

# The Novato Historian

The Quarterly Publication of the Novato Historical Guild, the Novato History Museum, and the Hamilton Field History Museum

*Preserving Novato's History*  
News Section

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July – September 2020

The Novato Historian

Volume 44, Number 3

## 1918 Influenza Pandemic's Impact on Novato

Compiled by Mike Read, Novato Historical Guild

### Oct. 22, 1918 *Petaluma Argus*

"It is said that the Spanish influenza has struck the local high-way construction camp, however, this has not been verified. Later – "Up till noon today some twenty cases of the influenza have been reported in this district, mostly at the highway camp above Burdell's; one in town and several at Black Point."

### Oct. 28, 1918 *Petaluma Argus*

"Mrs. A.L. Phillips was called to Novato on Saturday owing to the serious illness of her brother, Emmet Cole, and his wife, who are both ill with the influenza."

### Nov. 25, 1918 *Petaluma Argus*

"James Casey of this city, who is conducting a meat market in Novato, was brought home on Sunday, very ill with influenza."

### Nov. 28, 1918 *Novato Banner*

"Dominick Turruciano, of the Black Point Road, Novato, died at his home Wednesday morning of last week. His wife is also suffering from the influenza, of which her husband was a victim. Four children survive the deceased. Three of them have been taken to San Francisco by a brother of the dead man. Willie Nave of Oldtown entered the General Hospital at San Rafael yesterday, suffering influenza."

### Dec. 5, 1918 *Novato Banner*

"Freddie Nave of Oldtown entered the General Hospital at San Rafael. Tuesday where his brother, Willie, is convalescing from the influenza. James Casey of the Casey Meat Market was taken to Petaluma Sunday evening for treatment. His sister learned that he was suffering from an attack of the influenza and had an ambulance remove him to his Petaluma home. At last accounts, "Jim" was doing nicely and expects to be back at the block very soon."

### Dec. 8, 1918 *Petaluma Daily*

"Manuel T. Alamada, a well-known rancher of the Lakeville District died last night at 11:30 o'clock from influenza. The entire family was stricken with the malady, including an 8



Thomas F. Keating (in vest and hat), a popular man who was postmaster of Novato, stands on the front of the livery stable he owned in Ignacio in a family photo from approximately 1910. He later died in the flu epidemic of 1918. (Keating family photo courtesy of the Marin Independent Journal.)

month-old baby. Two nurses are in attendance. Mr. Alamada was a native of Portugal and aged 45 years. He was married some years ago to Miss J. DeBorba of Novato. The body has been removed to the Healey Funeral Parlor and the funeral will be under the direction of D.J. Healey."

### Dec. 12, 1918 *Novato Banner*

"Mr. and Mrs. John Green are both confined to their home with the malady, influenza. Miss Mary Mattos and two members of the Baccaglio family at Old Town, are among those reported to be ill."

### Dec. 26, 1918 *Novato Banner*

"Sad news came to Mr. and Mrs. Frank Gness at their home in Novato Tuesday in the information that their son, Corporal Frank J. Gness had died from influenza at Camp Eustice, Virginia. He had been ill but a few days. Corporal Gness was 29 years of age and was born in San Francisco. He was well known in Novato and vicinity, as are his parents. Gness was a volunteer, having enlisted in San Francisco in December of 1917. He was an observer in the balloon corps. His remains will be shipped to Novato for burial."

## The Novato Historian

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*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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### 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

**Kathryn Hansen**

**President, Novato Historical Guild**

### Review of the Novato Historical Guild's Accomplishments in Past Decade 2010 - 2020

Do you ever ask yourself what the Novato Historical Guild has accomplished in the last decade? This list is the result of viewing past Board minutes and asking Board members. My apologies if there is something significant that has been left out.

- Hamilton Field History Museum opened in May 2010.
- Installed internet in both museums.
- Operated without a paid curator since 2013
- Upgraded Past Perfect museum software that (a) catalogs archive, library, historical object, art object, natural history, archaeology and photograph collections in 2012 and (b) membership information. Procured Past Perfect module software that makes the archive accessible to the public through the website 2017.
- Created a website in 2014 - novatohistory.org - that is continually adding content and improving.
- Cataloged and took inventory of maps and files in the archive room at the downtown museum.
- Transferred Oral Histories from tape to DVD.
- Created special exhibits at each museum:
  - a) Novato History Museum (downtown) – Railroad exhibit, Dairy exhibit, Fire Fighters exhibit
  - b) Hamilton Field Museum – Models of Planes stationed at Hamilton Field exhibit, Tom Crull exhibit and US Coast Guard exhibit.
- Designed an engraved Brick Exhibit (97) at Novato City Hall that summarizes the most significant historical events in Novato's History in 2015.
- Hosted a monthly Speaker's Series free to the public in 2019 (temporarily suspended due to COVID19)
- Purchased, installed a kiosk at each museum and created a rolling video for each kiosk.
- Created a Pay Pal account to accept donations through the internet in 2017.
- Joined the Association of Novato 6 Museums in which the Guild's two museums belong.
- Formed a COVID-19 Committee to gather information from the community related to the impact of the pandemic on Novato's businesses and citizens.



