

# Pacifica Historical Society

Newsletter Volume 17 Issue 1 Spring 2023

## President's Letter



Welcome everyone, and Happy Spring!

I have been wondering for days now what to write in the President's letter for this issue. Then this morning, Tuesday March 28, the earthquake shook me awake. I felt two of the three jolts and haven't been able to calm myself down or concentrate on any one thing for long. I realized I needed to get this written before something else happens. Just do it. Kind of reminds me of volunteering for a non-profit. So many things to resolve, so many issues begging for attention, so many feathers to unruffle, so many people to thank for doing such a magnificent job of planning events, and actually pulling them off! Where to start? Just do it.

None of us have the luxury of sitting and waiting for the perfect time to get things done, because there is no perfect time for much of anything these days. We just need to get busy and do it!

Who among us didn't have a grandmother who intoned "Once begun is half done"? I know I did. I encourage you to come get involved or stay involved. Just do it.

By the time you read this newsletter, our very own Pacifica earthquake will be a distant memory of a week or so ago, the Ocean Shore Railroad passenger car will have been moved (see photos in the train story) to its new home across the street from the museum (not in its final resting place, but oh so close).

And publicity will be circulating about the April 22 Paint Party and Lunch at the new rail car site, our April 30 Little League/Bobby Sox Memories event and the May 21 Mother's Day Tea coming up soon (get your tickets now, see [pacificahistory.org](http://pacificahistory.org)). Our newly minted and experienced docents are signed up for their shifts at the museum, and a fund-raising frenzy of activity will be announced shortly.

So much progress. How to be involved? Just do it.

Historically Yours,

Judy Heldberg, PHS president

# ***Train Update –Good News!***

At long last, OSRR Car #1409 has a new home. On March 30, it carefully made its way from Vallemar to the Francisco Blvd. lot across from our museum. Restoration will continue in the back of the lot. When finished, it will be moved to the northeast corner.

Here is an update for the year thus far.

1/10: PHS board meeting. Approved a bid from O'Brien heavy haulers for \$7,997 for movement of #1409. Approved a request from contractor Bob Azzaro to hire two workers skilled in historical preservation.

1/17: Planning Commission meeting. Kathleen Manning reported on the rail car history and provided photos. Christian Murdock, planning director, submitted his report, complete with placement plans of the train car on the parking lot, provided by pro-bono architect, Bob Boles. Commission passed a resolution for "temporary placement on the lot" on Francisco Blvd.

2/27: PHS members attended City Council meeting. We were placed on the agenda for council approval of the Planning Commission's resolution. Unanimous approval was received.

3/14: PHS board meeting. The lessors of the Vallemar location approved a rental extension until the end of March. A GoFundMe campaign started for OSRR car restoration.

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/PHSsorr1409>

3/10: Bob Azzaro, and employees, met with O'Brien movers to take measurements, talk about the cribbing, fence removal and mapping the delivery route. – Shirlee Gibbs



Above left, #1409 prepares for the move from Vallemar. Center, on the way on Highway 1. At right, the forklift gently places our precious cargo in place on Francisco Boulevard. Deb Wong created this lovely video of the happy day as a tribute. <https://www.youtubevideo.watch?v=nnNs6JBMvyc>

# ***Spring Events: Sports, Train & Tea***

## ***Pacifica Little League and Bobby Sox – April 30***

Keith Hernandez, Bob McClure, Rich Morales, Greg Reynolds and Mike Buskey. Pacifica has produced great baseball players who went on to play in the minor and major leagues. And for years, local girls enjoyed playing softball in our Bobby Sox leagues.

On Sunday, April 30, the PHS will celebrate those Little League and Bobby Sox players with an afternoon of memories. The event starts at 2 p.m. at the museum, 1850 Francisco Blvd. Horace Hinshaw, longtime Pacifica Tribune sports editor, will moderate a panel with Gary Hernandez, Little League player from early Pacifica days and brother of major league great Keith Hernandez.

They will be joined by Bill Hooper, who played in the first Little League game (1957); Diane Hart, an early-year Bobby Sox Softball board member; and Terra Nova High graduate Greg Reynolds, who played in the Major Leagues for 10 years. A special appearance is planned (on pre-recorded video) by Keith Hernandez.

Former players and members of the champion 2014 Pacifica Little League team will also join the discussion. A photo exhibit will be displayed, and a 2-minute video shown that captures the unforgettable 1982 World Series game when two Pacifica Little League players who grew up just blocks apart in Linda Mar faced each other: the Milwaukee Brewers' McClure pitching to St. Louis Cardinals' Hernandez.

