

CAMEL



TRACKS

Year 2010

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Jan. / Feb.

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The mission of the Benicia Historical Museum is to engage the community in the evolving history of Benicia and the Arsenal and their influence in the development of our country.

The Museum complex is the center where history is seen, enjoyed and preserved. Through exhibits, events and educational programs we enlighten the public about the history of this unique city.

Revised and adopted 2006

Happy 25th Anniversary



There have been many hours of discussion and planning in anticipation of celebrating this year's 25th anniversary. Our committee headed by Louise Martin and Mary Marino have been hard at work and have come up with what we believe will be a worthy celebration in which we will give back to the community the fruits of their loyalty to the Benicia Historical Museum, their museum.

Each month will have its own theme. There will be some activities each month. Included in the activities will be a concert series and a lecture series. There will be at least three special events. The first one will be the opening of the Boy Scout Exhibit which is being produced in cooperation with Beverly Phelan, our curator, and the local Boy Scouts by Dr. Jim Lessenger. The planning and execution going into the exhibit is phenomenal, well thought out with displays important to the development of the Scout movement. The exhibit will open on February 7th and will run till June 1st.

In May will be the special formal opening of our celebration with a reception and activities to please everyone. The founding of Benicia coincides with the Museum anniversary so that will be properly noted. We will be observing the anniversary of the Pony Express (150 years) the previous month. Benicia was important to the Pony Express being the terminal of the journeys made to deliver messages to the West.

June will be the very special exhibit of Dorothy Belknap's beautiful "**A Place to Mend**" This is an award winning book that Doty created with photogra-

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The Museum Welcomes our New Members

Tom and Nyla Throckmorton

♦

Margo Spaulding

♦

Sharon and Tom Toner

♦

Alicia Gallagher and Brent Martin

♦

Bonnie Weidel

Supporting

Bobbi Enderlin

♦

Irma Ward

♦

William And Marie Earp

Camel Corps

Scott and Chris

Strawbridge

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Louis Alfeld

Brita Bautin

Glenn Boatman

Alexandra Borostyan

Tania Borostyan

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Kimble Goodman

Elly Harkins

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Gloria Lambousy

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Suzanne Lieban

Phyllis Malicki

Mary Marino

Louise Martin

Leonide McKay

Elizabeth Murphy

Lorraine Patten

Bruce Quandt

Ron Rice

Eric Sargeson

Carol Scott

Margo Spaulding

Ian Toner

Donna Worthington

Bill Venturelli

Notes from Ann

Happy New year to All. We go through so much to prepare for our holidays that we sometimes get to them and can't really enjoy them as much as we would like. I do hope that has not been the case for all our friends and supporters of the museum. My Christmas and New Years celebrations were low key but I must say very enjoyable. I did not go to many parties though there were opportunities. I celebrated with closest friends and family. We did have a flurry of activity before we closed the office for the holidays – up to the last moment.

We had a great attendance at our holiday party in early December. We celebrated with the Benicia Historical Society who supplied the turkey, stuffing and mashed potatoes while we supplied the hams (baked to perfection by Venticello's) and other goodies. It is impossible to describe the variety and good tastes of the many dishes that members brought. Kasma Kelley did her usual beautiful job of decorating the Christmas trees. It



is always good to renew friendships at this time of year and everyone appeared to have a great time.

We are going into what promises to be an intensely exciting and busy year. Elsewhere in this publication you will read about the tremendous plans the committees are making for the 25th Anniversary celebration this year. Committees have been meeting, planning and scheduling what will be a worthy observation of this yearlong event. Jim Lessenger is heading up the Boy Scout 100th Anniversary exhibit along with Beverly Phelan has spent countless hours in planning and producing a remarkable exhibit. You will surely want to visit – perhaps many times as there will be much to digest. You will be receiving a schedule of dates and activities in this Camel Tracks. We are sure that you will be anxious to participate in the recognition of the Museum's milestone.

We have welcomed four new docents and are still looking for more. With the expansion of our exhibits, it takes people to guide our visitors in the interpretation of our story – the story of the development of Benicia and its place in the history of the state and country. We invite you to participate in the great experience.

