

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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October – December 2019

The Novato Historian

Volume 43, Number 4

Novato High School Class of 1959, Members Meeting and Speaker Series



The first graduating class at Novato High School, class of 1959

Back Row L-R: Jim Farnsworth, Tom Unger, Dick, "Bud" Rush, Bonnie Russell Broxton, Joan Marzell Quinn, Pam Kingsley Meija, Elaine Hale Singleton, Nikki Brashear Dew, Yvette Borloz Jackson, Lynda Tomlinson Ashley, Lenore Zanco Olesen, Carryl Patterson Mountjoy, Pete Ferrarese, Janet "Rusty" Thomas Barnett, Georgia Blackwell Tiefer, Linda Schwartzberg Monaco (hidden), Donna Noonan Lovell. **Front Row L-R:** Gary Edwards, Howie Broxton, Roy Wilfert, George Gness, Jack Sparrow, Lee Thompson, Maurice "Mo" Moberg, Don Levensaler.



September's General Meeting guest speaker was Jean Bowler. She discussed the Japanese involvement in World War II.



Children and adults alike enjoyed the Historical Guild's display in the entrance to Druids Hall during Novato's "Safe Trick or Treat" event. From there the visitors were encouraged to visit the Museum.



A Brownie troop of second graders had a special tour of the Novato History Museum by volunteer docent Sharon Azevedo. The troop was working on their Community badge.

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 March 2020 issue is February 1st.

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Address Changes

The Novato Historian is mailed by bulk mail and will not be forwarded by the Postal Service. Please notify us promptly of your address change at Novato Historical Guild, P.O. Box 1296, Novato, CA 94948.



President's Corner

Jim Crumpler

President, Novato Historical Guild

What's New at the Guild

Christmas is almost here and it seems like only yesterday that we had the September Member's Meeting (it was, I'm writing this in September). The September Meeting was, as usual, a BBQ at the Hamilton Museum. This year "School Fuel's" Dale Cline served a wonderful pulled pork sandwich with all the trimmings. Dale was assisted by his wife Joan and our own Kathryn Hansen. The three did a terrific job in serving a record attendance of almost 70 members and guests.

The first of two speakers was Jean Bowler, discussing the Japanese involvement in WWII that you have never heard about. Incredible! The second speaker was former Novato City Mayor, Jeanne MacLeamy, discussing bringing the Community House back to life along with the possibility of moving Novato's History Museum to the Simmons House. Thanks Ray, for letting us use your Museum.

Kate Johnston's "Monthly Speaker Series", the second Wednesday of each month, has been picking up momentum. Starting in March with a talk on North Korea and continuing each month. The attendance has been growing with about 25 attendees the first few months to standing room only for July's Paul Liberatore (Marin's Music Rock History). The 2020 Speaker Series will begin Wednesday, March 11 with an earlier starting time of 5 P.M.

The Guild can always use new Members. Here are a couple of ways to grow our numbers.

Pick up some extra Historians and give them to your interested friends and tell them "if they like what they read, they can receive FOUR Historians mailed to them by filling out the membership form on the last page." The best way to get new members is to give a Gift Membership by filling out the membership form in a friends name...after reading FOUR

Historians about the history of his favorite town he will be "hooked" and renew himself!

I can tell you that both of these methods have worked for me.

Ray and Susan are telling me that both museums are in need of new docents, since our wonderful docents sometimes wear out. Think about calling one of the museums and signing up for a shift...it will be the most enjoyable four hours you will have all month.

We lost one of our most interesting, dedicated, humorous and oldest Docent... JOE GIARI. He was president of the Guild in the 90's and volunteering up until a couple of months ago. Maybe I'll take Joe's shift.

The speaker at the December Members Meeting is Linda Hepworth, long time employee of Le Chalet Basque. Linda will not be giving you a "history lesson" but the most entertaining hour that you have had in a long time, guaranteed!

A BIG THANK YOU to all of our wonderful docents and volunteers...we would not exist without you!



CORRECTION: The prize-winning float in the September "Western Weekend" feature story on page F-4 belonged to the 4H Club and not the Junior Women's Club as mentioned. Many thanks to Sue Mclsaac for pointing out the error.



Novato – 50 Years Ago

(October, November, December 1969)

by Yvette Borloz Jackson

Another year has gone by, and next year we begin a new decade. I wish I could include all the articles and pictures that I get to read, but obviously I can't. I hope you remember and enjoy those that I choose, and I want to remind you that what I write may be abridged, but is directly from the pages of the Novato Advance. I want to wish you all a Merry Christmas, Happy Holiday and a peaceful and contented New Year.

