

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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July – September 2019

The Novato Historian

Volume 43, Number 3

4th of July Parade, Volunteer "Thank You" Luncheon and Guest Speakers



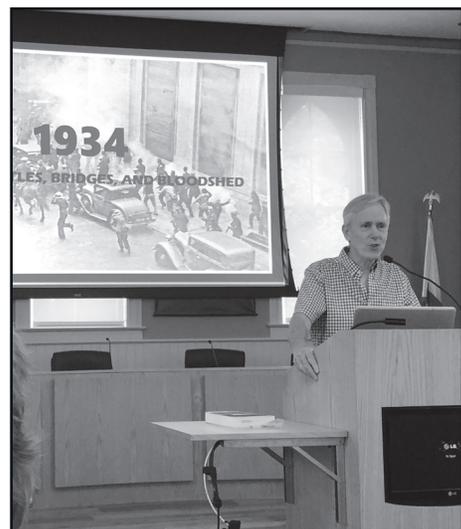
Mike and Patty Silva supplied their 1941 Cadillac for the Annual 4th of July Parade on Grant Avenue.



The June Members Meeting featured Mike Moyle, who gave a talk on the Portuguese Dairies of Marin.



Herb Rowland (descendant of Juan Ignacio Antonio Pacheco) gave a talk at the Volunteer "Thank You" Luncheon at the Pacheco Winery in Ignacio.



On June 12th, the Novato Historical Guild hosted guest speaker, Daniel Bacon, a San Francisco historian and author of the book *Frisco*, which is based on historic events. In *Frisco*, Mr. Bacon tells a tale involving the 1934 Waterfront Strike that spread across the entire West Coast.

The Novato Historian

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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 December 2019 issue is November 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

It's been a busy summer for the Guild. Starting off in early June, the Docent Appreciation BBQ held at the wonderful and historic Pacheco Winery. Herb and Deb Rowland were gracious hosts and along with Mother Nature, provided a beautiful venue to THANK our incredible docents for the time and energy that they have given to the Guild in the past year. Forks and Fingers did a terrific job of providing the BBQ for about fifty well deserved docents. Herb Rowland followed the luncheon with an informative, historic talk about the Pacheco Family. The Guild owes a big "Thank You" to Herb and Deb.

The SECOND weekend in June was the annual Art, Wine and Music Festival. The Guild's booth provided a place to meet and introduce ourselves to the public. We gave away a lot of "Historians," made a lot of new acquaintances and reconnected with some old friends. Thank you to all the volunteers who helped at the booth and I hope that you all had as much fun as I did.

The THIRD weekend in June was the quarterly Members Meeting. Mike Moyle gave a very informative talk about the Portuguese Dairies in Marin. Also present at this meeting were some actual Portuguese dairymen from around County.

The second Wednesday of June was the Monthly Speaker Series by the Guild, the speaker was Daniel Bacon who discussed the San Francisco Waterfront Strike of 1934. Really an excellent talk.

Future Talks:

July 10: Paul Liberatore- Marin's Music Rock History

August 14: Bonnie Portnoy- California Artist Tilden Daken

September 11: Dr. Crystal Chang- China and the Rise of Xi Jinping

The last City Council Meeting in June had on its agenda "The Relocation of the History Museum," possibly to the Simmons House. There was a very positive discussion on this subject. Keep your fingers crossed.

Mike and Patty Silva again supplied their immaculate 1941 Cadillac for the July 4th Parade, which they have so generously done for many years. My wife and I were fortunate to be invited to ride along. While the two Patty's were talking and waving to the crowd, Mike and I were discussing some of the History of the Cadillac. Mike mentioned that his younger brother Frank, who was in my 1965 class at Novato High, had driven "The Cadillac" back to "Woodstock" in 1969!

We have a new member to the Historian editorial staff, Barbara Gildea. Barbara is our new proofreader. This position has been vacant for a while as I'm sure the readers of this column are well aware.

Thanks to all our wonderful docents and volunteers for what you do.



Herb Rowland giving an informative talk at the Volunteer "Thank You" Luncheon.



Novato – 50 Years Ago

(July, August, September 1969)

by Yvette Borloz Jackson

The summer of 1969 was a busy one for the residents of Novato and a historic one for the world. Novatans were wishing the crew of the Apollo 11 a safe trip and a happy moon landing. "It's unbelievable." "It was the greatest thing in the world." "It was a wild sensation, it's hard to comprehend." It seemed to be impossible and it was actually happening." These are just a few of the comments made by the people of Novato, something that the whole world could be proud of. Our daily lives went on though and the following are some things that happened July, August, and September of 1969. I hope this brings back fond memories to those who were around during that time and that it gives an insight to how things were here in Novato 50 years ago for those who weren't.

