

CAMEL



TRACKS

Year 2011

Phone (707)745-5435 email: info@beniciahistoricalmuseum.org website: beniciahistoricalmuseum.org

Mar. / Apr.

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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

John Molfino's Views Around Benicia

Exhibit to close on March 31st.



Marquerite & Violet Molfino by the Turner Shipyards.

As some of you may be aware, the digital frame in the Molfino photography exhibit had to be removed for repair. We have replaced it with a digital DVD display. The new display has a few additional photos, including several from the 1950 Panama Pacific International Exhibition. We are also adding a few wall mounted photos that we hope you will enjoy.

The book Views Around Benicia 1902-1937 has sold out its two first orders. Understanding the interest that these photos have brought we have a new order of books available at the Gift Shop for \$40 each. This is a limited order so if you want your copy, stop by the gift shop before they are sold out again!

The Museum Welcomes our New Member

Supporting Level

♦
Jack & Ralpha Crouse

♦
Lyna A. Myers

♦
David Palik

♦
Donna Worthington &
Karl Uebel

Museum Docents

Louis Alfeld

♦
Brita Bautin

♦
Tania Borostyan

♦
Robert Cates

♦
Sonny Flores

♦
David Galligan

♦
Kimble Goodman

♦
Toni Haughey

♦
Gloria Lambousy

♦
Jim Lessenger

♦
Mary Marino

♦
Leonide McKay

♦
Elizabeth Murphy

♦
Lorraine Patten

♦
Bruce Quandt

♦
Barrie Robinson

♦
Eric Sargeson

♦
Jessica Sargeson

♦
Carol Scott

♦
William 'Bill' Scott

♦
Susan Sullivan

♦
Bill Venturelli

THE YEAR BEGINS ANEW

Spring is on the way and we are excited with all that is going on here at the Museum. We are proud to announce our newest Board members; Lou Alfeld and Susan Sullivan. They are committed members who have great talents to add to our incredible Board of Directors. We have also added two new members to our awesome docent group. Sunny Flores and Robert Cates are great additions and we thank them for their support. Our docents are most often the first contact visitors have here at the



museum and we are honored by having new docents joining.

The board is committed to getting our new Executive Director on board soon. We will be looking to advertise in April and then begin the selection process. Thank you all for your support during this transition time.

We are always looking for new members to join our museum. It is through membership growth that we are able to continue providing our community with a most valuable resource. Many thanks to our loyal members and let us know if there is someone you know that has not been to our museum. We would love to show them our history.

David Galligan
Board President

Curator's Corner

The museum is so fortunate to have dedicated and caring volunteers! Just recently, Jim and Roberta Garrett donated much-needed shelving for our Collection Room. They even gave the museum a fold-up ladder to climb to the highest shelf! I am personally thankful for the Garretts and others who have worked in our Collection Dept. They love the museum and they love the work they do.



The Benicia Antique store has closed and Manuel Lopes has donated two display cabinets to the museum. Manuel has donated so many items in recent weeks that will enhance our collection as well.

We have a volunteer that has been working with the collection for the last several months. Miranda Gregory has just received word that she has a job with an up and coming tech company! She is a graduate from Stanford with a degree in history and they are so lucky to have this wonderful young person working for them. We wish Miranda the best! She wants to continue volunteering on a limited basis because she loves working with the collection.

Our next rotating exhibit will be "Viet Nam War-Veterans Remembered". We are asking the local community to loan or gift the museum items from that era; uniforms, helmets, equipment, personal items, posters, stories and photos that can

help us tell the story of the veterans who served. This exhibit is to honor those veterans who served during that time. Please call Beverly 745-3397 or the Museum Office 745-5435. Let us know who you are and what you can contribute. We will begin collecting those items on May 16. The exhibit will open on Sunday, May 29. Mark your calendars!

Our new year at the museum is off to a good start! We are initiating a photo contest with this newsletter issue. The photos we have in our collection tell the story of Benicia's structures, people, events, tragedies and geography. We want to encourage our members to interact with those photos. The picture on page 3 is our first photo in this endeavor. The person who identifies the photo and is the first one to call the museum with the correct answer can pick up their prize at the Museum Office. The staff and collection department are exempt from this contest for obvious reasons. So, it is up to our members to make the call!

Beverly Phelan
Curator



Miranda Gregory



Where is this photo located and what is the building to the far right?

Docent's Corner

"Enjoy the present hour, be mindful of the past...."

That is a quote from "Poor Richard's Almanac", one of many interesting books at the museum shop.

As Benicia became a port of entry in 1850, many historical and exciting events passed by and or landed on our shores. If Capt. Stone had read his orders to dock at the Presidio, would we all be in that beautiful spot? Because Benicia had few trees, the Army used sandstone from three quarries in the Arsenal, therefore, we exist. If President Lincoln had not designated us as one of five Arsenals in the U.S.A., where would we be? Senora Vallejo bore 16 children, and according to her diary, she wrote to General Vallejo, often away, that she had need of money!

