

# 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

Contents ©2020 Novato Historical Guild, Inc.



January – March 2020

The Novato Historian

Volume 43, Number 4

## New Exhibit at Downtown Museum - The Novato Fire Department

The new exhibit salutes our Fire Fighters past and present. The Novato Volunteer Fire Department was established in June of 1894. The Novato Fire District was formed in 1926 following a request by the residents living in a 71 square mile area around the community of Novato. The first fire station was built at the intersection of Grant Avenue and Redwood Boulevard, which at the time was Highway 101.

The first fire engine was a 1923 Model T Ford. It was outfitted with a chemical tank, which was replaced one year later with a 160 gallon water tank and a small pump. The conversion was done by Steven Porcella the local blacksmith. The Model T was in service until 1939

when it was replaced by a 1938 Dodge Power Wagon.

Since its formation the Novato Fire Protection District has become a respected and trusted organization, not just within the fire service, but among most organizations - public or private.

You will not want to miss the many pictures so professionally displayed that tell the story from its beginnings to the present day.

The new exhibit officially opened on February 1, 2020 at the Novato History Museum, 815 DeLong Ave. There were special attractions from 10:00 a.m. to noon along with two vehicles from the fire department and special guests.



Visitors to the Novato History Museum viewing the new Fire Department exhibit..



Grand opening of the Novato Fire Department exhibit on February 1, 2020..



December's General Meeting guest speaker was Linda Hepworth. She talked about her years at Le Chalet Basque Restaurant in San Rafael

## The Novato Historian

Published March, June, September and December by the Novato Historical Guild, a California 501(c)3 non – profit corporation formed on November 18, 1976.

Contents © 2019 Novato Historical Guild, Inc.

### Guild Mission Statement

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

### Novato Historical Guild 2020 Officers

President	Kathryn Hansen
Vice President	Jim Crumpler
Secretary	Sharon Azevedo
Treasurer	Mike Read

### Board of Directors

Gary Bramon	Ann Russell
Mike Corlett	Barry Smail
Ray Dwelly	Lane Yee
Kate Johnston	

### History Museum Managers

Hamilton Field	Ray Dwelly
Novato	Susan Magnone

### Honorary Historian

Bill Almeida

### Committee Chairs

Adult Tours	Kate Johnston
	Jim Crumpler
	Mike Read
Finance	All Board Members
Fund Raising	Pat Johnstone
Gift Stores	Sharon Azevedo
Hospitality	Judi Brady
Historian/Mailing	Jim McNern
Membership	Lane Yee
Publicity	Sharon Azevedo
Public Outreach	Jim Crumpler
School Tours	Laurie O'Mara
Sunshine	Diane Campbell

### Newsletter Editorial Board

Yvette Borloz	Barbara Gildea
Jackson	Jim McNern
Mike Corlett	Mike Read
Jim Crumpler	

### Typography, Layout, Composition

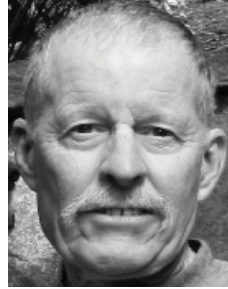
Carol Aregger

### Deadline for the June 2020 issue is May 1st City of Novato Staff

Recreation Operations Manager  
Elizabeth Tran

### 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

Happy New Year! even though it's almost March. Hope everyone enjoyed our December Members' Meeting and our very entertaining speaker, Linda Hepworth. Linda reminisced about her many years of waiting tables at "Hill-top 1892" and "Le Chalet Basque." Linda should have been a standup comic instead of a waiter!

The speaker for the March Member's Meeting is Brian Crawford. Brian is a Marin historian who has written several very informative books on Marin history. Brian will be discussing his book *The Bolinas Fairfax Road*. This is an interesting story about the construction of a very difficult road and the history of Marin County before the turn of the century.

The New Year brings some changes to our Guild Board. First the departures. Edna Manzoni has been a board member for many, many years with duties such as Membership Chair and Exhibit Chair to mention just a few. Edna has "history" in her blood, I'm not sure how we will be able to get along without her. Thank you, Edna, for all you have done. Pat Johnstone is also leaving the Board. Pat has been in charge of Sales at the two museums and, lucky for us, has agreed to retain that responsibility even though she is not on the Board. Thank you, Pat!

We have three additions to our Board. Gary Bramon is recently retired, a hard core history buff and a longtime docent at the Hamilton Museum. Barry Smail was born on Hamilton AFB, grew up in Novato and is also a docent at Hamilton. The third addition, Mike Corlett, is a contributor to the Historian and also a Hamilton docent.

Some additional shuffling of the Board includes Kathryn Hansen moving from Treasurer to President (thank you, Kathryn!) and Mike Read takes over as Treasurer.

In January five of our members, Sharon Azevedo, Michael Corlett, Kathryn Hansen, Susan Magnone and Barry Smail, were judges of student history projects at San Jose Middle School. The event is part of the National Day celebration in which seventh grade students do an exhibit, website or paper about a theme. This year the theme was "Overcoming Barriers." Our five members said that they were very impressed with the student projects and the enthusiasm of these young historians.

I would really like to thank the Board for all the assistance that they have given me for my term as President. I couldn't have done it with out you.



