

The Novato Historian

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

Preserving Novato's History
News Section

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October – December 2020

The Novato Historian

Volume 44, Number 4

Novato Memorializes Past City Leadership

The Novato Historical Guild would like to thank Patrick MacLeamy for his contribution of bricks with historical information.. Each brick lists the mayor and the “Citizen of the Year” from 1960 to the present.

The City Hall Brick Project fits in with the mission of the Guild in collecting, preserving and making available artifacts, exhibits and records relating to development of the Novato Valley and the adjacent North Marin area.



The Novato Historian

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Guild Mission Statement

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

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Deadline for the March 2021 issue is February 1st

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Address Changes

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



President's Corner

Kathryn Hansen
President, Novato Historical Guild

Continuing Our Mission During Covid

The mission of this Guild is to collect, preserve and make reasonably available to the public exhibits and information related to the historical and social development of the Novato Valley and the adjacent North Marin area. In the past the Guild has focused on its mission to the public through the museums, newsletter and website.

Along comes the COVID 19 crisis and the Guild now has an opportunity to collect pictures and stories from citizens, businesses, non-profits and government on how they were affected. The Guild would welcome your contribution to the collection. The plan is to scan all the documents into a permanent electronic file and to have an exhibit at the museums at some later date. A scrapbook is also going to be filled with pictures and stories from citizens, businesses and newspaper articles related to the impact on Novato. This effort is being led by the COVID 19 Committee (Barry Smail, Michael Corlett and Susan Magnone).

The museums have been closed since March and will stay closed the rest of the year. This has an impact on the financial position of the Guild. Revenue from museum visitors has stopped. Therefore, donations are \$878.68 less than at this time last year and gift shop income is \$1,811.55 less than at this time last year. The City of Novato used to print "The Novato Historian" at no charge to the Guild. The City's print shop was closed so the Guild sent the newsletter via e-mail. Many members expressed their disappointment because they find email harder to read than print.

Based on the comments of members the Board agreed to pay for the Spring and Summer issues of "The Novato Historian." This was an unexpected expense of \$1,323.61.

The Board has been meeting on a monthly basis, not at the Margaret Todd Center, but on Zoom. This new interactive media feature has kept the Board together. The Board has been very active in adapting to the changes COVID 19 has brought to our lives. This effort is being led by Mike Read, our Zoom master.

As you recall, our quarterly membership (March, June, & September) meetings have been cancelled. The Board is working on having the quarterly membership meetings broadcast on Zoom. Look for further announcements related to the December membership meeting hosted on Zoom. This effort is being headed up by Board Member, Kate Johnston. In keeping within the mission of the Novato Historical Guild, the Board has made great strides in adding to the collection, adjusting to the changing financial position and making information available through different mediums.



August 2020 - start of NUSD school year with Covid 19 restrictions.



Novato – 50 Years Ago

(October, November, December 1971)

by Yvette Borloz Jackson

Dear Readers,
Greetings Loyal Reader, This is the last issue of the Newsletter of 2020. This year has been like no other year in my lifetime, thank goodness. I found, I hope, interesting & memory provoking items for the following article. Few of us went into 2020 expecting an impeachment, a pandemic, riots, murder Hornets, earthquakes, fires, a contested election, whales swallowing kayakers and whatever has hit you individually. History making? Maybe, but this hasn't been a bad year. It's been a year more like some and less like others. We don't control what has been, but we can have some influence over what will be. Take care through the holiday season, be kind to one another and let's get through this so we can enjoy each other's company soon.

Yvette Jackson

P.S. November 7, 2020 - Joe Biden was elected the 46th President of the United States with his running mate, Kamala Harris, who was elected the first black/Asian woman to become Vice President. HISTORY WAS MADE TODAY.

MAYBE WE LIKE IT DIRTY. One of the regular events that gives Novato its own distinctive flavor as a community are the semi-annual clean-up drives....This has almost become exclusively the work of youth groups, who have noticed that adults seldom join in the Mr. Clean attack.

