

Capitola Sunset

Summer 2023

410 Capitola Avenue

News, Events & Information

Jo Jo's Mojo by Niels Kisling



Jo Jo Urbancic was born and raised in San Francisco. He spent his pre-teen summers in Capitola before moving here permanently in the early 1960s. His family vacationed here in the mid-1950s. They came to Capitola, like many others, to enjoy the beach and the family-friendly vacation vibe.

After high school, Jo Jo decided to leave home and move to Capitola. His earliest days here were spent as a vagabond—sleeping 'here and there.' Our community quickly recognized that he was someone who deserved their attention.

Capitola has taken care of Jo Jo for decades.

Anyone who has spent any time in the village or on the wharf has had some kind of positive



interaction with Jo Jo.

He has taught generations of people how to bait a hook, cast

a line, or land a big fish off the Capitola Wharf. Jo Jo is the defacto Chief Operations Officer of the wharf.

Jo Jo's Mojo took a large hit earlier this year on January 6 when the Capitola Wharf was split in two. Losing the wharf was tough on all of us, but Jo Jo lost a little bit of his identity that day.



Jo Jo cleaning fish

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City of Capitola Volunteer Appreciation Dinner



On June 6th, the City of Capitola hosted a Volunteer Appreciation Dinner for all City volunteers at the newly reopened Zelda's on the Esplanade. The Capitola Historical Museum contingent numbered over 20 in

attendance. Thanks again to all our wonderful volunteers who enable us to keep the museum open for the public. We could not do it without you!



The admission free — Capitola Historical Museum at 410 Capitola Avenue, next to the railroad trestle, is open mid-March through December every Friday through Sunday from noon until 4:00 p.m.

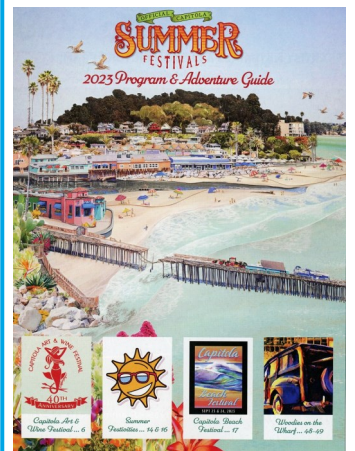
831-464-0322

capitolamuseum@gmail.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

Art & Wine Festival
Saturday & Sunday
September 9 & 10

Beach Festival
Saturday & Sunday
September 23 & 24



Pick up a copy of the free *Official Capitola Summer Festivals 2023 Program and Adventure Guide*.—available at the Capitola Historical Museum and around the Village.

Jo Jo's Mojo—continued

Again, the community stepped up and they helped Jo Jo reinvent himself. On weekends he now hangs out with friends on the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf doing what he loves—helping people learn to fish and cleaning fish for tips.

During the week you will find Jo Jo in the village. He loves to talk about Capitola, fishing, and how if he was in charge, the wharf would be fixed already. He also promotes himself by handing out his business card—a calling card created for him by a member of our community.



The calling card promotes the *Capitola Memories* Video that Jo Jo did for the Capitola Museum, and it promotes his message, “*I Clean Fish for Tips.*”



The cast of characters from The Capitola Wharf, Mike, Rich, Jo Jo and Myron are right in step with each other. They spend their time at the Santa Cruz Municipal Wharf since their beloved Capitola Wharf is inaccessible this year.

Jo Jo is truly a Historical Treasure. He has spent the last 70 years of his life loving and supporting the community that supports him. On November 6th, Jo Jo will turn 80. Stay tuned for details about how you can help celebrate this Capitola Legend.



The Capitola Beach Festival



Capitola Pleasure-seekers

The Capitola Beach Festival takes place Saturday, September 23rd and Sunday, September 24th. The Beach Festival began in 2018 as a replacement for the beloved Begonia Festival which ended in 2017.

The Beach Festival was mounted by many of the same volunteers who made the Begonia Festival such a wonderful community event. The Beach Festival has been held annually since 2018, except in 2020, due to the pandemic.

Several Begonia Festival traditions were revived. The most beloved tradition, the nautical parade, was transformed into the Lighted Nautical Parade. The new version of the parade was started in hopes of keeping the tradition of the creek parade but adapting it to the use of new technology (lights instead of begonias), attracting new, diverse float builders and reducing waste.

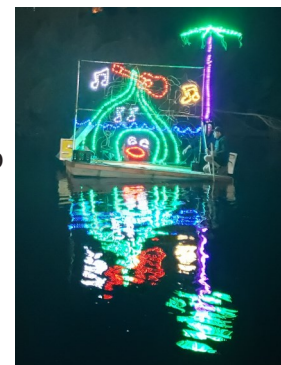
The Lighted Nautical Parade is now a crowd favorite. Though last year the floats were “beached” due to poor creek conditions, the floats were still greatly enjoyed by festival goers. So far this year a parade on the creek looks like a go.

The Capitola Beach Festival is a family-friendly festival and will include the following events: sand sculpture contest, rowboat races, horseshoe tournament, corn hole contest, children's art, chalk art, and the Lighted Nautical Parade. Due to this past winter's storm damage to the wharf, the festival is unable to hold the traditional Fishing Derby. In the derby's place, a paddleboard race will be held.



This year's theme is “Beauty and the Beach”. If you and your group, business, or neighborhood would like to participate in the Lighted Nautical Parade use this QR code to access the parade guidelines.

2021 Winning float—*The Spirit of Capitola*



Did You Ever Wonder About the Georgette Dufresne Bench?