Yvette Borloz Jackson

• **Reunion of our first High School Graduates.** In 1955 the first high school class in Novato's history was organized. Up to that time, Novato students attended San Rafael High School. The students spent two years at Marion School in temporary cramped quarters. When Novato High School was completed the students transferred there. The class of 82 students graduated in June of 1959. It was the first graduating class in the history of the community. Members of the '59 class were probably the best-known group to have ever attended school here. Their activities were always noteworthy and closely watched by the community. The class, a bright and volatile group, set many of the traditions still carried on today. They chose the school's colors and adopted the "Hornet" name, a decision questioned by some succeeding classes. The members of the historic first graduating class are holding a ten-year reunion Saturday (06/21/69) with a dinner dance at the Marin Country Club. A reunion picnic is to be held the next day at Kenilworth Park in Petaluma. Because of the significant role the first Novato High

class played, the affair is a particularly nostalgic one. The class of 1969 is planning their 50-year reunion to be held 10/06/2019 at McInnis Park Gold Center.

- More than 170 students and Novato youths are being taught conservation subjects that include air, water pollution and soil conservation as part of the Novato Unified School District summer program. Elementary teachers Ron Vestal, John Oliver, Linda Field and secondary teachers Rufus Read, Dave Lusk, Marilyn Hunt and Christopher Dawson formed the program to make students aware of local conservation needs.
- A second child who fell into the swimming pool last week at the Rancho Olompali hippie commune, located North of Novato, died at Marin General Hospital this morning. Audrey J. Keller, 3, died after remaining in critical condition for a week after she and Nika Carter, 2, were pulled unconscious out of the pool. Nika died Monday at Marin General Hospital. Neither child regained consciousness. The children were pulled out of the pool under bizarre circumstances. Reportedly a resident of the commune noticed the bodies of the youngsters at the bottom of what was described as a dirty and murky pool. They were pulled out and left on the walk surrounding the pool. Later they were discovered by other residents and rushed to Novato General Hospital and later Marin General. The second drowning came after it appeared that the days for "The Chosen Family" on the Rancho Olompali hippie commune are numbered. With their erstwhile leader, guru Don McCoy, in a psychiatric hospital, their mansion burned, and their violations of the county codes reached 'actionable state,' members of The Family must find a new home. (07/09/69) Lieutenant Guido Battaglia, in charge of the inspectors bureau, said questioning of witnesses reveal that Stephen Albin Keller, 26, father of one of the victims, Audrey J. Keller, 3, gave Audrey and

Nika Carter, 2, the other victim, mouth to mouth resuscitation and restored breathing to both little girls after they seemed to be dead. Early reports that the children had been taken from the pool and left for dead, unattended, at the side of the pool, were disclosed by Battaglia to be without any foundation in fact.

- Novato Postmaster Harry Overly, who suffers from Parkinson's disease, has experienced a dramatic improvement after only nine days of treatment with a new drug that has not yet been released for general use. The drug, called L-Dopa for short, is classified as an "investigation" drug. It is being tried on victims of Parkinson's disease in 22 research centers, including the University of California Medical Center in San Francisco, where Overly received it. Overly began to feel the results the fifth day. The rigidity he suffers from began to diminish. He was able to walk normally instead of using the Parkinson's shuffle. His speech, which had been slurred, became clear.
- According to the national news wire service stories, Novato nearly was destroyed by fire over the week-end (07/26-27/69) Radio and newspaper reports described a "ring a fire" around the city, slowly but surely enveloping Novato in flames. Worried residents here flooded the police department with calls. Novato police officer Albert Mendoza's spine chilled while he was driving back home from a trip to Southern California when he heard a Bakersfield radio flash that Novato was threatened with destruction. The doomsday stories were nonsense, of course - and they grew out of the fact that six grass fires hit Novato early Saturday morning. The blazes were set intentionally with road flares, according to fire chief Jack Kidder. Quick work by the fire department minimized danger to the city. Eleven general alarms have been sounded this

