

# 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

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Prue Draper & Connie Martin, Editors

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## SOCIETY OFFICERS

**President:** Marie McNaughton  
529-0734  
**Vice Pres.:** Yvonne VanDyke  
**Secretary:** Velma DiMeola  
**Treasurer:** Connie Martin  
**Historian:** Prue Draper  
**Archive Admin:** Judy Gustafson  
**Directors:** Gary Santero  
Sandra Walton  
**Volunteer Coordinator:**  
Barbara Jean Veronda 795-4545

## Cotati Museum Hours:

Saturday 1 - 4 P.M.  
2nd Tuesday of each  
month 5 - 7 P.M.  
Special times by appointment  
Phone 707-794-0305

## Our Mission Statement

As stated in our Articles of Incorporation, dated April 11, 2007, the specific purpose of the Cotati Historical Society is to protect and preserve the history and culture of the City of Cotati, California. Our goal is to provide a 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.

## MUSEUM IS 5 YEARS OLD!

"Oh wow! This used to be my first grade classroom! My desk was right over there!" We hear this often when long-time Cotati residents come into the Cotati Historical Museum for the first time.

And they're right. What is now Cotati City Hall was, for years, Cotati School. It has been the site of a school since the earliest days of the Cotati community....in 1893 a one-room school, then in 1905 expanded to a two-room school. In 1914, the old school was moved and a beautiful new school designed by famed Petaluma architect Brainerd Jones, was built on the same site. That school burned down in 1921 and a new school, the building that is still there, was built.



**OVERFLOW CROWD** - The opening day soon filled the museum capacity and the ceremony had to be moved to the City Council chambers. Many neighbors had reunions that day.

Photo by Paul Hacker

In 1971 the school district sold the building to the City of Cotati, and the space that is now the museum was converted to be the Cotati Police Dept. So how did the police offices become a museum? After the new police department building was finished, the old room was empty.

There had been talk for years of a museum to preserve the history of the interesting little community of Cotati. Several people had launched the effort, but it never became a reality. In 2007, **Lloyd and Prue Draper**, who had started gathering Cotati history in the 1950's and 60's when they owned The Cotatian weekly newspaper, started the process again. With the help of Attorney **Maurice Fredericks**, who did the legal work pro bono, the Drapers launched the Cotati Historical Society, a non-profit California corporation. The Cotati Women's Improvement Club and Post 103 American Legion, as they disbanded, had asked the Drapers to preserve their artifacts. They needed to be stored safely, and be available to the public.

The empty former police department seemed like a logical place. Cotati city officials agreed, and the effort to produce a museum began. The first board of directors of the new Cotati Historical Society had the Drapers as president and vice-president, **Terry Dutra** as treasurer; **Suzanne Whipple** as secretary and **Lisa Moore** as community outreach chairman. Amazing support from the Cotati community and history-lovers from all over the county began to pour in.

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**IN THE BEGINNING** - The first display cabinets for the future museum were dusted and loaded in Harry Bosworth's barn in Geyserville by, from left, Bruce Martin, Simone Wilson, Bob Renati, Dave Thomas and Connie Martin.

First was **Harry Bosworth**, owner of Bosworth & Son Store of Geyserville, a museum lover, who offered some display cabinets that he had stored in his barn for years. **Connie and Bruce Martin**, who have been leading supporters since the beginning, offered their truck and trailer, and led a sporty gang of workers – **Bob Renati, Simone Wilson, Dave Thomas and Prue and Robin Draper** who headed to Geyserville to bring the dusty relics to Cotati.

The Martins donated use of a vacant warehouse as a refinishing locale, and a team – the **Martins, Drapers, Jim Wolfard, Dave Thomas, Bob Herrerias and Arch and Rick Stewart** worked on sanding, varnishing etc. to make the old items handsome again. Soon other artifacts began appearing – donations from people who had lived in Cotati for years and agreed that the traditions of the community should be preserved.

With guidance from City Manager **Dianne Thompson** and architect **Robert Keyes**, work began on transforming the old classroom/police station into a museum.

**Johnny Kistenmacher** of Aladdin Electric donated materials and services to rewire the room, including an outlet for the heritage wall clock from Cotati Realty Co, donated by the Martins; **Bruce Hammond and Steve Eichbaum** of Hammond Fine Homes donated and installed wall materials; **Rick Stewart** of Arch's Glass donated and installed a new window, **Michael Pastryk** of Liberty Valley Doors produced a new door to match those in the rest of the old building. **Dennis Thomas** of North Counties Drywall donated all the materials and labor to install new sheetrock.

