

Cotati Historical Society Newsletter

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Preserving Cotati's Past
PO Box 7013 Cotati, CA 94931
chsinfo@sonic.net www.cotatihistoricalsociety.org

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Marie McNaughton, Editor

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CONTENTS

President's Letter	1
New CHS Video Hits Internet!	1
News Briefs	2
New & Renewing Members & Memorial Donations	2
Remembering Connie Martin & Cathryn Fairlee	3
2020 Essay Award Winners	3
Board Member Reports & Thomas Page Field Trip	4

President's Letter to the Membership

By John Allred

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Cotati Historical Society, I want to wish you all a very Happy New Year! Our hopes are that you are all currently healthy and virus-free. This past year has certainly been a challenge for all of us.

We are all well aware everything changed in March of 2020. . . everything! The Cotati Historical Society was also impacted, just like everyone and everything else. We had to close our museum doors to visitors as well as forego our monthly board meetings. That being said, we were also not able to keep you informed with a quarterly newsletter.

Each of us has been following the advice of the experts, staying in place, wearing our masks, and trying to be part of the solution. We hope that you, your family, your friends and other loved ones have been able to make the best of it during these *very* difficult times.

During all of this, I am happy to report, many have continued to support us by generously renewing their 2020 memberships and through thoughtful donations, including memorials for those lost in 2020 and remembrances of other family members.

After discussing our current situation, the Board of Directors has decided to "gift" your 2021 membership dues to you! We want to show how much it means to us to have you continue being a part of our community. We realize that we couldn't be a historical society without *you*!

So thank you from all of us. We truly appreciate your support, and we look forward to bringing you many more featured exhibits, displays, and informative events. Most of all, we are eager to bring back our famous annual Chicken BBQ and Silent Auction, though probably not until 2022.

Please check back with us from time to time. We will update our outgoing phone message and our website with information about reopening.

I also want to thank, in advance, each of you who chooses to continue making donations and contributions to support CHS. Please do keep in mind that this is your organization, and that we count on your physical participation as well. I hope you will think about volunteering this year and being part of Cotati's "Future History." Today is just the beginning of what future generations will fondly look back on as Cotati history, and you can be a part of that!

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President: John Allred, 795-2791
Vice President: Ed Gilardi
Secretary: Velma DiMeola
Treasurer: Bobbie Veronda
Archiving Administrator:
Judy Gustafson

**YOUR IDEAS &
ENERGY NEEDED!**

COTATI MUSEUM HOURS

Currently CLOSED to the public due to COVID-19.

For research, donations & other concerns, call 707-794-0305.

*Inside Cotati City Hall
201 W. Sierra Avenue*

THE CHS MISSION

As stated in our Articles of Incorporation, dated April 11, 2007, the specific purposes of the Cotati Historical Society are (1) to protect and preserve the history and culture of the City of Cotati, (2) to provide a permanent resource (museum and interpretive programs) for the preservation of artifacts, memorabilia and documents illustrating the past and present life of the Cotati community, municipality, and its citizens, and (3) to reach out to the general community and to support similarly guided educational and historical agencies.

Take the **NEW CHS Virtual Tour of Cotati**

Since CHS was unable to begin its downtown Cotati walking tour program last year, we took a leap into the 21st century.

Now anyone anywhere can take a virtual tour of Cotati past and present.

Visit the CHS home page: www.cotatihistoricalsociety.org.
Like it, love it, share it!

NEWS BRIEFS

Cotati Historical Society volunteer extraordinaire **Judy Gustafson** has done it again. She earned CHS another \$500 Good Neighbor Grant from State Farm Companies Foundation, by reporting her many volunteer hours. As a State Farm retiree, she has garnered \$6,000 over 12 years. We are grateful for all her hard work and for turning it into hard cash.

Descendants of Thomas and Ana Maria Page made news this month when the Save the Redwoods League paid the Mailliard family \$25 million to place permanent conservation easements on their 15,000-acre ranch in Mendocino County. The ranch is the largest ranch held by a single family in the coast redwood range. It includes groves of old and second-growth trees and 25 miles of streams, and will now be protected from any future development. The Pages' daughter Lizzie (1861-1950) married John Ward Mailliard of San

Rafael in 1888, joining two of the North Coast's leading families. The couple had five children to whom today's generations are related.



Lizzie Page (seated, center) celebrates her 88th birthday with her five children and their spouses, 1949. Image from UC Berkeley Digital Assets.