Yvette Borloz Jackson

- “Great strides have been made in the eye sciences recently. The Lions White Cane Days which comes this Friday and Saturday, October 3 and 4 are your opportunity to help the Lions extend these innovations toward serving the blind and needy with sight impairment,” declares Joe San Fillippo, White Cane Days chairman of the Novato Lions Club.
- Kathe Sternberg’s Story Hour: Mrs. Sternberg comes to the Novato branch of the Marin County Library at 10:30 a.m. each Thursday to delight pre-schoolers with her lively story telling punctuated by gestures and mimicry and enlivened by the children’s finger play exercises. At the end of the session two youngsters will be privileged to make a wish and blow out the candles.
- Cavallero Corner, the mini-park at Grant Avenue and Highway 101, will be dedicated Monday in a brief ceremony starting at 9 a.m. the mini-park is named after George J. Cavallero, Novato fire chief who died last February 2 of heart attack while en route to an early morning fire. Mayor Harley McAskill will preside at the ceremony. A plaque honoring the memory of Chief Cavallero will be unveiled. The dedication will be held Monday as part of the observance of Fire Prevention Week.
- Construction is now underway on a 185-bed convalescent hospital in Novato. The new Hy-Land convalescent hospital, located at 1565 Hill Road, should be completed by May 1970. The 48,000 square foot, single story facility is expected to employ about 150 people and have annual payroll of approximately \$400,000. The new hospital, a sister institution of London House in Novato, Santa Rosa and Sonoma, is owned by Hy-Land Enterprises, with headquarters in Sonoma. It is being built by M. Dotson Construction Company of Stockton. The new facility will provide care for Medicare, Medi-Cal and private patients. It will house a complete physical therapy department and offer outpatient physical therapy services.
- SALUDOS AMIGOS! Join the Fun at our TIJUANA TACO FIESTA GRANDE *MARVELOUS MEXICAN FOOD *MUSIC BY ZAPATA’S STROLLING MARIACHI BAND - 930 Seventh Street, Novato
- Novato Children will be asking for donations to UNICEF on Halloween. Each penny that is dropped in the orange and black collection cartons will provide the vaccine to protect youngsters in South America from tuberculosis, or five cups of milk for a hungry baby in Asia. One penny can provide the vaccine to protect a child against smallpox, and five cents can mean antibiotics to cure a child from trachoma, which can cause blindness. For a single dollar 16 children can be protected from malaria for a year, or one child can receive four years of leprosy treatments. This is self-help. These developing countries contribute \$2.50 for every UNICEF dollar spent for supplies and equipment. The programs are designed to become a permanent part of the aided countries’ economies.
- The Novato Boys Club was revived with news that a matching \$10,000 from the national group is available if the local club can raise \$10,000 of its own. A fund drive has started. The eventual objective is a fully operational club for boys in Novato. New Officers are: Dave Moore, treasurer; Bill Nye, secretary; Paul Scheller, vice president; Everett Stanlake, vice president; Dave Milano, president; Eugene Trombley, chairman; Bill French, public relations chairman; Robert Carrow, legal committee chairman; and directors Rev. Lloyd F. Gebhart, Ralph Eckhardt, Don Shank, Bob Busher and Larry Cato.
- There’s no massive exodus of displaced Novatoans because of property purchases by the state for the new freeway. Reports that affected property owners and tenants are moving wholesale to Petaluma and elsewhere, victims of high prices and housing shortages here, are false rumors. About 75 percent are staying in Novato. This is the conclusion based on statistics furnished by the State Division of Highways, which has paid more than \$2,000,000 to date for 99 out of 127 parcels needed to build the freeway bypass. Since some of these purchases are only portions of property, not all owners are required to move.
- George H. Gross Jr., member of the first graduating class of Novato High School in 1959, this week learned he had successfully passed the fall state bar examination. Gross lives with his wife and 5-year-old daughter in Tiburon. He is associated with San Francisco legal firm of Seigenbaum, Ladar, and Goldberg & Steinhart.
- A whole separate center section of the November 5th issue of the *Novato Advance* had “A Salute To The Women of Novato and Their Organizations.” The following are the ones that were featured: Kappa Phi Sigma; VFW Auxiliary; Newcomers Club; Novato Garden Club; Hospital Volunteers; League of Women Voters; Xi Kappa Psi Chapter; Bel-Marin Keys Women’s Club; Parents Nursery School; Novato Hostess Club; Nova-Marin Grandmothers; Marin Foundation; Boyd Museum Guild; Jolly Rogers; Sunny Hills Guild No. 1; Indian Valley Women Golfers; Needlework Guild; Beta Sigma Phi; Sunny Hills Guild No. 2; American Legion Auxiliary; Marin Country Club Garden club; Order of Eastern Star;

