



Old Gilroy City Hall - 1905

THE SOCIETY PAGE

Newsletter of the Gilroy Historical Society

August 2023

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Bitter Tap House is Beautiful!



Board of Directors / Museum Shop



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Gilroy Historical Society Luncheon:
Oct. 28th - Old City Hall



Sponsors



Membership Application

GILROY MUSEUM

195 5th Street • Gilroy, CA 95020
(408) 846-0446

HOURS:

Tuesdays and Thursdays
10AM - 4PM

First and Second Saturdays
10AM - 2PM

Email the museum at:
Gilroy.Museum@cityofgilroy.org

BITTER TAP HOUSE IS BEAUTIFUL!



This handsome historic house was the site of the Society Board’s Planning Retreat on August 2nd. Built for James Princevalle in 1909, it was designed by architect Frank Delos Wolfe. Krista Van Laan, an expert on Wolfe sent us a news clipping verifying that. She says it was probably a prototype for the Cordes House on Watsonville Road. The Craftsman style of this two-story bungalow is emphasized by the exaggerated bargeboard, gable end posts and oversized rafters. Squared wooden pillars rise above river rock posts which are repeated with small rock posts on the wall encircling the yard. According to our Historic Resource list it is “clearly a site of major significance to our urban heritage.”

After graduating from business college James Princevalle joined his Italian parents in their grocery business. He served on the City Council from 1904 to 1910. When Mr. and Mrs. Princevalle moved in, the newspaper described their home as having six large rooms, bath, basement, enclosed verandas and a sleeping portico upstairs. . . . all for \$4,000. James went on to become Mayor for six terms from 1920 to 1932.

Read more about our impressions and experience there on page 3.

GILROY HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

www.gilroyhistoricalsociety.org (Follow the link on our website to reach our Facebook page)

Connie Rogers, <i>Co-President</i>	Jrogers@garlic.com	(408) 842-8494
Joanie M. Lewis, <i>Co-President and Heritage Films</i>	JoanieMLewis@charter.net	(408) 842-8698
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Maureen Hunter, <i>Education Committee</i>	MaureenHunter8@yahoo.com	(503) 550-7668
Barbara Biafore, <i>Volunteer Schedules</i>	budbiafore@gmail.com	(408) 842-7515
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Elizabeth Barratt, <i>Emeritus</i>	hrhandqe3@gmail.com	(831) 241-6927
Karen Pedigo, <i>Education Chair</i>	karenpedigo10@aol.com	(408) 499-7460
Dave Matuszak, <i>Outreach</i>	dmatuszak2@aol.com	(408) 781-0497

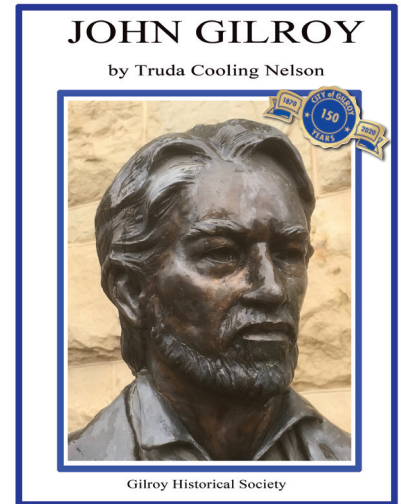
Board meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month at 10 AM at the Museum.
Let us know if you would like to attend to share ideas.

MUSEUM GIFT SHOP

846-0446 ♦ gilroy.museum@ci.gilroy.ca.us

The following items are for sale with the proceeds going to benefit the Museum.

GHS Historical Footage DVD	\$	5.00
GHS Gilroy 1950 DVD (55 mins.)	\$	5.00
GHS Gilroy Museum Tour DVD	\$	12.00
GHS Oral Histories DVD	\$	10.00
Old City Hall Collector Spoon	\$	1.00
Walking Tour Booklets	\$	1.00
Packet Historical Homes Notecards	\$	10.00
Single Historical Homes Notecards	\$	1.00
Postcards	\$	1.00
Souvenir Pencil	\$.25
Gilroy Museum Mouse Pad	\$	10.00
Historic Home Prints by R. McGinnis	\$	10.00/15.00
Tote Bags	\$	5.00
Juan Bautista De Anza Booklet	\$	5.00
<i>A Country Doctor in the Valley of Hearts Delight</i> by E. Barratt ...	\$	5.00
<i>A Hundred Years of the Gilroy Hot Springs</i> by I. Sanderson	\$	25.00
<i>John Gilroy</i> by Truda Cooling Nelson	\$	15.00
<i>Gilroy's Old City Hall</i> by Woollacott, Pursell and Myer	\$	5.00
<i>Images of Gilroy</i> by Claudia Salewske	\$	20.00
<i>San Martin Then and Now</i> by D. Brodsky	\$	20.00
Christmas Ornament (Globe)	\$	10.00
Christmas Ornament (Ceramic)	\$	10.00



Proceeds from Sales Directly Support the Gilroy Museum.