NICE COMMUNITY, NICE NEIGHBORS, SAY RESIDENTS. "I love it. Its just like home, and with all the conveniences. Nice neighborhood and nice neighbors," says Mrs. Mary Ballantine, a widow, one of the occupants of the new "turn key" housing project for the elderly at the end of Fourth St. and Carmel Dr. (Casa Nova).

NOVATO WINS ACROSS-TOWN CLASSIC 17-13. The Hornets put up a tremendous goal line stand in the closing minutes to preserve a 17-13 victory over the San Marin Mustangs in Saturday's big Game on the Novato High grid.

PROUD OF PRIZE PONY. Grand opening prizes have been drawn and awarded by the new Ross family apparel store in the Downtown Shopping Center and the first prize, a pony, was won by Mary Ellen Agnew, 1360 Monte Maria. Proudly enjoying the prize are Zona Agnew, Eileen Agnew, Nancy Agnew and Peggy Braff. Prize drawing also awarded a trip to Disneyland, an overnight stay for two won by John Demers. Don Westlake, Ross manager here, said approximately \$1,000 of merchandise awards were won by 100 other Novatans.

"INFILTRATE" RADICAL GROUPS. Peter H. Behr, GOP nominee for state senator from the 4th District, has called for increased federal assistance in "ending the wave of senseless bombings that imperil the lives and property of all Californians," Behr told members of the Novato Rotary Club at Nero's Restaurant at lunch last Friday: "The only method of preventing the rash of bombings across the country is through infiltration of revolutionary groups." Now the federal government must move effectively against the Weathermen, SDS and other radical groups, which are undermining the very principles of our nation....Behr told the group that the federal offense should be broadened to encompass the unlicensed possession of explosives, the illegal instruction in their manufacture or use and the theft of explosives or conspiracies to possess, instruct or steal them.

YULE PACKAGES SENT TO VIETNAM. Christmas packages were mailed yesterday to 14 servicemen in Vietnam by a group of women from the Novato United Methodist Church. The servicemen include: Cpl. William D. Convis, Sgt. J.P. Grace, Sgt. Jack V. Rickey, PFC Jeffery C. Ross, LTC. Joseph A. Zingale, Sp. 4 Carl Van Houck, Pvt. Edward Bethards, SM Sgt. J. D. Conover, Spc. 4 Paul Andrews, LTC Carsten Rabehi, Pvt. Bill Roscoe, DC 3 John Russell, Sgt. Stanley A. Cudia and Sgt. Barry Roberts.

CITY RECREATION. Registration for activities are being taken in the Novato Parks and Recreation office, 917 Sherman Ave. from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. today. Tiny Tots...Holiday Show... Christmas Crafts...Food and Cake Decorating... Ballet and Tap... Teen Jazz... Art Class for Children...Yoga... Judo... Fashion Show. A fashion show sponsored by Ross Store will be held at the Community House next Monday at 8 p.m. The fashion show climaxes the teen modeling course conducted by the recreation department. The models will be class participants. Instructor is Laura Frazier.

UP FOR SALE. Jim's Sport Shop, 703 Grant Ave., is looking for a new owner. Partners Harold Greenwood and Art Gee are offering the business through Associated Developers, asking \$36,500 for the building, which contains 3,000 square feet, and \$65,000 for their merchandise, for a total price just into six figures. Jim's has been a fixture in its east Grant Avenue location for 17 years.

HOPES TO DESTROY 'YOUTHFUL APATHY' "I'll be speaking for myself, but I do believe I'll be speaking for many others too," says Peter Sorensen, 17, newly appointed member of the Marin County Youth Commission. Chairman of the San Marin High School student assembly, member of the school's senior class committee, football varsity wing-back, basketball varsity guard and member of the varsity golf team, Sorensen believes his prime job as a commissioner will be to "formally express the ideas of youth to the Board of Supervisors...and to other official groups such as the Board of Education. The ideas of the young people need to be made known formally."

TO SUSPEND RUBELLA CLINICS UNTIL JANUARY. The Monday afternoon rubella vaccination clinic at the county Health Department's Civic Center office will be discontinued for about

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50 Years Ago

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two months while rubella vaccinations are given in the schools, Dr. Carolyn B. Albrecht, County Health Officer, announced last week. It is expected that the clinic will be resumed January 4. Beginning in December, rubella vaccinations for children 1 through 11 years of age will be given in public schools in Novato. Private, parochial and nursery school children will be included in the program.