**West Sonoma County Museum** donated a desk; **T.J. Nelson** of Windsor came down with a handsome library table that now is always covered with books; **Paul Harvey** made a custom-designed cabinet for a set of map and newspaper drawers donated by **Tom Origer**.



**FORMER BLACKBOARD** - Terry Dutra, our first treasurer and chairman of our successful first BBQ in 2009 was hopeful that the walls of the old classrooms, could be transformed into a museum.

**Geoff Fox** arranged to have the old floor refinished by **Jeff Nelson** of Trammell-Nelson Floors after **Bob and Robin Draper** patched the holes; **Dunn Edwards** donated all the paints and finishes, **Jim Reaney** primed the walls and **John Moore and his family** did the painting, augmented by **Susan Harvey**. **David Glaubinger** arranged the lighting plan and **Lowe's** donated all track lights and electrical parts. **City Carpets** donated the utility room carpet; **Mike Sheehan** of Pacific Heating repaired the heating system and **Al Martinoni** of Cotati Public Works managed plumbing repairs in the washroom.

**Wendy and Bob Gilman** of Window Perfect donated and installed venetian blinds; **Rocky Deitz** of Sunshine Services cleaned all the windows; **TAP Plastics, Cotati True Value Hardware** and **Grainger Co.** gave us discounts to help make the museum a reality.

With advice from museum experts from SSU and the Sonoma County Museum, **Judy Pagnusat** led the project of producing displays on walls and cabinets; **Connie Martin** and **Judy Gustafson** began the unending job of cataloging all the artifacts on a computer donated by **Kit Tuveson**.

**Hines Signs** produced a hexagonal sign crediting the many companies and people who helped make the dream of a Cotati Museum come true.




**SKILLED AND INDUSTRIOUS WORKERS** Dave Thomas, left, Arch Stewart and Bob Herrerias were among the dedicated workers who braved cold and dust in the warehouse that was our refinishing shop.

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The grand opening was held on Feb. 28, 2010, with a crowd of over 400, that included city, county and state officials. Instead of cutting a ribbon, we cut a panel of cobwebs that had to be moved to the city council chambers when the museum overflowed.

Now it's time to celebrate our first five years. Our popular annual chicken barbecue seems to be the ideal way. The date is Sunday, April 12, from noon to 4 p.m. **Ed Gilardi** and team will again assure that the chickens are perfectly barbecued, and volunteers will serve beans, coleslaw, rolls, lemonade and coffee. Beer and wine will be on sale and our popular bake sale will again offer goodies of all kinds, as well homemade jams; the silent auction promises treasures both old and new, the 50-50 raffle is always fun, as are the vintage car show and toe-tapping music. The winner of our annual Cotati history essay contest for Thomas Page Academy fourth graders will be announced and cash prizes awarded to him/her and their teacher.

It promises to be a day to remember.... and to honor the memory of those Cotati pioneers who launched and nurtured our community. We are sincerely grateful to the many companies and individuals who have helped make our first five years



**Cotati Museum**  
Established 2010

**Invites you to celebrate  
our FIVE YEARS of operation  
with the**

**Cotati Historical Society**  
7th Annual Old-Fashioned Chicken BBQ  
Sunday, April 12, 2015 ~ 12 noon - 4 p.m.  
Cotati Room, Ray Miller Community Center, 216 E. School St.  
**\$12 in advance** **\$15 at the door**  
Live Music Raffle & Auction Meats served until 3 p.m. Beer, Wine & Dessert For Sale  
Benefit for the Cotati Historical Society & Museum

**Vintage Car Show • New Exhibits • History Presentation  
Raffle & Auction • LIVE Music**

**Advance tickets at:**  
Cotati Chamber of Commerce  
216 East School Street  
(707) 795-5508

Exchange Bank, Cotati Branch  
590-A East Cotati Avenue  
(707) 795-5481

**Meal includes ONE-HALF**  
  
**Baked Beans • Coleslaw  
Roll • Beverage**

For more information  
Visit [www.cotatihistoricalsociety.org](http://www.cotatihistoricalsociety.org) or Call (707) 529-0734

# Museum Sponsors Student Field Trip to Cotati City Hall

One of the Cotati Historical Society's annual events is a field trip to Cotati City Hall for fourth grade students of Thomas Page Academy. It fits well with that grade's study of California history, teaches students more about their own community, and equips them to enter our annual essay contest on history of Cotati. Velma DiMeola, an experienced teacher and Historical Society board member, arranged the event.

