

# CAMEL



# TRACKS

Year 2010

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July / Aug.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Ann Hansen**

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**Tania Borostyan**

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*Complex Caretaker*

## VOLUNTEER STAFF

**Harry Wassmann**

*Curator Emeritus*

**Beverly Phelan**

*Curator*

**Louise Martin**

*Assistant Registrar*

*Volunteer Coordinator*

**Roberta Garrett**

*Registrar*

**Jim Garrett**

*Multitask Volunteer*

**Mary Marino**

*Spokesperson/ Education chair*

**Lorraine Patten**

*Museum Educator*

**Toni Haughey**

*Gift shop manager*

**Marie Earp**

*Docent Coordinator*

**Rhonda Hicks**

*Concert Coordinator*

**Fred Paine**

*Computer Consultant*

The mission of the Benicia Historical Museum is to engage the community in the evolving history of Benicia and the Arsenal and their influence in the development of our country.

The Museum complex is the center where history is seen, enjoyed and preserved. Through exhibits, events and educational programs we enlighten the public about the history of this unique city.

*Revised and adopted 2006*

## *VOLUNTEERS -- OUR LIFE LINE*



*Larry Lauber and Ann Hansen*

The heartbeat of the Benicia Historical Museum is the spirit of its volunteers. The administration, responsible for operations, has at all times to be alert to the pulsations of the many who form the whole. How else would it be possible to accomplish the unprecedented fetes of the past twenty-five years? During this current fiscal year, we are close to logging 10,000 volunteer

hours. That is the equivalent of five full time employees.

From the founding of the museum in 1985 to the present time, there have been nearly a hundred persons who have volunteered their time to be on the Board of Directors. They formed the policies and established the goals and the mission of the fledgling youngster. They solicited the funds and support necessary. They did the hard work of making the abandoned historic structures usable by scrubbing floors, cleaning and clearing out rubbish, painting, building stairs, bathrooms and a kitchen. They did this with the help of other volunteers whom they recruited and who believed in their vision. During all this time, they gathered artifacts and kept them for future generations.

As the organization matured it became apparent that staff was needed to provide leadership and structure to tasks at hand. Even though this happened, key positions stayed in the hands of volunteers, even as they do today. For example, for years Harry Wassmann was our curator. It was at his retirement that Beverly Phelan took over as curator. Both are very faithful and long term volunteers, key to the existence of the museum.



*Ann Hansen and Louise Martin*

Paid staff consists of one full time and two part time employees. So you can see that the volunteers fill in many empty spots.

*See Volunteers, Page 3*

## *The Museum Welcomes our New Members*

♦  
Wayne Wright Evans

♦  
Barbara Gladding

♦  
Bill & Kay Reid

## *Supporting Level*

♦  
Michael F. Brown

## *Museum Docents*

Louis Alfeld

♦  
Brita Bautin

♦  
Alexandra Borostyan

♦  
Tania Borostyan

♦  
David Galligan

♦  
Kimble Goodman

♦  
Toni Haughey

♦  
Gloria Lambousy

♦  
Jim Lessenger

♦  
Mary Marino

♦  
Leonide McKay

♦  
Elizabeth Murphy

♦  
Lorraine Patten

♦  
Bruce Quandt

♦  
Ron Rice

♦  
Barrie Robinson

♦  
Eric Sargeson

♦  
Carol Scott

♦  
William 'Bill' Scott

♦  
Margo Spaulding

♦  
Donna Worthington

♦  
Bill Venturelli



## Notes from Ann THE YEAR EXPIRES QUICKLY

I thought we just said, "Happy New Year" but it is time to say "Happy 2nd Half of the Year". Business as well as we operates for the most part on fiscal years so I suppose in a sense we could still say, "Happy New Year". We can only hope that this fiscal new year may bring us better times.