Curator's Corner

The Boy Scouts of America-100 years exhibit has been keeping us busy for a few months now and our Chair Jim Lessenger is not sleeping well these days! The exhibit is going to hopefully be an event that will encourage Scouting and bring the families to the museum. The exhibit will open with a reception on Scout Sunday, Feb. 7 from 1-8 p.m. with a flag ceremony at 1 p.m. and will include a traditional Scout "cracker barrel" and patch trading tables. There will be a day of viewing Boy Scouts in action with their tenting the night before and also many phases of the Boy Scout commitment. There will be an extensive display on Norman Rockwell, the famed American painter whose art graced the covers of Boy Scout publications for three generations. The exhibit will include Cub Scouts, Explorers, merit badges, Order of the Arrow, Woodbadge, the Founders, Scout art, stamps, uniforms, hats adult awards, religious awards and most importantly, the Trail to Eagle. A special display will feature Scouting in Benicia and Solano County. A special exhibit will feature patches and other memorabilia from the national jamborees. In an adjoining case will be a display featuring Philmont Scout Reservation. An entire wall cabinet will feature dozens of items of "Scout Stuff," including canteens, Morse code kits, first aid kits, axes, and Scout knives. Dozens of Scout knives.

Our exhibit work on the Patwin, Fire Dept. and Von Pfister continues. We will have these exhibits ready by our May 15, 2010 25th anniversary event.



All Those Wonderful Greetings

Christmas already seems months past and yet the Christmas spirit lingers in the many wishes of good will that have come to us throughout the season. We have tried to keep up with all the gifts and greetings but it is a bit hard to do.

We had a wonderful Christmas pot luck co-hosted by the Benicia Historical Society. One can hardly fathom the phenomenal expertise of the cooks in our community. There was nothing perceivably absent from the array as guests happily chatted as they stood in line. The room was cheerful with our lovely trees decorated by Kasma Kelley and the table decorations. Members were generous in bringing canned goods for CAC. Surplus food after the meal was taken to the Christian Help Center who always welcomes food to feed the hungry.

The raffle is always fun. The Society takes care of the raffle, providing prizes which are supplemented by donations from members. Proceeds are divided between the two organizations. The music was supplied by the Rolling Tones a new group from the Congregational Church. Leslie Lessenger, one of our members, has been the power behind getting the organization up and running. Bells are so appropriate at Christmas time.

We can certainly say, "A good time was had by all". We want to also say a thank you to all of you who sent us greetings, stopped by, brought us goodies (not for the pounds you may have helped us add) and all around supported us during the season. Thank you, too, to the cadre of volunteers so vital to our activities, especially to Louise Martin and her wonderful elves.

Anniversary

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phy of Benicia accompanied by poems. She was awarded first prize for her book – chosen out of a field of over a thousand entries. There are only two copies of the handmade volume, one in the National Gallery for Women's Art and the other at the Athenaeum in La Jolla. The book is black and white photography and the subjects are more historical than of scenic significance. However, our artist community is inexplicably tied to the history of the community and while the subjects may not be significant for their beauty, there is great beauty in the photography. We will be having two presentations, one especially for our artists and the other for the general public.

July will feature a special day for kids. The theme of the month is **"Children: Our Future in Education"**. Because July is a month of great activity in the city with holiday celebrations, we are not planning many activities except for the Kids day and the Spenger Garden Concert. All Spenger Garden concerts will be the second Saturday of the month from June through October. In October we will **"Have Historic Halloween"** Just what that will be is in the planning stages. It will be followed by November's book signing by local authors and, of course, the finale will be **"A Small Town Christmas"** in December.

It has been amazing to see the creative process that the committee has shown in their picking of the themes and in formulating ideas to carry them out. We will be dealing with many varied subjects timely in the presentations. Our lecturers will be important to our message to the community. The con-

cert series will be enhanced. Contracts are in the making and the series has a sponsor. We will announce the artists in the near future as well as the lecture subjects and lecturers. We are still in the process of confirming dates and subjects. We also are negotiating to secure sponsors for the various activities and projects.

One of the important aspects of this year's activities will be the completion of at least two of our exhibits in the museum. We expect to have both of them completed for the opening in May. The Patwin exhibit will feature a structure made of the tulle so prominent around our area. We are working with Rush Ranch to insure the authenticity. We have to wait for the tulle to mature before the structure can be built. We also expect to finish the Fire Department exhibit. Valero has funded the project for the Patwin exhibit and Rose Hadaway is the sponsor for the Fire exhibit in honor of her father whose career was in fire fighting. Our designers Toxey/McMillan are directing our efforts.

We look forward to seeing you here for our activities. In a separate insert, we will give you dates and the activities that we have confirmed. Everything we are doing is dependent on obtaining sponsors and contributions towards the celebration as we, like every nonprofit, have felt the economic downturn and cannot use operating funds for this celebration. Mark your calendars with the dates we indicate so that you can attend as much of our celebration as possible.