Students were divided into groups to visit all the city departments and get information about what is done there to



**WELCOME TO CITY HALL** - About 60 students from Thomas Page Academy, teachers and parents, arrived at Cotati City Hall for a field trip to explain how our city works and prepare the students for an essay contest on Cotati history.



**SCAVENGER HUNT** - Students in the museum scurried to find objects on a scavenger hunt designed by Velma DiMeola. Prue Draper, right, offered tips.



**PRESIDENT EXPLAINS SCHEDULE** - Marie McNaughton, left, explained that students would be divided into groups which would visit the various departments of Cotati city government.

keep Cotati running smoothly. Marie McNaughton, CHS president, conducted a class on how Cotati was started, how our famous plaza came to be, and how the community developed.

The young visitors left with bags of souvenirs and reminders of rules for the essay contest. The winner will be announced and cash prizes awarded at the April 12 barbecue.



**VISITING THE MUSEUM** - Velma DiMeola, left, partly hidden, welcomes one group of students to the Cotati Museum.



**HISTORICAL SOCIETY WELCOME COMMITTEE** - Preparing for the field trip are, left to right, Connie Martin, Prue Draper, Judy Gustafson, Yvonne VanDyke, Marie Aggio, Velma DiMeola and President Marie McNaughton.



**POLICE DEPT. VISITORS** - Students on the field trip visited the Cotati Police and got acquainted with Officer Chris Kaupa and K-9 assistant Koda. CHS Board Member Judy Gustafson, right, accompanied them.



**CITY CLERK'S DUTIES** - Tamara Taylor, right, tells students how the city's management is handled.

Photos by Jerry Pagnusat



Photo by Prue Draper

## THANKS TO DONORS MUSEUM WELCOMES GIFTS

Marie McNaughton, left, president, thanks former Cotati Mayor Harold Berke-meier, center, who joined family and friends in memorializing his late wife, Julie, with the handsome photo display unit at rear, for our museum. Mike Sheehan, right, who grew up in Cotati, has been a liberal supporter since the museum opened. He has donated \$500.00 to digitize our photo collection, to be displayed in this new unit.

# Special Showing of Early Cotati Doctor's Late-Life Talent



**DR. ROBERTS' ART - Shannon Roberts displays some pieces of the art produced by Dr. John Roberts. Left, is a sculpture of Dr. Roberts' favorite 49er, Dwight Clark; center is a marble statue of clasping hands and at right, an abstract statue of a female subject. These and more of his pieces will be in the museum at our anniversary barbecue.**

*Photo by Prue Draper*

Cotati had been without a local physician in 1948 when Dr. John Roberts and his first wife, Louise and their growing family came to become an important part of the community. Dr. Roberts was drafted during the Korean War, but he and his family later moved back to Cotati and he restarted his successful medical practice.

Almost 30 years later, Dr. Roberts took sculpture classes with the late Petaluma artist Rosa Estabanez, and discovered that he had talent for art as well as for surgery.

His youngest daughter, Shannon Roberts, recalls that her father started sculpting in the mid 1970's and seemed to take to it as naturally as he did to being a doctor. Once he had an idea for a piece, he would make a full rendering of it out of clay. Then the chiseling and grinding of the stone he had selected would begin. Often he chose marble, sometimes soapstone, occasionally sandstone, wood or an alternative media piece, possibly plaster.

He was a prolific artist, as well as a talented one, and produced numerous works for his second wife Ellie, and all his children before his death in an auto accident in 1988.

Many pieces of his sculpture were lost when the Roberts home on Cypress Avenue burned in 1993, but the Roberts children still own and treasure special art pieces their father produced.

We are honored to have a number of them on display in the Cotati museum to celebrate our fifth anniversary, thanks to Shannon Roberts and her siblings, Beverly Colburn, Rick, Fred and Mark Roberts.