Continued on Page N – 4

50 Years Ago

Continued from Page N - 3

- Alpha Tau Chapter; AAUW; BPW; Republican Women; Officers Wives Club; Federated Women's Club.
- **Marriages October thru December 1969:** Ann Lane - Emmett R. Holderby; Judith Ann Hearn - Eugene L. Winters; Lynette Marie Bobo - Thomas John Lepinski; Susan Aldridge - Kenneth Ball; Jacqueline Patrick - Michael McClure; Janet Marie Sempf - Douglas Turner; Anna Marie Trohatos - A1c Richard Lee Phelps; Cynthia Louise Ryan - Charles John Goepfner; Sherry Lynn Turner - A1c Larry F. Talbott; Robin Lee Patrick - William Mazzoleni; Kathleen Marie Foley - Dan Lee Evans; Sylvia Wagner - Don George; Sally Christina Williams - Kirk M. Allen; Paula Heffernan - Gregg Bartolomei; Sheila K. Locke - Daniel Levy; Barbara Ann Whitehead - Douglas George Alexander, Jr.; Ruth Ada Johnson - Sam L. Kannier.
 - A helicopter went to work in southwestern Novato today to prove utility poles can be "planted" from the air in hilly terrain. Hired by Pacific Gas & Electric Co. for the job of placing 62 wooden poles on a seven mile line from Raphael Village to Hicks Valley Road, the aerial green thumb operation began this morning and was slated to end before dark. The aerial technique eliminates the need for scarring hills with treads and wheels of heavy equipment.
 - Novato teachers were armed with petitions this week seeking signatures to place a constitutional initiative on the ballot, which would reform school and welfare financing in the state. At a meeting of the Novato Teachers Association last week, members heard Herbert Forman, assistant executive secretary for the California Teachers Association, and James Bunker, Novato school superintendent, explain the need for the constitutional amendment and what it would do for the Novato School District. The amendment would force the state to return to financing 50 percent of local school operations. The exact formula would be left up to the discretion of the state legislature. It might provide up to \$1,200,000 more for the Novato School District - both Forman and Bunker agreed.
 - The Women's Society of Christian Service of the United Methodist Church of Novato last week mailed holiday packages to 37 Novatans serving in Vietnam. Mrs. Donald Jackson, chairman, has added the following names to her list of local young men now serving in Vietnam. Sgt. David Wilson, Cpl. Michael w. Doyle, SSgt. John A. Hendricks, L/Cpl. Randy J. Bertelson, Major John Kasmayk, L/Cpl. C.C. King, Sp/4 Gary Davenport, Pfc. G.W. Galt.
 - (In the same vein) "It really tugged at the heart to see some of the boys just back from Vietnam at 20 years of age with both legs off," said Councilman Joseph Gargiulo, commenting on Saturday's gift distribution to wounded veterans. Novatans contributed 300 gifts in an outpouring of feeling for the wounded. Gargiulo, accompanied by William Washburn, took the gifts to the Marina Green in San Francisco, where a group of 150 people on a similar mission gathered before proceeding to Letterman General Hospital.
 - The Novato High School Parent Faculty Club is sparking a fund drive to buy necessary additional bleachers for the football field. Donations should be sent to the high school, attention Mrs. Kenneth Back, fund drive chairmen. Fellow fund drivers are Mrs. Christian Krabbe, Mrs. William Fergus, Mrs. Walter Pohja and school principal Stanley Onderdonk.
 - Ribbon cutting by Mayor Harley McAskill marked the grand opening of "Shipwreck Pete's" Restaurant, Hofbrau and Tavern at The Lodge, under the new management of Pete Lind and Mrs. Lind. Two grand opening nights drew more than 2000 guests.
 - "Generally students today, regardless of publicity to the contrary, attend institutions of higher learning for a specific series of missions in life." said Henry J. Moroski, principal of San Marin High School, in addressing the Novato Community Ambassadors Monday evening on "The Relevancy of High School Education Today." "The ability range in San Marin High School is between fifth grade level and junior college and we must come up with different kinds of programs to meet these different needs" he added. Moroski stressed that learning to think inductively is the basis for all education and said that basic skills are still essential. Students must be prepared to survive in a highly competitive world and most critical will be their ability to get along with others.
 - The parishioners of St. Anthony of Padua will celebrate their first folk mass at the 11 a.m. mass Sunday (12/07/69) at St. Vincent's School for Boys. The mass is one of the projects which evolved during the formation of the newly-organized St. Anthony's Men's Club and the St. Anthony's Women's Guild. Under the direction of Mrs. Thomas O'Brien a group of enthusiastic musicians has been organized to accompany the congregation in singing the mass. This group includes Paul Curtis, Mike Lennon, Matt Lennon, Debbie Cordone, Barbara Irwin and Laura Alumbaugh (flutist).
 - Despite Councilman Babe Silva's negative vote and warnings that the Hell's Angels may descend on Novato and create a sea of glass on Grant Avenue, the council gave a 4-1 approval last night to a peace walk and rally. The okay for Saturday's 10 a.m. to noon march and gathering on Grant Avenue, starting at First Street and ending at Seventh Street, was not easily obtained by the group represented by Richard T. Langtry, 1735 Center Rd. The council was touchy on the topic of insurance and sought an opinion from City Attorney Clark M. Palmer to determine if the city could waive insurance guarantees for parade sponsors. After a harried search for the right change to make the phone call to Palmer from the Community House pay telephone, City Manager Charles Brown wasn't able to locate Palmer. This morning, he got assurance from Palmer that the city can waive insurance requirements for the event without jeopardy to its liability insurance rating.
 - Some 200 Novatans took part in a peace walk Saturday on Grant Avenue. The walk attracted adults, teenagers, babies, and dogs, and not one Hell's Angel predicted by Councilman Babe Silva.
 - A sale starting tomorrow will liquidate the business of McAskill's Men's Wear at 1559 South Novato Boulevard in Tresch Triangle. Harley McAskill, owner of the retail store, said he had been advised by his doctor to leave the business. He also sited competitive factors such as Roos-Atkins at Northgate Shopping Center. McAskill said he regretted that the name of the store would disappear. He has been in the