Bring mementos, such as banners, uniforms and baseball caps, from your time on local teams and share memories. Cracker Jack and refreshments will be served.



From left, Pacifica Little League players John Vallero (son of coach Carl Vallero, a Pacifica Little League founder), Gary Hernandez and Mike Buskey, who went on to play for the Chicago White Sox, meet the great ball player, Joe DiMaggio. Photo courtesy of Gary Hernandez.

## ***OSRR Painting and Lunch – April 22***

Our second spring event is an OSRR Painting Party and Lunch on Saturday, April 22 at 11 a.m. to create two murals for the fence surrounding OSRR car #1409 at its new Francisco Blvd site. Lunch is \$10. It will be a fun time for kids and adults. If you don't feel like lunch, just come on over to paint!

## ***Tea – May 21***

PHS's Mother's Day Tea is set for Sunday, May 21 at 1 p.m. at the museum. Tea will be served, of course, along with sandwiches, a salad and pastries, from Lovey's in Rockaway Beach. A brief talk by our own Stephen Johnson on famous mothers through history, including in Pacifica, will accompany the tea. Admission is \$40. Check [pacificahistory.org](http://pacificahistory.org) to save a seat.

## ***Rummage Sale Success***



Our March rummage sale, which coincided with St. Patrick's Day, was a success. Our volunteers (above, left) even got to celebrate with a pint of Guinness, brought in by one of our supporters (right). Our next rummage sale is April 13-15.

## ***Welcome New Docents!***

In February, PHS board member Susan Stallard and PHS member Michele Trausch launched a four-week training program for new museum docents. The volunteers learned the ropes of opening and closing the museum, the location of First Aid kits, fire extinguishers, and cleaning supplies. They learned to operate the lift and about the museum displays and resources. There were reading and visitation assignments. And each of the ten trainees researched and presented a topic relating to Pacifica history.

At the last class, a small celebration was held. Those who completed the course received their docent badge, a certificate, and Pacifica Jack cheese. They then picked a shadow shift to get experience under the guidance of veteran docents. One new docent had "trial by fire" when we had 38 visitors – a record – on a recent Saturday. We are thrilled with the depth of interest and experiences of our new volunteer guides. Come on down to the museum and meet our newest docents. They are wonderful!

- Susan Stallard



**New Docent Class:** left to right: Michele Trausch and Susan Stallard with new docents Shaanti Trikha, Jay Chew, Mike Wong, Steve Clark, Karen Bacheller, Craig Blackstone, Michele McEntee, Susan Christopher, Christine Guzman. Not pictured: Mor Hirsh and Colleen Witte.

## ***Sharp Park Camp Signage Discussed***

Pacifica has been in the spotlight because of renewed interest in the former internment camp, northeast of Fairway Park. It has been an archery range since the late 1940s, but during World War II the facility held about 2,500 Japanese, Italians and Germans at various times.

The SF Parks and Recreation Commission started discussion about creating interpretive signage (the property is owned by San Francisco) that will describe the camp's history and its impact on Japanese, Italians and Germans. I've attended a couple of Zoom meetings with a SF Parks/Rec signage committee on behalf of PHS. We discussed the possibility of having the main signage installed not at the archery range itself but on Lundy Way, at the entrance of the range road, so that it will be more visible to more people than at the range. Also discussed was a smaller sign at the camp site and a plaque at the Co-op Nursery School Quonset hut on Carmel Avenue, the only remaining camp building. The signage development will be a long process, and the committee is applying for a California state grant to get started. — Laura Del Rosso

## ***More Fascinating Pacifica History***

It seems the more you delve into our history the more interesting it gets. One of our great researchers, Deb Wong, has gone deep into the background of Snug Harbor Cabins at Rockaway Beach and Hazel's in Sharp Park. Great stuff, with terrific old photos. Both have been posted on our website in their entirety.