Your museum along with all nonprofits has had to tighten the belt – very tight – in a celebratory year. Which brings up the point that money isn't the only thing necessary to stage a celebration. You might be surprised to learn that we have not spent any of our operating funds on the celebrations we have had. Even in these hard times donors have been generous – and continue to be. How else could we have had an ice cream social for which we did not charge except for Double Rainbow? How else could we host our musicians with a meal except for Venticello's generosity? How else

could we provide transportation on site except for the generosity of our neighbor, Amports. Robin and Robert Lyon brought Hump Free here without charge. Valero and Wulff Electric provided for the Garden Series, Valero through a grant; Wulff through donated labor. All our lecturers have spoken without receiving stipends. Of course, we cannot forget Beverly Phelan's activities of enlisting and scheduling all the great military vehicles that we showcased at our celebration.

We have recently passed our budget and are really on bare bones pending infusion of funds from donations and fundraisers. All our members can be helpful by promoting our fundraisers – presently our concert series. In the fall, we will be having our Ball (October 30th). Then the matter of renewing your membership on time or inviting your friends and neighbors to become members would be helpful.

All the details for the Ball and the Christmas tree lot are still being discussed. We will keep you informed about our plans. Our next concert is July 10th featuring The David Thom Band. We are getting topnotch performers through Rhonda Lucile Hicks of Red Dragonfly Productions.

We provide the public with affordable education and entertainment and are pleased that more and more are coming to enjoy our offerings. We are happy to present the legacy of Benicia to everyone

## Curator's Corner

The Boy Scouts of America 100th Anniversary exhibit has closed. I hope that most of our members visited the museum during this time. Thanks to Jim Lessenger and Bill Goshorn, the exhibit was a success. The exhibit displayed over 1000 items of badges, uniforms, hats, awards, statuettes, manuals, Boys Life covers, etc. There were many scouts and leaders that visited the museum in the last few months and were impressed with all that was displayed.



We now have the "Structures & Light" exhibit installed! This is the first collaboration with Arts Benicia and it has been a wonderful experience. Before the Yuba Mfg. buildings at the end of East H St. were razed in 2006, artist Linda Grebmeier and photographer Hedi B. Desuyo were given permission to take a last look at the Yuba structures. Through monotypes and photography the artists created the "Structure & Light" exhibit at the Arts

Benicia Gallery. Kathryn Renfrow, curator of the exhibit, invited the museum to have a companion exhibit. The collaboration includes more of the artist's works, photos from the museum's collection, Yuba Mfg. wood patterns of all shapes and sizes and artifacts from the three industries that occupied the site; Pacific Mail Steamship Co., Benicia Agricultural Works and Yuba Mfg. The Arts Benicia Gallery is open Thurs-Sun from 12-5 p.m. The exhibit at the Gallery will be open until July 17. The museum's exhibit will close on August 9. The museum is open Wed-Sun from 1-4 p.m.

Putting out a fire can be a real challenge! You can experience this for yourself with the museum's new Fire & Firefighters exhibit to open in a few weeks. Our designer Toxey/McMillan created a computer program with a touch screen using photos of historic structures in Benicia. The Clocktower is burning with fire coming from the windows! The visitor can put the fires out and hopefully save the historic structure! Rose Hadaway, a resident and realtor in Benicia has sponsored this exhibit. Her father was a firefighter in San Francisco.

Please come and visit your museum in the near future. The history of Benicia is so interesting and fun!

# Join us for Kid's Day on July 18th

# VOLUNTEERS

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## LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE!

The astounding achievements of this organization going back to



Mary Marino and Ann Hansen

the very beginning have been augmented by unprecedented volunteer involvement. The work of the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century laid the foundation for expansion that came through numerous projects. There was the brave

step that the Board of Directors took in adopting an entirely new concept in telling the story of the history of Benicia. Volunteers worked at developing strategies and working toward funding the new exhibits. They may not be classified as volunteers but Anne Toxey and Patrick McMillan contributed so much and put in so many "unbilled hours" in designing and building the skeletal exhibits that we are now in the process of enhancing. Alongside of them were Harry Wassmann and Beverly Phelan with many other volunteers.