**Jim Crumpler, outgoing President, was recognized for his leadership and dedication to the Guild.**



# Novato – 50 Years Ago

## (January, February, March 1970)

by Yvette Borloz Jackson

Dear Readers,

*Not only is it a new year, but a new decade. I went on my "memories treasure hunt" reading the Novato Advance newspapers from 1970. Do you remember the "art and entertainment" pink section of the Advance, it was sideways towards the middle of the weekly issue. It was the 10th anniversary of Novato becoming a City in January of 1970, and the Novato Advance celebrated with a 17-page section of history; current events and the movers and shakers of the time. Sadly, I can only give you bits and pieces of what I found, but I hope it is enough to help spark some memories for you. A reminder, many of the pieces are extracted from larger articles, but the language and information have not been changed.*

Happy Reading,

Yvette Borloz Jackson

- Richard David Anton won a raft of prizes from Novato merchants by timing his arrival well. He was Novato's first baby of the year. Born at 9:42 a.m. January 1 at Hamilton Air Force Base Hospital, he was also the first Marin County baby and the first baby of the year to be born in any of the Aerospace Defense hospitals in the nation. His proud parents are Sgt. and Mrs. David E. Anton of Hamilton Air Force Base.
- In what is hoped to be an annual feature, the *Advance* has picked **Novato's outstanding women for 1969**. This year there are three. Who they are, what they did, and what they represent is reported on page B-2. (page B-2)  
**MRS. CLIFFORD MOODY**, working for low cost housing, sociology major, mother of three, League of Women Voters, worker, social studies teacher, influential supporter of conservation causes, and a leader of the movement to improve the housing situation in Marin for low and middle-income families. She has found it hard to change attitudes, especially in areas like race relations and low-income housing. Betty says it's easier to work on conservation than housing because "people shy away when it comes to doing anything for the poor." They say, "I didn't get help from the government why should the poor get help?"  
**MRS. ARNOLD BAPTISTE**, past pres-

ident of the North Marin PTA unit at San Jose Junior High, organizer of the Novato drug abuse committee, advisor for almost four years to the Ignacio (formerly Loma Verde) Teen Association. An outstanding president of the North Marin PTA council, she got the council involved in new activities, such as arranging cultural programs for the schools. One idea that worked out last year is now approaching realization. It's the establishment of a collection of artifacts and art objects that represent different cultures throughout the world. As the head of San Jose PTA, Emily is also trying something new. Recently the PTA unit presented a panel discussion on the environmental crisis in Marin. It brought together speakers such as the executive director of the Bay Conservation and Development Commission to discuss the ways in which our environment is threatened. Another encouraging sign she sees is that "Novatoans are beginning to identify more closely with the city and show greater participation and interest in the future development of the creek, beautification and downtown study." Also residents of unincorporated areas have worked closely with the city on major issues, including the fight against mobile homes, she notes.

**MRS. DONALD WILHELM**, Heads Civic Projects, chairman of the Novato citizens' beautification advisory committee, energetic head of two community clean-up campaigns, key figure in the fight to save Novato Creek from the fate that befell Tamalpais Creek, member citizen's committees that supported the city bond issue. Gail Wilhelm is often called upon when a good organizer is needed to head a civic project. Gail has become interested in city planning and is taking a University of California Extension course in city and regional planning. "I think our future lies in planning, and I'm concerned about the development of Novato," Gail says. She wants to see Novato save its creeks and natural resources, She thinks more parks are a major need, and she feels one of the most critical issues is how the Highway 101 frontage in Novato will develop when the freeway bypass is complete. She is concerned about air and water pollution. "I think in terms of the year 2000 and what kind of environment my

children will live in." She is concerned about the need for low-cost housing in Marin. "We need an alternative to mobile homes. Perhaps modular or prefabricated homes – something that can take a 30-year mortgage and make the transition between low and moderate-cost housing. We need ingenuity on the parts of the developers."

- **THE SPRAY POOL** adjoining the now-completed small boat lagoon at Pioneer Memorial Park should be ready to spray by the end of this month, the parks and recreation commission was told Monday night. Once the spray pool has been erected, phase one development of Pioneer Memorial Park will be marked as done, signaling successful completion of an estimated \$180,000 worth of work in the first phase.
- **NEW CROCKER-CITIZENS BANK** slated to open Monday in its new red brick-white columns structure on the northeast corner of Sixth Street and Grant Avenue.
- Situated between Denny's Restaurant and Santa Rosa Savings and Loan in Novato Square, **McDONALDS DRIVE-IN** hamburger emporium will hold its grand opening Saturday. The local link in the national 1150-unit chain is among the new McDonalds to feature a used brick exterior with mansard tile roof, replacing the huge "golden arches" which were rebuffed by the City. The Novato McDonalds franchise is in the operating hands of Gary Flynn and Dan Nicholson and will employ about 40 people. Ronald McDonald, the chain's TV clown, will be on hand Saturday at 2 p.m. and will dispense grand opening souvenir gifts to children. (01/07/70/ issue)
- **THE GOSSIP RESTAURANT** is slated to add *French and international cooking flavor to the Novato eating-out scene at 1213 Grant Avenue in the near future*. Wine and beer also will be served by co-proprietors Cesar A. Marticorena and Apostolos Stoyanoglou. (South side of Grant between 2nd & 3rd)
- The official opening of the **NOVATO CHILDREN'S CENTER** and preschool facilities will be observed at a brief

Continued on Page N – 4

# 50 Years Ago

Continued from Page N – 3

ceremony at 9 a.m. tomorrow at the facility at 185 Washington Street in Novato. A new sign for the center will be placed by Dr. Virgil S. Hollis, county superintendent of schools, and Supervisor William A. Gness. The Novato Children's Center provides day care for up to 30 children from low-income families residing in the Novato area through the Children's Center Program. The low cost day care is available to families of low income and families who are receiving public assistance and entering training programs for employment. The senior teacher at the Children's Center, Mrs. Janie Franklin, or the head teacher for preschool, Mrs. Jerry Coleman, should be contacted at the center at 897-5770 for additional information.