50 Years Ago

Continued from Page N – 4

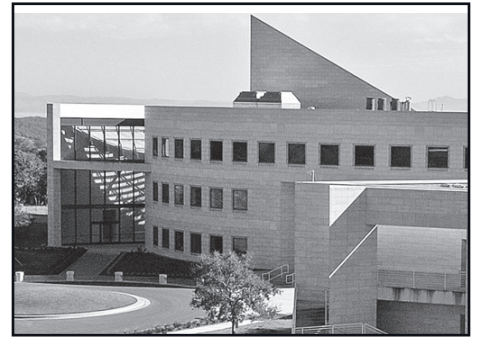
men’s clothing business since 1952 when he opened a store on Grant Avenue. Prior to that he worked with his father, Harley A. McAskill, Sr., in their store in Petaluma. In the early ‘60’s he moved from the Grant Avenue location to Tresch Triangle.

- **COMMUNITY HUMS WITH YULE EVENTS:** Christmas is two weeks away. The community is humming with activities. Among some of the things going on are: Christmas Festival; Holiday Show '69; Luminaries; Rooftop lighting; Nativity scene; visits by Santa; Home decorations contests; School Shows; Parties; Good Deeds; Caroling. Store Hours - Most Novato stores during the Christmas shopping season will remain open until 9 p.m. Monday through Friday nights until December 23.
- Sometimes the differences that divide Americans because of the long and brutal involvement in the Vietnam conflict are reflected in incongruous and devastatingly clear ways. Consider two events that took place simultaneously Friday morning at San Marin High School. While more than 70 students formed a human peace symbol on the football field to mourn the war dead and to support Saturday’s peace marches and rallies in San Francisco and Washington D.C., other students jammed the gym for a spirited rally prior to Saturday’s final football contest of the season against Redwood High. San Marin’s Hornets came from behind to win; the war in Vietnam slogs ahead, with peace talks stalemated. (Hornets might be Mustangs)
- The distinguished Winifred Baker will conduct her own Winifred Baker Chorale as well as the massed choirs of nearly 200 voices at the annual Novato Christmas Festival at Novato High School at 7:30 p.m. Saturday (12/13/69)
- The Hamilton Air Force Base Band, conducted by CWO Vernon E. Proctor, will accompany the massed choir on the "Hallelujah Chorus" and a medley of familiar Christmas Carols at Saturday evening’s Community Christmas Festival at Novato High School. They will also play several numbers before the program, slated for 7:30 p.m., and during intermission.

- **CHALLENGE OF THE SEVENTIES:** A conclusive end to wars, health and happiness for everyone in a preserved environment of cultural and physical sanity, a society more open and ready to accept changing values, less home rule for local government, a doubling of Novato’s population – these are among the crucial hopes, concerns, and predictions for the 1970’s expressed readily and candidly in Advance interviews. The new decade will start Thursday. There are certain to be monumental changes for each of us now alive and for those millions of unknowns who will catch their first breaths of air - clean or polluted- in the next ten years.

60th Reunion Novato High School First Graduating Class

The first graduating class at Novato High School, class of 1959, gathered on October 06, 2019 for their 60th reunion. The luncheon was held at the McInnes Park Golf Club in San Rafael and lasted more than four hours. Twenty-three of the 83 graduates attended including ten “kids” who started first grade and went all the way through school together. We had graduates who came from as far away as Georgia, North Carolina, Texas, Idaho, Nevada, Arizona and from all over California. Lee Thompson generously donated a Magnum of red wine etched with the Hornet logo and reunion date, to the



Speaker Series

Buck Institute

Docent Sylvia Chipman
History of the Buck Institute

Dr. Dipa Bhaumik

The Science of Living Better Longer

Wednesday, November 13th
7:00 pm

Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue

event. The bottle was auctioned off to the highest bidder, Pam Kingsley Meija and her husband Leonard for \$200. The money from the wine and other donations will be used to get a bench or plaque to be placed at the Novato High School Campus, to honor the class of 1959. It was truly a wonderful event where we shared our unique and cherished memories of being the first graduating class of Novato High School.



