sense of North Bay pride to his work and is especially excited about increasing the visibility of Novato as an amazing place to do business and live. His willingness to help others and their businesses stems from his long involvement in charity organizations and is never of short supply here at the Chamber.

If you come in to the Chamber of Commerce office to meet with Theo, you most likely will meet a cute four-legged assistant. During his spare time, Theo and his family train service dogs with Guide Dogs for the Blind. Outside of the office, he is very much into being outside. He enjoys trips to the city, wine country, the coast and is often relaxing in Tahoe. When he decides to stick around Novato you can often find him hiking or in his backyard tending to his garden – though no matter where he and his Guide Dog puppy are, they are always accompanied by his camera and his love of photography.



Anne Russell

Our New Board Member, Anne T. Russell, is entering her 9th year with the Novato History Museum's 3rd grade docent program. She graduated from the Chamber of Commerce and City Leadership Novato 2018 program, and is now a Trustee on the board focusing on local Business Community support. She studied at Keuka Woman's College and Syracuse University in Marketing and Business Law. Anne is also a commissioner on the City of Novato Economic Development Commission.

Anne has lived in Novato for 23 years, and assists her husband, Tim, with their two financial services firms. As a mother of two, she has volunteered many years for sports organizations, the church, and the Novato Unified School District's Art Docent program. "I consider it an honor to serve on the Novato Historical Guild board. I strive to make our beautiful community better. I am a history lover; it is a source of pride."



Lane Yee

Lane Yee moved to Corte Madera with her family in the 1940's. She attended Redwood High School, College of Marin and Dominican University. She and her husband moved to Novato in 1988.

Lane worked for the State of California for 37 years; the last 20 years with the California Coastal Commission as their Chief Fiscal Officer. She retired from the State in 2008 but continued to work with the Coastal Commission on special projects on a part time basis. She has worked as a Wednesday Docent at the Downtown Museum since 2017. Lane spent a lot of time in Novato in the 1950's and 60's with her cousins, and she's enjoyed learning more about the early history of Novato through the Museum.

This year, Lane is also president of the Novato Garden Club. She is a member of several knitting and needlework guilds in Marin.

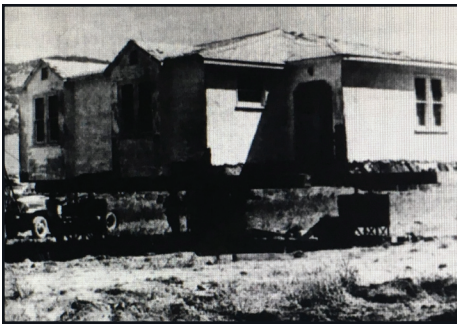
Lane and her husband love to travel and attend the theater.

NOVATO'S TREASURES

Lundblad/ Tracy/ Miwok Museum



Picture of the house on 6th Street.



On May 6, 1969, the second floor of the house moved down Grant Avenue to Highway 101 (Redwood Blvd) and along San Marin Drive to Miwok Park.



Picture of the museum in 1974

1600 Grant Avenue:

When Harry Lundblad (who was a builder, contractor and also worked at Mare Island) got engaged to Edna Mae Butler (daughter of F.C. Butler), he decided to build a new home for them next door to his father's house – John Lundblad – on Grant and 6th Street.

They were married in December 1932 and moved into their new home.

In June of 1936 Harry purchased a ten acre lot near Simmons Lane and Marion. They moved into their new home in 1937.

Eugene and Margaret Tracy bought the home on Grant Avenue in 1938. Eugene died in 1970 after working for Pini Mill, Nave Garage and was one of the first paid Novato Firemen.

The 1600 Grant Avenue home ended up in the hands of Crocker Citizens Bank. The bank gave the house to the museum and the lot at 1600 Grant Avenue is now the home of Bank of America.