# Novato – 50 Years Ago

## (April, May, June 1970)

by Yvette Borloz Jackson

*Dear Readers,*  
*Although the first item below indicates that not much happens in Novato during the summer months, I found plenty of fun and interesting articles to write for you in hopes that it will invoke some memories. I hope you enjoy them as much as I did finding them for this article. I want to remind you that the language & words used are straight from the pages of the Novato Advance and although not always "PC" now, they were then. Stay safe & healthy, and I hope that we will be able to gather again in the near future to share our memories in person. Remember, the thing about history is that we will always have it as it is being made everyday.*  
 Yvette Borloz Jackson

**SUMMER DOLDRUMS:** Nothing much seems to happen in Novato at this time of year - except sports, weddings and deaths. Although schools are closed, sports activities reach a fever pitch of activity here in the warm summer evenings. Probably the biggest news event of the week was the upset of A&N Maintenance women's softball team. *The Advance*, always with its nose for news finely attuned, was there with its photographer to capture the immortal event. Several well-known Novatans are either leaving the community or being honored. The Rev. James Purcell of Our Lady of Loretto Church and the Rev. Leo Hamilton of the Novato Methodist have been assigned to new pastorates. Farewell gatherings have been held. Mike Gragg a long time fixture at Novato High School, has resigned and is moving to Hawaii, while Robert McKeay, who is retiring after a lifetime career devoted to teaching, was presented with a special gift by fellow employees. In a somewhat different category is Supervisor William Gness who will be stepping down at the end of the year after serving 16 years on the Marin board of supervisors. He was honored at a Chamber of Commerce dinner.

**SCHOOL BUSES OUT OF GAS:** No bus transportation to and from school will be provided for Novato children this year, the school board decided Monday night. The board also placed no money in the budget for the school lunch program. Both cuts were made because of the financial crisis the district faces due to the defeat of the tax ceiling increase last April. The 85 cent increase in the tax limit will be submitted to voters again on July 28. If it passes, many of the cuts could be restored. Two Novato brothers topped their all around athlete age groups at the two-week Santa Clara Coaching Camp ending July 4 and brought home "Champs of Camp" trophies. Steven Ghirado, 12, and Gerald Ghirado, 10, sons of Mr. and Mrs. E. T. Ghirado, 213

Grande Vista, were awarded the top trophies on the basis of excellence in sports performance, leadership and sportsmanship.

**MISSSES STICK TO MINIS:** According to the fashion magazines a full-scale assault is to be staged this fall to convert women to favoring the midi - a dress whose length reaches somewhere in the middle of the calf. The question whether women - American in general, and the young women and girls of Novato in particular - are going to accept the new style as decreed by the fashion experts. According to a survey by the *Advance* of Novato, women in their late teens and early twenties - an age group amongst whom most dedicated devotees of the mini skirt can be found - the midi is unacceptable with some approval of the maxi. What is most remarkable of the mini skirt is that it was not evolved by high fashion designers- it was a gift of the working girls of London and its popularity spread from there. As such it was fashion of popular origin. Novato girls just aren't going to support the midi if the sentiments of seven 16 to 18 year-olds we interviewed are to be trusted. The girls interviewed were: Marion Baccaglio, Linda Dessert, Mary Hunter, Chris Proett, Dolly Hiller, Melissa Allen and Mary Schneeflock.

**STUDENTS FOUND RESPONSE IN COMMUNITY TO BE WEAK:** The Novato Peace Project is over. That's the word from Allen Peterson, of 55 Rica Vista, one of 15 University of California students who participated in the project. They were part of a group of some 600 Cal students who went into communities to try to mobilize the silent majority against the war. Peterson said the effort in Novato was not as productive as they had hoped. They went from door to door, talking to people about the war, distributed pamphlets, and invited residents to give coffees for which the student group would supply speakers such as specialists on Indonesia. "Response was weak," Peterson said. One problem, he said, is that many people viewed them as "kids with long hair," and their feelings about students vs. the establishment got in the way of the discussion about peace. "We became straighter as the weeks went by to try to counter this," said Peterson. "My beard went first! Then my mustache, and my sideburns and my hair got shorter and shorter." The group aroused some hostile reaction. There were some harassing phone calls, and other calls from people who "seemed to think we were tied up with a Communist conspiracy." One good thing that came out of the efforts, they said, is about 1,000 signatures on a petition for the McGovern-Hatfield amendment, which cut funds for the war in Indochina. ... The major argument they encountered in Novato, said Peterson, was the position that "Richard Nixon is our president, and we must go along with what he says," said Peterson:

"They relieve themselves of the responsibility to investigate or make any decision of their own about the war." Peterson felt some pro-war people were motivated by "a deep fear of communism, probably related to the fear that if the U.S. went Communist they would lose their property. He said another attitude that is unfavorable to peace is viewing war like a football game, with victory the only consideration. "When President Nixon said he doesn't want to be the first president to preside over an American defeat, he might have been a coach giving a pep talk to the team." Peterson came to the conclusion that "what we did wouldn't change many attitudes. "If I want something to do with bringing about change I have two choices - getting involved in a political party and supporting candidates or going with one of the revolutionary groups like SDS (Students For a Democratic Society)." He said he thinks the November elections will help many students decide whether to give up working through the system.