- **COMMENTARY** by George Barnwell (Publisher Novato Advance): Everybody's climbing on the environmental bandwagon. The favorite word today is "ecology." Reagan's now swimming with the tide. He's the one who reportedly sneered, "Seen one redwood seen them all." President Nixon has joined the ranks, probably to divert the public's attention from other impenetrable problems. --- What is encouraging (and discouraging too) is that citizens groups seem to be pioneering in exploring new ways to protect our environmental heritage. It has been consistent public pressure which led the council over the years to seek undergrounding of overhead wires, to reduce the cutting of hills, to prevent indiscriminate chopping of trees, to somehow at this late date save Novato Creek from being converted into a concrete sewer conduit.---Oil companies and automobile manufacturers bear a guilt for defiling America which probably can never be erased. Whole professions, such as engineers, have in the name of technology, produced monstrosities, which will take generations to dismantle. Somehow we must shove these institutional, corporate and governmental blocks aside and set up new systems and create new attitudes so that the mistakes of the past will not be repeated. It certainly won't hurt for the Reagans and the Nixons to be on our side.
- **LEAKY SKIES** poured three inches of rain on Novato from yesterday (01/20) afternoon to 10:30 a.m. today, setting a spill-over record at Stafford Lake and threatening to make January the all time rainfall record-breaker. The

highest month on the Novato fire station is February 1958, when 14.15 inches of the wet stuff hit the streets here. But as of 10:30 a.m. today, January rainfall totaled 11.32 inches, well above last January's full month total of 9.95 inches and above last February's full month total of 10.30 inches.

- The **CAMPAIGN** committee of supervisor-hopeful Arnold Baptiste at a recent meeting had a representative of the firm that handled the expensive but immensely successful campaign of Diane Feinstein to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. Price tag for a similar campaign for Baptiste, the committee was told, would be around \$25,000. Everybody promptly vomited on hearing the news and decided they would depend on local talent instead...
- **LEE BROS. CLOSES** Goodbye Lee Bros. Supermarket. The 17-store chain went out of business officially Saturday and the Grant Avenue and Seventh Street store was one of eight unsold as doors closed.
- **THE BANK OF AMERICA**, presently at 1200 Grant Avenue (Corner of Grant and 2nd St. presently The Village Restaurant), is planning to open the "biggest bank in town" this fall on the northwest corner of Sixth Street and Grant Avenue.
- **THE NOVATO ADVANCE** was chosen as the top newspaper weekly in the state during 1969 in the middle-circulation bracket by judges of the California Newspaper Publisher's Association. The coveted first-place General Excellence Award was presented to publisher and editor George A. Barnwell at the annual state convention of the association last Saturday morning in Los Angeles.
- **AL TRESCH** of Shields Lane is the only North Marin resident in 30 persons nominated to serve on the 1970 county grand jury.
- A coffee house approach to the **NOVATO YOUTH COUNCIL** Teen Center at 875 Grant Avenue (presently the Pinnacles Dive Shop) may solve the impasse that blocked opening the facility. As a coffee house, with F-2 use a "drinking and dining" facility; the Teen Center can remain within building code limits. But the use permit will be subject to revocation if the coffee house is used as a place of "public assembly." That means no big dances or similarly large assemblies. The occupancy limit is 50. Once that number is exceeded, the Teen Center would take on the tinge of public assembly for entertainment and recreation, which would mean that the ceiling would have to be earthquake proofed. The Marin Economic Opportunity Council says it will spend that kind of money if it must, but it isn't anxious to unnecessarily. Murals are in the throes of completion, with the deft brushwork by Tony Sanders, Phil Hindmarch, Heidi Walberg and Mary Hunter. Ken Selberg and others are doing the general shape-up hoping for early opening.
- Local winners in the **BETTY CROCKER** Search for the American Homemaker of Tomorrow were announced this week. Jan Moroski is the winner at Novato High School. She is the 17-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Henry J. Moroski of Terry Circle. Laurean Pisano is the San Marin High School winner. The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Pisano, Devonshire Drive, she is 17.
- **BESTLINE DISTRIBUTORS** Two local couples have become Novato distributors for Bestline Products Inc., manufacturer of bio-degradable products. They are Mr. and Mrs. Martin Beebe, Olive Avenue, and Mr. and Mrs. Bill Green, Buchanan Street.
- **NOVATO TEACHERS** walked out on the lottery held yesterday to determine which teachers will be the first to be dropped in a proposed reduction in staff for next year. Although the lottery affected only 74 first year teachers, tenured teachers showed up in force to protest the proposed cutback. They stayed to listen to the presidents of the two teacher organizations, who contended the school district should have made cuts elsewhere before reducing the number of teachers. Then most of the teachers walked out.
- **CAMPUS UNREST** erupted on the elementary school level last week when some 70 members of the peanut-butter-and-jelly set boycotted the cafeteria at Lynwood School. The lunch count dropped from the normal 160 to 90 as fourth, fifth and sixth graders united to protest the food. They wanted a cafeteria-style lunchroom that would offer a choice of hot dogs, hamburgers and other foods. Leftovers, now offered at full price the second day, should be served as second helpings, some of the youthful protesters said. Many criticized the hamburgers, which have a high cereal content.
- **GREEN BERET CAPT. JAMES MICHAEL GRIBBIN**, 21, a member of the Novato High School class of 1966, was fatally wounded while engaged in a firefight somewhere in Vietnam. His mother Mrs. Louis Ondrasek, Simmons Lane, received word of her son's death Friday and his remains arrived here Monday. She was informed that Capt. Gribbin was mortally wounded while

Continued on Page N – 5

# 50 Years Ago

Continued from Page N – 4

defending an embattled position....He won three Bronze Stars for heroism.