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50 Years Ago

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- month, according to chief Peter Russ. Fires on the Pinheiro Ranch, land near Harkle Road, caused general alarms July 1st. On July 4th, there was a small grass fire in Indian Valley, but it was a general alarm because it threatened to spread. Steep terrain made it tough to put out.
- Groundbreaking ceremonies were conducted vigorously yesterday morning for the \$200,000 building to be constructed by Crocker-Citizens National Bank at Grant Avenue and Sixth Street.
 - Another Kentucky Fried Chicken Take Home has opened in Novato at 939 Front Street, making it the 93rd Kentucky Fried Chicken Take Home to open in Northern California since 1963.
 - Novato Golf champ, Ray Leach, sinks one. Young Leach, a Novato High School grad now attending Brigham Young University, placed second overall at the NCAA's Golf Championships in Colorado Springs, Colorado.
 - The ink was hardly dry on Novato slugger John Dolinsek's NCAA "Most Valuable Player" before he signed with the Houston Astros. Dolinsek put his future on the dotted line in Phoenix, Arizona. He then reported to the Astros class A farm club in Covington Virginia in the Appalachian League.
 - The *Novato Advance* won four first place awards at the 44th annual convention of the California Newspaper Advertising Executives Association in San Diego, June 26 -28th. The local weekly newspaper also won one second-place award and two 3rd place awards. The *Novato Advance* won more awards than any other California weekly.
 - "Were it not for the different opinions of its inhabitants, the world would stand still and soon crumble, hence a person is to be admired who stands by his guns until he sees the fruitlessness of his cause, and then graciously submits to the will of the majority in community advancement. In this way a community will rise to its full height and become a place worthwhile," so said William Hanen, first publisher of the *Novato Advance*, on July 1, 1922 in his first editorial. The *Advance* celebrated his 47th birthday on July 1.
 - A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ruzick, 649 Peach Street, on July 25 at Kaiser Hospital in San Francisco. The little girl, whom the Ruzicks have named Christine Diane, weighed in at 6 pounds, 8 oz. She has a brother, Matthew, age 2 ½.
 - Grant Avenue Meats has opened at its new location in the Nave Shopping Center annex on South Novato Boulevard, between Western Auto and Chicken Delight. The former Red Topers location, measuring 1800 square feet, has been completely redecorated by Laurent "Frenchie" Welter and his son-in-law Mike Smith. Gourmet meats, delicatessen items, sandwiches and barbecue chickens "to go" are offered by the store.
 - President Nixon was in Novato Thursday morning. (08/21) The Chief Executive was on the grounds of Hamilton Air Force Base - which are within the city limits - for nine minutes. That was as long as it took for Nixon to debark from the presidential jet, greet base officials, shake a few hands in the crowd of well-wishers, and climb aboard a helicopter bound for San Francisco. The President's Hamilton stop came while he was on route from his San Clemente summer retreat to San Francisco where he met with South Korea's president Park Chung Hee.
 - The new school year for the City's two high-schools-Novato and San Marin - begins Monday morning. (09/08/69) San Marin students have been mailed letters containing the numbers of their first period rooms. They will receive the remainder of their class schedule during their first period classes. An orientation assembly will be held next Wednesday at San Marin High according to Harry Moore, assistant principal. Opening day at Novato High will be a regular day for students, according to Principal Stanley J. Onderdonk, who said that the normal schedule will include six periods, a pre-period and a post-period. A student assembly at 8 AM will start off the day with all students assembling in the boy's gymnasium.
 - Martin Baccaglio is making a determined bid for a starting spot as defensive end with the Cincinnati Bengals of the American Football League. Baccaglio, a 6-3, 245 pounder, from Novato was outstanding in the Bengals 25 - 21 victory on August 23 over the Miami Dolphins. The 24-year-old Baccaglio, who played college football for San Jose State, played a big role in stopping a last ditch touchdown drive by the Dolphins on the Cincinnati 11 yard line in the final quarter to preserve the victory. Twice Baccaglio came forward to stop Dolphin fullback Larry Czonka at the line of scrimmage. "Baccaglio is a real competitor," said Bengals' head coach Paul Brown. "He can become an outstanding football player."
 - "Swamped with customers" is the word from Arthur Hay, owner of the newly open Tijuana Taco restaurant in the Downtown Novato Shopping Center, 930 7th St. Mexican foods are the specialty of Tijuana Taco, served every day from 11 AM to midnight (to 1 AM Friday and Saturday nights.) Fast service is offered for take outs of tacos, chiliburgers and other items on the Mexican menu, and the air-conditioned interior provides seating for close to 50 customers. Tijuana Taco's stainless steel kitchen prepares all dishes and no pre-cooked foods are used, Hay stresses. The restaurant staff totals 16.
 - The security of United States is threatened by any published disclosure of nuclear devices at Hamilton Air Force Base and the U.S. Air Force absolutely decline to comment on the subject, including the alleged presence on the base of nuclear bombs "bigger than blockbusters." This is the reaction of Lt. Col. Everett C. Brown, director of information at Hamilton, who says he is officially and personally offended by publication in last weeks *Advance* of a story in which attorney Robert Carrow, former mayor of Novato, charged that the Air Force is derelict in it's duty to the people by declining to confirm or deny that nuclear missiles are kept at the base. Reminded that the discussion of a nuclear stockpile at Hamilton and its possible danger to the Novato Community had arisen because a mentally unstable sergeant has been assigned to guard the arsenal, Lt. Col. Brown questioned the judgment of the *Advance* in printing

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50 Years Ago

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- the comments of Carrow, describing the former Mayor as “completely unreliable.” Carrow, who was defense Attorney for the mentally unstable sergeant, Robert V. Baliou, (given a undesirable discharge for threatening a superior with a pistol and carbine), said the people of Novato should be informed about the presence of nuclear weapons at Hamilton. He said the citizens have the right to know and to decide if the need for security outweighs the dangers of plutonium leakage that could be caused by a fire or conventional explosion. Carrow asserted that there are huge nuclear bombs stored at Hamilton in addition to nuclear-tipped air-to-air missiles. In reiterating a previous “no comment” from Hamilton on nuclear materials stored at the base, Lt. Col. Brown said he was speaking for the Department of Defense as well as Hamilton. He said he would not confirm or deny that nuclear bombs are at the base.
- Russ Dillon, Novato’s left-handed pitcher, signed a professional baseball contract Monday night with the Atlanta Braves. Dillon signed for a sum considerably more than the \$23,000 he was offered in initial talks last June with Atlanta officials. The Braves have also agreed to pay for Dillon’s college education.
 - The “no-bra” look is seen on the streets of New York and other large cities, but it might well send a Novato high school student home to dress. Students, career girls and young married women have joined with models and hippies that are going bra-less. Polo shirts and soft jersey knits are favorites for the no-bra look. The skinny little knits are worn with necks cut low or unbuttoned with no scarfs or chains to change the natural uncluttered look.
 - **“Here are some stores where one could find up-to-date fashions, make-up and accessories, as seen in the Pink Section of the Novato Advance.”**
DEAN’S REXALL DRUG STORE - 1205 Grant Ave. had Revlon’s “Ultima II” leg complexion make-up in six shades, which reflects the emphasis attention legs are getting in the mini-skirt era; MODE O’DAY-1417 Grant