Throughout all the years there has been a constant that has made it possible to keep the museum open. It is the volunteer hours that the docents contribute. During the last two years Dr. James Lessenger has done research, created a power point and developed a tour that has given docents the background needed to understand the development of the local history. Before this, many volunteers contributed their time to keep the doors open for guests. Perhaps the longest standing are Ron Rice and Lorraine Patten who have always been there when needed. Members of the present board have taken the docent training and are taking their turns on the schedule. Marie Earp does wonders with scheduling as she does with getting our mailings out, including the Camel Tracks.

It would take a whole Camel Tracks and more to outline in detail all the tremendous accomplishments of our volunteers in the past several years. We hope that those who were present for Volunteer Appreciation on Sunday the 27<sup>th</sup> felt appreciated. Among the things we brought to their attention for which we are grateful to them are capsulated here.

## LOOK AT 2008!



Paige Stubbings and Olivia Winkley

In 2008, great strides were taken and the Spenger Garden, after eight years of unattainable attempts, became a reality through the leadership of Glenn Boatman and great assistance by Larry Lauber, the Garretts and many other volunteers. Also at that time, after the Garretts' thorough cleanup and salvaging efforts and Boy Scout projects on the arches and the ramps, the front section of Casey Hall became the Industrial Exhibit. Again with Toxey/McMillan, Beverly Phelan and fifty volunteers this

culminated in the two day dedication and opening of the garden and the exhibit. During this year, the Garretts dedicated much time to cleaning out, organizing and establishing a very fine tool room so that we can have necessary tools readily available.

## HERE IS 2009!

In 2009 we opened our Spenger Garden Concert Series. This required a lot of ingenuity on the part of producer, Rhoda Lucile Hicks, and the bands that she engaged for us. Lacking electrical hookups and lighting, the bands did play on. Our guests enjoyed the music and we kept tab of what was necessary for us to create a first class venue. We were able to produce the concerts through the efforts of the volunteers. The Key Club members were big players in this activity as they were when the Kiwanis undertook the redo of our office. Much cleaning and painting made the office a nicer place in which to work. Many volunteers helped in our fundraising, Pasta Tasting, chaired by Tim Lynch with Gloria Galligan at the helm of producing the meal and Barrie Robinson the setup. Tania Borostyan improved the acoustics in the hall by her beautifully created hangings.

## 2010 AND COUNTING!

The year 2010 has seen tremendous input from volunteers.



Ron Rice

There was the Boy Scout Exhibit that curator, Beverly Phelan, helped Dr Lessenger and Bill Goshorn produce. Co-Chairs, Louise Martin and Mary Marino have produced a great series of events to commemorate our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. There have been the lecture and concert series, the anniversary celebration when hundreds of people

came and enjoyed the day. Bruce Quandt has been remarkable in his performance in helping setups and take downs. The garden concerts continue. Joan Eignor hosts the musicians. Behind all these activities there have been committees and subcommittees and meetings and planning and many emails going back and forth. Nothing of this magnitude just happens. Every committee has either board member or staff oversight.

Key to our museum was the work done by Collections. Bob Kvasnicka did remarkable work on the Glass Plate negatives. Roberta Garrett continues at her steady pace meticulously recording to keep the records straight. Beverly and Jim Phelan with Brita and Nick Bautin were responsible for gathering the materials for the Patwin Hut and the exhibit. We cannot forget Cynthia Giroux and her wonderful work on the mural for the exhibit. Of course, there were hundreds of hours contributed for the actual building of the exhibit.

## AND WE ARE NOT DONE!

There is more yet to come. July features the Twilight Parade. Cathy Forbes has spearheaded the building of the float and she with Toni Haughey's support will see it to a successful end. Quite a number of volunteers will be on or about the float. John Halliday has lined up military vehicles to augment our presentation with veterans in the jeeps. On July 18<sup>th</sup>, we will host Kids Day which Mary Marino has so deftly planned. We still need volunteers for that day. You can read about it

## VOLUNTEERS

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Ann Hansen and Sarah Segers

in this edition. In August there is a pot luck scheduled and the concerts will continue with the membership annual meeting in September. Halloween will follow the last of the concert series in the garden. A Masquerade Ball is planned for October 30<sup>th</sup>. November is harvest time when there will be a book signing for local writers of which there are many in Benicia. A Small Town

Christmas has not been detailed but the annual Holiday Member Pot Luck will be on December 5<sup>th</sup>. We are expecting to have a Christmas tree lot if all details work out favorably. Everything is touched by volunteers. Our life continues with you all on board.

