

Pacifica Historical Society

Newsletter Volume 16 Issue 1 Winter 2022-23

President's Letter



Welcome everyone, and Happy Holidays!

We have had an interesting year with programs, tea parties, luncheons and many fundraising events. We have had visitors to the museum during our regular hours, and to the monthly programs. Many who have visited have joined PHS on the spot. And we have constant compliments from visitors as to the pleasing appearance and the informative content of the exhibits. And we have sold our famous Pacifica Jack cheese by the ton. That wonderful cheese brings in a constant flow of customers.

All of the progress we have made would not be possible without the docents, Board members and general members of PHS who volunteer their time and energy in a multitude of ways. Without you and your dedication, we would cease to exist. For those of you who volunteer, please know you are so very appreciated.

Your membership dues, donations and fund-raising monies pay for the expenses and maintenance of the building and for the renovation of the Ocean Shore Railroad passenger train car #1409 which is in progress of being restored to her former glory. Said car will be moved to the parking lot next to the museum before the end of the year. Restoration work will continue at that site until the permanent spot for her is ready, just across the street from the museum. Once she is moved to her permanent home, she will be finished on the outside and we will then begin fundraising for the work on the inside. Exciting times.

Because we as an organization are dependent on fund-raising, we are trying to make it easier for members to help, if they are interested, when they are available to help. We now use Sign-up Genius to schedule docents for shifts at the museum. It works very well and is easy to use. So, the Board has approved using Sign-Up Genius for fundraising events. Once every couple of months, you as members will receive an e-mail, asking if you are ready, willing and able to help with a special project. If your answer is yes, sign-up is easy and you will receive a reminder of what you agreed to do. If you are unable to help, please just delete the email.

If you have ideas for programs, or fundraisers, or anything else to offer, please contact us. Your ideas are welcome. Looking forward to sharing holiday cheer at the Castle Holiday Party, Dec 4!

Historically Yours,

Judy Heldberg, PHS president

PHS Annual Holiday Party at the Castle



All members of the Pacifica Historical Society are invited to our annual holiday party at Sam's Castle on Sunday, December 4, 1-4 pm, at 900 Mirador Terrace in Sharp Park. Music will be provided by the Seaside Singers, as well as by a ukulele band. Please bring finger food to share. Tour the inside of this amazing, historic building and celebrate the holidays with fellow PHS members. (Due to building

policy, no children are allowed at this event.)



Your Membership – And New Levels

Because membership dues expire at the end of the calendar year, December 31, now would be an excellent time to renew your membership or join us as a new member. Your dues go further if you join early in the year! Note that we have two new membership levels: Silver \$250 and Gold \$500. Please consider upgrading to a higher level. More opportunities to support the PHS!

There are three ways to renew or join: Online at <https://pacificahistory.org/join>, by credit card at the Holiday Party or at the museum, 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

Individual or Senior Couple \$20

Family Membership \$25

Patron \$100

Silver \$250

Gold \$500

Footprints of Pacifica Now on YouTube

Thanks to the work of PHS board member Denise Buckley Crawford, dozens of episodes of Footprints of Pacifica created for our local PCT television station, are now on YouTube.

Just type “Footprints of Pacifica” in YouTube’s search box. Lots of great videos. In just a few months of being uploaded on YouTube, the episodes have already had hundreds of views.

One of the most recent Footprints is past PHS President and emeritus board member Kathleen Manning’s episode about the model of the Ocean Shore Railroad, how it was developed by the Vargas brothers and moved to the Pacifica Coastside Museum.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JAEk2e9pjnc> Also, there is Kathleen’s popular Pacifica Jack cheese episode. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zhz2D_o8leM

Sharp Park Camp in Spotlight

With the 80th anniversary of Executive Order 9066 that forced Japanese internment, Pacifica received attention in 2022 because of the Sharp Park camp. The site to the east of Fairway Park has been an archery range since the late 1940s, but during World War II the former Depression-era facility for indigents held about 2,500 Japanese, Italians and Germans at various times.