As a docent, I recount the past, learn from visitor memories, and share our heritage. I've listened to stories of repairing radios; of the "Soiled Doves" or "Ladies of the Evening"; dumping used batteries into the Strait; ferry rides to work; and to shop for silk stockings; and even a young boy who had knowledge of Lt. Col. Doolittle and his infamous bomb!

Three hours can pass quickly, sharing information and stories of the colorful past of Benicia and California Treasures.

Lorraine Patten

Hands on Experiences

The Benicia Historical Museum hosts tours for kids of all ages. Our tours include the Museum, Powder Magazine, and the Industrial Exhibit. Each staffed by a docent to explain and highlight the treasures housed in the museum.



The student visitors, generally 3rd to 5th graders are studying local and state history and they have one more stop - the "hands-on" experience.

We ask that they use their imaginations to transform themselves into youngsters in the 1850's living in a world without electricity, (What- no video games?) no running water, supermarkets, cell phones or automobiles. These chores were necessary to sustain the entire family, as they struggled to eke out a life in times that were hard and subject to the wiles of nature.

Our first stop is the "bucket brigade". If a fire broke out, townspeople needed to supply the water for fire fighting from their wells, streams, rivers and everyone lined up to get water to the fire, bucket by bucket. This could be day or night, warm, cold or windy weather.

For the home, water was hauled from a source (hopefully nearby) again bucket by bucket, for cooking, bathing, laundry, and water for the crops and animals. A yoke slung across the shoulders enabled the carrying of two pails at a time. Here we learn that water is heavy.

Laundry involves large buckets and scrubbing boards. The key is to wring out the water before hanging the clothes on clotheslines. In a large family, laundry would be an all day chore.

For food, families had gardens and raised animals, large and small, ground corn or wheat by hand with a mortar and pestle for the families needs. Games and toys were very simple, mostly hand crafted.

Our students also make adobe bricks, from dirt, straw and sand, filling in a form that will dry and eventually become one "brick" in the walls of a home.

It was not an easy life, the chores were not optional, but life sustaining and hard work. With their chaperones as leaders, our young guests really dig into the spirit of these work stations, and hopefully it gives them some thoughts after they return to their 21st century lives. Hurray for the simple life!

This is another place in our Museum life where we always need volunteers to assist in these historical replications. For more information on our tours and how to become a volunteer, go to beniciahistoricalmuseum.org

Mary Marino

Adopt a Bear



Our little black bears need a new home.

Spring is on the way (believe it or not) and time to make room for some new goodies in our gift store. Our small black bears are free when you purchase any book in the gift shop. These are perfect gifts for children or adults...they even roar when squeezed.

Offer good through the month of March only.

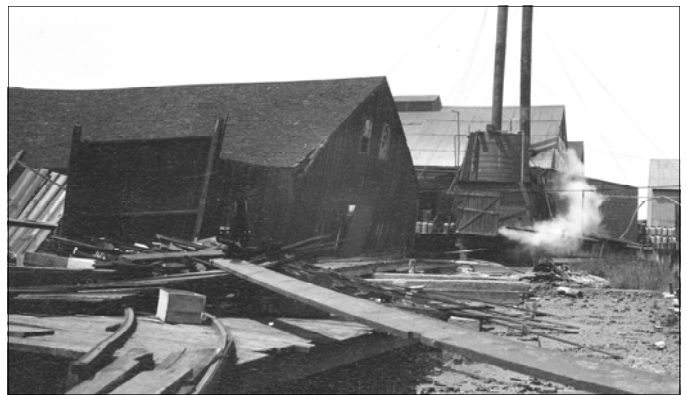
Toni Haughey

Museum Requests

- A Leaf blower
- Foam core
- A carpet sweeper
- Small paper cutter
- Lawn mower (working) with a bag.

Thanks Marjorie Williford for the Vacuum cleaners!!

Views of 1906 Earthquake



Damage at Western Creamery

A major earthquake struck San Francisco and the coast of Northern California in 1906. It occurred at 5:12 a.m. on April 18 with a magnitude of 7.9. It was felt from Oregon to Los Angeles and was

In remembrance of the 105th anniversary of this event, the museum will have an exhibit of photos and information on this disaster including the damage to property in Benicia. Included in this exhibit will be John Molfino's earthquake photos taken in Benicia and other photos of San Francisco not seen in the "Views Around Benicia" exhibit. Learn about advanced planning to reduce the dangers of an earthquake should it happen again. The exhibit will open on Sunday, April 10 at regular museum hours 1-4 p.m. The exhibit will be open through May 1.

Bev. Phelan

Calendar of events

John Molfino Views of Benicia

Exhibit open until April 3

Stone Hall Comedy Series

Presents:

MIKE PACE & Maggie Newcomb
Saturday, March 26 @ 8:00 p.m.
Stone Hall
Tickets \$20

Views of 1906 Earthquake

Opening, Sun. April 10 @ 1-4 pm
Museum
Free event

Stone Hall Comedy Series

Presents:

ROCKY LAPORTE & Andrew Norelli
Saturday, April 30 @ 8:00 p.m.
Stone Hall
Tickets \$20

Viet Nam War—Veterans Remembered

Open May 29 @ 2:00pm
Museum
Free Event