Ten attendees of the Novato High School Class of 1959 who attended school together from grade one to grade twelve. (Back Row L-R) Joan Marzell Quinn; Pam Kingsley Meija; Elaine Hale Singleton; Nikki Brashear Dew; Yvette Borloz Jackson; Lenore Zanco Olesen. (Front Row L-R) Roy Wilfert; George Gnoss; Jack Sparrow; Leland "Lee" Thompson

Novato Memories

Jim McNern



Bonnie Russell Broxton

Bonnie Russell Broxton moved to Novato in 1950 with her parents, Charles and Rita Russell. She is a member of the first graduating class at Novato High School in 1959. Bonnie graduated from the University of the Pacific, with a BA in History and Education and received her Master's Degree from Cal State Sonoma aka Sonoma State in Educational Administration. She has taught every grade from K-12 except first grade. She was principal of four elementary schools, two middle schools, and two high schools. Bonnie has lived with her husband, Howie, in Napa for the last 51 years. Bonnie shares her memories of growing up in Novato in this December issue of the Novato Historian.)

I was born in Marin County at Ross Hospital. After several years in Corte Madera and Vallejo, we moved into our brand new home in Novato in 1950. My dad had been hired as part of the development of a new reservoir and water treatment plant (now known as Stafford Dam).

I started attending Grant Avenue School midyear of fourth grade. I can remember meeting new friends out by the "merry-go-round," and many of these "kids" became life-long friends -- Elaine (Hale) Singleton, Chris Avery, Lewis Fredrickson, Pam (Kingsley) Mejia, Yvette (Borloz) Jackson, Rebecca (McClelland) Wade and George Gness, Jr. (who I had met earlier at my dad's hunting club).

The population of Novato was 3,500. There was only one stoplight at the corner of Grant Avenue and Highway 101 (now old Redwood Hwy). Our phone was a "party line," - when we picked up the telephone we either heard people talking or an operator who said: "Number Please?" Mail was RFD (Rural Free Delivery boxes along Novato Boulevard).

Of course I joined Novato 4-H Club. Sewing classes were held in the train caboose behind the Community House (treadle sewing machines). Cooking classes were at Mrs. Lieb's house. I especially loved going to 4-H Summer Camp (Los Posadas in Napa County). One summer I was the camp Bugler - early morning "Reveille" and "Taps" at sundown. Maureen Tresch and I also loved going to the State Fair in Sacramento,

especially the thrill rides. Joan (Marzell) Quinn and I once did a 4-H demonstration showing off our handmade collars where we declared we would go on to the Chicago National Convention as the "California Sweater Girls!" Joanie did go on to become a 4-H All Star. She is also a loyal reunion committee member for our NHS Class of 1959 (even though she now lives back east). My daughter, granddaughter and I were able to visit Joanie and her family a few years ago in her North Carolina home.

In fifth grade most of the 5th-8th grade students moved to the new Marion Avenue School. In September of 1951, my dad suffered a major heart attack while deer hunting in the western hills of Novato. George "Shorty" Gness and Babe Silva saved my dad's life by literally carrying him off the mountain. After a lengthy stay at the San Rafael Hospital, my dad thankfully survived.

My mother and I attended St. Francis Episcopal Church, first in a small room at the Community House and later at the Parish House (services in the living room - Sunday School classes in the bedrooms). Eventually the church building was erected and still stands today at 967 5th Street. I remember the Lieb, Killen, Kingsley, Witzel and Benaski families as members of our congregation. Our pastor, Father Peter Farmer later officiated at our 1963 wedding. The Episcopal Church has been a major influence in my life. Today we are 51 year members of St. Mary's Episcopal Church in Napa.

During those middle school years (6th, 7th, 8th) at Marion Avenue School, the word was out that our class would become the first group of students to start the new

high school. But we were still kids playing outside until the street lights came on and we were riding our bikes all over town. New friends were discovered in our extended neighborhood - Carryll (Patterson) Mountjoy and Pete Ferrarese joined with our existing pals (anyone near Center Road and Tamalpais Avenue) Jack Sparrow, Lenore (Zanco) Oleson, Paul Hughes, Chris Avery and Lewis Fredrickson. No one ever locked their doors in Novato, even at night.

My friend Elizabeth (Messer/Wise) Freese moved in across the street when I was in 7th grade. We enjoyed many adventures in Novato. We picked blackberries at



Bonnie is standing with a grinding wheel that her father Charles Russell rescued from the Stafford Dam before the water was released into the new dam in 1951.

Continued on Page N – 7

Novato Memories

Continued from Page N – 6

the creek and made cobblers and jam. There were sleepovers in my backyard and bike rides far and wide. During the summer of 1957 Liz, Rusty (Thomas) Barnett and I rode our bikes all the way out to Point Reyes and back (totally crazy and undoubtedly dangerous even for the 1950's). Liz and I were invited to a formal event at Hamilton Air Force Base during that same summer. It took my breath away at my first glimpse of those 400 Air Force Academy Cadets. Dancing the night away with our escorts was memorable indeed. Liz, now known as Libby has remained a lifelong friend. We have taken family vacations together and we are Godparents to each others' children.