**TURTLE LIBERATION FRONT BUSY AT WORK IN NOVATO:** "This Friday morning at 4:30 a.m. 46 red-eared turtles were liberated from the confines of Grant's Department Store." That's the first communique issued by the Turtle Liberation Front, which is speaking out about treatment of the turtle majority. In an unsigned letter to the *Advance*, the TLF explained: "The Turtle Liberation was forced to apply such tactics in order to alleviate intolerable living conditions imposed upon these creatures by Grant's. The TLF demands immediate compliance with the following conditions: 1. Free space with a minimum area of nine times the size of each turtle confined. 2. Adequate elevated basking area 3. Clean, temperate water at all times. 4. A nourishing, balanced diet, fed at regular intervals. 5. At least two hours direct sunlight every day, weather permitting. The letter said the 46 turtles were crowded into a 9x14-inch aquarium. TLF continued, "TG&Y was also inspected by the TLF reconnaissance team and found to be the worst offender. Their tank contained no water at all and housed 11 red-eared sliders in an agonizing condition, the most fortunate of which was dead. The remaining were set free." The communique ended in approved revolutionary style with "Power to the Turtle Liberation Front." The Novato police department, now reorganizing into three divisions (patrol, investigation and special services.), soon will embark on a new program of monthly group and individual therapy sessions with Dr. E. Shev, Greenbrae psychiatrist. Dr. Shev, whose monthly services are being used by the Sausalito, Pleasant Hills and Petaluma Police Departments, has for the past couple of years assisted Novato in screen-

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# 50 Years Ago

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ing applicants for police jobs. His rate for therapy sessions is \$80 per hour and Chief Allen Klemme said he'll average two hours per month. "He'll come right to our department and have sessions with group and individuals, to help with any difficulties in understanding human behavior," said Chief Klemme. "Dr. Shev also will ride in patrol cars, observe the behavior of officers and talk to them on a one-to-one basis."

## **SAMBO RESTAURANTS LEASES PROPERTY:**

Sambo Restaurants has signed a lease with Hoyt Enterprises for the northwest corner of Seventh Street and Novato Boulevard.\* Sambo plans to construct a 4,000-square foot building on the site. Seating capacity would be 125. Henry Hicks, local representative of the national restaurant chain, anticipates that the Novato unit will be open by the end of the year. Sambo Restaurants cater to the "local family trade rather than the transient public." \*(Star's Restaurant location)

## **BUSING, ATHLETICS COME "BACK TO SCHOOL."**

A favorable court decision disclosed Friday shook loose more than \$200,000 for use by the Novato school district. It gave trustees the wherewithal to restore \$132,241 at Monday night's meeting and unanimously approve 1970-71 budget totaling \$10,064,537. By no means did trustees restore all previously reduced funds. For example, \$38,631 was added for transportation, but \$85,963 total in busing budget will cover only \$74,963 for "hardship transportation" for elementary school pupils beyond one and one-half miles from their schools, junior high students two and one-half miles distant, and senior high students who live at least three and one-half miles from school, plus \$11,000 for athletics field trip transport. Junior and senior high students who live east of the highway will be transported by bus because of highway crossing dangers.

**WINNING FAMILY HABIT:** Sharon Boivie, 19, and her brothers, Larry, 13, and Bobby, 16, will be competing in the water skiing national championships in Canton, Ohio, in two weeks. They won eight firsts among the three of them in the western regional water skiing championship finals last week-end.

**ARTHUR MEETS INDIAN VALLEY:** Indian Valley Road grading has been completed to link Arthur Street and Indian Valley Road and paving will finish the \$70,000 project in about one month. Bresnan-Dalecio is doing the work, which provides an alternate route to Novato High School and takes the load off South Novato Boulevard at peak times. The job includes a 365-foot extension of Arthur and rebuilding 1,000 feet of Indian Valley Road. Motorists already are using the extension before it's paved.

**NOVATO POPULATION: 28,593:** The population of Novato is 28,593 according to preliminary 1970 census figures released by the U.S. Census Bureau. That's 407 under the figure the city has been using since 1967. The 28,900 figure was based on an estimate made by the State

Department of Finance. The loss of 470 people will mean the loss of about \$5,700 a year in subventions and grants allotted to the city on the basis of the population, according to City Manager Charles Brown. That includes gas tax funds, cigarette tax money and similar funds. Brown said if the Department of Finance estimate "was anywhere near accurate," he questions the validity of the federal census. "I question it even more when I read about errors in the census made elsewhere in the country." He recommended to the City Council that the city have the department of finance conduct a census next year. ... Any Novatans who did not fill out a census form should contact city hall, Brown said.

**NURSE INVENTS LIFE-SAVER:** A potential life-saver has been invented by a Novato High School graduate who was in town this week demonstrating the device for her former family physician, Dr. Ralph J. Wiseman. Mrs. Kathleen Stewart Toms calls her invention an Auto-Infuser and she says its use may make the difference between life and death for critically ill or injured patients. Before her product came on the market eight months ago, infusions took about seven minutes and required a medical attendant to rhythmically squeeze a rubber pressure ball the entire time. Now, Mrs. Toms points out, use of the Auto-Infuser has cut the time in half and personnel are relieved of the tedious job for other important emergency room details.