MEETINGS SLATED ON RUBELLA SHOTS. Parents who have questions about the rubella immunization program, that will get underway in Novato on December 9th, can attend meetings to be held at local elementary schools.

DREAM OF AMERICA STILL DRAWS. The American dream is a very real ideal in the minds of European people, the audience at the Friends of the Library was told at the group's recent reception. The speaker was Dr. Henry Gardner, adult education lecturer in philosophy and political science. A former European who is now an American, he spent last summer in Europe. Americans must be careful that they do not lose the inspiration of the American dream in their own country, he said.

THE WOMEN OF NOVATO. The women service clubs of Novato were recognized for their service, charity and hard work in a special section of a November issue of the Novato Advance. There were 36 total mentioned. I can't name them all because of limited space but here are some you might recognize. Nova-Marin Grandmothers Club who supported an 8 year old Navajo Indian... Sunny Hills Novato Guild No.1 and Sunny Hills Novato No. 2... Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary who gave aid to firemen during an emergency... North Marinites Society (formerly Alpha Tau chapter Kappa Phi Sigma) Alpha Lambda Chapter, Kappa Phi Sigma, Upsilon Gamma Chapter, Xi Kappa Psi Chapter Beta Sigma Phi, whose missions were: better oneself culturally, promote fellowship and friendship... Marin Country Club Garden Club - beautification, Novato Garden Club-city landscaping... Officers Wives Club-HAFB, NCO Wives Club- HAFB...Sylvan Circle which began in 1923... League of Women Voters, who promoted politi-

cal responsibility... Jolly Rogers chapter who supported Children's Home Society Adoption Agency (and still do)... VFW Auxiliary who celebrated 20 years in 1970. Eastern Star.

TOWNHOUSES MEAN MARIN CITY:

The prospect of having townhouse neighbors with incomes less than \$8,000 per year caused certain Trumbull Estates (the Vistas) residents to rise up with indignation at Tuesday night's council meeting. Protests against Boise Cascade's master plan for more than 200 townhouse units on the 59-acre Olivia Ranch next to Trumbull Estates Unit 2 included cries of "We don't want another Marin City."

RECORD RAINFALL TOTAL: Never before in Novato's modern recorded rain history, from the start of the wet season through December 2, has there been such an abounding overflow of heavenly dew. Fire Chief Jack Kidder, reporting damply that the first two days of December contributed a total of 3 inches to the total rainfall adding machine through 8 AM today, had only one statement to make for publications: "It looks like it's going to get wetter before it gets drier." Adding December's thus far 3 inches of rain to the .97 inches recorded in October at the main fire station and the 8.71 inches in November makes a new record total of 12.68 inches of Novato rainfall thus far in the season of showers.

SEASON WISHES BY NOVATANS: The greatest Christmas gift of all for most Novatans would be families together, an end to the war in Vietnam and peace throughout the world.

• Mr. and Mrs. Bill Gay: "We have love. We wish everyone in the rest of the world has their share of love for Christmas and always."

• Mrs. Margaret Rickey said she could not want for much personally because living in California offers all that anyone could ask. "For the world," she said, "I'd like to see a little more honesty between people, not only in relationships with their families but also with their co-workers and in business."

• Pam Bernoel, was certain she wanted "nothing particularly special for myself," but she was equally certain she wanted "peace in the world and, for the family, we'd like to have a white Christmas In Yosemite."

• Mary Halloran replied: "The best way to answer is what I heard - that Christ is cancelling his birthday this year due to the lack of world peace."

• Mrs. Nancy Dickinson and son Larry, 2 months old, said: "The main thing I'm concerned about at Christmas, this or any Christmas, is that I wish we could put Christ back in Christmas, not making it so commercial."

• Jack Conniff said: "For myself, I'd like a job. If anybody needs a field service manager, it doesn't matter what the product is, I can do the job. My specialty is controls & electronics. A job would fix up my family fine for Christmas."