Pre – History Museum

In 1963 Novato High School instituted a course in anthropology. In 1966 an Archaeological Club was organized at the school. On May 10, 1967 the club formalized the Marin Museum Society Inc. for the purpose of maintaining the artifacts and the acquisition of a museum building for workshops, housing, and displays of the growing collections of Indian objects

they have collected, with aspiring young anthropology student David W. Dippel as president.

The Novato Kiwanis Club was contacted for assistance and they earmarked \$4,000 for the construction.

A site was selected at the Novato Creek Park (opened in 1968) which was changed to Miwok Park in August of 1972. The park site was given to the city by Sunset International Petroleum Corp which was part of the F.C. Butler ranch.

On January 14, 1969 the *Independent Journal* reported: "Now the Novato Kiwanis has named a committee to try to get the big old white house at Grant Avenue and Sixth Street, owned by Crocker – Citizens Bank. The Kiwanians want to move the house to the city – owned Novato Creek Park site off Novato Boulevard at Novato Creek."

Plans called for the "Grand Opening November 7, 1970." But the remodeling was on a piecemeal basis with the help of Paul Scheller on the weekends. Stucco would go on the building in April of 1971.

October 1, 1972 the Novato Prehistory Museum opened to the public.

In 1975 the museum name changed to the "Marin Miwok Museum" and in June of 1981 was changed to "Marin Museum of the American Indians."



Picture of the "Marin Museum of the American Indians" today

The Pilot Maker

By Michael Corlett

One of the displays at the Hamilton Field History Museum is a Link Trainer. Edwin Albert Link invented the trainer in the late 1920's to reduce the cost of becoming a pilot. The story of how the trainer came to be world famous is an interesting one.

Ed Link's family moved from Chicago to Binghamton, NY in 1910. Ed's father had purchased a bankrupt player piano firm and renamed it "The Link Piano and Organ Company."

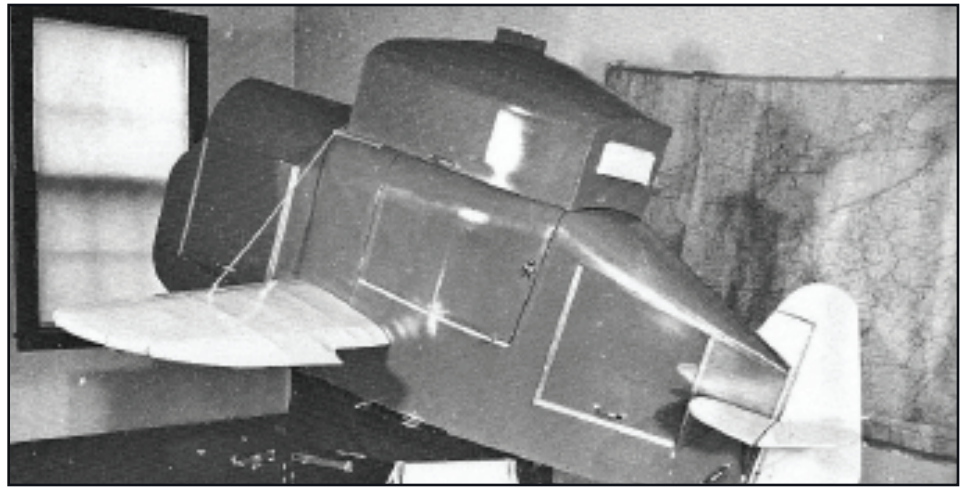
Ed's mother and father divorced in 1918 and Ed and his mother moved to Chicago and then Los Angeles. While at LA Polytechnic High School, Ed took his first flying lesson from Sidney Chaplin, brother of noted actor, Charlie Chaplin. That flight ignited his interest in aviation.

Ed and his mother returned to Binghamton and he went to Binghamton Central High. However, he was simply not interested in "formal" schooling and he left a few months afterward. Ed went to work in his father's company and quickly rose through the ranks. He had native ability to fix or improve upon anything mechanical. At 20 years old, Ed obtained his first patent for a suction device used to pick lint off a player piano roll.

