

CAMEL



TRACKS

Year 2011

Phone (707)745-5435 email: info@beniciahistoricalmuseum.org website: beniciahistoricalmuseum.org

May./Jun.

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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

The Benicia Historical Museum and Red Dragonfly Productions presents its 3rd

Spenger Garden Concert Series

The Johnny Smith Group
Sophisticated Blues, Jazz & Rock fusion
Sat. June 18 @ 8:00 pm

Houston Jones
High Octane Americana Music
Sat. July 16 @ 8:00 pm

Russ Lorenson
The Great American Songbook
Sat. Aug. 20 @ 8:00 pm

The Steve Freund Trio
Classic Chicago Style Blues
Sat. Sep. 17 @ 8:00 pm

Wavelength
Latin Jazz and Funk
Sat. Oct. 15 @ 8:00 pm

Benicia Historical Museum ♦ 2060 Camel Rd. ♦ Benicia
www.beniciahistoricalmuseum.org ♦ 707 745 5435
Tickets \$20.00

Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?

The above are key words in writing, stated to give the reader all the information that is needed. Who is coming, what are they doing, where, when and how are they doing See Who? What?, Page 4

The Museum Thanks Member Contributions

Supporting Level

- ♦ Michael F. Browne
- ♦ Patricia Swan
- ♦ Pete & Marianne Goodson
- ♦ Lorraine & Gerry Patten
- ♦ Louise Costa

Patron Level

- ♦ Louise Martin
- ♦ Louis Alfeld

Doña Benicia Level

- ♦ Thomas C. Benet

Benefactor Level

- ♦ James & Leslie Lessenger

Museum Docents

- Louis Alfeld
- ♦
- Tania Borostyan
- ♦
- Robert Cates
- ♦
- Sonny Flores
- ♦
- David Galligan
- ♦
- Kimble Goodman
- ♦
- Toni Haughey
- ♦
- Gloria Lambousy
- ♦
- Jim Lessenger
- ♦
- Mary Marino
- ♦
- Lori Morris
- ♦
- Leonide McKay
- ♦
- Elizabeth Murphy
- ♦
- Lorraine Patten
- ♦
- Bob Rozett
- ♦
- Eric Sargeson
- ♦
- Jessica Sargeson
- ♦
- Carol & Bill Scott
- ♦
- Susan Sullivan
- ♦
- Sharon Toner
- ♦
- Bill Venturelli

From the President

The board has now begun the process of finding a new Executive Director. We have a great organization in place and are looking for a strong leader to help guide our museum. Applicants are being encouraged to visit our website and get the specifics to apply. We hope to have enough applicants by the close of business May 27, 2011



to begin the interview process. Our plan is to have the new director in place by July 1, 2011. With our latest exhibit set to open I am truly excited we are able to honor our Veterans from the Viet Nam war. This will be an event to remember.

David Galligan
Board President

NOTICE: The museum is still asking for items for their Vietnam War-Veterans Remembered exhibit. We would like to hear from veterans and their families on loans or gifts of uniforms, medals, stories, photos, etc. We are including all branches of the service; Navy, Army, Air Force, Marines and Coast Guard. The deadline for receiving items is May 16. Please call Beverly at 745-3397ext. 28.



Curator's Corner

A few weeks ago I had the privilege to visit Murray Hunt who is shipbuilder Matthew Turner's step great-grandson. Murray has loaned and donated items to the museum in the past. He is such a wonderful gentleman to talk to about one of my favorite subjects-Matthew Turner.

During our visit he showed me the silver coffee server and goblets that Matthew Turner had received from the King of Norway for saving one of their ships. He also gave the museum the book he just published on Matthew Turner. I can't wait to read it!

The museum has received an art piece from the Carrington Foundation. The piece is a sculpture called, "It Ain't Easy". It is made of recycled railroad spikes from the Southern Pacific Railroad and made into the shape of a man working with heavy equipment. The Carrington Foundation contacted us to donate this piece because of its relativity to our railroad history with the Southern Pacific.

We hope that all of you will attend the Opening Reception of "Vietnam War-Veterans Remembered" exhibit. It will be on Sunday, May 29 at 2:00 p.m. We

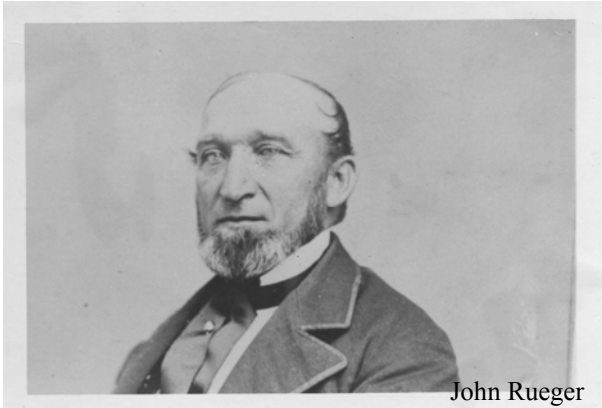
will be opening the exhibit at the main door of the museum. **PARKING WILL BE ACROSS PARK RD. IN THE AMPORTS PARKING LOT. THERE WILL BE SHUTTLES TO BRING YOU TO THE MUSEUM.** Please invite your friends and especially any Vietnam veterans you may know.



Beverly Phelan and Murray Hunt viewing silver coffee set.