8th grade was a big year for our class. We voted on our future high school mascot and school colors. We chose the Black and Gold Hornets over the Blue and White Jets. My buddy Chris Avery suffered a terrible bicycle accident when he was hit by a car riding along Novato Boulevard. I would bring our homework home from Mr. Patterson's 8th grade class to his house after school. We would play some board games also. Previous to the accident we enjoyed jumping out of the barn loft on the rope swing in his backyard. Chris and I also participated in the Marin Youth Orchestra. I played the trumpet and Chris played the violin (he was very talented) on Saturday mornings at College of Marin. Fast forward to present day, Howie and I along with Chris and his wife Lorraine enjoy our dining outings to Marin and Napa County restaurants.

The high school was still not ready when 10th grade started so we continued with half day sessions. We finally moved to the new campus on Arthur Street in the spring of 1957. A major earthquake shook our new building but it survived. There was a school hayride and of course the fun of Western Weekend that June. Walking downtown to the Donahue Theater for Saturday matinees was a fun time also.

When we started 11th grade a gym, cafeteria and library were added to the new campus. There were new clubs created for our growing student body. I loved playing the part of Emily in the school play, "Our Town." The football, basketball, wrestling, baseball, track and golf teams also did well that year. But there were no inter-school sport teams for girls in those days. Title IX did not become a law until 1972. When I became a high school principal and told my



After the spring 1958 play, "Our Town," at Novato High School. Left to right - Herb Duerr, Jon Sewell, Chris Avery, Ron Witzel, Larry Chapman, Martin McKeay. Kneeling - Pam Kingsley and Nancy Lagsdin.



Bonnie Russell as "Emily," Tom Volk as "George Gibbs," and Jim Temple as "The Stage Manager," in the Novato High School Play "Our Town," - Spring of 1958.

students about that and the dress code for girls (dresses and skirts only - no pants) my students were in total disbelief! There were sock hops and a Spring Turnabout Dance that year. And most of us finally got our "legal," driver's licenses but most of the cars in the parking lot belonged to our teachers.

Our senior year at Novato High was quite momentous for me. We finally had a school with all four classes in place. Our athletic teams continued to be very successful. We definitely remembered our senior English Class taught by Mr. Clemente, who rode a Vespa to school from his houseboat in Sausalito - a demanding but very good class! My first date with my future husband (new kid in school who had moved here from Ottawa, Canada - Howie Broxton) was at the December 19, 1958 "Jingle Bell Rock!" We still celebrate that anniversary to this day. Now we could travel in our parents' cars to places like the Burgie Drive-In Restaurant at Ignacio. Before we knew it we were attending our Senior Picnic at Stinson Beach and our Senior Ball in Corte Madera. Eighty three of us graduated on June 18, 1959.

Growing up in Novato was a very unique experience. Many of us have maintained close friendships from our early years in our hometown. Our 19 year old granddaughter recently visited us and I took her on a "drive thru tour" of Novato. She was amazed at how I knew the names and house locations of so many of my Novato friends. We were a close group of "kids." Our small town certainly didn't limit our dreams. I like to think it's a good thing to look back at the memories and savor the good times. We recently held our 60th high school reunion. It was a wonderful

afternoon of reminiscing but we were also missing some of our beloved classmates. For me personally, it was difficult not having my good friend, Geoff Lang, there among us. He would have loved this get together! Thank you Novato for the Memories!

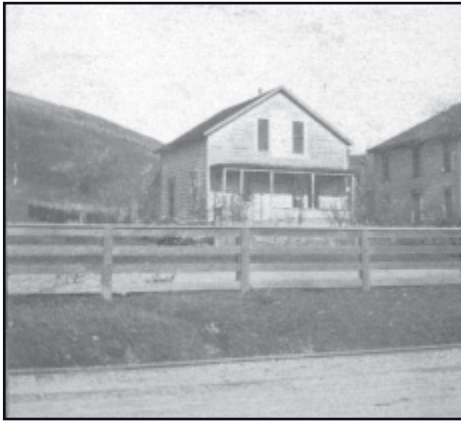


Howie Broxton and Bonnie Russell before Novato High School Senior Ball in 1959.

NOVATO'S TREASURES

The Oliver House

MIKE READ



George passed away shortly after returning to Novato in August of 1899.

His obituary read "George W. Oliver passed away at his home in Novato after an illness of several weeks, due to a complication of disorders. He was born at Crescent City, CA, on Washington's birthday, 1857. For many years he has resided at Novato, where he formerly conducted a store. During the big excitement he left for the Klondike, but did not meet with very great success, and recently returned to his family at Novato. He is survived by his wife, Mary A., a son George W., and a daughter Jennie V."

In November 1893 - Magie A. Oliver bought from the Home & Farm Co, lots 3, 4, 5 in section "D."

December 1893 - Superintendent George W. Oliver of Novato "California Creamery," built a handsome residence opposite the railroad depot for his family. The new house was ready in February 1894.

