

CAMEL



TRACKS

Year 2010

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

May / June

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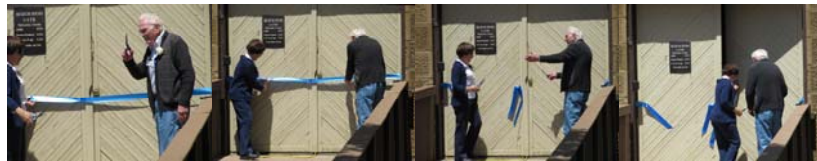
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The mission of the Benicia Historical Museum is to engage the community in the evolving history of Benicia and the Arsenal and their influence in the development of our country.

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

WE INVITED, THEY CAME



They came and kept coming! A wonderful testament to "the best little museum in California and beyond" were the crowds who came for the opening of our 25th Anniversary year. There was hardly a slackening off at any time in the day. The opening ceremony with the dedication of the Patwin Exhibit was well attended and the crowds grew from there.



President, David Galligan, welcomed our guests and then introduced Mayor Patterson who made inspiring comments about museums. She presented a proclamation recognizing the importance of our museum in the community for the past 25 years. She encouraged all to visit. Kathy Hoffman representing Congressman George Miller presented a Certificate of Congressional Recognition which was followed by a presentation by Don Lowrie for Senator Patricia Wiggins and Assemblywoman Mariko Yamada. It is a beautiful framed Resolution of the California Legislature.

After County Supervisor Linda Seifert's congratulatory words, Harry Wassmann was welcomed to the podium.

It had to be a triumphant day for Harry and his lovely wife, Dianne. Our archives are full of documents that attest to the steadfast efforts of this great man who so resolutely met every challenge to make this museum a reality. We know he was not alone in his efforts but it would not have happened without him. Nor would we have made the progress we have without his guidance which he so graciously has given us even after his retirement. We consulted him on many issues during the time leading up



See They Came, Page 4

The Museum Welcomes our New Members

♦

Larry & Susan Grossman

♦

Rev. Michael Hurley

♦

Ellen Kolowich

♦

Robert J. Lincoln

♦

Jerry Littlefield

♦

Larry Littlefield

♦

Jean McInerney

♦

Ebba & Mike Navas

♦

Kimberly Patterson

♦

Virginia Schaefer

♦

Linda Sturgis

♦

Phyllis Sundquist

♦

Janeen Null Thomas

♦

Patricia A. Vogel Pohl

Friend Level

♦

Barrie Robinson

♦

Supporting Level

♦

Michael F. Browne

♦

Louise Costa

♦

Pete & Marianne Goodson

♦

Timothy G. Lynch

♦

Rose F. Russell

♦

Soroptimist International of Benicia

Benefactor Level

♦

James & Leslie Lessenger

Notes from Ann

How Busy Can We Be?

While we are dedicated to our work, being busy can be a detriment! Perhaps not serious but what does it say when we miss our deadline for getting the Camel Tracks out? We are late with this edition. Why?



We have been building up to a very important date – the day we officially opened our anniversary year celebration. A good portion of the year is gone but we didn't wait for the official opening to begin our celebration. These past four and a half months have been crammed full of activities while we were looking ahead to the big day on May 15th. We have had remarkably high class lectures on many varied subjects, we had concerts in January and February and behind the scenes plans were being laid for completion of two of our exhibits, the Patwin Indian exhibit and the Fire Department Exhibit. You can't imagine the detail even when you see the beautifully executed mural that Cynthia Giroux has donated to the exhibit, the Patwin hut that was built and the bringing together of all the elements of the exhibit.

All that was just a part of behind the scenes activities. Louise Martin and Mary Marino were working hard with the many committees needed to bring the 25th celebration together. Just imagine putting together the program we did, opening of our year of celebration, dedication of the Patwin exhibit, display of military vehicles and getting Hump Free, our camel friend, here

for people to see to say nothing of the ice cream social. Preparation of the grounds and buildings was a formidable task. Planting at the entrance of the garden had never been completed; displays of past history of the museum and its beginning had to be created. Nearly all of these things were completed by volunteers. We have the equivalent of two full time paid employees. So you can see we are very dependent on our volunteers and they serve us well.

The volunteer with the "mostest" has to be Beverly Phelan. There has not been one thing mentioned above that she has not contributed to its successful completion. Hump Free, military vehicles, the Patwin hut, getting ice cream donations and with her we usually get a second volunteer – her husband, Jim.