• Diane Halpenny said she wanted nothing for herself. "I'd like to see people have greater acceptance of other people - more acceptance of other people's differences."

• Charles Michael Schnell, age 9, had one gift in mind. "A race track, a car race track, an Eldon 500."

WEDDINGS:

Janet Lantz - Robert Casagrande:
Patricia Ann Murphy - Harold W. Sagan:
Melanie Lines - John Ferris Manning:
Lurah Magee - Kenneth Bellucci:
Linda Louise Roche - John Craig Griffey:
Teresa Ruth Moran - John Clifford Stevenson
Jana Vaughan - Jonathan Brooks Allen
Gail Rogers - Daniel Payette
Sharla Leah Rowland - Philip Norman Gjervi
Jill Kathleen Bergala - Frank Anthony Ammirata
Katherine Rogelio - Rand Alan Hutchison
Janet Richey - Sgt. Peter Anthony van Rijsbergen
Patrice Camille Hand - Dr. Avery Mark Goldman
Patricia Carpenter - Steven Thornycroft
Deborah Weber - Michael Weitenhagen
Janet Gunthorp - Paul Mobley
Nancy Lee Allen - Stephen Michael Berg.

Novato Memories

Jim McNern



Laurie McGrath Gratiot

Laurie McGrath Gratiot is the oldest daughter of the late Ralph and Catherine McGrath. She is a 1964 graduate of Novato High School. Laurie shares her memories of growing up in Novato in this December issue of the Novato Historian.

My family, Ralph, Cathy, Laurie, Kit and Margie moved to Novato in 1956. We had been visiting my Aunt Janet and Uncle Bill Melson here since 1948. Arthur Street was built opposite their house in the 1950's. I remember walking on an unpaved Arthur Street to see Novato High School being built.

We moved to a 52 acre property at 300 Olive Avenue. The driveway was a dirt road 3/5 of a mile long. The Bugeias had lived there as kids and moved out in 1904. Johnny Bugeia said it was an old house then. The living room windows were hand made glass with lead. We had an orchard, stable, brooder house, chicken coop and a barn for our sheep.

My father refused to have a milk cow, so we bought milk from Mrs. Medeiros. Most of our animals were bought from Ed Mazzoleni. We had 50 ewes (who always lambed in the rainiest February weather.) We had a dozen Rhode Island Red chickens, a goat named Violet and a goose named Matilda.

The most exciting thing for me was having horses! My horse, Blaze, was a sorrel. Dad had an Appaloosa named Taxiann and Kit had a horse named Silver. Our family joined the Novato Horsemen and I learned to ride in a drill team and competed in pole bending. The Young and Hansen girls were the best riders.

In those days there were no locks on doors! The telephone was a party line. We had dial phones in San Rafael.

School began in September with a 7:02 a.m. bus ride to Olive School. Miss Sutton was our principal. My 4th grade teacher was a shock. She yelled at kids and broke rulers over their hands. She was gone by the time Kit reached 4th grade. I was lucky to have Mrs. Steele for 5th grade. There was a piano in the room so there was lots of music. My 6th grade teacher was Mr. Slepnikoff. We were challenged to read and I read over 100 books that year.

After school, the bus picked us up at Plum Street. We went up the 101 Highway to the Silveira Ranch and then back to Atherton to Black Point. We were the second to the last stop on Olive Avenue. We had wonderful bus drivers: Lena, Tony, Margaret and Valerie. We sang and did homework on the bus. Sue Binford, Elaine Medeiros, Jackie Kimball, and Sharon Jackson were



Laurie and Kit in sandbox at home



Laurie on her horse Blaze with her mother and sister, Kit.

Novato Memories

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all neighbors who rode the bus with Kit and me.

Living on a small ranch was very different than living in suburbia. The number one lesson to be learned was to always close and lock gates! Animals had to be fed and watered before us.



I fed the chickens every day and gathered eggs. We fed the sheep alfalfa and hay. I learned to wear old clothes in rainy weather because their wool was like a very wet sponge. The horses got oats, hay and alfalfa. My dad borrowed our neighbor's tractor and I got to ride with him as we plowed and planted our hay field.