Come, help us celebrate the gem we are polishing for you – yours is a magnificent heritage.

Your Board Members



Bruce Quandt

At the annual meeting of members in September, new board members were elected. Quietly they assumed their positions on the board. They "got their feet wet" in October and November and in December we did not meet. That does not mean they have been idle. All three of the new members have been most helpful in their areas of expertise.

Bruce Quandt who is an employee of our good neighbor, Ampports, has dived in with both feet and has been most helpful on the Buildings and Grounds



Ian Toner

committee. Ian Toner, who as a new college graduate, shared his job hunting days with us during the summer volunteering wherever we needed him. So the organization was very familiar to him as he took on the duties of Treasurer of the Museum. He has kept up his commitment even as he joined the employment ranks of AAA, even taking on new committee jobs.

Blithe Wilson is using his expertise as an architect in advising us on building issues and becoming a very active member of the Finance Committee. We are very grateful for the added talent to our Board of Directors and their willingness to become an integral part of the organization.

Meet our New Docents

In November, four new docents completed their initial orientation. They were introduced to the Benicia Arsenal history, the exhibits in the museum and toured the campus. After the orientation each docent is scheduled for duty with an

experienced docent to better learn the details of working in the museum. Docents are a vital part of our operation and so we are happy to welcome: Margo Spaulding, Eric Sargeson, Bruce Quandt and Suzanne Lieban. We appreciate and welcome these new members to our docent ranks.

GEAR UP FOR WAR!



The National Civil War Association with the Benicia Historical Museum will be hosting the 2010 Winter Quarters at Stone Hall and Benicia High School beginning Friday, February 26th through Sunday the 28th.

The event begins with dinner Friday evening. Included in activities will be seminars presented by prominent national and local historians.

Among the speakers will be Jaunita Leicsh, Les Jensen and Nick Sekela. There will be a popcorn and movie night on Saturday. A full schedule will be posted on the National Civil War Association web site with seminar subjects and presenters.

The registration is \$75 in advance for the three days activities. Registration at the door will be \$85 for a single person. A family of three or more is \$150 in advance and \$170 at the door. Students with ID will be admitted for \$20. Dinner on Friday evening will be \$15 in advance (reservations necessary). Continental breakfast is included in registration on Saturday and Sunday. Lunch is available for \$5 a day, must be paid for in advance.

Volunteer of the Month Kasma Kelley



The holidays were brighter because of Kasma Kelley's artistic bent in decorating the trees for Stone Hall. It is the attention to detail and the preciseness of placement that make the difference in Kasma's work. The hardest part is not being able to use all her creative talent as time and funds run out before her ideas do.

Kasma is generous in giving her time to the museum. Her efforts are unparalleled and the results are always beautiful. Happy New Year, Kasma and many thanks.

Kudos to our Supporters

As the new year unfolds we will be met with many challenges. We know we are not yet out of the deepest recession any of us have ever known. All of us in the past year have had some setbacks and yet there was always someone there to help us out. As we came to the close of the year and operating on a very slim budget, we sent out our usual "end of the year appeal" and many of our wonderful supporters responded. You have helped us over the "hump" so that the new year could start on a more even keel.

We send a very hearty "THANK YOU" your way. We are blessed with your generosity.

Calendar of events

BLACK IRISH IN CONCERT

Saturday, January 23, 2010
Stone Hall @ 8:00 pm

AFRICAN AMERICANS IN SOLANO COUNTY

Lecture by Sharon McGriff-Payne
Sunday, January 31, 2010
Stone Hall @ 2:00 pm

BOY SCOUT EXHIBIT OPENING

Reception
Sunday, February 7, 2010
Museum @ 1:00 pm

MEN OF WORTH IN CONCERT

Friday, February 19, 2010
Stone Hall @ 8:00 pm

WHEELS OF CHANGE, STORY OF THE AUTOMOBILE IN CALIFORNIA

Lecture by Kevin Nelson
Sunday, February 21, 2010
Stone Hall @ 2:00 pm

WINTER QUARTERS CONFERENCE 2010

February 26 to 28, 2010
TBA

WOMEN WHO WORKED IN ARSENAL/ WOMEN IN SCIENCE

Lecture by Kathy Williams
Sunday, March 21, 2010
Stone Hall @ 2:00 pm

WOMEN'S APPRECIATION LUNCHEON

Monday, March 22, 2010
Stone Hall @ 11:30 am