



Old Gilroy City Hall - 1905

THE SOCIETY PAGE

Newsletter of the Gilroy Historical Society

March 2021

In This Issue

Stories From Gilroy



Museum & Society News



Honoring the Whitehurst House



Honoring Our Donors



Nomination for 2021 Architectural Awards



Monthly Walking Tours

GILROY MUSEUM

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

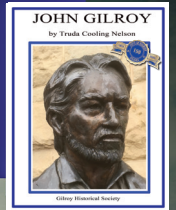
HOURS:
To Be Decided

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

STORIES FROM GILROY

SATURDAY, MARCH 13, 2021
AT 10:30AM

Enjoy the 2020 Stories of Gilroy's Heritage and also hear about the life of John Gilroy.



Gilroy Historical Society

REGISTER TO ATTEND THIS FREE ONLINE EVENT
AT WWW.SCCLD.ORG/EVENTS

santa clara county library district

We're excited to partner with the Gilroy Library for the premiere of our 2020 edition of Stories of Gilroy Heritage.

SATURDAY, MARCH 13TH at 10:30 AM

Register with this specific link/or QR Code provided by the Gilroy library and you'll receive a Zoom link shortly before the program begins:

[https://sccl.bibliocommons.com/events/search/local_start=2021-03-13%20TO%20%20&fq=branch_location_id:\(BC_VIRTUAL\)/event/602effb3b8f4233a006032d8](https://sccl.bibliocommons.com/events/search/local_start=2021-03-13%20TO%20%20&fq=branch_location_id:(BC_VIRTUAL)/event/602effb3b8f4233a006032d8)



The 43-minute film will feature these beloved Gilroy natives, preceded by a short interview with Phill Laursen showing how he converted a typewritten thesis into a handsome 85-page book with maps and graphics. Both projects were made possible with grants from Santa Clara County's Historic Grant Program.

GILROY HISTORICAL SOCIETY BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

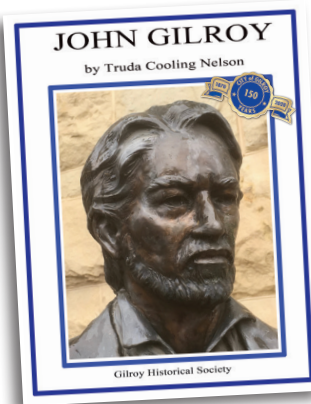
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- Joanie M. Lewis, *Vice-President* JoanieMLewis@charter.net (408) 842-8698
- Maureen Hunter, *Secretary* MaureenHunter8@yahoo.com (503) 550-7668
- Eileen Cavallaro, *Treasurer* Etcavall@hotmail.com (408) 848-3084
- Barbara Biafore, *Volunteer Schedules* budbiafore@gmail.com (408) 842-7515
- Linda White, *Fund Raising Coordinator* linda104@charter.net (408) 847-2861
- Elizabeth Barratt, *Emeritus* hrhandqe3@gmail.com (408) 607-3189
- Karen Pedigo, *Education Chair* (408) 499-7460
- Roberta Hughan RHughan@garlic.com (408) 842-5375
- Dave Matuszak dmatuszak2@aol.com (408) 842-0681
- Lucy Solórzano (408) 607-7722

Board meetings are held on the 1st Wednesday of the month at the Museum, 195 Fifth St., 1:00 p.m.
Members are always welcome to attend or share ideas with the board.

THE MUSEUM AND GIFT SHOP ARE TEMPORARILY CLOSED DUE TO COVID

The Museum will open to the public when the Health Dept. We hope it will be soon! In the meantime, Susan Voss, our Museum Manager, is inside working and can fulfill telephone or emailed requests for research or products. To get in touch with her, please call the Museum at (408) 846-0446 or email her at Gilroy.museum@cityofgilroy.org

Visit our website at gilroyhistoricalsociety.org and look under the Merchandise tab for a picture list of our books and products. You can order directly from the Museum, decide if you want it to pick it up or have mailed to you for a little bit extra., then pay by credit card. Easy! And all proceeds benefit the Museum.



If you don't have yours yet, you can still buy a copy of John Gilroy's biography through our website as described above.

When ordering from Amazon use **smile.amazon.com**, and they will send the Gilroy Historical Society a tiny percentage of your purchase!

MUSEUM & SOCIETY NEWS

The Museum may be temporarily closed, but thanks to our **Manager Susan Voss**, work inside continues. The Collections Committee of the Museum "met" via email and reviewed photos of 44 items donated between April and November. All but two were accepted. They will be accessioned and entered into our Past Perfect data system. **Joe Robinson** has resigned his position at the Museum but continues to work with the Miller Red Barn Association.