Ave.; MEDICINE CHEST-Novato Fair Center; NEW LOOK WIG SHOP - 968 Second St.; FABRIC FAIR - Novato Fair Center; TOBIE’S BEAUTY SALON-1115 Grant Ave.; LONG’S DRUGS - 1707 Grant Ave. at 7th Ave.; McDONALD’S JEWELRY STORE – 908 Grant Ave.; TODD’S DEPARTMENT STORE - Nave Shopping Center; WYONNE’S BEAUTY SALON - 1220 Grant Ave.; MCCARTHY’S APOTHECARY - Nave Shopping Center; JODY’S SAMPLER - 1424 So Novato Blvd.; LA TEE’S FASHION - 1518 Grant Ave.; JANSEN’S SHOES - 1411 Grant Ave.; STAN’S SPORTS - Diablo at S. Novato Blvd.; BOU-TIQUE ZAIRA -824 Grant Ave.;BOB’S BEAUTY SALON - 1121 Grant Ave.; CHAPMAN’S SHOES - Tresch Triangle; ARDEN STUDIO - 1616 Grant Ave.; DON’S DE MARIN - 434 Ignacio Blvd.; MIX’N MATCH & SAMPLER BAR - Novato Fair Shopping Center; TG&Y - Downtown Novato Shopping Center

- KSFO radio personality Carter B. Smith dropped in at Novato General Hospital by helicopter Friday afternoon to pay a surprise visit to his colleague, KSFO’s Dan Sorkin. The two did a live broadcast from Sorkin’s hospital room. Smith then took off from the hospital parking lot. Sorkin suffered a mangled leg and other injuries when he was thrown from his motorcycle through a barbed-wire fence on Novato Boulevard. He has not yet been told when he will be ready to leave the hospital.
- **WEDDINGS: JULY THRU SEPTEMBER 1969**
Sharon Lynn Sawyer - Paul Stuart Herriot; Patricia Pastras - Michael Kerfoot; Linda Elaine Garner - Timothy Lynn Goepfner; Sharyn Joy Clark - Larry Charles Cornelius; Linda Joyce Skinner - Thomas Richard Corder; Julia Lee - Paul Duane Williams; Linda Patrice Behrens - John Robert Garrecht; Cynthia Ann Olsen - Darrell Russell Foster; Deborah Ruth Armstrong - Sgt. Larry Wayne Mobley; Marilyn Jean Clark - Steve Dixon Forest George Douglas Vaughn; Joanne Alice Christensen - Peter E. Haas Jr.; Janet Bain - Michael Thomas; Julie Tyra - Michael John Gerke; Trudi Louise Smith - Sp4 Marshall Franklin Collin, Jr.; Pamela Ann Scott - Wayne Walter Cole; Joanne Louise Burleigh - Benjamin Vargas Murach, Jr.; Christine Marie



Speaker Series

“China and the Rise of Xi Jinping”

Wednesday, September 11th
7:00 pm

Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue

Dr. Crystal Chang,
UC Berkeley Lecturer

Kelly - David Wade Cameron;
Julia Aleta Roos - Joseph Edward Knickerbocker; Julianne H. Williams - Dr. Jefferson C. Brook, III; Barbara Lee Bray - Milton Thomas Hain; Kathryn Lynn Fowler - James M. Naugle; Valerie Claire Witzel - Charles W. Ridgeway; Kristen Dare Cooper - Richard Earl Rush, Jr.; Sharon Louise Mares - Thomas Owens; Denise Ann Shoemaker - Donald Earl Warner; June Ellen McHugh - Robert Merle Gass; Benigna Castillo - Vincent James Landof; Nancy Hemovich - Byron B. Peppers; Marsha Ann Baccaglio - John Harold Anderson; Sharon Elizabeth Larson - Dennis Lee Hanson; Susan Elizabeth McIsaac - James Allie Simontacchi; Barbara Ann McDonald - John T Robbins; Christine Ann Skoog - Mac Robert Macham; Linda Elizabeth Gwynn - Dennis Lee Minnick; Linda Diane Ford - James August Ventura; Antonie Patricia Kramer - Robert B. Johnson; Rebecca Cressman - John Forsythe; June N. Thorwart - Jack P. Berger; Renee Lee Cameto - John Hiram Dustman

Novato Memories

Jim McNern



John Cook

John Cook moved to Novato in 1954 with his parents, John and Mary Cook and sister, Elizabeth. He graduated from Novato High School in 1962. John spent most of his working years working in the plumbing industry in Marin and Sonoma counties. He shares his memories of growing up in Novato in this September issue of the Novato Historian

I was born in 1944 in St. Joseph's Hospital in San Francisco. In 1952, my mom and dad and my sister and I moved from San Francisco to the town of Novato. We were moving to the country. I remember the sign: "NOVATO Population 3500."