Beverly Phelan
Curator

The Story of John Rueger



John Rueger

John Rueger was the owner of the Benicia Brewery in the 1850s. The museum has a copy of a booklet about John Rueger's life based on his own writings. This small volume tells the story of his many adventures traveling to California. We would like to share one of those harrowing tales with you.

Rueger was an early Benicia businessman and in 1854 started the Benicia Brewery. He purchased the California House on West "H" street and turned it into a brewery and a place to house some of his workmen. Our story begins years before he first landed in the U.S.

Born in Switzerland in 1817, Rueger apprenticed as a cooper and worked in the brewing industry. In 1834, he came to the U.S. with his brother-in-law's family, but after three years he returned to Switzerland where he bought his first brewery. In 1842 his first wife died, leaving him with three small children. He married a second time and had a fourth child with her. In 1847 with his brewery business failing and Europe suffering from a potato famine and widespread crop failures, he decided to return to the U.S.

Rueger first settled in Detroit but decided to head west when news of the California gold discovery reached the East. He traveled on riverboats to St. Joseph, seeing his first Indians at a Mission, crossed raging rivers with wagons and oxen, narrowly avoided cholera epidemics, crossed deserts, and finally landed on the foot at the banks of the Feather River. Without provisions he became separated from his companions. Lost in the wilderness he survived for a week on the few berries he could find which had not already been stripped by Grizzly bears.

His luck finally improved when he stumbled into an Indian village. They gave him a guide to lead him as far as the next tribe's territory, where he was passed on to another guide and so on until he reached the Sacramento Valley. By this time, it had been 11 days since he had had any food. Finally, meeting some miners, he was directed to a store where he could buy flour and rice. He was preparing to leave when the proprietor asked him where he had come from. His appearance alone must have raised the man's curiosity. He described himself as:

"I had not shaved for five months and my face was covered with a thick, shaggy beard, my hair was long and unkempt, surmounted by an old torn hat, my coat was buttoned to my neck to hide my naked chest, for I had given my last shirt to the Indians; I wore no trousers, only a pair of deerskin drawers, while to the soles of my feet were tied pieces of sole leather."



California House

The storeowner, upon hearing his tale of near starvation warned him that if he ate the flour and rice in his condition he would be dead in three days. He then fed Rueger small meals of crackers and porter until his system was back to normal. With the help of ranchers in the area he finally made it to Nye's Ranch, the present site of Marysville. John stayed in Marysville several years, opening a brewery with his partner, George Engler. In 1854 Rueger returned to Benicia where he opened the Benicia Brewery and lived out the rest of his life.

Bob Kvasnicka

Calendar of events

Views of 1906 Earthquake

Ongoing exhibit
Continues until July 31
Museum

Vietnam war - Veterans Remembered

Exhibit Opening
Sunday, may 29, 2011
Museum @ 2pm
Free event

Spenger Garden Music Series

presents:

The Johnny Smith Group

Saturday, June 18, 2011
Spenger Garden @ 8:00pm

Annual Kennedy Music Studio Student Concert

Sunday, June 26, 2011
Stone Hall @ 1:30pm
Free event

Spenger Garden Music Series

presents:

Houston Jones

Saturday, July 16, 2011
Spenger Garden @ 8:00pm

Spenger Garden Music Series

presents:

Russ Lorenson

Saturday, August 20, 2011
Spenger Garden @ 8:00pm

Spenger Garden Music Series

presents:

The Steve Freund Trio

Saturday, September 17, 2011
Spenger Garden @ 8:00pm

Spenger Garden Music Series

presents:

Wavelength

Saturday, October 15, 2011
Spenger Garden @ 8:00pm

Museum Requests

- A Leaf blower
- Foam core
- A carpet sweeper
- Small paper cutter
- Lawn mower (working) with a bag.

Who? What?

Continue from page 1

it, and add a sprinkling of extra details. If we follow these clues – what are we going to find and consequently do?

WE ARE GOING TO ATTEND THE SUMMER SERIES AT THE BENICIA HISTORICAL MUSEUM!

For years the Benicia Historical Museum has been bringing music and fun to Benicia with indoor concerts featuring Celtic and Bluegrass music and comedy programs, which continue to rock the rafters of Stone Hall.

With the opening of the Spenger Memorial Garden in 2009, the Summer Concert Series, produced by Rhonda Lucille Hicks and her Red Dragonfly Productions has showcased local and area musicians in an eclectic array of styles and talents. Over the past two seasons, concert-goers have experienced exceptional music, blue skies, fluffy clouds, free and abundant parking, museum exhibits to visit at intermission, even a double rainbow after a mild and swift moving rain shower.

Priced at just \$20 per ticket, concert-goers have enjoyed these talented bands. Rock, jazz, blues, oldies, New Orleans and yes, there has been dancing in the aisles. Add in comfortable seating, wine, beer and snacks.

Here your summer music evenings are already planned for you. Softened by the breezes from the bay you could come early and picnic on the grass. This year, tickets are still \$20, and will be available at beniciahistoricalmuseum.org, in the Museum office or gift shop and at Bookshop Benicia.

Mary Marino

Benicia Historical Museum presents

VIETNAM WAR VETERANS REMEMBERED

**Opening Reception
Sunday, May 29, 2011
2:00 p.m.
(707)745-5435**



**The exhibit will feature uniforms, medals, weapons,
recovered enemy articles, vehicles from the period,
stories, film, photos and much more!**

**WE WELCOME AND HONOR OUR VETERANS
FREE ADMISSION**

2024 Camel Rd.-Benicia