- **PASTORS** of three local churches go over plans for the community sunrise Easter service to be held at 6 a.m. Sunday on Mt. Burdell. They are The Rev. Leo Hamilton of the United Methodist Church, the Rev. Donald Rayment of the Novato Presbyterian Church and the Rev. Arthur Sorenson of All Saints Lutheran Church. All three will participate in the service, with Rev. Rayment preaching a sermon entitled "Strange Choice." All Novatans are invited to the service. The site can be approached via San Marin Drive. Turn North on San Carlos Way, and the Boy Scouts will be on hand to direct cars. (Easter was March 29)

## MARRIAGES;

Gwen Maureen Smith – Leonard Allen Semas  
 Nancy Jane Pinkham – 1 st Lt. Trent Eyler  
 JoAnn Zay Coursey – Lt. Joseph H. Abeggien  
 Barbara Jean Henson – Gary L Powell  
 Linda Diane Scribner – William L. Harrigan, Jr.  
 Louise Diana Skowronek – William Koenig  
 Margaret Ann Granucci – Raymond M. Hill, Jr.  
 Carolyn Elizabeth Cook – Marinus Howell  
 Oostdam  
 Cynthia Sherrill Fredette – Warren Paul Boyd  
 Monique Hoffman – Kris Kristofers  
 Diane Price – Gary Lommasson  
 Susan Elizabeth Tandy – Michael J. Telegin  
 Marsha Ann Fahnestock – Dean Raymond  
 Edwards  
 Eleanor Jean Garrison – William Edward  
 Stanley  
 Elizabeth Alice Henderson – Robert Scott  
 Griffith  
 Phyllis Henegar – Thomas R. Stocks  
 Randi Louise Crane – A1C Bruce Eugene  
 Jarvis  
 Virginia Tighe – Steven Edward Hoover  
 Marsha Diane Krehbiel – Frederick O. Arnold  
 Norma Gonzalez – Bob Lubinoff  
 Pamela Kay Henrich – William A. Johnson  
 Keeta Catherine Kirwin – Robert Wayne Cline  
 Barbara Herrington – Capt. Thomas J. Moholt  
 Marcia Ellen Bunney – A1C David M. Lopic  
 Sarah Tandy – Don Melson  
 Kathy Steele – Petty Officer 3c John Hertz  
 Maureen Anne Classick – Thomas Horn  
 Sally Louise Hetrick – Thomas J. O'Neill

# New Guild Board Members



New Board Members (from left to right) Gary Bramon, Barry Smail and Mike Corlett

## Mike Corlett

I am a native of Illinois and moved to California in 1962. After graduating from Cal State Hayward, I spent 15 years with United Air Lines as a Maintenance Training Developer and Instructor, specializing in aircraft Avionics and Electrical systems. The balance of my working career was in the Fire Detection and Suppression industry.

I have lived in Novato for forty-three years. I coached Novato Girls Softball teams for a number of years and worked in various volunteer endeavors. I have always enjoyed history. I have been a docent at the Hamilton Field History Museum for nearly five years, and contribute articles to the Novato Historian. As a new member on the board, I am looking forward to being involved in the processes necessary to keep our two museums moving forward..

## Gary Bramon

Gary Bramon has been a resident and business owner in Novato since January 1970, Born in Salem Oregon, he grew up in Del Norte County and graduated from Del Norte County High School in Crescent City in 1960 and from Sacramento State University in 1964.

He started in the business of financial planning after graduation and in 1970 he was transferred to Marin County. He has had a reputation over the years of having the ability to explain useful and innovative financial concepts to individuals and businesses alike. He is particularly proud of his concept that a financial planner can be of extreme assistance to the young person, the near to retire and the senior in retirement as well.

Gary quickly obtained the Chartered Life Underwriter and Chartered Financial Consultant degrees from the American College in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. Active in the National Association of Insurance and Financial Advisors, he has served as president at both the county and state level. A member of the Novato Rotary Club, Gary served as its president in 1999/2000.

Gary enjoys reading, particularly Civil War History, watching the San Francisco Giants and the San Francisco 49ers sports teams. He and his wife, Toni, enjoy traveling and spending time with their two children and four grandchildren.

## Barry L. Smail

I was born on Hamilton Air Force Base in 1952, and for the past several years have served as a docent at the Hamilton Field History Museum. I've lived in Marin continuously since 1966 (mostly in Novato). I was in the first graduating class of San Marin High School (1970). Three years later, while attending Sonoma State, I worked as a summer replacement reporter for the *Novato Advance* and was the first to break the story that the Pentagon had plans to decommission Hamilton.

My career background is primarily in public relations and conference planning. Since childhood, I have been an avid reader and history has been my favorite subject. It is an honor to have been asked to serve as a board member of the Novato Historical Guild, and I look forward to making a solid contribution in support of the Guild's mission and its two museums.