THANK YOU TO OUR NEW AND RENEWING 2020 MEMBERS AND SOCIETY DONORS

Pat Anderson	Sage Howell	Gary and Reta Santero
Marie Andreoli	Robert Jensen	Joan Simon
Erin and David Armstrong	Mark and Jan Landman*	Trudy Simonton
Frank and Kathryn Bianchi*	Jeff and Janet Libarle*	Joan Tunzi
Dennis Carrera	Kit Lofroos	Bobbie Veronda
Beverly Colburn	Denise Libarle McCarthy	Mike and Elaine Von Der Porten*
Cotati Chamber of Commerce	Scott Miller	Sandra & Joshua Walton*
Vanessa Davenport	Barbara Morrow*	Dave, Laura and Johnny Wasson
Velma DiMeola	Janet Orchard*	Mariann Short Weed
Victoria Dougan*	Tom Origer	Pamela Wilford
Terry Dutra	Gary and Louise Petersen	Carol Williams*
Darlene Engellenner	Katherine Rinehart	Robin Wood
Melanie Fleek*	Barry, Christopher and	
Kevin Goddard	Kenneth Santero	

*Indicates a general donation in addition to dues received Feb.15, through Dec. 31, 2020

Memorial Donations

Melba Andreoli	Shorty Santero
Velma DiMeola	Louise Santero
Martha Gustafson	Connie Martin
Bobbie Veronda	R. J. Banks
Gus & Mary Bianchi	Carol Clothier
Gary, Reta, Barry, Christopher and Kenneth Santero	Velma DiMeola
Jennie Falletti	Judy Gustafson
Velma DiMeola	Vincent and Margo Hoagland
Harold Griffith	Bruce Martin
Velma DiMeola	Paul and Jill Martin
Millie and Red Libarle	Deborah Maus
Denise Libarle McCarthy	Rebecca Mickelsen
Eleanor Miller	Gary and Louise Petersen
Scott Miller	Katherine Rinehart
Edwin James Patterson	Sonoma Marin Cattlewomen
Joan Simon	Bobbie Veronda
Barney & Evelin Santero, Joe & Clara Santero	Robert Waldron
Gary, Reta, Barry, Christopher and Kenneth Santero	ZRC Wealth Management LLC

IN MEMORIAM: Connie Revard Martin

It is with great regret that the CHS board shares news of the passing in 2020 of Connie Martin, former board member, vice president, and newsletter co-editor with Prue Draper.

Connie was born on August 29, 1942, to C. J. (Bud) Revard and Marguerite Clothier Revard in Petaluma. She and sisters Ann and Barbara were granddaughters of Cotati business and community icons Robert and Ethel Clothier.

Connie attended Cotati and Petaluma schools, and met future husband Bruce K. Martin at the Sebastopol Wranglers riding club. They attended Santa Rosa Junior College and Chico State University together. Connie graduated with a degree in laboratory technology. In 1966, they married, then raised Gary and Bruce Junior here in Cotati.

Connie was an accomplished equestrian and cattiewoman. In the 1980s and 1990s, she owned North Bay Horse Shows with friend and partner Carol Clothier, producing and managing some of the largest equine events in the region. Carol remembered, “Three, four hundred horses would come from around the country to compete, bringing large revenues into Sonoma County over 12-plus years.”

Connie also loved to garden and often shared flowers and produce with friends and colleagues. She was an active member of numerous horse associations as well as the Foxtail Womens Golf Club.

Cathryn Fairlee, Cotati Storyteller

CHS volunteer Cathryn Fairlee, who died in late 2019, was a gifted storyteller who traveled the globe delighting audiences with her wide range of cultural knowledge and dynamic performance style.

Born in Healdsburg and raised in Fort Bragg, she (with her late husband, Gregg Neilson) bought their home in Cotati planning to host storytelling events in the extra-large family room at the back of the house on Valparaiso Avenue. There she and her colleagues shared tales from Celtic Ireland, Tudor England, ancient India, and Central Asia. Formerly a middle-school librarian, she especially loved sharing American culture with school-age children, from tales of the Donner Party to African American songs, as well as Cotati history on behalf of CHS. She created the slide show given each spring to Thomas Page Academy students and was a discerning but kind judge for our annual essay contest.



Barbara McGee provided this photo of her sister Connie and our exhibit that featured their grandmother Ethel Clothier.

In 1974, she and Bruce founded Martin Ranch Supply, which they operated until their retirement in 2006. In 2015, both were awarded the Sonoma County Trailblazers Award of Excellence in the Horse Industry.

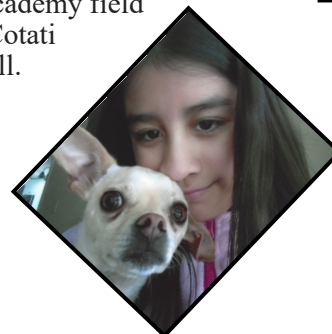
“Connie was involved with CHS from the get-go with Prue Draper—all the planning, refinishing of furniture, donating warehouse space for work, storage of furniture, and more,” recalled CHS archiving administrator and fellow volunteer Judy Gustafson. “We began accessioning donations with the first computer set up at Prue’s house, and worked our way through the many items Prue and Lloyd had stored in a spare bedroom.”