My father sold wholesale sporting goods and hardware. His accounts included Hamilton Air Force Base, Jim's Sport's Shop and Pini Hardware when it was located on Grant Avenue. He had many more accounts throughout Sonoma and Napa counties. It just made sense for us to move out of the city.

We moved to a house on 8th Street. Across the street was Marion School with two to three baseball diamonds and backstops, playing fields and school yard from 8th to 7th Street. There was an orchard full of apple and plum trees where Lucky Market and CVS Drug Store and other stores are today.

I had gone to St. Brendan's Catholic School in San Francisco, so after moving to Novato, my parents sent me to St. Raphael's Catholic School in San Rafael. I went there until I graduated from the 8th Grade in 1958

In those days, the 101 Highway went right through downtown Novato. There was a Greyhound bus station close to Grant Avenue and Highway 101 which is now Redwood Boulevard. It was next to where the Viking Bar is today.

A group of three or four kids including Dennis McCormick, Joanne Rocha Novak and I took the Greyhound bus every day from Novato to the bus stop at Lincoln and Mission in San Rafael. Then we would walk three blocks to Fifth and A Street, where St. Raphael's School was located. There was a group of kids that took the Greyhound bus to St. Vincent's School in Petaluma. They included Rocky Renati, Bob Renati, Mike Silva and the Gustafason sisters.

It was great fun to get to the Greyhound depot early because there was a pinball machine inside and for five cents you could play it. If you knew how to bang and shake it just right, you could rack up free games one after another and play as long as you wanted or until someone decided it was their turn.

Growing up Catholic, it was only natural to be an altar boy. Our Lady of Loretto Church was on the corner of Grant and Second Street where the Village Italian Restaurant is today. There must have been a shortage of altar boys. I met with Father Kelly and learned how to serve Mass for him. Sunday Masses were at 7:15, 8:15 and 10:15. I remember many Sundays when I was the only altar boy for all three Masses. The Masses then were all in Latin.

After about a year, my parents bought a new house in the Trumbull Estates subdivision. The houses were built by John Novak who was a building constructor and contractor. He had a lot to do with the rapid housing growth in Novato in the 50's and 60's. His stepdaughter, Joanne, also rode the bus to St. Raphael's in San Rafael. It turned out that John Novak was an influence and mentor in my early life. He always had a job for me.

The *Independent-Journal* came out in the afternoon in the 1950s. I got a paper route that took me up Wilson Avenue to Vineyard Road and then back around and down Center Road and through the Trumbull

Estates. I did that every day on my bike rain or shine. I spent all the money I made at the Hi Fi.

When spring and summer came I always played Little League Baseball. I played for the Tigers, Indians and Yankees. At 13, Pony League came and then I played for Pini Hardware and Brice Brothers teams. To this day, I still have some of the friends I played with in Little League: Larry Hale, Mike and Wally Halkovich, Al Enyeart and Mike Silva.

The summer before I went to Novato High School, which was brand new in 1958, I got a job washing dishes at the 101 Cafe. It was located between Rodoni's Richfield Gas Station and the Hi Fi Drive In. I worked all day from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. and then came back at 6 and worked until they closed at 9 p.m. I got paid one dollar an hour which they took out of the cash



Dennis McCormack and John Cook (at right) crowning Chris Garberoglio "queen" at the annual Seniors' Coronation Ball in 1962. John was the varsity football team captain.

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Novato Memories

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register and paid me in cash every day I worked. More often than not, I would go next door to the Hi Fi and spend the cash with my friend. You could get a hamburger, french fries and a shake for 99 cents. Gas was 25 to 30 cents a gallon.

I started Novato High School in September 1958. I could not wait to play on the football team. They had Varsity and J.V. teams. The Varsity team was pretty good for a new school. They won a lot of games. Some of the senior players were George Gness, Tom Mace, Jim Riddell and Jack Sparrow. They would use the J.V. team as their practice team. Some of my team mates and school mates were: Art Cherry, Dennis McCormick, Craig Bond, Joe Colfer, Wally Halkovich, Mike Milano, Martin Baccaglio and Don Scribner. We played together for four years and in 1961 we won all our games. We were the Marin County Athletic League Football Champions. I cannot forget our coaches Marlin Olsen and John Panagakis.

Throughout my high school years, I had many jobs. I worked for John Novak as a laborer in the summer time on one of his many construction projects. I also worked for Grant Nelson. He owned the Chevron Gas Station in the 50's and 60's located on the corner of Center Road and South Novato Boulevard. I would put gas in the customers' tank, check the oil or tire pressure and wash all the windows. I remember the stations had gas wars. Every station was trying to be one or two cents cheaper than the other. Gas was 25 to 30 cents a gallon. They also gave out Green Stamps.

I had many motorcycles and cars through my high school years. That is why I always had a job to pay for and work on them and buy insurance. My first motorcycle was a 1937 Indian, next a 1948 Royal Enfield, and 51 Triumph Bonneville. The first car was a 1928 Model A two door sedan. I paid \$85 for it. Then a 1936 Ford two door sedan, followed by a 1950 two door Chevy coupe with a 1958 Corvette engine. That car had many owners and made the rounds with a lot of the kids in town. It was too fast for a teenager. The best vehicle I had was a 1940 Chevrolet pickup truck. That truck was as good as new. I bought it from Lee Baxter, who taught Auto Shop at Novato High School. It was his pride and joy. Looking back, I wish that I owned any one of them today.



