

The Society Page

JANUARY 2016

JOIN US TO LEARN THE HISTORY OF
THE GILROY POLICE DEPARTMENT

Saturday, February 6th at 1:30 p.m.

At the Gilroy Police Department Lobby and Community
Room
7301 Hanna Street

Frank Bozzo, native Gilroyan and history buff, as well as a retired Gilroy Officer, will share his research about the department. The lobby (which most of us seldom see) contains an excellent display of police artifacts, retired equipment and photos. If climbing all those steps seems prohibitive, there is an elevator just to the right.





OLD SAINT MARY CEMETERY DEDICATION

On November 7th the long-awaited re-dedication of Old St. Mary Cemetery was held at 10:00 a.m. It was a fitting capstone to the 150th anniversary of the parish and quite the celebration with over 100 donors and friends attending. A color guard from American Legion Post #217 and VFW Post #6309 led off, followed by Angela Tirado, the Voice of San Jose, singing the national anthem.

Father Vincent of St. Mary Parish gave a beautiful blessing. Mayor Don Gage officiated at the ribbon cutting provided by the Gilroy Chamber of Commerce. Recognition was given to all members of the Friends of Old Saint Mary Cemetery: the Gavilan Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Gilroy Historical Society, the City of Gilroy, Habing Family Funeral Home, and St. Mary Parish. Cyclone Fence and Iron was honored for the beautiful wrought iron fence they erected. Supervisor Cortese's office presented a framed commendation of our restoration achievement. Porcella's Music loaned a portable microphone and amplifier for the occasion. The ceremony concluded with Ms. Tirado singing a version of Ave Maria that was originally sung by the Native Americans at Mission San Juan Bautista and the retiring of the colors.

Following the ceremonies Connie Rogers led a tour of the 150 year old cemetery and guests enjoyed refreshments in the lovely backyard of Joanie Lewis, which just happens to adjoin the cemetery on the west side. The Committee is very proud of the improvements, which included professional trimming of the heritage oak trees, removal of volunteer privets and a dead pine tree, new LED lighting around the perimeter, new monument sign identifying the cemetery, new John and Maria Gilroy monument, and finally, a beautiful wrought iron fence and arched entry gate on the southeast corner. The Friends Committee vowed to continue to ensure that maintenance is provided in the future.

MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS ENJOY FESTIVE CHRISTMAS LUNCH

The Willey House was the scene of a festive lunch on December 2nd honoring our faithful Museum Volunteers for their service.

Lead Volunteer Betty Kelly spearheaded the event, with Barbara Biafore providing lovely centerpieces for the tables. Tom Howard gave his annual report on our progress this year. The volunteers received nice lapel pins with an enameled picture of Old City Hall.





AMAH MUTSUN PROGRAM MARCH 12th

Remember the terrific program the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band presented to us in 2012? They are returning on March 12th at the Gilroy Library, showing a beautiful film that emphasizes their relationship to the land where we live. Put this on your calendar!



Native American Tribal Partnerships 2.pdf

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HOLLOWAY HOUSE RESTORED

Gilroy has been given a wonderful gift, the restoration of the National Register Holloway House at 7539 Egleberry Street. This ornate Queen Anne Victorian, built in 1903 for Edgar and Dora Holloway, was designed by famous Central Coast architect, William Weeks. Last year Jeff and Barbara Orth purchased it for use as the office for their financial planning business. For a year they have worked hard to repair damage and return the house to its former glory. Their investment paid off and is a vote of confidence in our downtown. The Orths celebrated with an open house for the community on November 19th. In accordance with our policy, Gilroy Historical Society presented the Orths with a National Register plaque, which is proudly mounted on the front steps.

OUR DEEPEST GRATITUDE TO OUR DONORS

We are eternally grateful to our generous donors to our Gilroy Museum Endowment Fund with the Gilroy Foundation. You will see a list of them below. We are thrilled to report that we are well over halfway toward our goal of \$500,000. Yes, that is a very lofty goal, but it is the amount needed to provide an annual income of \$20,000, and that is the amount we think is needed to pay a half-time Museum Director. We will still need and want volunteers. They are the lifeblood of the Gilroy Museum! But a Museum Director will be the guiding light. Thank you again for believing in the Gilroy Museum.

2016 WALKING TOURS

Every first Saturday of the month when the Gilroy Museum is open, we lead walking tours to different parts of Gilroy. Most of the tour locations are based on areas of architectural interest or importance that were defined in the 1980s when our Historic Building Survey was completed. The tours are a fun way to learn more about some unnoticed areas of Gilroy and get some exercise. Often the tour participants add interesting pieces of information about locations where their ancestors lived or worked. We'd love to have you come!



Walking Tour2016.pdf

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THANKS TO THESE GARLIC FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERS

We received a check from the Gilroy Garlic Festival Association for \$724.18 for the hours our 19 volunteers worked at the Garlic Festival last July. They also let us know that over the life of the Garlic Festival we've earned \$30,753.22! This money is very important to us because it helps pay for our newsletter printing and mailing. We have one of the best jobs at the Festival. We help customers choose art posters from current and past years, and operate The People's Choice voting on the runners up in the poster contest. On top of that, our jobs are in the shade and we have a place to sit down. So if Barbara Biafore calls you and asks you to volunteer this summer, please say YES!

Our gratitude goes to these volunteers: Sarah Kelly, John Kelly, Carol DeSantis, Katie DeSantis, Phyllis Armenta, Maureen Hunter, Connie Rogers, Jim Rogers, Phill Laursen, Kathy Laursen, Edith Edde, Claudia Salewske, Gloria Caliri, Tony Caliri, Marcia Bodnar, Eileen Cavallaro, Grace Narvaez, Bud Biafore, and Barbara Biafore.

NEW DISPLAYS AT THE MUSEUM & CITY HALL

The big display case in the center of the west gallery is sporting a new display. A new child size mannequin enabled the talented team of Barbara Biafore and Deanna Goodrich to dress a school child and show her belongings.

This same team has set up an interesting display of kitchen tools and equipment, Fannie Farmer cookbook and all, in the center corridor at City Hall. It will take you back to when you used to help your mother in the kitchen. Enjoy!

WHAT AND HOW TO DONATE TO THE MUSEUM

Several people have donated photos and memorabilia. These items can be very helpful with research and/or contribute to a display. Some recent items include three Gilroy High yearbooks, a 1915 cookbook from the Christian Church, a 1971 Goldsmith Seeds Catalog, copies of the Gilroy High School Owl from 1935 and '36, Miller-Lux Scrip from 1880, and an antique perambulator found in Dick Bruhn's store. The Collections Committee meets monthly to decide if the Museum should accept each donation. Due to space limitations the Museum can't accept furniture. The Museum appreciates receiving most items related to Gilroy or South County, so remember us when you are cleaning your closets and cupboards. Bring in your item; fill out a donor form and within a month the Collections Committee will let you know if it is something that would be a good fit for the Gilroy Museum.

A REQUEST FOR OUR HELP

Richard Burrill of Chico is an author, educator and presenter. He has a website: www.ishifacts.com. He is seeking information about a California Indian of Tehama County who was "farmed out to Santa Clara or San Benito County about 1868." Mr. Burrill wants to know more about where he worked, who he married, when he died, and whether there are living descendants today. If you have any clues about this man known as "Indian Dick Coffman" please get in touch with Mr. Burrill at 530-809-2451 or email him at richardburrill2011@gmail.com.

The Museum does accept research requests and our stalwart volunteers do their best to answer them. If the request takes more than half an hour, we charge for our services.

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