Summers were so much fun! We had Western Weekend with a wonderful parade and rodeo. A carnival came to town. Our dads grew beards..



Olive School- Fifth Grade

I was in 4-H from age 10 through 18. I learned sewing from Mrs. Benaski and animal husbandry from the Pronzinis. Pini Hardware bought my steer. I saved the money. The other half was spent on school clothes. We took the Greyhound bus at Grant and 101 for trips to the city.

Most summers we spent a week at Buck's Lake with 30 to 40 other people from Novato. We had a ski boat which we towed up the beautiful Feather River canyon. I fished a lot and did many hikes. The highlight of the week was a potluck at the Manzonis.

I loved going to 4-H camp in the hills above Angwin. We had morning hikes with Arnold Righetti, baseball, swimming and an evening campfire. Mrs. Baccaglio was often our nurse.

We shopped for groceries at Rayburns on Grant Avenue. My dad paid our bill once a month. A developmentally disabled man named Tootie brought our groceries to the car. Alfalfa and grains for animals were bought at Pini Mill. (Where Whole Foods is today.) Pini Hardware was on Grant

Avenue too. I once bought an ironing board as a gift and they wrapped it!

I was a girl scout through high school. My troop volunteered at Sonoma State Hospital twice a month. From my troop we had a pediatrician, two registered nurses and a special ed teacher.

After high school, I attended St. Joseph's College of Nursing in San Francisco. Our neighborhood was Haight Street. It was amazing to see how it changed from a normal San Francisco street from 1964 - 1967. I became a R.N. and worked at St. Mary's Hospital until I got married in 1973. I met my husband, Jim, at a 49'ers game at Candlestick Park. I have always been a Giants fan. Kit and I went to the 1962 World Series. I've had season tickets since 2000. I often go with NHS classmates: Bob Renati and Jim Cranney.



Laurie at St. Joseph's College of Nursing in San Francisco

NOVATO'S TREASURES

Paxton House - 808 Paxton Ct

MIKE READ

This home was built by Col. Alexis Rupert Paxton. The home was situated on a knoll just high enough for a panoramic view of the valley. It was known as Paxton Place, in Novato Ranch Sub. B, and included approximately 40 acres.

It was bounded by the present Hill Road, Diablo Boulevard and in two places reached through to Center Road and Tamalpais Avenue. Col. Paxton had hoped to acquire the remaining land bordering Center and Tamalpais Avenues. This he never accomplished before his death in 1931 at the age of 82.

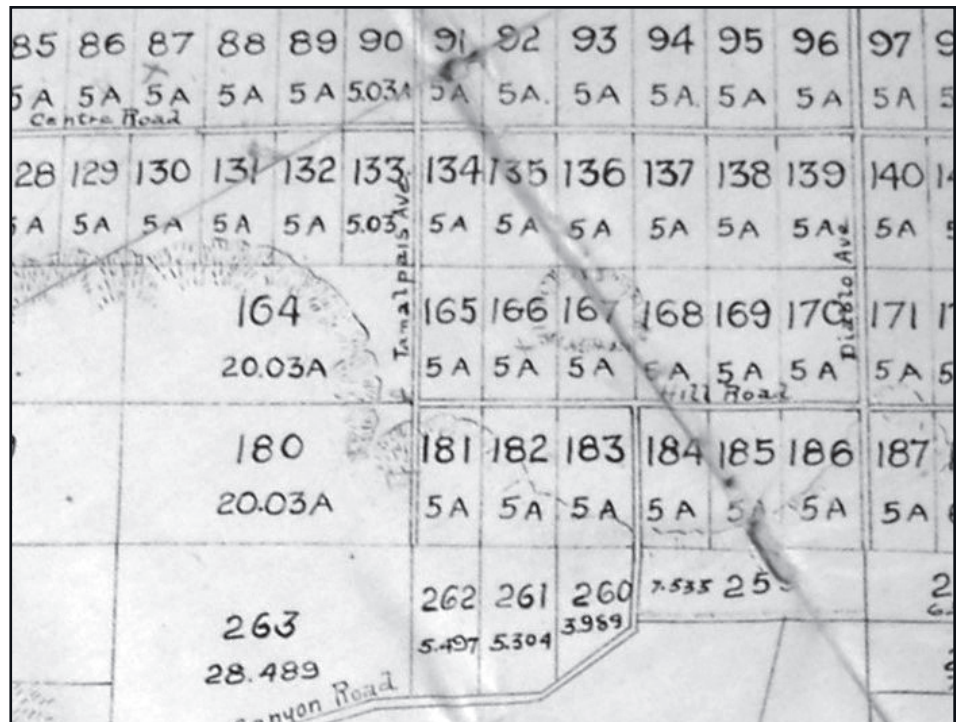
The house was a rectangular cement house facing south-east. Col. Paxton engaged in horticulture, the principal crop being pears. He also had apples, walnuts, prunes, almonds and about seven or eight varieties of grapes – including Champagne, Ladyfinger and Zinfandel.