Our hands-on Board member (besides Mary and Louise) Bruce Quandt has been indispensable to our preparations. Bruce, as you may know, is the son of Carolyn Quandt, one of the earliest supporters and workers at establishing the museum. I am sure Carolyn would be very happy to see Bruce's contributions,

Now we move to the next events which you will find details about in other articles of this edition. The showing of prize winning book, "A Place to Mend" is coming in June. Also the Spenger Garden series of concerts will begin. In July we will be having our Kids day in which all stops will be pulled out to entertain the younger members of the community. Other lectures may be announced in the near future. Whatever we do, we do with the idea of meeting the interests of our members and others who may come to the museum. Hopefully we score bull's eyes more often than not.

Enjoy the summer – we welcome it!



Curator's Corner

Hope everyone who attended our 25th Anniversary event on May 15 enjoyed the day. The Patwin Indian exhibit is now installed and our visitors can learn about how the Patwin lived in our area.

We will be removing the Boy Scouts of America-100th Anniversary exhibit at the end of this month. In its place, we will be installing a permanent Fire Dept. exhibit including an interactive for children and adults. Our designers Toxey/McMillan Design



Associates have created this interactive with history in mind.

We will also be installing a collaborative exhibit with Arts Benicia for their Structures and Light event. The subject is the razing of the Yuba Mfg. site in Benicia using images and artifacts related to this large industry. Arts Benicia will have an Artists' Talk on Sat., June 12 at 3 p.m. Following at 4:30 p.m. the museum will have a display and lecture.

The museum has just received a gift from the Woytak Family, owners of the Union Hotel in Benicia. It is a letter from T. B. Storer, a former Benicia trustee and mayor to James W. Denver who was later a general in the Civil War. The towns of Denver, CO. and Denverton in Solano County were named after him. The letter was dated January 19, 1856.

SPECIAL THANKS

The Board of Directors of the Benicia Historical Museum thank the following benefactors and participants in observance of our 25th Anniversary and dedication of our newest exhibits.

- Mayor Elizabeth Patterson, Benicia
- Kathy Hoffman for Congressman George Miller
- Senator Patricia Wiggins
- Don Lowrie for Assemblywoman Mariko Yamada
- Linda Seifert, Solano County Supervisor
- Harry Wassmann, Founder and Curator Emeritus
- David Galligan, President of the Board, Emcee
- Amports, use of Parking lots and grounds preparation
- Lou Alfeld, Gift Shop Docent
- Brita and Nick Bautin, Patwin Exhibit and Docent
- Joan Eignor, Supervision of Refreshments
- Cynthia Giroux, Muralist for the Patwin Exhibit
- Dolan Lumber, Materials for Patwin Hut
- Double Rainbow Corp., donation of ice cream for social
- Larry Lauber, Advise and design of Sound for exhibits
- Leslie Lessenger, Refreshment Serving
- Robin and Robert Lyon for Hump Free, the camel, presentation
- Phyllis Malicki, Refreshment Serving Assistance
- Steve Messina, donation of Ice cream for social
- Beverly and Jim Phelan overall contributors to activities
- Kevin Phillips, Native American Flutist
- Margo Spaulding, Gift Shop Docent

- Toxey/McMillan, Designers and builders of Patwin Exhibit
- Valero Refining, financial sponsorship Patwin Exhibit
- Vallejo City Floral, Boutonnieres
- Virgil Sellers, Rush Ranch, guidance in building the Patwin Hut
- Bob Flournoy, shuttle driving
- Regina Bull, shuttle driving
- Bob Kvasnicka, photography
- Tania Borostyan, Office support
- Charles Pregeant, Grounds preparation
- James Lessenger, Board member & Museum docent
- Lorraine Patten, Docent
- Kimble Goodman, Docent
- Bruce Quandt, Board Member, Docent, Grounds & buildings preparation
- Thomas Hamilton, Refreshments for staff
- Mary Marino, Board Member and Co-Chair of Event
- Louise Martin, Board Member and Co-Chair of Event
- Toni Haughey, Board member & Gift Shop
- Donna Worthington, Board Member & Information Table
- Kellie McCormick, Board Member & Information Table
- Ian Toner, Board Member, Information, Video preparation
- Tim Lynch, Board Member & Video preparation
- Cathy Forbes, Board Member, Marketing & Refreshments
- Jim Porterville, Military Vehicles
- C.J. Bertagna, Military Vehicles
- Sonny's Vehichles, Military Vehicles
- Michelle Chavez, Script Writing, Curator support
- Bob DuBois, Traffic Control
- Genesis House, Traffic Control