KQED’s Bay Curious radio show and podcast produced an excellent episode focusing on a Stanford professor who spent time interned at Sharp Park and wrote about it.

<https://www.kqed.org/news/11918432/pacificas-wwii-prison-camp-has-been-largely-erased-but-it-was-there>). We have printed an excerpt of that episode, laminated it and added it to our Sharp Park exhibit about the camp. Museum visitors are free to pick up the piece to read it.

The San Francisco Chronicle’s local history columnist, Gary Kamiya, wrote a terrific piece on Sharp Park this year. That article prompted the San Francisco Board of Supervisors to pass a resolution calling for the city’s Recreation and Parks Commission (which oversees the archery range) to develop and install interpretive signage at the site describing the role it played in World War II history.

The PHS board is enthusiastic about this development, recognizing it is long overdue that this painful part of history is recognized and that the public is educated. The board has approved a letter in support of the signage, to be sent to the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department and the commission.

The camp history was also highlighted by Le Donne d'Italia, an Italian-American group that recently held an event at the archery range site. One of its officers is Christina Olivolo Sauvageau (right, pointing), a Pacifica native and Oceana High School graduate, who researched the story of Italians from the Bay Area who were interned at Sharp Park or required to live under curfews and restrictions.



Finally, in November we were thrilled that Steve Okamoto (left), whose family was forced to Tanforan and interned for the length of the war, spoke to us at a well-attended museum event. Steve was a leader in the creation and installation of a statue commemorating the Japanese who were taken to the horse racetrack at Tanforan. He gave a moving talk about what the local Japanese community endured during World War II. --Laura Del Rosso



A Busy Year for the PHS

We've had a fun and busy year with many of our events and activities returning – almost – to pre-pandemic levels. We installed a new Pacifica Tribune exhibit along with a laptop on Bill Drake's desk to research newspapers (including Sharp Park Breakers) that have covered Pacifica since the 1930s.

Our events and presentations included the topics of Pacifica's hazards and natural disasters, the history of the Tribune and its role in the city, a Hobo lunch fundraiser for the OSRR rail car, presentations by our own Steve Johnson at the May Mothers' Day tea party, on the Anza expedition and the Presidio's link to Pacifica (photo right, with tour guide Steve Johnson).



We also had the above-mentioned Steve Okamoto speak on the Sharp Park camp and a wonderful luncheon (below) with the founders of the Ohlone Café of Berkeley, who came to the museum and served up delicious Ohlone dishes and described the history of the local native American tribe (photo below, with background of PHS exhibits).



Train Committee Report

When we were advised that our current lease on the train site in Vallemar, which would expire at the end of 2022, would not be renewed, we scheduled a meeting with Pacifica's City Manager to discuss our options.

Although the railcar is not a "finished product" as previously required, the City Manager, Planning Director and Assistant Director of Public Works agreed to permit the PHS to move the railcar to a temporary placement in the city-owned parking lot which is adjacent to the museum.

The corner of Salada Avenue & Francisco Blvd is the final destination for the railcar but currently the construction firm for the new Pacifica Civic Center will be using the lot for a staging area. For now, the placement will be against the rear fence, where after security measures, the work on restoration will begin in early 2023.

After extensive communication and researching railyards at Jackson, Sacramento & Suisun, original wheels (trucks) for the railcar were discovered by PHS member Rob Wullenjohn, at the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds in San Jose.

Deidre Crow drove Rob, Kathleen and Shirlee down to San Jose to view the discovery. We can have the wheels – FREE – but there's a catch: they are attached to a vintage railroad passenger car 72 feet long, 12 feet wide, solid iron, with a cement floor!

We placed a "hold" on the wheels, track and ties and are currently searching for dismantlers, recyclers, and heavy-haulers in the area.

Kathleen met with Christian Murdock, City Planning Director, and presented documents pertaining to the environmental impact, and city expenses incurred on the parking lot where the railcar will be placed. Our heartfelt thanks to Bob Boles, our pro-bono architect, for assisting us with all the paperwork in connection with a possible December Planning Commission meeting.