By **September of 1894** the creamery wasn't doing well and Mr. Oliver was in Siskiyou County, superintending the erection of machinery in creameries for Baker & Hamilton of San Francisco.

In August of 1897 - Mr. Oliver went to the Gold Rush in Alaska. After not doing well in panning for gold, he opened a restaurant business in April of 1898 with A.H. Brown (builder of the Carillile house) in Alaska.

June 1901 - Mrs. Oliver rented out her house to E.R. Samuels. She moved to San Francisco with her two children. Jennie married Arthur Field. The 1906 earthquake destroyed the Oliver home in San Francisco, and they moved back to their home in Novato with the Samuels. E.R. Samuels built a new home at 906 Railroad Avenue soon afterwards.

January 1907 - Mrs. M.A. Oliver married Adolph Scown and he moved into the Railroad Avenue house. She divorced him, probably around 1915, because Mrs. Scown filed "Abandonment of Homestead" on April 10, 1915 - By Margie A. Scown and Adolph Scown, homestead of lots 3, 4, 5, and 6 in block D.

June 1, 1912 - The *Novato Banner* reported: "Dr. Kuser's new Novato Sanitarium and Emergency Hospital is assuming proportions and being fitted up to handle all manner of cases. It is located opposite the depot, and besides the doctor there is a matron, also a trained nurse Jennie Oliver Field, in charge."

An addition was built at the rear of the house for the family quarters.

March 16, 1918 - The *Tocsin* paper reported that "The public will learn with regret of the discontinuance of the Novato Sanitarium, heretofore conducted by Mrs. M. Scown and Mrs. Jennie Field. The ladies wish through the columns of the *Banner* to express their appreciation for past patronage and announced that the former sanitarium will in the future be conducted as a home for children from the Juvenile Court of Marin County.

Dec. 31, 1932 - "The funeral of Mrs. Margaret A. Oliver was held in the Presbyterian Church, conducted by Rev. Charles Christensen. Burial followed in the Novato cemetery. Mrs. Oliver lived in Novato several years ago, and with her family had many friends here. She was born in 1859, and died in San Francisco, December 23, 1932. The death was a relapse from a case of the flu. Of the family surviving her are two children, Mrs. Jennie V. Field and George T. Oliver, and three grandchildren, Mrs. I. Crossfield, Homer Oliver and Wm. Field."



Dr. Granville Coggs

By Michael Corlett

The Hamilton Field History Museum has an exhibit showcasing the remarkable life of one of the original Tuskegee Airmen, Dr. Granville Coleridge Coggs.

Granville Coggs was born near Pine Bluff, Arkansas in July of 1925, the grandson of slaves and the son of a father and mother who strongly believed in education.

His parents, Tandy and Nannie Hinkle, felt that educating their five children was the best way for them to “beat the odds,” and have a successful life in a segregated society.

Coggs graduated from Dunbar High School, a school for black students, in Little Rock, Arkansas in 1942. As a senior he decided he wanted to pursue engineering, so it was necessary to take the SAT exam. The test was to be given at a white high school.

Upon arrival at the testing room, he asked the white proctor where he should sit. The proctor said, “Sit anywhere you want, you ain’t gonna pass anyway.” (1) Later, when the test results were known, Coggs had scored higher than any of the other test-takers.

In the fall of 1943, Granville was attending Howard University as a pre-med and pre-engineering student. He received a notification from the Little Rock draft board that he would soon be



Dr. Granville Coggs - 1945



Tuskegee Airmen and MD., Dr. Granville Coleridge Coggs with his daughter - 2009.

drafted. Not wanting to end up in the infantry, he volunteered for the all Black 99th Pursuit Squadron of the U.S. Army Air Corps.

In the 1940s, the U.S. military was segregated. Prior to that time black Americans were banned from flying for the U.S. military. The prevailing military attitude was that black Americans were not intellectually capable of flying complicated military aircraft. In response to pressure from various civil rights groups, in January of 1941, President Roosevelt ordered the Army Air Corps to create a “Negro Pursuit Squadron.” The 99th Pursuit Squadron became the first unit of Black American military aviators in the U.S. Armed Forces. Those that wanted to fly and were qualified, trained as bombardiers, navigators and pilots. There was also training for all the various ground support functions. Those that qualified for flight status were trained at Tuskegee Army Airfield in Alabama. The graduates were the first black Americans to fly for the U.S. Military, and they became known as the Tuskegee Airmen. Their story is told in the 2012 movie, *Red Tails*.

After scoring well on the Air Corps aptitude test, Coggs was accepted for cadet training and began instruction at Tuskegee Army Airfield. When his training was completed, he was certified as a bombardier, aerial gunner and had received his wings as a multi-engine military pilot. He graduated in October of 1945, a month after the war ended, so he did not see any combat.

Coggs left the Air Corps in 1946 and went back to college. His sweetheart and soon to be wife, Maud Currie, a graduate of Tuskegee University, had applied to the University of Nebraska,

Coggs applied there also. They wanted to be roommates at school, but in those more conservative times, a man and a woman did not live together unless they were married. Coggs proposed and Maud said yes. They married. Problem solved.