**SCHOOL ENROLLMENT DOWN:** Attendance at Novato schools on opening day was even lower than the enrollment figure announced last month- and that was well below expectations. According to Assistant Superintendent Paul Mobley, attendance yesterday totaled 11,448. That's 464 fewer students than originally predicted and 277 fewer than the prediction made after registration last month. Apparently the day of burgeoning school population is over, due to declining subdivision growth and birth rate.... Last June's enrollment was 11,525. Yesterday's opening day attendance was below this, but is eventually expected to top it.

**GETTING CLIPPED A WOMAN:** That male haven - the barber shop - is no longer a sanctuary. It's being invaded by lady barbers. A local member of the invading force is pretty Zerelda (Zee) Newell, 22, who now hangs up her barber's towel at David's Barber Services, 1405 Grant Avenue.... She says that many men like the idea of a lady barber and say there should be more of them. "There are more women working in barber shops just as there are more men working in beauty salons," Zee added.

**FEDRICK, GNOSS, KIRWIN RECEIVE LEGION AWARDS:** Dee FEDRICK, Ken Gness and Kim KIRWIN received special awards at the Novato American Legion baseball team's annual banquet last week at the Hamilton Air Force Base NCO Club. FEDRICK was presented the Irv Links Most Valuable Player Trophy and Gness and KIRWIN were named co-recipients of the Wayne Armstrong Sportsmanship Trophy. The presentations were made by Irv Links, long time baseball fan, and Sandy Armstrong, daughter of the late Wayne Armstrong, who helped start Novato's Legion team. Tom Zechlin received a certificate for being the team's top hitter with a .474 average. FEDRICK batting .383 and John

Kidder, .329, were the only other players to hit over .300. Other team members honored were Dennis Butler, Jack Burnam, Bill Busher, Jeff deRecat, Dave Judnick, Marty Larsen, Gregg Mazares, Steve Pond, Dennis Stanley and Jim Thompson. All players received Legion baseball pins.

## **WEDDINGS:**

Judith Ann Irwin - Michael David Lenhoff;  
Beverly C. Jonas - Thomas C. Dunderdale;  
Susan Sheehan - David Skarshaug;  
Kare Sooy - Steven Burchell;  
Susan Ann Adams - Harold Irvman Lee Kinchen;  
Jeri Lynn Palazzotto - Garry E. Martindale;  
Harriet Ann Eisenberg - James W. Garretson;  
Judi Lorraine Durham - Edward James Jurkowski;  
Julia Fahey Hauserman - Frank Tony Perachioti;  
Judy Marie Lewis - Ronald Lester Lerch;  
Arlene Marie Reynolds - Michael David Stubblefield;  
Linda Diane Pearson - Walter Thomas Becker;  
Carrie Lombardi - Howard Wright;  
Linda Sue Peterson - Dennis Wayne Moore;  
Teresa A. Whitburn - Jack E. Villemure;  
Christine A. Owen - H. Kendall Raymond;  
Eileen Rauschenberg - Joe Silva;  
Georgia Lee Anderson - George Francis Farley;  
Claudine Madeline Montvernay - David Wesley Pritchard;  
Leslie Ann Lehman - Robert H. Wilcox;  
Andrea L. Anderson - Charles J. Pearson;  
Yvonne Barca - Lt. Keith William Barngrover;  
Vicki Legerdemain - Sgt. Richard L. Delaney;  
Carolyn Anne Schlegel - Frank Bishop Goodrich;  
Nanette Lynn Hendricks - W. Eugene Hellman II;  
Sherry Teachnor - Michael J. Giardiasis;  
Catherine C. Donnelly - Thomas C. Constanten;  
Mary Bell Wood - Kurt Werner Fiell;  
Kathleen Cecilia Walsh - Henry Lee Tanner;  
Judy Ann Forsman - David Michael Long;  
Christine Louise Carter - Dennis Craig Groberg;  
Carole Lee Jensen - Robert Spencer Sanders;  
Susan Townsend - Sgt Robert Eques;  
Lee Jacobson - Kenneth Webster;  
Patsy L. Dunlap - Larry T. Medeiros;  
Kerry Lynn Onderdonk - Michael John Manzoni;  
Jodie Alverson - Rick Smith;  
Debbi Belli - Ronald Fedrick;  
Laurie Ann Irish - Russell Michael Guidi;  
Colleen Handforth - Ronald G. Larson;  
Kathryn Ann Patrick - Sgt. Carl Lee Serra;  
Sandra Lee Whitehead - Sheldon Spreen Friesella;  
Mona Alana Patterson - Stephen Carl Sozanski;  
Deborah R. Shepherd - Robert P. King;  
Patricia Malley - Dennis Larson;  
Linda McDonald - Sp4 Mark Loegering;  
Karen Claytor - Howard P. Butterstein;  
Janet Norton Aubel - Phillip Felix Plettner;  
Yolande Robin Yaris - Rand Steven Ell;  
Elizabeth Henerlau - Arthur M. Butler;  
Katherine Rose Kendrick - Steven Fredrick Dexter.