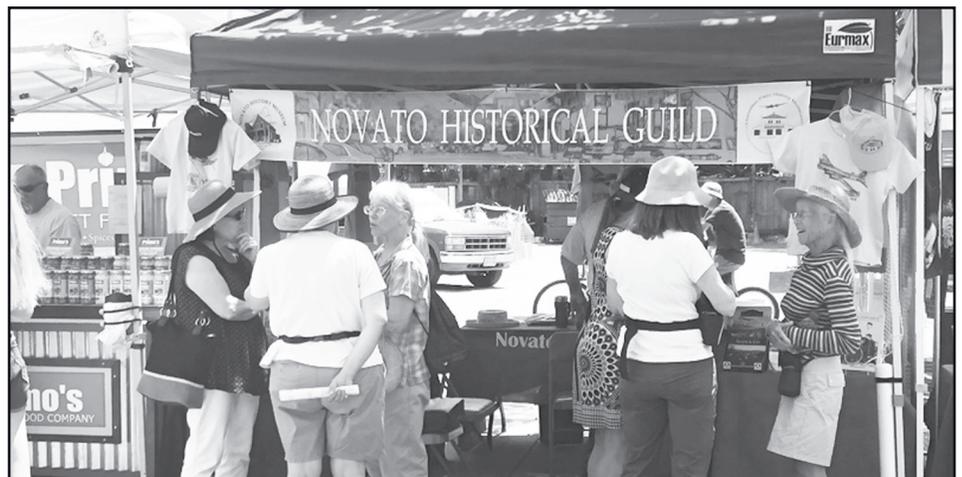
John Cook (second to right in top row) with the Tigers baseball team in 1956.

Every year the second weekend in June Novato sponsored Western Weekend. A carnival came to town on Thursday and was set up by Friday afternoon on empty land around town. One area was where Safeway and Rite Aid are today. Saturday morning there was a pancake breakfast at the downtown firehouse and then the parade down Grant Avenue. As kids, we always seemed to get into that parade, although we were never officially signed up. Then a rodeo at the Horsemen's Grounds on Sunday. It was always a great time.

In 1962, Novato High School graduated 193 students. Art Cherry and I received football scholarships to the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. In August of 1962 we set off in my 1955 Volkswagen to UNM for registration and football practice. I played that one year. Football was not as much fun anymore. After our last game I got back in my V.W. and drove back to Novato and never told anyone but Art Cherry. Needless to say, my parents were very upset with me and tried to get me

to go back. But I wanted to get a job and start making money. Again, I went to see John Novak and he put me to work as a laborer on one of his building projects. A week or so went by and he came up to me and said, "You don't want to do this kind of work, do you?" He said, "What do you think of being a plumber?" I said, "That sounds good to me." John Novak had a partner named Harry Locke who was a plumbing contractor. He did all of Novak's plumbing work, and many other jobs throughout Marin and Sonoma Counties. Harry Locke sent me to San Francisco to meet Joe Mazzola, the head of the Local #38, San Francisco, Marin and Sonoma Co. Plumbing Union. I joined the union as an apprentice plumber at 18 years old. Looking back, that was the smartest thing I ever did. I was never out of work. To this day, I still belong. I retired in 2008.

Somehow I made it through all those years without a cell phone or iPad.



Novato Historical Guild booth at the Novato Art & Wine Festival

NOVATO'S TREASURES

The Black Point Inn

MIKE READ

The Black Point Inn plans were started in March 1904 by Rudolph Danmeyer of the Crown Distilling Co., San Francisco. He constructed a building opposite the station, in which a general merchandise store, hotel and post office were located. Chris (Christian) Brixen was in charge. The new hotel at Black Point opened May 20, 1905 and was called Bridgeview Inn. The Inn had 10 upstairs rooms.

The U.S. Postal service didn't allow the name "Bridgeview" for the post office, so the name was changed to Grandview. The post office in the hotel was called Grandview until April 1, 1944, when it was changed to Black Point. On July 31, 1952 the post office moved to Novato.

On August 1906 the two-year-old son of C. Brixen, the proprietor of Grandview Inn at Black Point was scalded by acid.

Some time after this, Mr. J.E. Wallace bought the hotel and on June 17, 1909, he sold the Grandview hotel, store and post office to a Mr. Miller. Mr. W.C. Miller got a liquor license in July of that year.

The 1910 Census shows a May C. Ennis living on Grand Vicie Rodesco at Black Point. She was born in California (her maiden name was Mc Lachlin) and she was 25 years old. May Ennis was a domestic and a sales lady in the grocery store. She was married and had 1 child who was not living with her. She lived with a man named William C. Miller age 40 – born in California - who was widowed, handled the hotel rents, was a retail merchant and a grocery employer.

May Ennis married William Miller sometime between 1912 and 1914 and went from clerk to housewife. Mr. Miller died from a ruptured appendix in 1923 and Mrs. May C. Miller became postmaster on February 16, 1924. Sometime after this date she married Louis Nave, owner of Nave Garage in Novato. Her name changed as postmaster to May C. Nave on August 29, 1925.

