

The Society Page - June 2016

Celebrate with us at our Annual Meeting and Picnic CHITACTAC-ADAMS COUNTY PARK Sunday, June 26th ~ 12:30 to 2:30 pm

Take Hecker Pass west, turn right on Watsonville Road. Proceed north about a mile. The park entrance is on the west side, opposite Burchell Road.

Our picnic lunch will feature chicken and tri tip, pasta, salad, fruit, and garlic bread, catered by David Bozzo. We'll provide non-alcoholic beverages. Make your reservation right away by mailing your check for **\$20** to Gilroy Historical Society, PO Box 1621, Gilroy, CA 95021. *We need your reservation by Monday, June 20th, please!*

Our Architectural Awards for 2016, a brief update on the Miller Red Barn progress, and Robyn Houts, who is a docent at the park, will give us a short program about the Amah Mutsuns who lived on the site.

If you haven't seen this small gem of a park with its petroglyphs and grinding rocks, you're in for a treat! There is an easy, self-guided trail around this site of an Indian village. The shaded picnic area is adjacent to the parking lot and easily accessible on smooth, level ground. Bring your camera!

AGENDA FOR OUR ANNUAL MEETING

- I. Treasurer's report
- II. Accomplishments for 2015-16
- III. Future goals
- IV. Questions, suggestions, and requests from members
- V. Report on Miller Red Barn progress and needs
- VI. Presentation of special awards to three Museum Volunteers
- VII. Presentation of 2016 Architectural Awards
- VIII. Presentation on the Amah Mutsun tribe (Ohlnes) who lived on this site by Robyn Houts, docent at the park.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2015-16

- 1. Staffed the Gilroy Museum with 29 volunteers on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and first Saturdays of every month.
- 2. Led free walking tours to different historic areas of Gilroy on nine first Saturdays.
- 3. Sold items at the Gilroy Museum and the Welcome Center to fund our Museum operating budget. Also received donations from visitors for this purpose.
- 4. Held a very successful Bowl-a-thon to benefit our Endowment Fund.
- 5. Presented Architectural Awards to three historic homes, the First Church of Christ Scientist, and the IOOF Rebekah Children's Home.
- 6. Gave a National Register Plaque to the owners of the Holloway House at 7539 Egleberry Street upon their restoration of this gorgeous Victorian home.
- 7. Earned **\$724.18** selling art posters at the Gilroy Garlic Festival.
- 8. Participated in a partnership with Gabilan Chapter, DAR, Habing Family Funeral Home, St. Mary Parish, the City of Gilroy, and neighbors of the historic Old St. Mary Cemetery. This culminated with re-dedication of the cemetery on November 5th. This Committee had heritage trees trimmed, installed 4 new LED lights, and raised over **\$30,000** for a beautiful new wrought iron fence and gate.
- 9. Helped with the timeline and choosing photos (many from the Museum) for large display boards soon to be installed in the Paseo on the west side of Monterey Street between 5th and 6th Streets. Also bought a brick for the Paseo in the name of the Gilroy Historical Society.
- 10. Provided displays at Gilroy City Hall featuring historic businesses, kitchen tools of the past, and the Gilroy postcard collection of Steve Medley.
- 11. Held programs on the new book featuring historic wineries, the history of the Gilroy Police Department, the Amah Mutsun tribal efforts to continue their cultural history, and the Hispanic contributions to our Gilroy history.
- 12. Held a well-attended workshop for our volunteers at the Willey House in September.
- 13. Supported the efforts of the Miller Red Barn Committee.
- 14. Hosted several school tours at the Museum and classroom visits by volunteers.
- 15. Gave a Christmas thank-you luncheon at the Willey House for our Museum volunteers.
- 16. Maintained a website and active Facebook page that generated interest in our programs and activities.

Whew! We were BUSY. Thanks you to the dedicated efforts of our volunteers and supporters.

ENDOWMENT FUND PROGRESS

Thanks to very generous donors we're making great progress on our Museum Endowment Fund. Again this year special appreciation goes to Margene Peterson who led a team that collected **\$5100** in pledges during our Bowl-a-thon last March! Total Bowl-a-thon proceeds in 2016 were **\$6772.79**.

During 2015, we deposited **\$15,813** in the Gilroy Foundation from donations and fundraisers. With interest our balance at the end of 2015 was **\$169,514**.

Our goal of reaching **\$500,000** in the Museum Endowment Fund is very high, but we believe it will take that much to generate enough income to pay a half-time professional director of the Gilroy Museum. With major help from the Lindeleaf Fund (which now stands at **\$89,077**) we are over the halfway point. A professional director will ensure that the Museum stays open, no matter what! At the same time we know that volunteers are the lifeblood of the Museum. We will always need and appreciate them. Although we are only open ten days/month our visitor numbers are similar to or better than when the Museum was open twice as many hours.