HUMP FREE

He captivated everyone, child and adult alike. When you patted his head or rubbed his soft chubby cheeks, his huge golden-brown eyes watched. His hair was tightly curled, soft but wiry to the touch. He was very observant, occasionally chewing his cud, sometimes yawning, as if ready for an afternoon nap. When he tired, he folded his front legs and gracefully lowered his massive body to the ground, while taking in all that



was around him. When he gets weighed, his owners take him to the scales off the highway, unloading him from his modern carrier, and he steps up on the scales- just about one ton- 2000 pounds, and on May 15th we all fell madly in love with him. He was our special visitor, HUMPFREE, a tall, young, graceful camel.



His owners, Robin and Robert Lyon, have raised him since he was six weeks old, he is now 7 years of age, so gentle that he is a therapy animal who visits nursing homes and hospitals. Imagine having him lay his head down near you- that is how soft and caring he is. Obviously the alpha male in the collection of over 50 animals, he and all the others do accept each other, as they are all a family. It was a special treat to have him visit, to be such a sterling representative here at the "Camel Barns".

They Came

Continue from page 1

to the celebration. His advice and his contribution to the museum and the city of Benicia are priceless and we are grateful.



Remarks by Beverly, our curator, who trained under Harry for years before she took over as curator gave us insight into the Patwins and the exhibit. Beverly is a walking encyclopedia of Benicia who carries on research with the excitement of a child in a candy store. Ann followed with remarks that recognized our legacy and our responsibility to protect and enhance it for future generations before she declared it time to open

the Patwin exhibit. Harry and Beverly cut the ribbon together and the crowds progressed into the museum.

The excitement and surprise that emanated from the crowds increased our pride in what we had achieved. The beautiful mural by Cynthia Giroux showing the Benicia hills, the water, birds flying in the air all created with a serenity that mirrors the contentment that the Patwin Indians must have felt in their time of existence in this area. The hut that was so lovingly constructed by so many volunteers under the guidance of Virgil Sellers was thoroughly enjoyed as kids as well as parents went inside. All was enhanced by the sound effects that Larry Lauber worked out. Behind the likeness of a Native American maiden, created from a photograph of our own Kellie McCormick, a button is pressed as she narrates a short story of the Patwin life. Inside the hut the sound of Indian music is heard by pressing a different button. We had stressed authenticity in all our plans for the exhibit and that was emphasized by the music played by Kevin Phillips on his Native American flute.

Wherever we went on the grounds and buildings, we were greeted by crowds.

Outside in the parking lot was Hump Free, our camel friend whom Mary Marino fell madly in love with, and the military vehicles which everyone enjoyed.

The Industrial Exhibit, the Powder Magazine and the garden were visited by many people. Inside Stone Hall, a continuous video ran showing pictures of the very beginning of the



museum. The cleanup of the neglected buildings, the building of a staircase and bathrooms, the preparations and the opening of the museum all were part of the picture narrative. Some guests sat and watched the entire video, others wandered about reading the story boards on the easels around the room. All this, while our wonderful volunteers scooped out ice cream, served cookies and lemonade to all who came.

They were four intense hours in which Board members and volunteers looked to help our guests have a good time, knowing that they appreciated being here. Transportation in shuttles to and from Amparts parking lot and to the Powder Magazine, up hills and down hills was provided by Amparts and Bob Flournoy of Nick's Golf Carts. At the end, we were happy to hear the many, "A job well done" remarks. We are proud of our museum and are happy that so many came to enjoy it during our celebration. We look forward to the next 25 years.

Calendar of events

June Theme: 25 Years of Community Service

"A Place to Mend"

Exhibit and lecture, Artist, Dorothy Belknap
Special for Artist Community
June 4 @ 7:00 p.m.
Museum Building

"A Place to Mend"

Exhibit and lecture, Artist, Dorothy Belknap
Exhibit open for general public
June 6 @ 2:00 p.m.
Museum Building

Spenger memorial Garden Music Series 2010

Guy Arrostituto & Friends in Concert
June 12 @ 8:00 p.m.
Spenger Garden

Kennedy Music Studio Annual Student Concert

June 20 @ 1:30 p.m.
Stone Hall

Docent Appreciation

June 27
TBA

July Theme: Children: Our Future in Education

Twilight Parade

July 3

Spenger memorial Garden Music Series 2010

The David Thom Band in Concert
July 10 @ 8:00 p.m.
Spenger Garden