# Novato Memories

Jim McNern



## Bob Sparrow

*Bob Sparrow is the son of the late Jack and Barbara Sparrow. His parents were former owners and publishers of the Novato Advance. Bob attended Novato Grammar School, Hill and Marion Schools and is a 1961 graduate of Novato High School. After graduating from college he taught and coached at Tustin High School for ten years and then went into the mortgage banking field for over thirty years. Bob now lives in Orange County, California. He shares his Novato memories in this March edition of the Novato Historian.*

I have often said that growing up in Novato in the 50s & 60s was the absolute best of times and place. Small enough to know virtually everyone in town, but close enough to San Francisco to get our big city fix.

My parents, Jack & Barbara Sparrow moved to Novato in 1940 and were very active in community affairs; Dad owned the newspaper, the Novato Advance, Mom worked there until she became the secretary to the Superintendent of Schools, W. J. J. Smith. Mom was also active in Eastern Star, Sunny Hills Guild, Business and Professional Women as well as the community theater group where we went to her plays in the old Community House.

Dad was on the school board, a member of the volunteer fire department and coached Novato's first Little League team, where brother Jack and I played. There were two teams in Novato (Giants and Yankees) and two teams from Hamilton Field (Dodgers and Indians).

Jack was a really good pitcher and one year at the Novato Fire Department's annual picnic out at the Silvera Ranch there was a 'salami throw' – where salamis were hanging from strings about 30 feet away and for a dollar you got three throws at them with a small potato – if you hit a salami, you got to keep it. For brother Jack this was like shooting fish in a barrel, so once people saw how good he was a hitting the salami, they were giving him money to hit a salami for them.

This didn't last very long as after hitting salami after salami, he was banned from playing the game! I was standing by and

thought, well if he can't play, maybe I can, as I saw people standing around seeing if I could pick up where my brother had left off. I paid a dollar and didn't even come close . . . the crowd quickly dispersed.

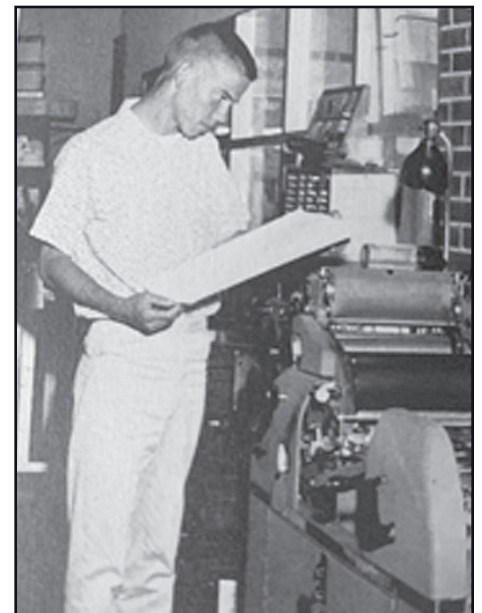
Growing up, Jack and I liked to go to the movies, usually the Saturday matinee, where Novato Theater owner, Don Donahue would patrol the aisles and tell us to get our feet off the seat in front of us. After the movies, which always included a double feature, with a cartoon and a newsreel in between, we'd go to the Parrot Cage, a soda shop a couple of doors down from the theater on Grant Avenue before we walked home. No Uber in those days!

On the rare occasion that the family went out to dinner, we'd typically go to DeBorba's, where you could get the best Chinese food in town, OK maybe the only Chinese food in town, and Dad could get a martini. DeBorba's was down at the east end of Grant Avenue along with Druid's Hall, where they held meetings and had dances.

Across the street was the Central Valley Bank, where George Morrison, president and an ex-Stanford grad, would always give our family four tickets to the 'Big Game' every year, which is probably where Jack and I fell in love with football. After Dad sold the newspaper, he opened his own print shop on Grant Avenue, just behind where the old Novato Advance building was. We became quite familiar with that part of town, as there was Dave's Barber Shop, Dr. Cranz dentistry, Rayburn's grocery store, Jim's Sport Shop and I even remember an old blacksmith shop at that end of the street by the railroad tracks.

I also remember Bruno Schultz patrolling Grant Avenue and brandishing his cane at anything or anyone that got in his way. Just off Grant Avenue in that part of town was the Presbyterian church which our family attended, which is now City Hall.

During our early years in Novato, Dad (the original Jack Sparrow) played 2nd base on the town's hardball team in a league that took them, and all the family fans, to games in places like Nicasio, Point Reyes and Kelseyville. The home games were played at the Marion Street School baseball diamond. After the home games the team would assemble to have a few highballs at the Village Inn, just up highway 101, which was owned by Lidia Quarg, who always provided cokes and peanuts for us kids.



Bob working at his dad's print shop.

Continued on Page N – 7

## Novato Memories

Continued from Page N – 6

I went to Grant Elementary School (no longer on the hill at the corner of 101 and Grant Ave) from Kindergarten to 3rd grade, where my best friend was Steve Taylor, although we did fight over the affections of Kindergarten hottie, Ellen Tingley.

According to class pictures that I found, friends that were in that kindergarten class, taught by Mrs. Walters, and also in my high school graduating class of 1961, were Janet Dennis, Bob Ornellas, Robert Remley, Rick Smaw, Kitty Stewart and Susan Wilcox.