After graduating from the University of Nebraska with honors, he was accepted by eleven of the twelve medical schools to which he applied. He chose Harvard. “I chose Harvard Medical School which treated Black Students with the respect we deserved as human beings ... Harvard treated me like a person.” (2)

Coggs received his M.D. degree from Harvard in June of 1953. He chose Radiology as his specialty and began his internship at Letterman Army Hospital in San Francisco.

In 1955, Coggs and his family moved to the Terra Linda area of San Rafael, California. During his time in Terra Linda, he served in the Air Force Reserves Medical Corp at Hamilton Field. Coggs had musical talent. While in Terra Linda, he played the “Gut Bucket,” also known as the Washtub Bass, for the Night Blooming Jazzmen trio. He played flute and piccolo in the Las Gallinas Valley Sanitary District Non-Marching Band and sang tenor in the First Presbyterian Church Choir.

In 1958, he became the First African American Staff Physician, a Radiologist, at Kaiser Hospital in San Francisco. In 1971, he became an Associate Clinical X-ray Professor of Radiology and staff radiologist at UCSF.

Granville and his wife moved to

Continued on Page N – 10

Dr. Granville Coggs

Continued from Page N – 9

San Antonio in 1975, where he was appointed Professor of Radiology at the University of Texas. While in San Antonio, he established the San Antonio Breast Evaluation Center in 1983. In 1991 he received a patent for the Precision Breast Lesion Localizer, and in 1993 he invented the Central X-ray Beam Guided Breast Biopsy System.

Coggs was Inducted into the Arkansas Black Hall of Fame in 2001. He retired from the medical field in 2004. In 2007, along with 300 other Tuskegee Airmen, he received the Congressional Gold Medal from President George W. Bush at a special ceremony at the Capitol. After retiring in 2010, Coggs took up running to stay in good physical shape. He decided to train for the National Senior Games track and field competitions. He won gold medals in the 400m, 200m and 100m events at the local state and national levels.

President-elect Barack Obama invited the Tuskegee Airmen to his inaugurations in 2009 and 2013. Granville and his daughter Anita attended both inaugurations, an honor which is detailed in his autobiography, *Soaring Inspiration*. While attending the historical first inauguration, Coggs and two other airmen were selected to be interviewed by Robin Roberts, herself a daughter of a Tuskegee Airman, on *Good Morning America*. The interview was broadcast on the morning of the inauguration and is available on YouTube.

Of his many accomplishments during his remarkable life, in the end, he was most proud of being a DOTA, a Documented Original Tuskegee Airman.

Dr. Granville Coggs died on May 6, 2019, in San Antonio, Texas. He is survived by his wife, Maud, daughters Anita Coggs Rowell (Joseph), Carolyn Coggs and granddaughters Aisha Rowell and Angela Rowell.

Sources: Granville Coggs, M.D., Anita Coggs Rowell, *Soaring Inspiration*, Self-published, 2012

(1) *ilid*, pg. 26

(2) *ibid*, pg. 45

Dr. Granville Coleridge Coggs, Obituary, *Marin Independent Journal*, May 19, 2019.

(Anita Rowell Coggs, personal communication, October 9, 2019)

In Memoriam

In Memoriam

Joe Giari
Dennis McCormick
Rock Morgan
Laurie Driscoll
Frank U'Ren

The Guild Extends Sympathy to

The Giari family on the loss of Joe Giari
The McCormick family on the loss of Dennis McCormick
The Morgan family on the loss of Rock Morgan
The Driscoll and Watters families on the loss of Laurie Driscoll
The U' Ren family on the loss of Frank U' Ren



Please support our Guild Business Members:

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Nominations for Board of Directors of the Novato Historical Guild For 2020 & 2021

The candidates listed below are recommended by the Nominating Committee to serve on the Board of Directors of the Novato Historical Guild for 2020 & 2021. The election will be held at the Guild's Membership meeting on December 14th 2019

Gary Bramon	Museum Docent
Ray Dwelly	Incumbent/ Manager Hamilton Field History Museum
Kate Johnson	Incumbent/ Speaker Series

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 Margaret Todd Centerl

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.

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 (415) 897- 4320. All contributions are tax deductible. Plaques cost \$250 per person named.

Welcome New Guild Members

Novato Historical Guild Membership Report December 2019

Individual Membership

Todd Crawshaw
 Karen Carlson
 Barry Smail
 Molly Weinfeld

If you have questions about membership, call

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

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 | | Additional donations? _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life membership, joint | \$500 | | 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, December 14, 10:00 A.M. to Noon
The Margaret Todd Senior Center, 1560 Hill Rd., Novato

Linda Hepworth will be talking about her years at Le Chalet Basque
Come enjoy refreshments, familiar company and a wonderful speaker.

Guild members and anyone interested in Novato history 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