# Novato Memories

by Barry Smail

## A Look Back at Long-time Novato resident Annette Smail, “Grande Dame of the Women’s Movement”

*Barry Smail shares memories of his mother in this September edition of the Novato Historian.*

By Barry Smail, Novato Historical Guild

Annette Klang was born in Rutherford, Napa County on July 20, 1920, the year women received the right to vote. Her grandfather and father were the proprietors of the Hartman and Klang Department Store in Rutherford. In 1926, the family moved to San Francisco, where Annette attended Lafayette Grammar School, Presidio Junior High School, Galileo High School and San Francisco Junior College.

After graduating from UC Berkeley in 1944 with a degree in English Literature, Annette moved to Illinois, where she enrolled as a graduate student at the University of Chicago. There, she met Saul Alinsky, the great community organizer. His focus was Chicago’s “Back of the Yards” district, famously depicted in Upton Sinclair’s *The Jungle*. The tenements, housing an amalgam of European immigrant groups and African Americans, sat in the shadow of Chicago’s giant stockyards. Annette put graduate school on hold and became the editor of the “Back of the Yards Journal.” In 1946, she went to Washington D.C. to lobby Congress on behalf of the United Packing House Workers of America. Little did she know that 30 years later, she would be lobbying in Washington once again, this time leading her own national grassroots movement.

Annette first came to Novato in 1949. Her husband, Sergeant Donald Smail, was stationed at Hamilton Air Force Base. In 1950-1951, she worked as an administrative assistant and analyst for the Directorate of Intelligence, Western Air Defense Force at Hamilton.

In 1952, Annette became a mother when Barry was born in the Hamilton Air Force Base hospital. Karen was also born there in 1957. Putting her career in hibernation, Annette’s focus turned to motherhood and homemaking. She wrote poetry in her spare time. In 1966, after having been assigned to other military bases,



Sergeant Smail and his family moved to back to Novato. Annette would call this city home for the next 35 years. As her children were in high school and middle school, Annette went back to work part time at Hamilton, teaching effective writing to military personnel from 1966-1969. From 1969-1972, she worked as a community organizer and education program coordinator for the Marin Economic Opportunity Council (now known as Community Action Marin). In 1972, she was appointed to serve on the City of Novato’s Human Needs Committee. She wrote the resolution petitioning the City Council to establish the Novato Human Needs Center (now known as North Marin Community Services). She served as volunteer coordinator and was a member of the board.

Annette rose to national prominence in the late 1970s as she was going through a divorce. She was shocked to learn that as an ex-spouse of a military member, she would no longer be eligible for government medical benefits, even though she had worked tirelessly over a 28-year period to support the family through her husband’s various tours of duty around the world.

Her activist flame burst anew. In 1977, she met with Congressman John Burton, who agreed to introduce a bill to grant ex-spouses married 20 years or more lifetime medical benefits. She returned to Washington D.C. for the first time since 1946, and testified before Congress. But initially, her proposal encountered stiff opposition from the Pentagon and Congress. Annette turned to grass roots organizing, and founded Medical Equality for Dependents (MED). What started out as a Novato-based group quickly evolved into a national lobbying organization. After a five-year struggle, during which time ex-military spouses from all over the country were enlisted and trained by Annette to petition their representatives, Congress relented, and Burton’s bill was passed and signed into law by President Ronald Reagan. Thousands of ex-military spouses, many of whom were ill, without medical insurance and poverty-stricken, had their medical rights restored.

In 1979, Annette was named recipient of the “Women Helping Women” award by the Soroptimist Club of Novato. In the same

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## Novato Memories

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year, she was named one of three “Women of the Year” by the *Novato Advance*.

Annette worked on many community projects relating to women. Her special focus was on the feminization of poverty and aging. In 1981, Governor Jerry Brown appointed Annette as a delegate to the White House Conference on Aging. In 1984, California Lieutenant Governor Leo McCarthy established the Feminization of Poverty Task Force and appointed her as one of its charter members.

In 1977, Annette founded the Older Women’s Caucus, a subgroup of the National Women’s Political Caucus (NWPC) and played a leading role in NWPC’s Marin chapter. She volunteered for the Marin County Area Agency on Aging and the Marin County Commission on the Status of Women, among other agencies.

Annette was a member of Congregation Rodef Sholom in San Rafael and served on the Jewish Community Relations Council. She was awarded the national Eleanor Roosevelt Women of Vision award in 1984. That same year, Annette initiated another nationwide campaign to reestablish a Federal Council on Women, which President Reagan had abolished. The legislation was carried by then-Congresswoman Barbara Boxer. The model Annette envisioned was based on the original President’s Commission on the Status of Women established in 1961 by President Kennedy. Its first chair was Eleanor Roosevelt, one of Annette’s heroes. After 11 years of lobbying, in 1996, the Clinton Administration agreed to set up the President’s Interagency Council on Women, not exactly what Annette had in mind, but she came to accept it.

Annette was inducted into the Marin Women’s Hall of Fame in 1991 and continued to stay active into the late 1990s,

working with Transforming Communities, a Novato-based agency whose goal was “creating safety and justice for women and girls,” and Marin Abused Women Services (now known as the Center for Domestic Peace).

Annette passed away on March 10, 2007. On March 15, a headline in the Marin Independent Journal referred to her as the “Grande Dame of the Women’s Movement.” Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey’s tribute in the March 27, 2007 issue of the Congressional Record said: “I rise today to honor my friend Annette Klang Smail. Her example has motivated many others to fight for their rights and not give up. And she paved the way for women like me to become involved and seek leadership positions”. Supervisor Judy Arnold sponsored a County proclamation honoring Annette. It was entitled “A Life Well Lived.”