I then went to Marion School for 4th grade (Mrs. Owens, who taught us to square dance) and 5th grade (Mr. Slepnikoff, my favorite teacher of all time), then to Miss Cullen's class where we were the first class to graduate from the then-new Hill Street school. Back to Marion for 7th (Mr. Laycock) and 8th (Mr. Gregg – another favorite teacher).

Our class then became the 3rd class to enter the still relatively new Novato High School. Because my brother was in the first graduating class of Novato, I got to know many of his classmates as well, like Chuck Coleman, Pete Ferrarese, George Gness, Gary Edwards, Judy Koehler, Yvonne Borloz and many others.

Some of my friends in high school from my class included, Bill Hall, who had a car as a sophomore (I think he was about 19 then), so was always being asked to double date, so a parent wouldn't have to be our driver; Ron Witzel, where we learned to be pirates and sail San Francisco Bay on his father's yacht; I learned to drink rum later. Ron Grayson, with whom I played football (on some fairly successful teams both at Novato and College of Marin) and basketball (on some not-so-successful teams).

Other friends included Liz Chisholm, who became my first girl friend, who was not a girlfriend), Bob Porteous, Paul Ferrarese, Lu Haas, Fred McElroy, Bink McBride, Bill Tuel and of course, my best friend Don Klapperich, with whom I sang and played guitar and stayed close to for 50 years. Don was a very good musician and had a great voice, I was just a pretty face! OK, maybe not that pretty. We did end up playing at a Western Weekend in 1964 where we played and sang folk music (which was dying), then donned wigs and sang a Beatles song (which was not). Classmate, Ron Turner's dad, Hugh Turner, who worked at the local radio station KTIM, heard us and asked us to do an interview



The Sparrow family - daughter Dana, wife Linda, son Jeff, Bob, and daughter Stephanie getting ready for a Margaritaville party at their house

and sing on his radio show, which we did – I still have the recording. It reminds me how good Don was and how I had a face for radio. Don and I sang at our 50-year high school class reunion in 2011 at Jim and Charlotte Temple's house; and even though he passed away in February of the following year, he still influences my life today.

Summers growing up were either at Boy Scout camp in the Sierras or family vacations to two places; from about 1947 to 1951 it was Yosemite, when they still had the 'Fire Fall' over Glacier Point – spectacular! From 1952 on, it was the north shore of Lake Tahoe and although it's gotten significantly busier, we still get up there regularly to visit our parent's ashes where they requested them to be spread.

After two seasons at College of Marin, I received a football scholarship to the University of Utah and ultimately ended up transferring to Westminster College in Salt Lake where I played for George Siefert, who went on to win two Super Bowls as the head coach of the 49ers. He always said as the coach of Joe Montana and Steve Young, that I was his 'first quarterback', but when he says it, it sounds like 'worst quarterback'.

After serving as an officer and a gentleman (only by an act of Congress) in the Navy, I taught English and coached football and basketball at Tustin High School in Orange County. After 10 years of teaching and coaching I embarked on a mortgage banking career that lasted for the next 30+ years and today I still stay active selling Reverse Mortgages – and am ready to step in if Tom Selleck needs help.

Several of my high school cronies have told me I had gone to the 'dark side' when

I moved to Southern California, but it has become home as Linda's and my three children and their spouses are here, along with our three amazing grandchildren and another one on the way.

Strangest question I was ever asked about growing up in Novato was, "What happened to 'Moe' Sparrow, weren't there three Sparrow brothers, Jack, Bob and Moe?" Actually Moe should have been my sister, Suzanne's nick name, as I got the moniker from our Dad, who said when I was born, "There'll be no mo babies," but there was – Suzanne, (Warning: Commercial coming!) with whom I've written a blog about travel and life's observations for the last eight years. It publishes every Monday morning on Facebook or can be found at [www.fromabirdseyeview.com](http://www.fromabirdseyeview.com) where you can subscribe – it's free! We stole the name from our Mom's old *Novato Advance* weekly newspaper column – we really didn't steal it – we got her approval.

Again, I cannot imagine growing up in a better place, at a better time, with better people and with such an awesome family. Soooo lucky!

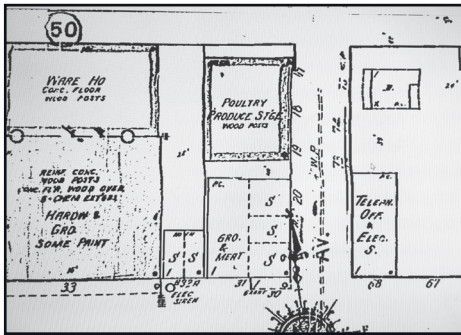


Recent photo of Bob with siblings Suzanne and Jack, at Bob and Linda's 40th wedding anniversary

# NOVATO'S TREASURES

## The Patterson Building

MIKE READ



1945 map shows 4 stores



### Grant and Machin Avenue Location

Frank Silva, then living in San Rafael, bought lots 1 and 2 in Block I, on September 1889. Sometime after this A.D. Scott would buy the lots from him.

In August 1922, Scott sold the lots to O.W. Hall, the local station agent. Hall built a large egg station on the back lots of 1 and 2 in September 1922. The egg station was erected by Mr. Phillips and Alexander of corrugated iron and finished by E.J. Frisbie.

March 26, 1926, Mr. Patterson of San Rafael, purchased for business purposes, the two lots from O.W. Hall, which adjoined the egg station at the corner of Grant Avenue and Machin Street and erected a \$6,000 business building.