The Museum has contracted with 152 West to obtain Spanish subtitles for our Museum Tour video. Volunteer **Larry Scettrini** and his wife **Elia** reviewed the Spanish translation and made a few edits. We should have the final product soon and think it will be very useful. ESL classes at many levels could use it.

The Society and Museum Facebook pages have been combined as Gilroy Historical Society and Gilroy Museum. **Linda White** works hard on keeping it updated and has been running a series on the history of our street names. Visit our page and send Linda items you find interesting. **Sean Barragan** has made some videos of a tour of the exterior of Rebekah Children's Services, tour of Old St. Mary Cemetery and others which he posted on his Gilroy Gold Facebook page and shared with us.

A Volunteer Survey was conducted to determine how many volunteers will be willing to come back with the new social distancing protocols. Three will come in with public visitors present and seven more are willing to work on projects without public visitors. These projects will include cataloging of over 3,600 photos, subject and research file reorganization, and creation of directories for each set of files. A gradual reopening plan will include training of volunteers after the development of protocols in accordance with city and county guidelines. For now, the Museum remains closed until we get the green light from the Health Dept. and City of Gilroy. Our new **John Gilroy biography** has been enthusiastically received! The Museum has sold and mailed out 45 copies. Additional books have been sold and delivered by Society Board members.

Have you visited the new Union Bank office on First and Wren? They have some fabulous photos from the Museum on display! Most impressive is the 12' x 15' view of Monterey Street circa 1930 behind the tellers. There are several other nice enlargements too. The Museum received a generous donation for providing these reminders of our heritage.

We are very proud that Board Member **Dave Matuszak** is now the Chair of the City's Historic Heritage Committee and friend **Kathleen Chavez** is a new member of that body. They meet monthly to review actions concerning historic buildings in Gilroy.

The Museum's huge file of photographs needed more space. The intrepid Susan thought we needed a new fireproof file for them and found a perfect used one in Richmond. The owner donated it and we paid a freight company to deliver it just before Thanksgiving. It was exciting to see these men bring it up the 14 steps into the Museum and put it in place!



Getting a 450-pound file cabinet up the 14 Museum steps was not easy. Luckily these guys had a battery powered "crawler".



SUCCESS!

HONORING THE WHITEHURST HOUSE



7040 Church Street

Imagine you moved to Gilroy about 1870 to begin a lumbering business here as Lyttleton and Hester Whitehurst did. They built this spacious farmhouse on an acre of land to accommodate their seven children William (1862), May (1864), Florence (1865), twins Logan and Jeanette (1866), Sarah (1868), Charles (1870) and Hetty, 1873. Can you imagine the children playing in the orchard on the south side of the house? Or exploring the tank house that still stands?

Lyttleton was born in 1834 in Virginia and spent his early life in Missouri. He crossed the plains twice to California, once in 1849 and again in 1859. He married Hester Ann Logan in 1860 and was in the lumbering business near Los Gatos. After moving to Gilroy, he became a partner with William Hanna and Pleasant Hodges in the lumber mill on Bodfish Creek Road, near the road that now bears his name. Soon after that they bought the planing and finishing mill in town, located where Wheeler Auditorium now stands. They supplied the redwood used to build many of Gilroy's early homes. The firm of Whitehurst and Hodges was a major Gilroy enterprise for more than 50 years.

In 1879 Whitehurst was elected President of the Bank of Gilroy, a position he held until his death in 1907. He was elected to the Gilroy Common Council

in 1876-1880 and served two terms as City Treasurer in 1882-1886 and 1889-1892. In 1889 he served in the State Assembly and from 1893 to 1895 served in the State Senate. He was also elected Mayor in 1892. Holding two elected offices simultaneously is not legal now, but was possible in those days because the Legislature only convened every other year with sessions usually lasting from January to mid-March!

The elegant pair of portraits of Lyttleton and Hester Whitehurst in their silver frames are on display at the Gilroy Museum, along with a marble inkwell from the Bank of Gilroy bearing the names of L.A. Whitehurst President and C.E. Whitehurst, Assistant Cashier. The handsome portraits were the work of J.R. Hodson, a highly acclaimed photographer in Sacramento in 1875. The property at 7040 Church Street is listed as an Historic Site by both Gilroy and the County.

Many of us remember the corner of Tenth and Church Streets as a prominent location for political signs during election season. The main house is as old as the City of Gilroy, 150 years. The spacious site may change in the future as the property is listed for sale with Intero. You can see the interior online. Our member Patty Filice is the agent.