SOCIETY NEWS...

MORE ABOUT THE BITTER TAP HOUSE

The owners of the Bitter Tap House, **Ryan and Larissa Dickerson**, live upstairs with their two children. They are to be complimented for honoring the distinguished heritage and keeping the house in beautiful condition! The woodwork in the spacious parlor and dining room is still original. The back yard is lovely with trees and picnic tables, even a space for a cornhole game while patrons are relaxing with friends. They truly have one of the nicest venues in Gilroy with both indoor and outdoor spaces. It would be a good place for many small business meetings or social occasions. Visit them and see for yourselves!

OUR BOARD RETREAT

We worked hard all day making plans for this year and enjoyed lunch from **Café 152**, without even one beer! Coming this fall is a new, large National Register plaque for the Cedar Tree Row on Hecker Pass, in partnership with Mountain Charlie Chapter of E Clampus Vitus, aka the "Clampers". **Joanie Lewis** and **Connie Rogers** will be Co-Presidents this coming year. We are hoping to engage more of our 176 members in helping the Society with some of these endeavors: membership, programs, grant writing, publicity, and fund raising. We have a beautiful new blue 10 x 10 tent with our logo on it to use at community events such as the Gilroy Rodeo, Downtown Car Show, San Martin Fly In, Veterans' Day Parade, etc. Could you help us man the display table? Let Joanie or Connie know if you can help with any of these items.

WE WENT TO THE GILROY RODEO

On Sunday, August 13th we went to the Gilroy Rodeo, a terrific new event that continues the tradition of Gilroy's original Gymkhana, held from 1929-1956. Some of the original programs were found in our basement; see the picture on the next page. A bundle of gratitude is due to **Ellen Marden** who created our display and brought the tent to the Rodeo, and many thanks to **Babs Holiday** and **Bill Faus** for manning the table.

BOWL-A-THON UPDATE FROM LINDA WHITE

Thanks to a couple of donations received after we had finalized figures for this year's bowl-a-thon, our total income for this year was \$9258.61. It is definitely a big help towards funding our Historic Heritage Film Project.

This brings the earnings from **12 Bowl-a-thons since 2010 to a grand total of \$73,643.28**. Thanks to everyone who contributed!

EVENTS COMING UP

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH – Our Museum will participate in Doors Open California. 10AM-2PM Learn about other locations available at <https://californiapreservation.org/doca/>.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER. 9TH – Dave Peoples' tour of Old Saint Mary Cemetery, 10 AM, meet in front of 7950 Church Street.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16TH – Protecting your Legacy Sat, Sept. 16 at 2 PM at the Gilroy Library – caring for your heirlooms. Presented by Mandi Santiago from the Calibri Gallery.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23RD – That Pirate Bouchard, 10:30 AM at the Gilroy Library. Author Bill Biggs will detail the exploits of the pirate who intimidated Monterey Bay in the early 1800s.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15TH – Almaden Wine Museum kickoff in San Jose. See this website for details: <https://www.almaden.com/about-us>.

GILROY HISTORICAL SOCIETY – WHAT WE’VE BEEN UP TO!

MEMORIES
08.2023



Connie Rogers and Ellen Marden with our booth at the Gilroy Rodeo.



Eileen, Barbara and Joanie working hard on August 2nd.



Mike Monroe and Gary Walton hosting quiz for Miller and Lux wine.



Former dining room at the Bitter Tap House.



Mike Monroe speaking to guests on June 25th. First event held inside the barn!



Karen, Lucy, Susan, Eileen, Barbara and Joanie at Board Retreat on August 2nd.

WELCOME NEW LIFE MEMBERS
Chris Bevilacqua, Carol Peters, Kirk Berube and Mary Kahihikolo
and CORPORATE MEMBER – Blaettler Accountancy

GILROY MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS CAN DO AND DID!