Harry Jackson Patterson (no relationship to the Patterson Ranch on 7th street) was born September 1868 in Maine. He moved to Madera California in 1890's as a clerk. In 1920, he continued working as a clerk in San Francisco in a hardware store. In the early 1920's he and his wife Ida moved to San Rafael.

In May of 1926, O.W. Hall enlarged his egg station and Mr. Patterson plastered his building with its five store rooms to prepare it for its opening as the "Cash and Carry" grocery store.

June 1926, Mr. Patterson moved into the Dettmer Ranch on Indian Valley Road.

July 1926, Peter's Barber Shop opened in the Patterson Building along with the grand opening of his grocery store. At this time H. Pini & Co. had started offering lower prices for groceries if you paid in cash. By November, Mr. Patterson wanted to get out of the grocery business. He ran this ad in the *Petaluma Argus*: "Stores for rent in new building in Novato. LOW RENTAL, FINE LOCATION FOR BRANCH STORE FOR Petaluma concern. Sale of going grocery business would be considered. H.J. Patterson, Novato."

July 1927, having been offered a good position in San Rafael, H.J. Patterson closed out his grocery business in Novato and moved to San Rafael.

January 1928, in the *Novato Advance* — this ad appeared — "In order to better serve our patrons, we have moved to new and larger quarters in the Patterson Building. It is our endeavor to establish a clean, sanitary market in Novato. We have put in a new ice box equipped with the Fridigadare system. We cordially invite you to inspect our new home at your earliest convenience. Yours truly Ambrogio & Son."

May 1930, Obituary of "Harry J. Patterson, a business man of San Rafael, died at his home. Mr. Patterson was well known in Novato, having erected the building on the corner of Grant and Machin Avenues and conducted a grocery store therein before going to San Rafael. He had been in failing health for some time, and his passing is regretted by many friends. He leaves a widow, son and daughter. He was brother of Mrs. L. M. Sansom, also a former resident of Novato."

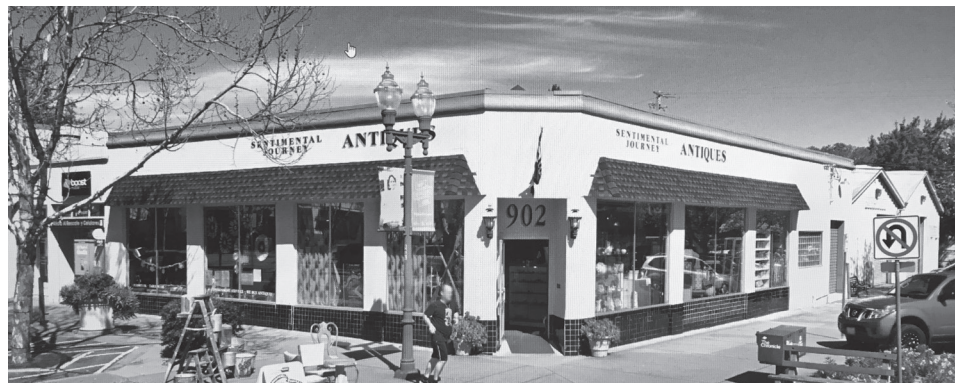
Sometime after this Mrs. Ida Patterson sold the property to Mrs. Henry Pini.

Mrs. Pini would sell the Patterson Building to Alfred W. Bowman of Berkeley on December 19, 1944. He had plans of erecting Novato's first theater on the corner property.

January 1945, Bowman also bought the H. Pini & Co. Building — Fire would destroy the Pini building on April 1945 and Bowman would build the theater on that location.

July 1945, the Patterson Building was remodeled with Harry Hale moving in to open a butcher shop and grocery store.

Later a laundromat moved in, then Eastside Auto Parts. Now it is an antiques and collectables store.





# Soldiers to Seniors

By Michael Corlett

The long-shuttered Hamilton Field Base Hospital is currently being reincarnated into its next life. In mid-October 2020, it is scheduled to reopen its doors as an Assisted Living Facility with Memory Care.

In the early 1930s, while Captain Howard Nurse and his staff were designing Hamilton Field, Leo Epp of San Francisco was awarded a contract to build the 2-story, 15,300 square foot hospital. The base Hospital was completed in November of 1934 for a price of \$108,887.

As a docent at the Hamilton Field History Museum, I find that the base hospital is the building most inquired about by visitors. Some who come through the museum doors were born there or had a parent or a relative born there during the hospital's 70-year existence.

During WWII, Hamilton was the prominent gateway to the Pacific Theater. Celebrities, on their way to entertain troops in USO shows, stopped at Hamilton before proceeding to their destinations. Popular 1940s comedians, Abbot and Costello, were among those who visited the hospital. President Truman visited the hospital in June 1945 on his way to sign the United Nations Charter in San Francisco.

During WWII the hospital processed as many as 3500 wounded soldiers per month. To accommodate the influx of that many injured, the hospital required more wards. To fill the need, temporary wooden barracks were built near the hospital, and existing barracks 422 and 424 were converted to serve as Hospital wards.

During the Vietnam War, most returning wounded were treated at Oak Knoll Naval Hospital in Oakland or sent to Letterman Hospital in San Francisco. The Hamilton hospital had become outdated. From that point on until its closure in 1995, the base hospital was used primarily by base residents, retirees, and dependents.

Hamilton Air Force Base closed in 1975, but activity did not stop. Much of the property was parceled out to the Army, Navy and Coast Guard.