The Board of Directors and Fellow members all appreciate the work our volunteers have done to make this the best little museum in California and beyond. It is impossible to give recognition to every single person. At appreciation day, the following awards were presented:

Volunteer of the Year:	Larry Lauber
County Fair Exhibit	Barrie Robinson
Youngest Volunteer	Sarah Segers
Co-Chairs of 25 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary	Mary Marino
(Executive Director Choices)	Louise Martin

## Kid's Day

Sunday, July 18, the Benicia Historical Museum is inviting **KIDS of all ages** to come and take part in old and new activities that represent the days of early Benicia.

This event is from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm, and is free of charge and open to the public.

There will be laundry to do using a wooden agitator and scrubbing boards, with the clothes to be wrung out and hung on our clothesline, just as your great-grandmothers did. Water needs to be hauled, and corn is ready to be ground. Dirt, straw and sand will be mixed to form adobe bricks. We will have a "History Quiz", and a Camel bean-bag toss.

Visitors will include a docent and "critters" from the Suisun Marsh Wildlife Preserve and the Benicia-Vallejo Humane Society. A special visit will be made by a Benicia Police Officer and one of the department's police dogs.

The Museum, Industrial Exhibit, and Powder Magazine will be open and staffed with docents, and there will be refreshments and free "Camel" balloons.

Make this a day for all generations in your family to come and visit.

**No animals permitted except for service dogs. Children must be accompanied by adults.**

## DANGER KEEP OFF

What a thrill it is to slide down a hillside! What a challenge it is to climb a hill!

It is possible to do either one of these activities at the museum complex but it is not safe. We know that kids love to slide down the slopes. We have seen adults with their kids trailing behind them climbing the slopes. While we know this can be challenging and fun, we ask that you refrain from doing so. There are several reasons for our request.

The slopes are somewhat unstable and erosion is a very real problem for us. On the garden side we have planted vegetation not only for beautification purposes but to prevent the wearing away of the soil. As people attempt to ascend or descend, it disturbs the soil and may cause sudden slippage causing erosion. This could result in serious injury. Slipping could cause a broken bone and a tumble down the slope could cause major injuries. In addition there would be damage to the plantings. We have to be mindful also that adjoining land is not our property and we and our guests are obligated to stay within our boundaries.

This brings up another problem with the garden. We do want everyone to enjoy it. However, it is not a playground for children. It is a formal garden and the walls were not built for anyone, especially not children, to climb, walk and run on. No children should be in the garden without adult supervision. Supervision means watching very carefully what they do and preventing them from running and climbing and keeping them off the slopes. It may be difficult to expect them to sit and enjoy the ambience but that is essentially what we expect.

It took a lot of dedication and work to create this wonderful spot. It takes much hard work to maintain it. Clods of dirt, rocks and loose dirt, things thrown in the fountain all increase the time and effort we spend to keep it beautiful for your enjoyment. Please help us by using it responsibly and not as a children's playground. Thank you for your help.

### SAVE THE DATE

**Saturday October 30<sup>th</sup> at Stone Hall  
Masquerade Ball**

### CHRISTMAS TREES

**Watch for development of plans  
for the Museum Christmas tree lot.**

### GENERAL STORE

**Let us help you plan your gift  
Shopping – get your member discount!**

### ONLINE CAMEL TRACKS

**If you prefer to get the Camel Tracks  
online, call our office at 707-745-5435  
or email us at: [info@beniciahistoricalmuseum.org](mailto:info@beniciahistoricalmuseum.org)**

### VOLUNTEER CONFERENCE

**August 25<sup>th</sup>, 9am to 3pm  
Martinez**