Connie also served as treasurer and membership chair. Her expertise in event planning was of critical benefit to CHS. She and her family developed and managed our events, bringing in funds that have placed CHS on a strong fiscal foundation. She donated family treasures and worked on exhibits, archives, and more. She also picked berries, made jams, and baked cakes for our bake sales.

Connie recruited Bruce Senior, son Gary, his wife, Kim, and their son, Jake—plus her sister Ann and brother-in-law Fred Carrasca all the way from the Sierra foothills. Her son Bruce Junior, daughter-in-law Heather Rose, and granddaughter Ali Martin of Los Altos Hills were regular participants and donors. Connie is also survived by her sister Barbara McGee and brother-in-law Terry, of Woodinville, Wash. Donations may be directed to the American Cancer Society or Cotati Historical Society.

CHS Essay Winners, 2020

Fourth grader **Isabella Wall** was awarded first place in the Cotati History Essay Contest, an annual competition held each spring by CHS. She enjoys soccer, camping, biking, boxing, and singing. Her favorite school subject is English. Here she is to the right at the 2020 Thomas Page Academy field trip to Cotati City Hall.



Honorable mention went to **Stephanie Velasco Vasquez**, pictured here with her puppy, Mia. Stephanie enjoys science and gymnastics.

Cotati Historical Society & Museum
Inside Cotati City Hall at 201 West Sierra Ave
PO Box 7013 Cotati CA 94931

2020 Field Trip & Essay Contest

By Velma DiMeola

The annual field trip for the fourth graders of Thomas Page Academy squeaked in before the COVID-19 shut-down, occurring on Feb. 5, 2020. Forty-three students, teachers Janae Dedekam and Justin Sax, and parent chaperones were led by seven CHS volunteers.

Our visitors learned about the contents of the museum, the type of work done in the City Hall offices, and the function of the police department and its equipment. One stop on the tour was a slide presentation of Cotati's history. Each student went home with a goodie bag from the police, a bookmark and historical information from the museum, and a reusable shopping bag donated by Recology.

To follow through on the field trip, students were asked to write essays on Cotati history, emphasizing the importance of Thomas Page and his family. Submissions were evaluated by a panel of judges. Isabella Wall won first place and received a \$50 prize. Stephanie Velasco Vasquez won honorable mention. Both girls were from Ms. Dedekam's class, earning her classroom \$100. CHS is pleased to support Thomas Page students in furthering their knowledge of Cotati. For more about the winners, see inside.

BOARD REPORTS

Ed Gilardi, Vice President

We had a great start planning our 2020 Chicken BBQ. Oliver's Market pledged to donate the chicken, Larsen's the charcoal, Bay Cities Produce the salad fixings, and United Markets the wine. Connie Martin even brought me the berries she had picked for making her famous jam.

We also received a community grant from the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors to offset some of our expenses. We had signs, tickets, and new banners ready to go. Sadly, we had to cancel the event at the last minute due to the pandemic. I'm hoping we can restart this annual tradition again in 2022.

In the meantime, I have started working on a major new project: the creation of an outdoor historic display showcasing chicken ranching equipment at the Veronda-Falletti Ranch. This is currently stored in one of the old barns on the property. My vision is for a covered outdoor display with signage describing the equipment and what it was used for.

Also, I have been working with Jake Page from Hines Signs to design a new sign for outside the museum. As with so many other things, this has been put on the back burner until we can reopen to the public.

Judy Gustafson,

Archiving Administrator

Everyone has had to make adjustments since March 2020 due to the pandemic, and the same holds true for CHS. We also suffered another blow with the passing of Connie Martin just after the COVID-19 shutdown began. We greatly feel the loss of her energy and expertise!

Even though the museum remains closed, we continue to process memberships and donations and are updating PastPerfect, the software that tracks membership and donations to the collection. Because our fall 2019 history event was impacted by the fires, power outages, and evacuations, we plan to leave the display of "Women Who Loved Their Town" available to all for some time to come after the museum reopens.

In 2019, CHS and the Cotati Chamber of Commerce put together a downtown Cotati walking tour booklet. (You may remember the bingo and pasta night we held to help pay for it). We had plans to conduct walking tours and introduce the booklet starting in summer 2020. That effort is still waiting in the wings, also due to the pandemic. To make up for the delayed face-to-face tours, we have created a video tour of some of our favorite spots. See and share it at cotatihistoricalsociety.org and/or the Chamber's page at <https://cotati.org/news-events>.