Next door was Rudolph Danemeyer, age 54 from Germany, who came to the U.S. in 1870. He was married for 31 years, owned a house and was the superintendent of a distillery.

A traveling Catholic priest came to the inn on Sundays and held mass on the side porch.

Around 1936, Mrs. Louis Nave, left Black Point and the post office was taken over by Mrs. Josie Bobo.

In May 1944, Mrs. May Nave sold her store and premises, (she was divorcing Louis Nave) to Al Leonhard of San Rafael. May Nave would die on June 4, 1962.

Mr. Leonhard enlarged the post office, changed its name to Black Point and the hotel was called the Black Point Inn. The store there was re-arranged, enlarged and modernized to bring it more in line with the times, similar to the self-help grocery stores.

Records show Mr. James Willette owned the Inn in 1946, and his wife Marguerite Willette became the postmaster. He died in November 1956.

Dec 04, 1957, the *Novato Advance* reported:

"The landmark Black Point Inn has been sold at an undisclosed price by Mrs. J.W. Willette, who has operated the inn and grocery store for 11 years. New owners are Mr. and Mrs. Paul Franklin and Bud Franklin. The Franklins were recently operators of the Starlight Club north of San Rafael.

Mrs. Willette said the new owners do not intend to reopen the grocery store, which has been closed for three months. She said there will be some modernization of the cocktail bar and lounge."

June 1, 1962 The Black Point Inn was remodeled and would open as the Black Point Steak House, which had recently been purchased by Shirley and Jess Fisher. Chinese and American food were served in 1963.

A corporation bought the Inn in December 1974 with Don Gallick in charge.

On January 1976 the Inn was for sale - IJ- "BLACK POINT INN – Liquor lic., fantastic potential! 7 rm. Hotel, 2 complete dining rms., Pool, piano bar, 250 cap dance area, \$195,000."

April 29, 1976 a fire gutted the Inn and was never rebuilt. The property is now home of Kelleher Lumber Co.

State crime laboratory tests confirmed that arson caused the April 29 fire. Evidence of gasoline was found on the outside rear wall and upstairs where the fire started.



Black Point Inn, Novato, circa 1909.



The Black Point Inn was the hub of the North Bay community for close to 90 years. (Courtesy of Marin History Museum).



Picture of the building burning in 1976.



The property is now home to Kelleher Lumber Co. of Black Point.

The Nurses of Bataan and Corregidor, Part 2

By Michael Corlett

The Army nurses were evacuated to the Malinta Tunnel on the island of Corregidor the day before the surrender of the Bataan Peninsula on April 8th, 1942.

Malinta Tunnel was bored into Malinta Hill in the early 1930s. Sixty feet below the surface, it was 831 feet long, 24 ft. wide and 18 feet high with 25 lateral tunnels branching off from the main tunnel. The tunnel served as Army headquarters and housed a 1000 bed hospital and stored food, medicine and other supplies. The Japanese had secured the Bataan Peninsula and now directed all of their artillery at Corregidor. The shelling and bombing were continual.

The air in the tunnel was musty and stagnant and the quarters were very close. The battle casualties resulted in doctors and nurses working around the clock. Nurse Dorothy Arnolds recalled, "There was little food, almost no medicine and bad water. Bloody dressings had to be reused. We were under constant bombardment and went days without ever seeing the sunlight or smelling the fresh air." (1)

As the Japanese prepared for a landing on the beaches, General Wainwright knew that his ground forces would eventually be overrun and the only remaining target would be the tunnel. The hospital was beyond capacity, water was already being rationed, food would be gone in less than thirty days and there was no help coming. It was time to surrender.



Wainwright surrendered the 11,000 American and Filipino troops on May 6th. When the Japanese took possession of the tunnel, they were surprised to see women in uniform. Nurse Jeanne Kennedy, "The Japs had no notion who we were and why we were there." (2) For the next 45 days the nurses continued with their duties while being robbed of their personal possessions by the Japanese soldiers and not having enough to eat or enough sleep. On July 2nd and 3rd the Japanese moved all patients, doctors and nurses from Corregidor to Manila. Upon arrival the male doctors and patients were sent to Prison Camps. The 85 Army nurses, 1 Navy nurse and 26 Filipino nurses were on their way to begin what would become a 2-1/2 year incarceration in Santo Tomas Internment Camp.

Santo Tomas was a former Dominican University which had shut its doors when the Japanese began bombing Manila early in December. The 60-acre campus had a Main Building, Education building, dormitories and other buildings typically found on a college campus. A 12 ft. stone wall surrounded the facility and the Japanese had added barbed wire to the top of the barrier. The first 17 months could be described as hard but manageable. Nurse Sallie Durett describes life in the compound, "...waiting, waiting in a long line for a meager meal two times a day, waiting in line to go to the bathroom or take a shower, waiting in the hot sun for three hours for a half a cup of salt, waiting in line to wash my clothes in the tin trough, ..." (3)

There were ten Navy nurses stationed at the Cavite Naval Yard near Manila who also ended up in Santo Tomas. Because of overcrowding at Santo Tomas, in 1943 the Japanese were looking for 800 male volunteers to construct a new prison camp in Los Banos, 42 miles from Manila. There was to be a camp hospital, so all eleven navy nurses volunteered to go. The Los Banos facility was to be smaller than Santo Tomas and the nurses would be able to perform their duties the "Navy Way." (In Santo Tomas, the Navy nurses chafed at being under the command of the Army Nurse Corp). The male volunteers and the Navy nurses left Santo Tomas for Los Banos on May 14th, 1943.