In 1989, 14 years after the base closed, the Army was tasked to close and dispose of all the property that was once



Rendering of New Facility

Hamilton Air Force Base. As part of the disposal process, the Army surveyed the base to determine if any of the 250 structures or buildings would qualify for listing on the *National Register of Historic Places*. A few buildings and structures on the base were selected, including the base hospital. The survey of the hospital noted, "The building is significant as an example of the application of an important architectural trend, (Spanish Colonial Revival) adapted to reflect California's mission heritage in a dramatic departure from traditional military architecture." (1) Captain Nurse's "dramatic departure" resulted in those in the military referring to Hamilton Field as "The Country Club."

In November of 1998, three areas of Hamilton were listed in the National Register as the *Hamilton Army Airfield Discontinuous Historic District*.

In September of 2014, the Novato City Council voted to sell the hospital for \$2 million to San Francisco's Avesta Development Group.

Although it is a 50,000 square foot expansion of the historic hospital, the entire front façade will be rehabilitated and preserved. In addition, the expansion will complement the Spanish

Mediterranean Architecture of the original hospital.

Mohammad Javanbakht, a principal with Avesta said in an interview, "The Hamilton hospital is an historic landmark we intend to preserve and restore." (2)

When the construction is completed, the 65,000 square foot facility will have 48 rooms for assisted living, and 32 rooms for memory care.

Although the hospital is gone, Captain Howard Nurse's architectural vision is being preserved.

#### References:

(1) Historic American Buildings Survey, [www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ca2694](http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ca2694)

Hamilton Army Air Field Discontiguous Historic District, <https://caa.archives.gov/id123859682>

(2) Novato sells shuttered Hamilton hospital, *Marin Independent Journal*, September 24, 2014

Redesign of former Hamilton Hospital, *Marin Independent Journal*, June 29, 2017



Hamilton Field Hospital 1944

## Novato Third Graders learn history with us again!

by Laurie O'Mara

Spring will soon be upon us and the Novato History Museum will once again be alive with third grade students learning all about the history of our beloved city. Third grade teachers and students alike are excited to be a part of this wonderful program we provide for them and they look forward to it every year. Tours for this year have been scheduled from April thru June and we are looking forward to yet another successful Spring with our wonderful, inquisitive third graders.

They so enjoy learning about how life in Novato was years ago with all the fascinating exhibits inside the museum and especially the buggy room and are excited to learn about all the amazing people who helped establish our city during the downtown tour where the Carliles, Hamiltons, Caines and so many more Novato pioneers are brought to life for them.

This program would not be possible without the commitment of our dedicated docents who give us their time every year. I would like to take this time to thank the wonderful volunteers who gave us their time last year. They are Sharon Azavedo, Mary Bicknell, Celinda Current, Laurie O'Mara, Stan Palmear, Anne Russell, Brittany Schuler, Christina Thomatos, Susan Trumbull and Lane Yee. I am so very grateful to these docents and how their dedication made last year's Third Grade History Tour Season such a successful one!

I am so looking forward to yet another successful season with this year's third graders. We always welcome new docents and cannot keep this incredible program alive without them. Docenting is such a rewarding and fun experience and doesn't take up much of your time. If you are at all interested in becoming a docent please contact Laurie O'Mara at [plomara@earthlink.net](mailto:plomara@earthlink.net) or 415-246-8168.

## Welcome New Guild Members

### Novato Historical Guild Membership Report March 2020

#### Individual Membership

Robert Buckwalter  
Delaine Hoffman  
Caryll Mountjoy  
Lonnie Raab

#### Family Membership

Elizabeth and David Ganz

#### Life Membership

David Scheller  
Sharon Scheller

*If you have questions about membership,  
call*

*Lane Yee, Membership Chairman,*

*415 – 898 – 0444*



### Please support our Guild Business Members:

A. D. Scott Building  
Andrew McAgnon Landscaping  
Bank of Marin  
Goltermann Real Estate and  
Construction  
Indian Valley Golf Club  
Marin Landscape Materials  
Marin Trophies  
Marin Volvo/Saab  
Mclsaac Dairy  
Nave Enterprises  
Novato Builders Supply, Inc.  
Pacheco Ranch Winery  
Pini Hardware  
The Wright Salon  
Trumbull Manor Inc. – Novato  
Valley Oak Wealth Management  
Zenith Instant Printing



December General Members Meeting at the Margaret Todd Center.

### 2019 Board Meetings

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

Time: 1:30 – 3:30 PM

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

### Membership Meetings

March 14	10 – 12 City Hall
June 13	10 – 12 City Hall
Sept. 12	12 – 2 Hamilton Field Museum
Dec. 12	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.

## In Memoriam

### In Memoriam

Lorraine Marie Priolo

### The Guild Extends Sympathy to

The Priolo family on the loss of  
 Lorraine Marie

## 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/>



**CORRECTION:** The caption at the bottom of page N-8 of last issue's "Novato Treasures: The Oliver House" was incorrect. No caption was provided.



### 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 |                                   |



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



NON PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
NOVATO, CA  
PERMIT NO. 138

Change Service Requested

TIME VALUE



## YOU ARE INVITED

**General Membership Meeting ~ Novato Historical Guild**

**Saturday, March 14, 10:00 A.M. to Noon**  
**Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue, Novato**

Brian Crawford will be discussing his book, *The Fairfax Bolinas Road*.  
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**