## **THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS**

Marion Ackerman, Marie Aggio, Harold Berkemeier, Dick & Jo-Ann Braden, Alan Budinsky, Paul & Kerry Burke, Ann & Fred Carrasca, Beverly Colburn, Vickie Dougan, Cathryn Fairlee & Gregg Neilson, Jennie Falletti, Jane Ferina, Barbara Gegan, Ed & Pat Gilardi, Janet Gingher, Dave & Karen Heisel, Dennis & Jennifer Hunt, Larry & Nancy Justis, Brittany Ketcham, Michael & Janet Kurvers, Jeff & Janet Libarle, Jack & Muriel Mahall, Gary & Robin Malone, Bruce & Connie Martin, Bruce Martin, Jr. & Heather Rose, Scott Minnis, Kathy Norwood, Janet Orchard & Madlin Hirshfield, DeLoris Osborn, Ellen Ostrand, John & Anne Page, Sylvia Palmer, Bruce Pearson, Stan Poncia, Mike Sheehan, Pamela Torliatt, Gerald Turney, Pamela Wilford, Carol Williams.

## **THANK YOU FOR YOUR MEMORIAL DONATION**

In memory of Mabel Nelson - Prue Draper

## **WELCOME TO OUR MOST RECENT NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS**

Marion Ackerman, Mark Ackerman, Marie Aggio, John Allred, Lars & Erin Andersen, May Andreoli, Mary Bartlett, George & Karen Baur, Harold Berkemeier, Frank & Kathryn Bianchi, Jenny Blaker, Frank & Marlene Blankenship, Lillian Blodgett, Bernice Borgia, Dick & Jo-Ann Braden, Alan Budinsky, George Bunting, Paul & Kerry Burke, Diane Canadas, Ken & Sherri Carli, Fred & Ann Carrasca, Church of the Oaks, Beverly Colburn, Cotati Police Mgt. Assoc., Chris Davis, Velma DiMeola, Julie Dinkins, Diane Dorfman, Vickie Dougan, Bob Draper, Prue Draper, Robin Draper, Terry & Will Dutra, Cathryn Fairlee & Gregg Neilson, Jennie Falletti, Jane Ferina, Neya Ferrari, Barbara Gegan, Ed & Pat Gilardi, Janet Gingher, Kevin Gingher, Laura Gray, Harold Griffith, Fred Groverman, Greg Gustafson, Judy Gustafson, F. Paul & Carolyn Hacker, Paul & Susan Harvey, Dave & Karen Heisel, Irene Hilsendager, Madlin Hirshfield, Dennis & Jennifer Hunt, Andrew & Catharine Hutchins, Art & Vicky Ibleto, Mark Ibleto, Larry & Nancy Justis, Pat Kavanaugh, Brittany Ketcham, Val Kingsbury, Michael & Janet Kurvers, Bob & Alice Larsen, Ken & Amy Larsen, Mary Lou Lentz, Lorraine Leivas, Jeff & Janet Libarle, Al Lockwood, Esther Loveridge, Steve Maas, Jack & Muriel Mahall, Gary & Robin Malone, Bruce & Connie Martin, Bruce Martin, Jr. & Heather Rose & Ali, Gary & Kim Martin & Family, Patrick McCarty, Marie McNaughton, Eleanor Miller, Scott Minnis, Millie Nibe, Kathy Norwood, Janet Orchard, Tom Origer, DeLoris Osborn, Ellen Ostrand, Dolores Owen, John & Anne Page, Judy & Jerry Pagnusat, Sylvia Palmer, Bruce Pearson, Louise Petersen, Ron Petty, Stan Poncia, Dayle Reilly, Bob & Debbie Renati, Shannon Roberts, Louise Santero, Carl & Mary Schollmann, Tom Scott, Mike Sheehan, Cathalee Thomas, Dan & Carolyn Torliatt, Lee & Marjorie Torliatt, Pamela Torliatt, Joan Tunzi, Gerald Turney, Yvonne VanDyke, Sandra Walton, Eleanor Wass, Dorothy Watt, Pamela Wilford, Carol Williams, Simone Wilson, Jack Withington, Robin Wood.

# Not too late to renew your dues for 2015

We collect dues every January and if you have not yet renewed, we would appreciate your help in preserving Cotati's history. **Dues are still only \$10 per person year.** Please complete this form and send with your check to:

- Yes I want to renew my membership for 2015*  
 *An additional donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed*

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

Name/s \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

*We can save postage by sending quarterly newsletters on-line.*

Learn more about Cotati history and  
the Cotati Museum at our **website:**  
[www.cotatihistoricalsociety.org](http://www.cotatihistoricalsociety.org)

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

*Bake sale and homemade jams  
featured at April 12 BBQ*



*Judy Gustafson, right, is again the chair of our popular bake sale and she invites people who would like to produce their favorite recipes to contact her at 707-665-5993. Working with her on this committee were Ellen Ostrand, left, and Diane Canadas.*

*Photo by Jerry Pagnusat*