MILLER RED BARN TIMELINE OF PROGRESS

by Kathy Chavez

February 2014 - City Council reaffirms demolition order, but gives ad hoc committee one year to show barn is historic. First meeting of MRB Committee. Subcommittees formed.

April 2014 - First inspection of the barn interior with volunteer architect.

May 2014 - Gilroy Foundation becomes fiscal sponsor, allowing donations. Committee visits Watsonville Ag History Museum and Emma Prusch Park.

June 2014 - First fund-raising BBQ dinner at Gilroy Demonstration Garden.

Summer 2014 - Mission & Vision statements created. Trifold brochure and Power Point presentations developed. "Buck for the Barn" button campaign begins.

December 2014 - Meeting with City staff regarding requirements for saving the barn.

January 2015 - Committee meets individually with City Council members to explain historic significance and assure them no city monies are requested.

April & May 2015 - Consultation with historical barn restoration expert who reviews architectural report. Hanna & Brunetti report that our barn is not in 100-year flood plain.

July 2015 - Letter to City Council asking for approval to clean out barn and repair roof.

September 2015 - Interior of barn inspected in detail. Application for National Register submitted to California Office of Historic Preservation.

October 2015 - Presentation to City Parks & Recreation Commission. City proposes drafting a Memorandum of Understanding.

November 2015 - MOU draft meeting with City staff. Committee hires attorney for incorporation and non-profit status. Mission and Vision statements revised.

February 2015 - Haz-mat report completed for barn cleanout procedure and presented to City.

April 2016 - MOU draft presented to Parks and Recreation Commission. Barn clean up held on April 30th with help from MG Construction haz-mat crew and volunteer help from South Valley Community Church.

May 2016 - MOU accepted by City Council and demolition order rescinded.

July 28, 2016 - Formal review of National Register application will be held in Sacramento.





MUSEUM VOLUNTEERS PUT ANTIQUE QUILT TOGETHER

Inspired by a challenge from June Bell, Nancy Alford, Linda Elia, Lenore Hailstone, and Edith Edde met to see what they could sew to benefit the Museum. Linda's neighbor had given her several antique quilt tops. The ladies chose one and went to work adding a border, filling, and backing. Edith donated machine quilting to complete the project. After Linda added a sleeve allowing it to be hung, the quilt was exhibited at the annual AAUW Quilt Show on May 7th.

Now these intrepid volunteers want to raffle off the quilt to benefit the Museum! Tickets will be sold for a donation of \$2 each or 6 tickets for \$10. Linda Williams, owner of the Nimble Thimble, will hang the quilt on the wall behind her cash register. You can buy tickets at both the Museum and the Nimble Thimble. The drawing will be held at the Volunteer Christmas luncheon on December 7th, 2016.



CULTURAL DIVERSITY WE'RE PROUD TO CLAIM

by Connie Rogers

Recently we've supported two programs that gave us a broader insight into Gilroy's cultural history. We were delighted to do this, especially because the Museum could use more diversity in our collection. If any readers have such items from Gilroy that would enhance our collection, please let us know. So many nationalities and ethnicities have contributed to our wonderful area. Consider: Native Americans, Spanish, Mexican, Irish, French, German, Portuguese, Swiss, Italian, Filipino, Japanese, and Chinese. I hope I didn't miss any!

Amah Mutsun

On March 12th we arranged for the Amah Mutsun Tribal Band to present a wonderful program at the Gilroy Library. They showed a video called *Here and Now* produced by the Bay Area Open Space Council that featured the tribe's collaboration with Mid-Peninsula Open Space District, the Sempervirens Fund, California State Parks, and Pinnacles National Park. The film discussed the tribal efforts to restore their land stewardship and management practices that reflect their spirituality and culture. I find it very impressive that instead of building casinos, the tribe has partnered with public agencies to use part of those lands to grow herbs and grasses important in their culture. You can view the video yourself at: <https://vimeo.com/openspacecounsel/hereandnow>.

Tribal Historian Ed Ketchum showed wonderful maps and told many legends explaining how local land features got their names according to the Amah Mutsun. Did you know Umunhum means resting place of the hummingbird? "Mt. Umunhum is the site of the Amah Mutsun's creation story, which occurred over 15,000 years ago," according to Amah Mutsun Tribal Chairman Valentin Lopez. Following the legends of local places Rick Flores from UC Santa Cruz discussed their arboretum and native plant propagation efforts. All in all an outstanding program!



Mexican

El Excentrico, a Spanish language magazine published in San Jose from 1949 to 1981, covered news and social events in the South Bay Area. On April 7th the Society hosted a reception at the Gilroy Library for this important exhibit.