We envision this brightly painted railcar, with an observation platform at one end, to be mounted on rails and seemingly ready to begin another journey. Interior details are yet to be determined.

--Shirlee Gibbs, Train Committee

2022 Rummage Sale Success

Thanks to the generous donations and participation from community members, our monthly rummage sales for the year 2022 were financially successful.

A recap of each month's reports shows an average of \$2,000 income per two-day sale, with an average attendance of 250 customers. All funds from these sales are deposited in our OSRR bank account for the historic railcar restoration.

You are invited to these monthly fundraising events. The next sale dates are January 13 and 14, 2023. Please stop by or offer to help set up and work at the sale. Purchase an item or two that you do – or don't -- need. It all goes to a very good cause.

Shirlee Gibbs and Kathleen Manning, Co-Chairs

Volunteering for PHS

The Pacifica Historical Society is an all-volunteer organization that needs to draw on the interests, skills and talents of its members to function at its best. Please consider volunteering some time to help out.

If you have good computer skills and a moderately techie mindset, we would appreciate your input. There are always ongoing projects at the museum, such as filing clippings or copying and labeling DVDs. Volunteers can become involved in the docent program or work in the museum shop.

If you'd enjoy participating in any of these areas, you can contact the Pacifica Historical Society at info@pacificahistory.org. -- Carolyn Miller

New Docent Training

Have you ever wanted to help the Pacifica Historical Society help our visitors to learn about the fascinating stories of this area we call Pacifica? Early in 2023, we will be updating our training materials for docents and storekeepers for the museum. The training will include material that you can review and research at home, and in-person and hands-on training.

If you think you would like to see if this is something that you would like to explore, please send an email to info@pacificahistory.org with subject line Docent Training. Include your name, email address, and phone number. If you do become a docent, you will be asked to take a three-hour shift once or twice a month. And we will let you start with an experienced buddy. The new training will start sometime in the first quarter of 2023. – Susan Stallard

Remembering Nattie Juvland



We are feeling the loss of one of our museum docents and storekeepers, Nattie Juvland, who died in early September. Nattie, a retired nurse and mother of three daughters, was active for many years in PHS and other Pacifica community groups. She loved making, repairing, and selling jewelry for the PHS gift shop and at our rummage sales. We miss Nattie, her bright, wonderful spirit, and send her family our heartfelt condolences.

Giving to PHS

PHS is a nonprofit organization, and we encourage donations, particularly as we plan for our future and as we continue with the OSRR rail car project.

We recently had a late Pacifican remember us in her estate plan, which we appreciate very much. More details on her generous bequest will be available later in 2023.

Another way to contribute is through **Benevity**, a matching donation program. PHS is registered with Benevity. Many businesses and corporations offer their employees matching donations to nonprofits that participate in Benevity. If you or your family members and friends work for a company that offers matching donations, ask them about Benevity and encourage them to contribute to PHS in that way.

Of course, we always have our donation jars open at the museum, you can upgrade your membership to Patron and the new higher Silver and Gold levels and our website accepts donations for the rail car restoration (click on Ocean Shore RR from home page).

Pacifica Historical Society

A Non-Profit Organization

Mailing Address: PO Box 752, Pacifica, CA 94044

Museum Location: 1850 Francisco Blvd., Pacifica

Phone number: 650-355-1909

Email: Info@PacificaHistory.org

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

Secretary: Carolyn Miller

Treasurer: Janet Ang

Board of Directors: Mary Dougherty, Shirlee Gibbs, Denise Buckley Crawford, Laura Del Rosso, Sue Digre, Judy Heldberg, Steve Johnson, Pat Kremer, Kathy McGuire, Carolyn Miller, Mike O'Neill, Susan Stallard, Brigid Voss

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 every Thursday and Saturday, 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 great 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 our website <https://PacificaHistory.org/join>. Information is there on how you may join by credit card, check, or online. Membership categories vary from \$15 to \$500. Dues are good for the calendar year.

Donations are always gratefully accepted. Our Federal Tax ID # is 943117665.



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PO Box 752
Pacifica, CA 94044