Anyone who knew Annette is welcome to contact me, as I am writing her biography. My cell is 415-497-2254.

## NOVATO’S TREASURES

### Alfred Walter Bowman

MIKE READ

March 23, 1962 *Novato Advance*

### Alfred Bowman, Inventor, Investor & Citizen

In 1944 he was a newcomer to Novato. A crisp, business-like stranger who had put his money into a commercial building at Grant Avenue near Highway 101. By 1946, the entire community was aware of his presence.

The town had watched his newly purchased building burn to the ground and had seen him construct a motion picture theater and stores in its place. And, early in that first post-war year, his startled fellow townsman read that he had won from the then Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson a citation for his work at the Lawrence Radiation Lab where he had been in charge of the mechanical construction of America’s first atomic bomb.

This is Al Bowman, Novatan, engineer, manufacturer, businessman,

civic leader. A native Californian - “One of the few to be found in the state,” he says. He was born on September 12, 1909, in La Jolla, the son of a general contractor who contributed much to the building of that seaside community. Al remained in La Jolla, attending the elementary school there, until he was 12, when his father retired to a farm in Oregon’s Rogue River Valley. Within two years, the elder Bowman decided that the easy life was not for him and brought his family south to Berkeley to enter business there.

Al attended Berkeley Junior High School, then Berkeley High, and went on to Polytechnic College of Engineering in Oakland, graduating from there in 1929. He followed his graduation with further engineering study at the University of California and at George Washington University in the nation’s capital.

While at GWU, he took a job with the Federal Radio Commission, now the



Alfred Walter Bowman

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## Novato Treasures

FCC, leaving it in 1932 to try his hand as a store manager with a family enterprise in the Midwest, Bowman Shoes, a retail chain of 17 stores. Today he recalls his retail experience with the words, “I found it was harder to sell a woman a pair of shoes than a man a carload of merchandise.”

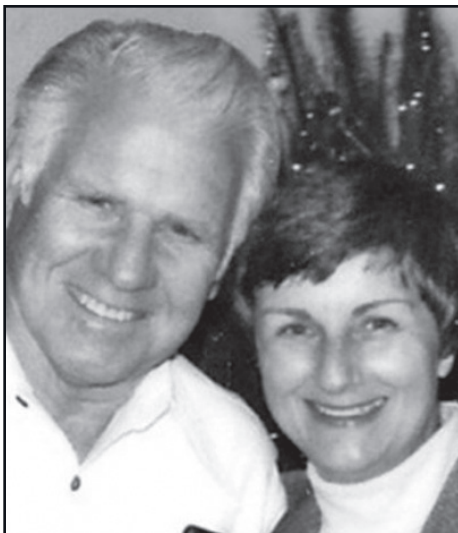
With that lesson in mind, he opened the Bowman Building Supply Company. The company, which Al still looks on as one of his most successful ventures, manufactured and distributed flooring.

With the coming of World War II, he had to close his plant. He did so because materials and help were impossible to obtain and because the plant itself was not of a type readily convertible to war production,

In 1942, he went to New Orleans to join the Navy for radar training in England. He was turned down because of the remnants that he still carried around of a tropical disease contracted in the South.

The Army also decided that he was not fit for active duty, and so he came on to UC's Lawrence Radiation Lab to head the mechanical production of the atomic bomb for the Manhattan Project.

His work at Lawrence was done by 1944 and he began to nose about the



Alfred and Carmen Bowman

northern part of the state in search of enterprises in which to invest his money.

Novato – quite by accident – proved to be the place he was looking for. Stopping by the town, he dropped into a barbershop and while having his hair cut, happened to ask if there were any good investments locally. The barber said that the general commercial building at Grant and 101 was for sale. Al looked into the matter and purchased the building in December of that year.

Telling the story, he shakes his head and says, “And then the darned thing burned to the ground in April 1945. On the charred site, he built the Novato Theater, opening it in 1946, leasing it first to Coast Side Theaters and then to its present manager, Donald F. Donahue.

The theater has the distinction of being one of a handful of movie houses built during wartime.

Since then, Al has devoted his time to patent development and research and to civic affairs.

In his research work, he currently holds the patents on hydraulic car window regulators and a nailing machine.

On the civic side of things, he is a long-time member of the Chamber of Commerce, having served as its president in such years as 1946, 1947, 1959-60. In that capacity, he has been one of the prime leaders in the effort to relocate the proposed Highway 101 freeway to the east of the city, as well as one of the many citizens who actively worked on the studies that led to Novato's incorporation in 1960.

A sampling of his other activities through the years shows that in 1946 he was appointed by the county board of supervisors as the Fifth District Representative to the board of the Marin County Hospital District; that in 1947 he was a director with the newly formed Novato Community, Inc. (Community House); that in 1948 he was appointed to the highway committee of the Redwood Empire Association to help map plans for highway development for the period of 1955-60; that in 1949, as a committee member with the Redwood Empire Association he

helped promote the conversion of three-lane “death traps” into four lane roadways; and that, in the years leading up to the present, he has been a member of the Lions Club, the Marin Boy Scout Board, and the County Airport Action Committee.