Colonel Paxton was a native of Philadelphia, born October 5, 1849. At the age of 28, he was appointed a second lieutenant in the Army on March 3, 1877. He travelled and served in many parts of the world. He served in the Indian Wars and the Spanish American Wars in Cuba and the Philippines.

He was stationed in the Philippine Islands in 1900-02 and again in 1912 -13. From 1903 to 1905 his station was Alcatraz Island, commanding a battalion of the 13th Infantry post and military prison. He served as military attaché in Mexico in 1906-08. In June 1908, he was made lieutenant colonel of



The Paxton property with panoramic views and an orchard.



This map shows the Paxton property, and you can see lot 167 has a knoll.

Novato Treasures

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the 24th Infantry and reached the grade of colonel in March 1911. In March 1913, he retired after reaching the age of sixty-two.

He bought lots 167 and 168 for \$20,000 on March 29, 1910 and said he was from Fort Ontario, Oswego, New York. Colonel Paxton had the construction begin in 1911 on this seven-room home with two baths and a full basement.

The floor plan originally consisted of a small bedroom with a small sitting room and bath, jointly accessible; a large bedroom, bath, sitting room or library; a main living room just as one entered the front door. There was also a dining room in the south corner with the kitchen directly behind it.

In March, Colonel Paxton bought five acres (lot 169), and in April twenty-five acres more (lot 136 to 139).

Aug 4, 1932 the *San Francisco Examiner* reported: "Throughout the life of Col. Alexis Rupert

Paxton, retired army officer, Theresa Kaufhold was known as his housekeeper.

It was not until nine months after his death, that a secret marriage of twenty-six years ago was revealed.

It came about when she appeared before Superior Judge Graham to claim Paxton's \$36,000 estate, which he had willed to her."

November 1942 - J. A. Cutshaw, San Francisco, business executive, has purchased from Mrs. Hildegard Roberts the Paxton property.

A.E. Pulley owned the home next; he also owned the A.D. Scott store on Grant Ave.

May 27, 1947 *Argus* - Dr. Robert L Bender of San Francisco has purchased the A.E. Pulley property, originally owned by Col. Paxton. The doctor will commute to his San Francisco office.

Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Bradley owned the home next, and they modernized it. Floyd Bradley was a distributor of plastic pipe and blasting sand in the 1950's. Mrs. Bradley was a concert soprano known professionally as Louise de Tansey.

Cookbooks at the Novato History Museum

- **Novato Boys Club Auxiliary Cookbook**
- **Prize Recipes of Novato** by Novato Aggies 4H Club.
- **What's Cookin in Novato, Calif.** Compiled by Presbyterian Women's Association. 1928
- **Tempting Recipes** from L.D. Ambrogio's Market, Novato, Calif. 1935
- **Fiesta Cookbook** by West Novato School PTA. 1965
- **Early American Foods for the Holiday Season** by San Marin High School. 1975

Board Nominations for 2021 & 2022

- Sharon Azevedo
- Kathryn Hansen
- Mike Read
- Anne Russell
- Lane Yee

Zoom December Meeting Information

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86264370106?pwd=YnpUQ1IEZW9GM2VHZVE2K21UOFNwQT09>

Meeting ID: 862 6437 0106

Passcode: 333041



This 1937 aerial photo shows the Paxton house and orchards on the left, with a road going from Center Road and Diablo Avenue to his house. A neighbor has the adjacent property on Lot 170.