The first week of January 1944, control of the non-combatant prison camps passed from the Japanese Civilian Bureau of External Affairs to the Army's War Prisoner Department. At this time there were more than 4000 internees



Continued on Page N – 10

The Nurses of Bataan and Corregidor, Part 2

Continued from Page N – 9

at Santo Tomas. Conditions in the camp began to deteriorate immediately. More restrictions and harsher treatment became the norm. However, the big problem became gradual starvation.

Food supplies were continually reduced. In June of 1944, calories were reduced from 1,490/day to 1,180/day. Over the next six months, calorie counts were continually reduced. In January 1945, the calorie count was 750 calories/day. The Chief Japanese Medical Officer ordered the camp doctors to stop listing starvation and malnutrition as a cause of death on internee death certificates. Nurse Josie Nesbit described the condition of the nurses, "Their eyes gradually sank deeper into hallowed cheekbones, their gait slowed down more and more as their strength grew less. Even their shoulders drooped noticeably." (4)

On February 3rd, 1945 American Army tanks crashed through the main Santo Tomas gate and liberated the camp.

Nurse Dorothy Scholl, "Everybody was laughing and crying, hanging out the windows, shouting, screaming and waving. It was a wild scene of joy and happiness." (5)

After liberation, the nurses were flown to Leyete for hospitalization, rest, new uniforms and promotion in rank. On February 19th they began island hopping towards the US.

The nurses' liberation was big news back home, and their arrival was well publicized. There was still a war going on and their liberation and arrival at Hamilton Field had great propaganda value.

Four C-54's carrying the nurses and other personnel touched down at Hamilton the afternoon of February 24th, 1945. Because of severe emaciation, fourteen nurses made the trip in a hospital plane. After a number of welcoming speeches by various dignitaries, they were taken to Letterman Hospital for further medical exams, treatment and debriefing. They were then given leave and sent to their homes around the country, or if required, to military medical facilities nearer their homes.

Three weeks later after Santo Tomas

was liberated, the eleven Navy nurses and 2100 internees were freed from Los Banos. Like those at Santo Tomas, they all suffered from near starvation and sickness. The Navy nurses arrived at Oakland Naval Air station on March 10, 1945. Their arrival was barely mentioned in local newspapers. The press had moved on.

In April of 1980, a bronze plaque was dedicated at the Mount Samat National Shrine on Bataan by men who survived Bataan and Corregidor. It reads: TO THE ANGELS — In honor of the valiant American military women who gave so much of themselves in the early days of World War II. They provided care and comfort to the gallant defenders of Bataan and Corregidor. They lived on a starvation diet, shared the bombing, strafing, sniping, sickness and disease while working endless hours of heartbreaking duty. These nurses always had a smile, a tender touch and a kind word for their patients. They truly earned the name — THE ANGELS OF BATAAN AND CORREGIDOR.

Sources: Elizabeth Norman, *We Band of Angels*, (1999) NY, Random House
Major F. H. Oberding USAF (Ret), *Hamilton Field Diary*, 2011
(1) Dorothy Arnold Interview, *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, December 7, 1980
(2) *We Band of Angels*, pg. 133
(3) *Ibid*, pg. 165
(4) *Ibid*, pg. 187
(5) *Ibid*, pg. 204



Please support our Guild Business Members:

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Call for Board Member Applications

Guild members are invited to apply to serve on the Novato Historical Guild Board of Directors for 2020-2021. 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. 14, 2019.
- Complete the Guild Board Application and return it by September 15, 2019.

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 13th at 1:30pm at the Margaret Todd Center and to talk with board members about the role, responsibilities and reward of serving on the Board.

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.

Welcome New Guild Members

Novato Historical Guild Membership Report September 2019

Individual Membership

Michelle Bernt
 Barbara Gildea
 Denise Halbe
 William O. Muggenthaler
 Jennifer Rose
 Dabney Smith
 Susan Volgelsang

Family Membership

Susan and Tony Anello
 Hermina and Arnold Drake

If you have questions about membership, call

*Lane Yee, Membership Chairman,
 415 – 898 – 0444*

In Memoriam

In Memoriam

**Gail Meyers
 Robert Rose**

The Guild Extends Sympathy to

The Meyers family on the loss of
 Gail Meyers
 The Rose family on the loss of
 Robert Rose

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/>

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.

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.

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
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YOU ARE INVITED

General Membership Meeting ~ Novato Historical Guild

**Saturday, September 14, 12:00 noon – 2:00 pm
Hamilton Field Museum, 555 Hangar Ave., Novato.**

A catered barbecue lunch will be served for a donation of \$10; A presentation by Jean Bowler will follow, on the Japanese involvement in World War II.

Hope you can make it. Bring some friends. Looking forward to seeing you there.

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