Al and his wife Carmen live now at 827 Reichert Street.

**By Michael Read**

**Aug 13, 1945 Argus** - Alfred W. Bowman, purchaser of the Pini store building and other local properties knows all about the atomic bomb as he spent several years as first inspector in the mechanical procurement department at the University of California in Berkeley, later advancing to the head of the department, where he did advanced research work on the cyclotron under Directors Ernest Lawrence and Donald Cooksey, leading to the breaking of the atom which led to the use of the atomic bomb. He is the proud possessor of letters from both scientists speaking highly of his skill and efficiency in this very confidential research work until the job was finished and the news of the atomic bomb released by President Truman, permitting Bowman to tell of his part in it.

1961 Al was one of the originators of the Novato Community Inc, started a lawsuit against the Community Clubhouse to turn it over the City of Novato and won.

1962 Al was pushing for the “J” route Highway 101 bypass of the highway, even mounted a recall campaign on the councilmen who favored the “E” route through town.

1964 Al found out that the old house owned by Robert L. Gaut was the oldest house left in Novato and was the first post office for the town. So, he got a six-month option from Gaut to buy it for \$5,000 to use as the basis of a city museum.

1967 Al made the 6-foot 7-inch weathervane perched on top of Novato city hall himself.



## Novato Treasures

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### PROPANE LESS POLLUTING THAN GASOLINE

Water Next Source For Car Fuel?

"It's theoretically possible to run cars on water fuel. What's needed is to devise an electrical system that will break up the water into its constituent parts of hydrogen and oxygen cheaply, efficiently and quickly," says Alfred W. Bowman, well known as a Novato property owner and as 1969 Marin Grand jury foreman, but known to relatively few as an electrical engineer and inventor.

The *Advance* chatted informally with Bowman during a relaxing visit to Pioneer Memorial Park. We sniffed the clean air and talked about auto pollution and what might be done about it.

Bowman, 827 Reichert Avenue, said electrical engineering is his first love. He worked seven years in the broadcast engineering division of the Federal Radio Commission in the Hoover administration. That commission is now known as the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

He had his own oak flooring business in Memphis, Tennessee, and was a department head at the University of California, Berkeley, for the Manhattan Project in 1943 and 1944. This was the research project for the atomic bomb and Bowman worked under the direction of the late Dr. Ernest O. Lawrence.

It was while he worked and lived in Berkeley in 1943, Bowman recalls, that he began experimenting with engines in a rented double garage.

"I had a friend who was the co-inventor of the Waukeshaw Diesel," he says, "and through the knowledge I gained in conversations with him, I decided to apply to passenger cars the principles of semi-diesel operation used in trucks."

"In a semi-diesel operation you combine the compression of a diesel engine with an ignition system. I procured an old Nash engine that had

overhead valves adaptable to semi-diesel and I converted it. I had to design a new ignition system to fire the engine properly - which I did."

"It took two years to develop the proper ignition system and I finished inventing it in Novato and got a patent on it. This system has twice the push of the conventional magneto system (incidentally in an aside)," Bowman explained, "A lot of people complain that the diesel fuel trucks and buses emit a terrific odor and I think they're terrible, too, but they do not contribute to air pollution in the same proportion as internal combustion gasoline engines. Their actual contribution to air pollution is comparatively negligible."

After developing his semi-diesel engine with the new ignition system, Bowman carried his inventing into the field of LPG gas. During the Korean War, he equipped a Lincoln Cosmopolitan so that it burned LPG gas, which is a mixture of butane and propane.

"The conventional internal combustion gasoline engine, with certain modifications, will burn a mixture of butane and propane," says Bowman. "I rigged it to run either on conventional gasoline or the mix. The key to the adaptation is removal of heat from the intake manifold. I sealed the heat risers with asbestos. You need better ignition to run on LPG and that's where my invention of the ignition system came in handy. The LPG fuel is slow burning and you need more powerful ignition to fire it."

"One of the disadvantages of LPG is that there's not as much power (not as many BTU's per gallon) as with conventional gas. But the advantage is no air pollution and your engine will run seemingly forever without repair work because there's no carbon going



down into the engine to eat it up. And you don't need oil changes. The oil stays clean. As a matter of fact, the oil tends to thicken from heat distillation, so when you add oil you have to add lighter oil to thin it."

"The reversal of the trend in the horsepower race could make LPG a popular fuel," says Bowman. He is also the inventor of a patented hydraulic window-lifter, which he still sells to classic car owners.

"I've been all over the world trying to sell my ignition patent," he adds, "but the problem is that you run up against major oil and auto companies who won't give an outsider credit for a good idea. They want to develop everything themselves."

Bowman says the internal combustion gasoline engine is terribly inefficient on the judging scale of fuel consumption and pollution.

"What's needed? More aggressive actions and attitudes by auto makers and oil companies in finding solutions to problems of air pollution and car safety and efficiency."