See <https://pacificahistory.org/hazelsinn> for the history of Hazel's, which was raided by San Mateo County sheriffs in 1956 and almost 90 patrons, mostly gay men, were arrested and jailed in Redwood City. Here's a snippet:

Hazel was arrested (in 1956) and booked for "Permitting dancing on a Sunday, and for operating a dance without a permit". She was released on \$250 bail. The morals charges specifically targeted homosexuals and described Hazel's as "...a resort for sexual perverts." According to testimony related to Hazel's Petition for Appeal in 1958, representatives of the San Mateo County Sheriff's office warned her that some of the activities taking place in the tavern should be discontinued. Between January 7, 1956, and February 18th of that year, various agents of the Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control and members of the sheriff's office, singly and in groups, visited the tavern on at least seven different occasions. Though the charges had to do with selling alcohol to a minor, testimony of the agents was mostly focused on the patrons and their sexuality. People who live near the tavern also who testified that it had a "....reputation of being patronized by sexual deviates, or homosexuals, or being a hangout for"... degenerates and undesirables."

Snug Harbor is at <https://pacificahistory.org/snugharbor> and here's a bit:

**The Snug Harbor Cabins were built during the days of the touring car**, when Rockaway Beach was a mecca for heat - weary citizens of the valley and others in search of a quiet place to vacation near the beach. Mrs. Laura Dunnigan married Captain Dunnigan in 1919 and lived in San Francisco. Laura came to Rockaway Beach to work as a waitress at Herbert's Place in 1923, during the Prohibition era. "It was a big place on the Old County Road in the middle of the street — up from the corner where the Golden Lantern restaurant is now. He paid me \$15 a day, and I made big tips," Mrs. Dunnigan said. "Mr. Blum, the candy man, was one of our best customers." According to Mrs. Dunnigan, Herbert and his partner, a Swede, would anchor a boat at sea and send liquor in on a cable. "The prohibits" would come, but they never found a thing. "They made me an apron with big pockets, to keep liquor bottles in, she laughed. Evidently, she didn't get searched. She didn't work at Herbert's very long, though. Her next job was in San Francisco as a waitress in a tearoom. Capt. and Mrs. Dunnigan had come to the seashore for several years. "We used to hike all over—we went to Bolinas Bay, Princeton and we used to stop to eat dinner at Rockaway Beach. That's how we met Herbert. When he found out I was a waitress he wanted me to work for him." Mrs. Dunnigan recalled that she came down to Rockaway Beach "...on the Red Star bus. They were like a big touring car with boards across, to make more seats. "There were only about four buildings in Rockaway Beach. there was a schoolhouse across the creek and the teacher lived in it." She recalled that Romano's restaurant was called 'The White House,' and it looked just the same as it does now. An Irishman owned it. He was a bootlegger, too. There was a cottage behind the place, but the `prohibs' burned it down.

## ***Footprints and More in PHS Media Room***

Thanks to the work of PHS board member Denise Buckley Crawford and ace researcher Deb Wong, we've got dozens of wonderful Footprints and other historical videos to watch both on YouTube and on a new SmartTV in the Media Room upstairs at the museum. You can see them at home on YouTube but it's fun to wander the museum and then pop into the Media Room to learn even more. Just ask a docent to fire up the laptop and TV. Thanks to Laura Del Rosso and Denise's family for donating the TV and laptop.

# Statue of Pacifica Ventures Out

In January, our 8-foot tall statue of Pacifica received an invitation to go to a dance on Treasure Island on February 18th. This was a BIG DEAL for her as she doesn't get out much (or at all). The last time she was actually outside was several years ago when she was moved to the Pacifica Coastside Museum from the downstairs corner of the City Council Chambers on Beach Boulevard. Her "Mother", the 80 foot statue that was the centerpiece of the Golden Gate International Exposition 1939-1940, was destroyed shortly after the World's Fair closed. Now our Pacifica and her twin (who is kept at City College SF) are the only large statues remaining. Although she is only one-tenth the height of the original, she is very proud that her face was chosen as the city symbol of the new City of Pacifica incorporated in 1957.

Another even smaller version of the statue also exists. In 1982, Don Carlson, a local artist and teacher at local high schools and College of San Mateo, created 200 of a one-foot tall version of the statue which the Pacifica Historical Society then sold as a fund raiser. We have three of these small statues on display in the biggest case in the museum along with other memorabilia from the World's Fair.

When the Pacifica Historical Society Board of Director's discussed whether we would let "our girl" go to the dance on Treasure Island, we were nervous about her safety. We are quite protective of her and want to keep her in good condition. In the end, we let her go to the dance, where she was displayed prominently and definitely was the "bell of the ball". Many who attended the dance had photos taken with her, including a PHS vice-president, Patricia Kremer and her husband Jim. Members from The Treasure Island Museum took very good care of her both during transport and during the event itself. She returned, between rainstorms, a few days later. Now she is again in her place of honor, on the south side of the Museum's foyer.