By Susan Voss, Museum Manager



When it comes to getting things done, a good group of volunteers can make it happen! Recently the Gilroy Museum was approached by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for San Benito and Santa Clara Counties. USDA staff explained that they had transitioned to digital formats and inquired if the Museum would like aerial photographs of Gilroy, the south Santa Clara County, and their accompanying map storage cases. The photographs were from 1980, 1990, and an unspecified year, and they chronicled Gilroy's expansion and the transition from an agricultural to a more urban environment. The USDA's thoughtful donation of the photographs and the map cases ensured optimal photographic storage, and it saved the Museum over \$2,000 in new purchases!

Obtaining the maps was a wonderful opportunity, and the USDA staff and a team of volunteers made it happen. **Babs Holiday**, **Beth Meinert**, and **Marian Niiyama**, moved furniture, vacuumed, and reshelved the Museum's library to make space for the new cases. On the appointed day, **Mike Hughes** and **Babs Holiday** supplied their pickup trucks for hauling, and **Steve Brady** and I accompanied them to Hollister. With the assistance of the USDA staff, the cases were soon loaded and secured, and a large stack of maps took up most of the pickup's back seat. When we arrived at the Gilroy Museum, all the volunteers unloaded, carried in the map cases, and successfully reassembled them in a corner of the Book Room. One of the Museum's smaller map cases was added to the stack, and the aerial maps crowned it all. When Marian Niiyama catalogs the maps, they will then occupy their final Museum location in the large map cases. This effort could not have happened without volunteers and the thoughtful assistance of the USDA staff. My thanks to everyone for preserving significant Gilroy history!



Marian Niiyama shows aerial photo of agriculture in South County and map cases to hold them.

Another recent example of a volunteer contributing their knowledge and skills was provided by **Mike Hughes**. As Museum staff and volunteers work to refresh and create new exhibits, it often means that unexpected challenges occur. Staff wanted to display the bookkeeper's desk from the Whitehurst & Hodges nineteenth century Gilroy lumber mill. Since the desk has a drop down front, the plan was to display the front open, with smaller period items in the desk's cubby holes. Those small items needed to be secured, but how to do that without compromising the desk was the conundrum. Mike was able to build and stain a matching wooden frame that surrounded clear plexiglass and provided a window into the desk's interior. With the application of a period lock, the smaller items could be secured and simultaneously viewed. When unlocked, the frame was removeable, so the desk remained in its original condition. Thanks to Mike's skill, the display problem was solved!



Mike Hughes using his woodworking skills to solve a museum problem.



Steve Brady, Babs Holiday and Mike Hughes loading map cases donated to Gilroy Museum.

If you would like to contribute to the Gilroy community, come volunteer at the Gilroy Museum! The minimum time commitment is three hours per month, but we enthusiastically encourage greater participation! The Museum has a multitude of jobs, and Museum volunteers take great pride in changing "can do" to done! Come join us!

For further information please contact Susan Voss at the Gilroy Museum by telephone at **1-408-846-0446** or by email: **Gilroy.Museum@cityofgilroy.org**

We are trying something new, occasional luncheons with a speaker, like the California Pioneers do. Try this and give feedback to Board Member Karen Pedigo!

GILROY HISTORICAL SOCIETY LUNCHEON

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28TH, 2023

11:00 AM to 2:30 PM

OLD CITY HALL RESTAURANT

Speaker: Mike Monroe

Agricultural Historian, Writer, Preservationist and Conservationist

Make reservations by Wed. Oct. 18th by email or phone to Karen Pedigo, karenpedigo10@aol.com or 408-499-7460

Call or email to cancel as we have to pay for No Shows!

Luncheon Cost is \$30 – pay at the door

MENU

Tri Tip with mashed potatoes and vegetables

Herb grilled panko chicken, mashed potatoes and vegetables

Grilled Tilapia, rice and vegetables

Penne Alfredo with Chicken or Spaghetti and Meatballs



Served with salad, iced tea or coffee



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OLD CITY HALL

GILROY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Thank You for your Membership!

*...Honoring the integrity of Gilroy Community History
Your membership or gift membership includes a subscription to The Society Page.*

Gilroy Historical Society, P.O. Box 1621, Gilroy, CA 95021-1621

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**GILROY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**