November 1973, Carmen Rey Bowman, 66, died in San Francisco, following a four-month illness. Born in New York City to Spanish immigrant parents, Mrs. Bowman later moved with her family to California. Following graduation from San Francisco Normal School, she taught at the one-room

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## Heads up for Hamilton and Nurse

By Mike Corlett

The Hamilton Field History Museum has a new display: a bust of Lloyd Andrews Hamilton. Howard Lazar, a portrait and history sculptor, delivered it to the museum on May 16th of this year.

Howard Lazar had driven past the museum a few times and he was curious about who the "Hamilton" was in Hamilton Field. Lazar visited the HFHM website in June of 2019 to do some research. Shortly after that, he spoke to the Director of Museum Operations, Ray Dwelly, about sculpting a bust of ace flyer Lloyd Andrews Hamilton and then donating it to the museum. Ray gave him the go-ahead, and Lazar went to work on the bust while researching – in books and online – his subject and aerial combat.

Among other things, he learned that First Lieutenant Lloyd Andrews Hamilton was a WWI pilot who first flew for the British 3<sup>rd</sup> Aero Squadron and then transferred to the US Army's 7<sup>th</sup> Aero Squadron. Hamilton was killed in action on August 26<sup>th</sup>, 1918, in France and awarded the Distinguished Service Cross posthumously.

Lazar's works are in national, state and permanent municipal collections. His subjects have ranged from people and events in WWI and WWII, to famous composers and musicians, actors and artists. He was also the founding director of the San Francisco Arts Commission's Street Artists Program for 45 years.

I asked Lazar what prompted him to begin sculpting people he found interesting and then donating the statues to the appropriate museum. He replied, "It is a love or affinity for the talents of my subjects. I will find a subject that was famous but



Howard Lazar and the Hamilton Bust

didn't always get the spotlight they deserved. It is my way of paying homage to that person."

He described his efforts on Hamilton as "a joyous path of homage to the spirit of a young American flyer whose courage was immortalized in the airfield named for him." The Army's official photos of Hamilton are rather stoic and unsmiling. Lazar sculpted a smiling Hamilton based upon one photo he found of his subject in a more casual and relaxed situation.

After delivering the Hamilton bust to the museum on May 16th, the conversation moved to Hamilton Field Architect Howard B. Nurse and his groundbreaking architectural vision for the airfield. Dwelly asked Lazar if he would do a bust of Nurse. Lazar said he would be honored to do so. Ray introduced him to museum curator Jim Davenport, who supplied Lazar with the documents

and photos the museum has about Nurse, and Lazar began work on the project

Thanks to the generosity of Howard Lazar, the HFHM is looking forward to having busts of two of the most prominent figures associated with the history of Hamilton Field.

# Novato Treasures

Continued from Page N – 8

Pioneer School near Eagleville, Modoc County. In 1930 she married her childhood sweetheart, Alfred W. Bowman, who survives her. The couple moved to Novato in 1944.

July 1974, Al Bowman, 64, would marry Clara Dieter, 43, of San Rafael in Reno.

BOWMAN, Alfred W. Passed away peacefully at home (Santa Rosa) on August 14, 2003. He is survived by his wife of 29 years, Clara, her three children, their spouses and 4 grandchildren. Al was an incredible businessman and civic leader, and he had an unusual talent for knowing what to do and how to get it done. He was a true leader in all his many endeavors. Al was highly active in business and civic affairs in Novato and Marin County for 30 years before moving to Santa Rosa in 1974.

Clara met Alfred Bowman in 1972 while doing private duty nursing. They were married in June 1974. They built a new house, traveled extensively and walked every day. In 1991, Al had the first of his final illnesses and Clara's nursing training provided the knowledge she needed to care for him full-time until his passing in 2003.

Clara G. Bowman passed away November 25, 2016. Clara was born in 1930 in Manitowoc, WI, the 10th of 13 children. In 1948, she attended the School of Nursing at the Baptist Hospital in Little Rock, AK. Before receiving her cap, she moved to Long Beach, CA in 1949 where she met her first husband. She moved to Santa Rosa in September 1949, where all three of her children were born. In 1956, Clara got a job as a Psychiatric Technician at Sonoma State Hospital in Eldridge. In 1960, she returned to Santa Rosa Junior College to complete her Registered Nurse's training, graduating top of her class, and returning to work as a nurse at Sonoma State Hospital. She was chosen by SRJC to become a teacher of Psych Tech in their new program and was appointed director of the SRJC Department. Clara loved teaching in the classroom and in clinical areas.

## Welcome New Guild Members

**Novato Historical Guild  
Membership Report  
June 2020**

**Individual Membership**  
James Cranney

**Business Membership**  
Novato Grove Druids #113

*If you have questions about membership,  
call*

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



### Please support our Guild Business Members:

- Aaero Heating & Sheet Metal, Inc
- A. D. Scott Building
- Andrew McAgnon Landscaping
- Bank of Marin
- Dennis Hagerty, State Farm Insurance
- 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



Drive through graduation at Novato High School - June 2020.



### 2020 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, Kathryn Hansen at (415) 898-0467, 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**  
**Michael “Mike” Irvine**

### The Guild Extends Sympathy to

The Irvine and Brossier families on the loss of Michael Irvine

## 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/>



Novato High graduate Corey Denton

### 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  
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**YOU ARE INVITED**

**General Membership Meeting ~ Novato Historical Guild**

**General Meeting cancelled due to Corona Virus**

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**