Scandalized and Scorned, the Army Women Carried On

By Mike Corlett

As the war in Europe was beginning in 1939, the British successfully found a way to compensate for their ever-increasing manpower shortage: Women. Likewise, some U.S. military and Congressional leaders had considered creating a Women's Army Auxilliary. The women would work primarily to fill the office and clerical jobs, freeing up men for combat. Chief of Staff George Marshall was all for the Women's Auxillary idea and became the idea's biggest cheerleader.

In May of 1941, Congresswoman Edith Nourse Rogers introduced bill HR 4806 to establish a Woman's Army Corps. Rodgers wanted full army status for the women with the same pay and benefits as the men. Rogers had to accept an "auxiliary" classification because of the congressional mood. In the early 1940s, it was unfathomable to many citizens that American women would be wearing Army uniforms. Congress reflected that mood. The main opposition to the bill came from some Southern Congressmen, voicing concerns such as: "Who then will do the cooking, the washing, the mending...who will nurture the children?" After acrimonious debates, the bill passed both houses, and President Roosevelt signed it on May 15, 1942. The Women's Army Auxillary Corps (WAAC) was born.

Two days later, Mrs. Oveta Culp Hobby was appointed the first Director of the WAAC.

The initial recruiting goal of 25,000 women was quickly exceeded, and the goal raised to 150,000.

The first Training Center opened in Fort Des Moines, Iowa, and four more centers opened within a year.

At first, there were four jobs to be performed by women: clerks, drivers, typists and cooks. Within one year of the formation of the WAAC, they were serving in over 200 job specialties. WAAC Squadron W, stationed at Hamilton Field, had 120 members in 1943-44. They processed heavy bombardment aircraft and crews to



Hamilton Field WAAC at work, May 1943

the Pacific. They also moved aircraft around the base, worked as mechanics on vehicles and airplanes and aircraft spotters.

Women joined the WAAC because they wanted to help in the war effort, but their first battle was in the court of public opinion.

They became victims of vile attacks. Director Hobby wrote: "There have been many indications of an organized whispering campaign directed against the WAAC." She suspected that the enemy Axis powers might be behind it and requested an investigation. The intelligence service found that it was not the Axis spreading the rumors, but "Army personnel, soldiers' wives, jealous civilian women, fanatics and disgruntled discharged WAACs."

Officers and enlisted men were sometimes openly hostile towards them, and their wives and girlfriends were suspicious of their motives. Male Army file clerks, typists and phone operators saw their stateside jobs going away. Not all men wanted to be "freed" for combat.

Many people viewed women that joined the WAAC as lesbians and prostitutes. It was against this whispering campaign that what became known as "The Scandal" happened.

Syndicated columnist John O'Donnell worked for the *New York Daily News* and wrote a column called Capitol Stuff. On June 8, 1943, his column's first line was: "Contraceptives and prophylactic equipment will be furnished to the WAAC members." Purportedly, it was an agreement between the War Department's high ranking officers and WAAC Chief Col. Hobby. It was a fabrication. O'Donnell's retraction quickly followed, but it was too late. WAAC morals became a topic of general public discussion. Secretary of War Henry Stimson stated that "sinister rumors aimed at destroying the WAAC's reputation are absolutely and completely false." The number of recruits dropped dramatically, and the WAAC members and their families had to deal with

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Scandalized and Scorned, the Army Women Carried On

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rumors, innuendo and humiliation. When former WAAC Selene Weise returned to the civilian job market, like others, she found that many employers refused to hire the alleged lascivious ex-WAACS.

Despite all the negative publicity, by March of 1943, it was apparent the WAAC program was a complete success. After American servicemen saw WAACs on the job and worked with them, many had changed their view. Army commanders wanted more women than the WAAC was able to supply. The Army desperately needed WAAC personnel overseas but could not offer them protection if captured or benefits if injured. Congressional hearings to move the WAAC to the regular Army began.