Whitehurst plot at Gavilan Hills
Memorial Park



HONORING OUR DONORS

We are eternally grateful to our generous donors. They inspire us and give us confidence. And most importantly they enable us to provide professional services at the Gilroy Museum and lasting programs like the Stories of Gilroy Heritage oral history films. We all look forward to the day when we can present programs in person again and welcome Museum visitors.

2020 MUSEUM BENEFACTORS

GOLD LEVEL (\$500 and above)

Barbara Biafore
Elaine Bonino
Tom Fischer
Joe Robinson

SILVER LEVEL (Up to \$300)

Angelo Benassi
Eileen Cavallaro
James Ebaugh
Tim Filice
Filice & Company, Inc.
Tom & Becky Fisher

Patricia Gilroy
Habing Family Funeral Home
Ric Heinzen
Jane Howard
Lenore Hailstone
Mary Kahihikolo
John & Sarah Kelly

Kelly Larsen
Joanie Lewis
Linda Sargenti Mello
Carol J. Peters
Barbara Shurtz
J. David Sturla
Belinda Vega
Linda White

BRONZE LEVEL (Up to \$100)

Charles & Alice Anderson
Barbara Armenta
Sandra Ayala
Elizabeth Barratt
Paul Baxter
Antonia Bowles
Everett & Marjorie Burchell
Donald Culver
Don DeLorenzo
Phyllis & Robert Dillon
Barbara Drewitz
Christine Flautt
William C. Hart
Zachary Hilton

John Kent
Penelope Lockhart
Kristiane McKee Maas
David Matuszak
Elizabeth McGlauffin
Steven & Ruby McWilliams
Susan Meyers & Michael Oshan
George Nichol
Loretta Pappani
Alan Porcella
William Reimal
George & Marika Somorjai
Cindee Sorensen
Shirley Willard
Lani Yoshimura
Richard Young

DO YOU HAVE A NOMINATION FOR OUR 2021 ARCHITECTURAL AWARDS?

Have you noticed an historic building that is "looking good" this year? We want to honor people who have invested in the preservation and beautification of their home or building, a significant effort that makes Gilroy a better place. You can easily nominate a building for the 2021 Architectural Awards. Send your nomination by March 31st using any of these methods:

E-mail: Gilroy.Museum@cityofgilroy.org

Mail: Gilroy Museum, 195 Fifth St., Gilroy, CA 95020

Phone: The Gilroy Museum at 408-846-0446

Please include your name; the street address of the nominee, and a brief explanation of why you think the building or residence deserves an award in one of these categories:

- HISTORIC DESIGN AWARD** – for a new building in the downtown area that complements the original historic buildings or enhances the Downtown Historic District area
- HISTORIC COMMERCIAL BUILDING AWARD** – for a building at least 50 years old in the downtown Historic District or on an Historic Site that restores, retains or preserves the building's historical, cultural or architectural values.
- HISTORIC HOUSE AWARD** – for a home that is at least 50 years old that is an outstanding example of restoration and renovation. Exterior only.
- CERTIFICATE OF COMMENDATION** – for residential, commercial or "other". This could be for new construction, restoration, renovation, additions, landscaping, painting or significant improvement.

Join the Gilroy Historical Society for Monthly Walking Tours

FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH
10:00 AM - NOON (approximately)

2021 Schedule

Meet in front of the Gilroy Museum, 195 Fifth Street
unless otherwise specified

January 2	MONTEREY STREET
February 6	BUNGALOWS
March 6	WOMEN'S HISTORY TOUR
April 3	OLD GILROY I (Railroad and Alexander Streets)
May 1	OLD GILROY II (Forest and Chestnut Streets)
June 5	GAVILAN HILLS MEMORIAL PARK CEMETERY (Meet at the cemetery, 1000 First Street)
July 3	NO TOUR
August 7	FIFTH STREET
September 4	TUDOR HOUSES (Carmel & Princevalle Streets)
October 2	WILLIAM WEEKS BUILDINGS
November 6	OLD ST. MARY CEMETERY (Meet in front of St. Joseph Family Center, 7950 Church Street)
December 4	NO TOUR



- Reservations suggested but not required -

TO MAKE RESERVATIONS OR
FOR MORE INFORMATION
CALL THE GILROY MUSEUM AT (408) 846-0446



GILROY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 1621

Gilroy, CA 95021

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**Return Service
Requested**



Old Gilroy City Hall (1905)

Thank You for your Membership!

Your membership or gift membership includes a subscription to *The Society Page*.

...Honoring the integrity of Gilroy Community History

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

MAIL TO:

Individual \$35 Senior \$25 Family \$50 Business/Corporate \$500 Life \$500

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Address _____

Name _____

Date _____

**GILROY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP**