

# Cotati Historical Society Newsletter

A non-profit 501 (c) (3) California corporation Tax ID #30-0421172

Preserving Cotati's Past  
P.O. Box 7013 Cotati, CA 94931  
E-mail chsinfo@sonic.net

March 2018

Marie McNaughton, Editor

Vol. 11 No. 1

## CONTENTS

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Fourth Grade Field Trip<br>Takes a Big Team | 1-2 |
| Mythbusters!                                | 2   |
| CHS Members & Donors                        | 2   |
| Old News & Current Events                   | 3   |
| Volunteer Profile: John Allred              | 3   |

**VOLUNTEER FOR THE BBQ  
& BUY TICKETS NOW**  
Page 4

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Membership:** Yvonne Van Dyke  
**Newsletter:** Marie McNaughton  
**BBQ Chair:** Ed Gilardi  
**Museum Volunteer Coordinator:**  
Bobbie Veronda 795-4545

## COTATI MUSEUM HOURS

Every Saturday, 1-4 p.m.  
2nd Tuesdays, 5-7 p.m.

For tours and appointments,  
call 707-794-0305

**Inside Cotati City Hall  
201 West 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.

## Thomas Page Academy Fourth Graders Learn Cotati History & City Operations

Each school year California fourth graders study California history. (Remember your Franciscan mission project?) Here in Cotati, the tradition has come to include a visit to City Hall, the Police Department, and to our museum. The adventure covers two topics: early Cotati history and how city departments work together.

This February 14, 44 Thomas Page students, their teachers Mira Patel and Kiyoko Nakano, and their parent chaperones assembled in Cotati's city council chambers to meet their volunteer tour guides and speakers. The visitors then split into four smaller groups to see a history slide show in the chambers, compete in a treasure hunt in the museum, and learn about public works, finance, and city planning and management.

This was followed by a behind-the-scenes view of police department dispatching and report writing. Kids also climbed in and around prisoner holding cells, cars, and other equipment.

Back at school, students then practiced their writing skills to compose essays about local land and history, especially of Rancho Cotate owner Thomas Stokes Page and his descendants.

During March, our contest judges will choose one winner and a few honorable mentions. This year's winner will receive \$50 personally and \$100 for his or her classroom.

**At the annual CHS BBQ  
— Sunday, April 8, 2018 —**  
attendees will be able to read the chosen essays and see the winning student and teacher receive their prizes. All student honorees will receive personalized certificates.

This is the seventh CHS school tour and essay contest, for which numerous volunteers and school and city employees coordinate for months. CHS secretary and Cotati-Rohnert Park Unified School District veteran Velma DiMeola oversees the project. Velma taught kindergarten through fifth grade for 43 years, mostly at Evergreen Elementary School, sometimes at Thomas Page Academy.

Additional thanks for making the field trip and essay contest a

*Continued on page 2*



Above, former Cotati mayor Lisa Moore (center) helped students read maps and plans in the planning department. Below, Officer Brian Deaton and a tour group worked with police dog Remo, after touring behind usually locked doors.



Photos by Jerry Pagnusat.

volunteers Yvonne Van Dyke, Connie Martin, Marie Aggio, Judy Gustafson, Marie McNaughton, Cathryn Fairlee, Sandra Walton, Lisa Moore, and newcomer Pamela Wilford; Cotati city intern Brittany Bober; and city employees Damien O'Bid, Lauren Berges, Ashley Wilson, Katie Duran, Keri Pajon, and Brian Deaton.

## MYTHBUSTERS!

Do you know of a bit of local history that begs for clarification—and *have some evidence to support it?* We love documentation.

For example, we recently came across three local spots whose names or signs have changed over the years. Olof/Olaf streets, Lebeck farm and Lebec street. Plus, do you know who changed Himebauch Creek to Hinebaugh Creek, and when? Do you know of similar (mis)spellings?

Contact us at [chsinfo@sonic.net](mailto:chsinfo@sonic.net) or 707-794-0305, and let's bear witness to the truth (as we know it most recently).

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

### CHS Members

Marion Ackerman  
Marie Aggio\*  
John Allred\*  
Lars & Erin Andersen  
Gail Barrett  
Mary Bartlett  
George & Karen Baur  
Harold & Randy Berkemeier  
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Pamela Wilford  
Robin Wood

\* General donation in addition to dues

### Donations in Memory of Prue Draper

Vanessa Aching Davenport  
Constance Hammerman  
Patricia Kavanaugh  
Bob & Debbie Renati  
Sharie Sbrazza  
Rhonda Smith  
Pamela Torliatt

### Additional Memorial Donations

Marion Ackerman for  
Lil Jaspersen  
Harold Berkemeier for Julie  
Berkemeier  
Martha Gustafson & Harold  
Griffith for Peggy Piezzi  
Constance Hammerman for  
Bill Hammerman  
David & Karen Heisel for  
Tubby Braden  
Mark Ibleto for Perry Goff  
Geraldine Magers for  
Valentina Magers Garzoli  
Denise Libarle McCarthy for  
Millie & Red Libarle  
Bob & Debbie Renati for  
Lu Waters  
Jennie Rossotti for Lee Vyenielo,  
Don Sartori & Joan Bean  
Robert Waldron for Eleanor Wass

## ***RIPPED from the headlines: 60 years ago in Cotati***

On March 6, 1958, *The Cotatian* reported on the state of local crime.

“The two newspaper racks from the front of the Cotati Post Office disappeared over the weekend, apparently stolen for the small change in the coin boxes. Since these boxes are emptied almost every day, it’s not likely the thief received much for his efforts.

“Local curiosity was aroused Monday when sheriff’s officers appeared at the 8-Ball.

“They were investigating a car parked there which matched the description of a car used by a robbery suspect. It turned out to be wrong one, but the owner was shaken up so [sic] when confronted by the law that he went home with a ‘package’ to relax.

“The back of the Cotati School acquired a polka dot effect sometime over the weekend when quantities of mud were thrown on the new pink paint. It was apparently the work of youngsters playing on the school grounds.”

...

“The more things change, the more they remain the same.” — *French proverb*

## *What's the BUZZ?*

### **Don't Miss These History Events**

#### **Petaluma Ladies' Improvement Club Will Star in Free March Talk**

Local authors and historians John Sheehy and Katherine J. Rinehart will discuss Petaluma’s storied women’s club as part of the Petaluma Historical Library & Museum exhibit “Women and the Search for Wisdom.”

The free event is slated for 4 p.m., Sunday March 18, 20 Fourth St., Petaluma. Call 778-4398 for details.

#### **Are You Swiss-Italian?**

Many Sonoma families are of Swiss-Italian heritage. Descendants of the Vallemaggia are planning a world reunion on July 21-22, 2018, at Finley Park, Santa Rosa. Replies encouraged through March 2018. Visit <https://www.facebook.com/groups/143227649554661/> or email [Familiesofthevallejaggai@gmail.com](mailto:Familiesofthevallejaggai@gmail.com).

#### **Heritage Network Is Open to All**

The Heritage Network is open to all folks interested in local history. Learn

from amateur and professional historians, archivists, archeologists, clubs and societies from around the North Bay. The next quarterly meeting will be Saturday, April 14, at 10 a.m. in the Manzanita Room, Finley Community Center, 2060 W. College Ave., Santa Rosa. There is no charge.

Bring a smile, says secretary David Lightfoot, and you’ll get a hearty handshake. For more information, email him at [dvlighfoot@hotmail.com](mailto:dvlighfoot@hotmail.com).

#### **Preserve Your Family Archives At May “Finding History Day”**

Mark your calendar now for the Sonoma County Historical Records Commission’s second annual “Finding History Day,” Saturday, May 12, 1-4 p.m. at the Saturday Afternoon Club, 430 Tenth St., Santa Rosa.

Photo archivist Don Silverek and textile conservator Margaret Geiss Mooney head the list of experts at this free event, developed last year by the County of Sonoma, the Library, and an amazing array of local and regional history organizations and vendors.

Email: [FindingHistoryDay@gmail.com](mailto:FindingHistoryDay@gmail.com) or phone 707-545-0831, ext. 1562 for more details.

## **Volunteer Profile: John Allred Taking Care of “Future History”**

John is beginning his third year as president of the Cotati Historical Society. Like so many others, he was introduced to the Historical Society by Lloyd and Prue Draper, and became an early member.

John’s love for small towns is natural for him having grown up in Oakdale, Calif. His father was a cattle auctioneer and John may have inherited the auctioneering talent. He has used his skill for many years at the annual Historical Society Chicken BBQ, CHS’s primary fundraising event, at which John serves as the announcer.

The owner of Professional Framing Services, John has been interested in the arts most of his life. He practiced music and art at an early age, and has continued through the years. “Art and music have contributed so much to my life and, as well, to many friendships.”

Growing up in the cattle business was an education in itself, says John. Additionally, he went on to study art, engineering, and psychology at various schools, eventually focusing his studies at SRJC and Sonoma State University, and graduating with an M.A. from San Francisco State University in 1976. Later that year, he became a licensed

MFT and practiced in Mill Valley, San Rafael, Novato, and Petaluma. Along with his practice, John joined the staff of Columbia Pacific University in 1981, became Director of Counseling Services, and later promoted to Dean of Admissions.

John moved to and settled in Petaluma in the late 1960s, moving to Cotati in 1992. Wanting to change careers, John returned to the arts, working in frame shops in Novato and Petaluma. He opened his own frame shop in Novato in 1991, and has operated his Cotati business for the past 22 years. His specialty is working with family heirlooms and fine art.

John’s expertise in restoration, conservation, and preservation has proven invaluable to CHS. When he looks at art works and collectibles he “understands” the canvas, the textiles, the paper, and the objects as well as what it will take to maximize their longevity.

Conservation, he warns, “only slows the process of degradation, it cannot stop it. Nothing lasts forever!”

John likes to think of the present as being “Future History.” He feels we are all part of history here and now, and encourages others to become more involved, so that 50 years from now, they too will be one of those in the photos their grandkids will see and cherish.





# CAN YOU HELP?



*With only ONE MONTH until the  
10th Annual CHS Old-Fashioned BBQ  
Sunday, April 8, 2018*

## **BBQ VOLUNTEERS**

Cashiers  
Table Runners  
Setup/Takedown  
Food Prep & Service  
Kitchen & General  
Cleanup

Contact Rick Minervini  
477-7762 or 792-2468  
rm@fiznikrick.com

## **YOUR SPECIAL BAKED GOODS**

Cookies, Bars  
Cupcakes  
Cakes & Pies  
Whole & Single  
Servings

Call Judy Gustafson  
707-665-5993

## **SILENT AUCTION DONATIONS**

New Merchandise  
Art, Kids' Stuff  
Gift Baskets  
Services, Crafts  
Gift Certificates

Call Bobbie Veronda  
707-795-4545

# **WE NEED YOU TO MAKE HISTORY!!**

Cotati Historical Society  
P.O. Box 7013  
Cotati, CA 94931

## **Cotati Museum & Historical Society**

**10th Annual  
Old-Fashioned Chicken BBQ  
Sunday, April 8, 2018**

Ray Miller Community Center, 216 E. School St.

**\*CAR SHOW \***



**\*LIVE MUSIC \***

**\*BAKE SALE\***

**\*SILENT AUCTION \***

**12 Noon - 4:00 pm**

Meals served until 3:00 pm \* Take-out Available

Tickets available at:

Professional Framing Services 795-2791

Cotati Exchange Bank

Cotati Historical Museum 794-0305

*\$14 in advance, \$17 at the door*