Following O'Donnell's column, Congress required Director Hobby to provide figures on how many WAAC were hospitalized for pregnancy or treated for Venereal Disease. The number was insignificant, finally putting "The Scandal" to rest.

On July 3, 1943, the WAAC became the Women's Army Corps (WAC) and received the same pay, rank, and benefits as the men.

The WACs served with distinction throughout the war theatres in North Africa, Europe and Asia. General MacArthur praised them, saying: "...they worked harder, complained less and were better disciplined than the men." In 1945 General Eisenhower said: "During the time I have had WAC under my command, they have met every test and task assigned to them...their contributions in efficiency, skill and spirit and determination are immeasurable."

The Army acknowledged the contributions of the WAC during WWII by granting numerous individual corps members various awards. Sixteen women injured because of enemy action received Purple Hearts.

Welcome New Guild Members

Novato Historical Guild Membership Report December 2020

Individual Membership

Stephen Perlman
Sandra Griffith
Lorraine Jordan
James Baird
Tracy Rempe
Ruth Kingy

Family Membership

Robert and Katherine Ball
Thomas Weldon

Business Membership

H & J Tire

If you have questions about membership, call

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

The WAC remained a separate unit of the U.S. Army until 1978 when male and female forces were integrated.

More than 150,000 women served in the Women's Army Corps during WWII. Most did so gladly and without regret.

Sources: Ziobro, Melissa, *Skirted Soldiers*
<https://armyhistory.org>

Treadwell, Mattie, *The Women's Army Corps*
<https://history.army.mil/books/wwii/wac>

Bellafair, Judith, *The Women's Army Corps*,
<https://history.army.mil>

Wikipedia, *The Women's Army Corps*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women's_Army_Corps

Creation of the Women's Army Corps, www.army.mil/women/history/wac



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THIS IS MY WAR TOO!
WOMEN'S ARMY AUXILIARY CORPS
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WAAC Recruitment Poster

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 – 11:30	Zoom

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
Evelyn deBartok
Jacque Rolle
Paul Sasse
Iva Young

The Guild Extends Sympathy to

The deBartok family on the loss of Evelyn deBartok
 The Rolle family on the loss of Jacque Rolle
 The Sasse family on the loss of Paul Sasse
 The Young family on the loss of Iva Young

Contact Us

Hamilton Field History Museum

Manager: Ray Dwelly
 Museum phone: 415-382-8614
 Email: Hamilton_museum@att.net
<https://www.facebook.com/HamiltonFieldHistoryMuseum/>

Novato History Museum

Manager: Susan Magnone
 Museum phone: 415-897-4320
 Email: NHG1850@yahoo.com
<https://www.facebook.com/NovatoHistoryMuseum/>

Membership Form

Please mail checks to Novato Historical Guild, P.O. Box 1296, Novato, CA 94948.

Yes, I want to join the Novato Historical Guild and help preserve Novato history! new renewal

- | | | | |
|---|--------|------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Student (full time) membership | \$10 | year | Name _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual membership | \$20 | year | Address _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family membership | \$30 | year | City _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron membership | \$100 | year | State _____ Zip _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting membership | \$200 | year | Phone _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life membership, individual | \$350 | | Additional donations? _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life membership, joint | \$500 | | Interested in volunteering? _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor | \$1000 | year | Email address: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business membership | \$50 | year | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate membership | \$1000 | year | |





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



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TIME VALUE



YOU ARE INVITED

General Membership Meeting ~ Novato Historical Guild

**Saturday, December 12, 10:00 to 11:30 A.M.
Zoom Meeting - Login Info on Page 8**

Join us for a program on the Women's Air Service Pilots (WASP) of WWII.

The WASP were the first women to fly for the U.S. military. Michael Corlett, a Docent at the Hamilton Field History Museum, will discuss the WASP story and their struggle to receive recognition for their contribution to the war effort.

Guild members and anyone interested in Novato history are welcome.

Novato History Museum

Hamilton Field History Museum

815 Delong Avenue

555 Hangar Avenue

(415) 897-4320

(415) 382-8614

COME VISIT AND BRING A FRIEND!

The Museums are closed until further notice.