In the spring of 1926, Ed Sr, learned that his son was taking flying lessons. He was furious. It was generally accepted that all pilots were bums, irresponsible and a hard – drinking lot, so, he fired his son. However, Ed Jr, had become one of few people who excelled at repairing and rebuilding player pianos and organs. Ed Sr, pressured by his factory manager, relented and Ed was rehired.

In 1928, with money borrowed from his mother, Ed purchased a 4 seat Cessna airplane. The Cessna Aircraft Company had incorporated two months earlier. Ed Link took delivery of the first airplane that Cessna Aircraft Company ever sold.

It took a lot of in – flight training time before an aspiring pilot could fly solo. Flying lessons were very expensive, \$25 dollars per hour. (\$25 dollars then is equivalent to \$360 now) Ed thought that training time could be greatly reduced,



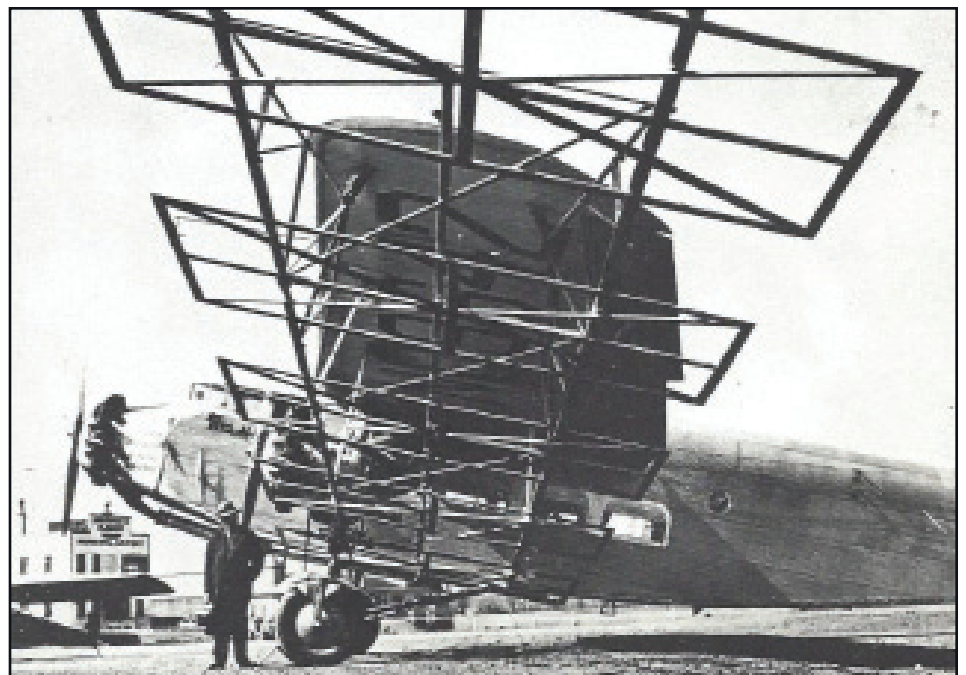
A Pilot Trainer at the Hamilton Field History Museum

and safety increased, by developing a ground – based training aid. Ed started by using air operated bellows and electric motors from his father's factory. He installed them in a small, stubby fuselage mounted on a universal joint. Before getting into a real airplane, the trainer would teach new pilots how an aircraft responds when the control stick is moved.

Ed filed for a patent on his "Pilot Maker" on April 14, 1929. Initially, the trainer was not well received among flight instructors. The Army Air Corp was interested, but there was no money in the budget. However, several Amusement

Park operators were interested and eventually purchased 50 of the trainers. The soon to be world famous "Link Trainer," started out as an Amusement Park ride.