# ***Your Membership and Giving to PHS***

If you haven't paid for your PHS membership for 2023, please join or renew now. Dues are valid for the calendar year, so if you joined in 2022, your membership expired at the end of December. Dues keep the lights on, pay for the maintenance of the museum, and help us get this newsletter to you. See <https://pacificahistory.org/join> to renew or join online; visit the museum when it is open to pay by cash, check, or credit card; or mail a check to PHS, PO Box 752, Pacifica, CA 94044. Be sure to include your name, mailing address, phone number, membership level and email address.

Membership Levels:

|                             |      |        |       |
|-----------------------------|------|--------|-------|
| Senior or Student           | \$15 | Patron | \$100 |
| Individual or Senior Couple | \$20 | Silver | \$250 |
| Family Membership           | \$25 | Gold   | \$500 |

PHS also gratefully accepts donations, particularly as we continue with the OSRR rail car project. A way to contribute is through **Benevity**, a matching donation program. Businesses and corporations offer employees matching donations to nonprofits. If you or your family members and friends work for companies that offer matching donations, ask them about Benevity. We are a listed nonprofit with Benevity. You also can help the OSSR rail project directly. One way is through our **GoFundMe** campaign

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/PHSossr1409> and another is through our website, which accepts donations: <https://pacificahistory.org/ocean-shore-r-r>.

## ***Remembering Paul Slavin, 1945-2022***

There are folks one meets throughout a lifetime—few can be described as one-in-a-million. We met one: Paul Slavin. Just to our organization, the Pacifica Historical Society, he was a breath of fresh air, full of new ideas, boundless energy, exhaustive research and a helping hand (like for our Lady Pacifica when she needed a handmade, homemade, wooden base painted white to stabilize herself).

Paul was our President after Kathleen Manning and before Erika Rigling. He enthusiastically developed exhibits for our participation at the San Francisco Bay Area History Fair held at the old San Francisco Mint (5th & Mish). Over 100 history groups and affiliates met for a weekend once a year to make friends, encourage volunteers and showcase their individual stories of Bay Area communities. Paul helped put our new museum on the map!

One example of his passionate advocacy was the historical research, support, help and assistance he willingly gave the Sharp Park Golf Course. In June of 2017, he was instrumental in organizing the "Save Sharp Park" Golf Tournament which funded the defense against the suggested imminent closing of Sharp Park Golf Course. Battling against what Jean Bartlett called "the anti-golf prejudice" and what we are calling "an over aggressive use of the Endangered Species Act by eco-terrorists from Virginia," Paul enabled the San Francisco Board of Supervisors "see the light" and vote 9-1 to keep our historic golf course.

A perfect sendoff was early last December when we said "Fair Winds & Godspeed" to Paul with family and friends at Molloy's Tavern. He was one-in-a-million. —Deidra Crow



# Pacifica Historical Society

A Non-Profit Organization

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Visit our website <https://PacificaHistory.org> for news and materials, including links to historical resources and videos.

Subscribe to our Facebook page: Pacifica Historical Society

President: Judy Heldberg

Vice President: Shirlee Gibbs

Vice President: Pat Kremer

Vice President: Stephen Johnson

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Emeritus Members Kathleen Manning, Jerry Crow, Clorinda Campagna

Newsletter Editors: Laura Del Rosso, Susan Stallard

The Pacifica Historical Society welcomes everyone to join our organization and join our committees. We hold monthly Board Meetings on the second Tuesday of each month, 7 pm. The Planning Committee for events and activities meets monthly on the first Tuesday of each month, 4 pm.

The Pacifica Coastside Museum and gift shop is open Thursdays and Saturdays, 1 to 4 PM. The shop features books, postcards, and other items of interest, including the famous Pacifica Jack cheese. The museum is free to the public and ADA accessible, and our docents are there to assist.

The museum (aka The Little Brown Church) is a wonderful venue for meetings, weddings, parties and events, and it's a revenue generator for the PHS. Please spread the word that it's available. For rental information, contact Judy Heldberg at 650-359-6874.

Bargains are available at the PHS's popular rummage sales, usually held during the second Fridays and Saturdays of each month. Donated items are welcomed for drop-off on the Thursday mornings before the days of each rummage sale.

To join the Pacifica Historical Society, see <https://PacificaHistory.org/join>. Dues are good for the calendar year. Donations are always gratefully accepted. Our Federal Tax ID # is 943117665.



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