Dr. Ramon Martinez, *El Excentrico* Magazine Project Director said, "The *El Excentrico* Magazine Photography Exhibit (bilingual in English and Spanish) is made up of 30 framed photograph collections with various themes such as Women Entrepreneurs, the American GI Forum Veterans Group, Chicanos in Vietnam, The Photographers, Sports Legends, Music, Cesar Chavez and the CSO, The Farmworker Movement, and The Chicano Movement. Two frames are collections of photographs about two groups directly related to Gilroy."



The story of "Las Hermanas Montoya" was featured with an exhibit at City Hall including their gold record and the beaded dress of Emelia Montoya, mother of Gilroyans Mark and Adam Sanchez. The Montoya Sisters sang with the "Mambo King" Perez Prado in the 1950s and also appeared with Celia Cruz, Nat King Cole, and Billy Eckstine. The gold record from RCA Victor was for their million selling single, "Mucho, Mucho, Mucho."

The December 5, 1951 cover of *El Excentrico* Magazine featured a picture of 21 girls, "Club Gardenia de Gilroy." The article noted that the group consisted of 40 members and had participated in San Jose activities and parades for "the last 6 years."

Gilroy resident Irma (Ruiz) Batrez recalls that her family moved from Texas to Gilroy in 1943, because the military sent two of her brothers to the west coast, one to Fort Ord. The parents wanted to stay close to their sons, so they came with their four daughters and five sons. "Because it was wartime, there were soldiers and strangers everywhere around town, and the Mexican mothers were concerned that their girls needed guidance and activities to keep them entertained and supervised. The mothers helped found Las Gardenias de Gilroy Club. They met in members' homes and backyards."

Irma remembers that the women and girls made enchiladas and held car washes to raise money for the girls to have birthday parties and to take trips to the beach. The money they raised was also used to host *tardeadas* (early evening social events), showers for engaged girls, or gifts to those who were getting married.

Las Gardenias also took part in the annual parades and fiestas in San Jose. These activities involved planning decorated cars and floats, Mexican folklorico dancing groups and other activities to support the events. It was the perfect reason for the girls to go to meetings and planning events in the big city. Irma's parents would let the girls go to meetings if they took their little sisters, one of whom was Irma.



Sally (Duran) Armendariz, Irma (Ruiz) Batrez, and Margaret (Perez) Luna reminisce

GARLIC FESTIVAL VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Yes, we have job positions at the Garlic Festival this July, but they will be different from our past assignments. This year we'll be assigned to a tent near the cookoff state (so still in the shade!) selling recipe booklets, and we are not sure what else; the position is still under development. If you'd like to help, please call **Barbara Biafore** at (408) 842-7515.

MUSEUM NEWS

The Museum always seems to be a busy place! Here's the latest:

~ **Bunny Cimino Filice** thoughtfully and generously established a Museum Fund at the Gilroy Foundation. She wanted to make sure we had **funds to operate now**, not just go to the Endowment Fund for the future. In April the Museum operating budget was enhanced by **\$545** disbursement from the Foundation, This will happen every year! We are all overjoyed!

~ In April, six volunteers attended a paper conservation workshop with Karen Zukor in Oakland, followed by a behind-the-scenes tour of the Oakland Museum. **Tom Howard**, Lead Volunteer, arranged for the workshop that was funded by a stipend from the City. All who attended felt it was very worthwhile.



~ Tom took a damaged panorama photo of Gilroy Hot Springs to Heida Shoemaker in Oakland for conservation. He also took a few other photos that had been rolled so tightly they were damaged. With the conservation part of the City stipend we now have a greatly improved large Hot Springs photo, and the others were flattened and improved too. When the Leedo Gallery tightens up the frame and installs a new mat we plan to display the Hot Springs panorama photo across from the Hot Springs Exhibit.

~ The Museum has received some interesting donations recently. They included an 1876 map of South County, a Masonic ring, and early Gilroy High School literary magazines and event programs. The largest donation consisted of many boxes of call records and duty rosters from the Gilroy Fire Department.

BRIEFS FROM OUR FRIENDS

On Saturday, May 28th, Gilroy Hot Springs held an open house, giving tours and showing off the restoration progress they have made. The theme was "Children Through History." The Society manned a table, selling a few of our items from the Museum. We also took the Museum's traveling suitcases which enabled us to share games like jacks, jump rope, and pick-up sticks, along with children's clothing of the 1890s. To learn more about the Hot Springs and their upcoming events go to www.gilroyyamatohotsprings.org.

Our friends in six area Rotary Clubs have adopted old St. Mary Cemetery and are busy putting in pathways and meditation benches. We are pleased and honored that they have invested time and money to continue the improvement efforts we started.

The long-awaited seven large panels depicting Gilroy History should be installed this summer. We can't wait to see them! Project Chair Joan Buchanan says they would still like to have more sponsors for bricks. Orders received this month will be included with the installation and help finance the finishing touches. For a **\$250** donation you can commemorate your family or group with up to three lines. For details, call Joan at (408) 847-4770 or email her at jbuchan@garlic.com.