Ed opened the Link Flying School in the basement of his father's factory. The school opened with a guaranteed "Learn to Fly for \$85". It consisted of ground school, which was in the trainer, and 2 hours of actual flight time. The school did very well the first year, 100 people had soloed. However, the effects of the 1929 depression were beginning to set in, and business dried up. The Link Piano and Organ company was forced



Edwin Albert Link with one of his Pilot Makers

The Pilot Maker

Continued from Page N – 9

to close. Ed's father lost everything, and Ed lost a home for his school and his trainer.

To make money Ed did barnstorming work, flight lessons, charter flights and stunt flying. In 1933 it occurred to him that anytime a plane was flying over, people instinctively look up. He designed a grid made of wood and several hundred small incandescent bulbs that would be attached to the underside of his plane. By sequencing the bulbs, he could spell out words. On July 24, 1933, Ed Link's "Flying Sign" began the era of Aerial advertising. Link's first customer was Spaulding Bakery in Binghamton, the first airborne message was "Spaulding's Cakes are Fresher."

Ed did well with his "Flying Sign" business, however due to a hasty decision by U.S. Post Office officials, his trainer sales were about to surge.

The US Post Office contracted out air mail delivery service routes to commercial airlines. On February 19 of 1934, because of a scandal in how the routes were assigned and renewed, the US Postal Service abruptly cancelled all domestic airmail contracts. President Roosevelt assigned the Army Air Corp to take over the routes for an interim period, while the airmail contracts were being reworked.

Unfortunately, the Air Corp pilots had little experience in night and instrument flying. In the first few days 5 airplanes crashed, and the pilots killed. Embarrassingly, the Air Corp had to restrict air mail flights to daytime flying in good weather. The Army Air Corp decided it was time to take another look at the "Pilot Maker."

In February of 1934, a demonstration of the "Pilot Maker" had been arranged for Army Brass at Newark Airport. The day of the demo was cold and foggy. Ed flew in for the demo, which in itself impressed Army personnel. They figured he must know something about instrument flying. The "Pilot Maker" demo was successful. On June 23, 1934, the Army purchased their first 6 trainers. From that point on orders rolled in steadily. The customer base soon expanded. Flight instruction schools began purchasing the "Pilot Maker," along with the US Navy and followed by many foreign governments. In the early 1940's, the armed forces of 35 countries were using the "Link Trainer" to instruct their pilots.

Ed established a company called Link Aviation Devices which marketed the "Pilot Maker." Over time, the "Pilot Maker" gradually became known simply as the "Link Trainer."

Now called Motion Simulators, Edwin Albert Link's "Pilot Maker" spawned what is now a 40 – billion – dollar Motion Simulator market.

On September 7, 1981, Edwin Albert Link died in Binghamton, New York at age 77.

Sources:

The Pilot Maker, Lloyd Kelly, 1970

Airmail: A Brief History, USPS

Postal Museum.si.edu, 1934 Airmail Scandal



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DOCENTS NEEDED HAMILTON FIELD HISTORY MUSEUM

Contact: Ray Dwelly
(415) 382 – 8614

2019 Board Meetings

Second Tuesday of the Month
Margaret Todd Senior Center
 1560 Hill Road

Time: 1:30 – 3:30 PM

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

Membership Meetings

March 16	10 – 12 City Hall
June 15	10 – 12 City Hall
Sept. 14	12 – 2 Hamilton Field Museum
Dec. 14	10 – 12 City Hall

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



Apple cider vinegar press at the Novato History Museum

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.

The Guild Extends Sympathy to

The Paladini family on the loss of
 Cynthia “Cindi” Paladini
 The Wilfert family on the loss of
 Randeel Wilfert

In Memoriam

In Memoriam

**Cynthia “Cindi” Paladini
 Randeel Wilfert**

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/>

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 | |



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YOU ARE INVITED

General Membership Meeting ~ Novato Historical Guild

**Saturday, March 16, 10:00 am – 12:00 noon
Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Ave.**

There will be a presentation by Greg Sarris, Chairman of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria and notable author, discussing his latest book "How a Mountain Was Made."

Come enjoy refreshments, familiar company and a wonderful speaker.
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