Georgette Dufresne (pronounced Du F-rain), from Montreal Canada, arrived in the United States in the late 1950s. She lived in a little cottage on the Van Syckle house property, at that time the residence of the Museum Board President, Norma Kriege. In 1992 Georgette joined the Capitola Historical Museum Board and became an American citizen while serving on it. Former Curator Carolyn Swift described Georgette as “a dedicated board member and the queen of festive receptions! She would spread a table cloth, bring cake and punch, and then sprinkle candy over the table.”

Georgette was known as the “French speaking red head with a quick wit” and she was known for “... getting folks to work together while having a great fun doing it.” She received a bachelor’s degree in occupational therapy at San Jose State. In 1983 she opened the Behavioral Health Unit at Dominican Hospital and later the El Dorado Center for those living with mental illness. Within her very busy schedule serving others, Georgette also served as a Museum Board member from 1992 through 2007. Georgette passed away in January 2009 after a battle with cancer. The memorial bench in front of the museum was purchased by her family and dedicated to her memory and her efforts in preserving Capitola history.



Volunteer Patrick White sits on the Georgette Dufresne memorial bench in front of the museum.

Former Board Member Returns for Service — Brian Legakis



Welcome Back Brian! - pictured here with former Board member Pam Greeninger at the 2022 Capitola Rod & Classic Car Show

Brian Legakis previously served on the Museum Board of Trustees from 2018 until the Fall of 2022 when he decided to spend 9 months traveling throughout the Western states. Brian taught Art History at Cabrillo College for 31 years until he retired in 2018. As an Art Historian and Classical Archaeologist he visited museums in Europe and the US for personal research and study. Brian’s love of museums is shared by his wife, Sally, who was the registrar at the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History in the 1980s and 1990s. It is a

natural fit for Brian to volunteer at the Capitola Museum front desk and to contribute his views at Museum Board meetings for a collection he

believes is well cared for. Brian enthusiastically supports the mission of the Capitola Historical Museum and the outstanding stewardship it is fortunate to possess. Brian encourages others to consider volunteering at the Museum as the benefits are truly rewarding.

In 1903 A.D. Houghton built a mansion on 100 acres at Soquel Point. After his mansion, The Owls, burned in 1914, the basement was filled with salt water and became popular as a local swimming pool. Later renovated as a health spa called the Pleasure Point Plunge, it was a local favorite until it went bankrupt in the mid-1950s.

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Adults 25c Children 15c

Tuesdays—Children under 12 only 10c

Pleasure Point Plunge

East Cliff Drive Near Capitola

Ideal for Private Parties
\$2.50 per hour

Dancing - Games - Barbecue

Phone 2181-W



Santa Cruz Evening News, July 26, 1940

Capitola Art & Wine Festival



Museum Board member Emmy Mitchell-Lynn shows historic Capitola photos to visitors during the 2022 Art & Wine Festival

The 40th Annual Capitola Art & Wine Festival will take place on Saturday, September 9th and Sunday, September 10th. This year's event includes the participation of 22 Santa Cruz Mountain wineries and the talents of over 100 artists. There will also be live music, dance performances and street performers. Admission to the festival in the Village is free but wine tasting requires the purchase of a 2023 Festival Glass and tasting tokens. Glass: \$15 Tokens: \$1 each. Wine tasting varies by winery.

Once again the Capitola Historical Museum will set up an exhibit table at the corner of the Esplanade and Monterey Avenue. Stop by and see us and learn a little about Capitola's colorful history. We will have history books, vintage Capitola logo buttons and stickers as well as vintage



Volunteer David Biancalana at the table

Begonia Festival posters available as a fundraiser to help support ongoing museum preservation projects.

The Park at Depot Hill



Last year the museum was contacted by Sara Karn about a memorial plaque she had which she wanted to place in the park her grandmother contributed funds to develop and maintain. The park in question is the small one with benches in front of the Inn at Depot Hill.

Miss Karn's grandmother, Miriam Parker, donated the funds for the park in the memory of her husband. The plaque was installed in the park's bench by the City's Public Works Department over this past winter. The new plaque joins several Parker family bench memorial plaques.



Capitola Library Exhibit Case

Next time you stop by the Capitola Library, located at 2005 Wharf Road, check out the Capitola Historical Museum exhibit case. The case, located to the left, just inside the library entrance, rotates exhibits every 2 to 3 months. An ongoing exhibit theme is "My Neighborhood ..."

Donations — Generous financial gifts from:

- | | | |
|------------------|---------------------|---|
| Margot Bauer | Kathleen A. King | Richard Wilson |
| Betsy Conners | Don & Karen Masters | Santa Cruz Seniors in Retirement (S.I.R.S.) for a history presentation by the Curator |
| Marvin Jensen | Joe & Gayle Ortiz | |
| Kathleen A. King | Dave Peyton | |

Artifact Donation: Cynthia Stringham, granddaughter of Brad Macdonald donated four images of the 1955 flood in Capitola and Santa Cruz.

Meet Volunteer Kate Clark—Interview by Dave Peyton



New Volunteer Kate Clark dressed in period costume at Wilder Ranch



What would others want to know about you? How has your life led you to this time and place?

Growing up in Los Gatos I recall being intrigued by the local history and stories of the area; as a Girl Scout I helped preserve the Billy Jones Railroad at Vasona Park and to document the remaining water towers in Santa Clara Valley. I even rode across North Dakota on a wagon train for a bicentennial reenactment. Once I settled down in Santa Cruz I rented a house that was an old saloon/jail across from the Santa Cruz Mission. Tour groups would be outside looking at the house while I read the Sunday paper — this led me to learn more about my new home and city and I've been on the trajectory ever since. My partner of 40 years and I now live in a home built in 1918, fortunately it is not on any tours and we can read the paper in peace.

Let us know what brings you to the museum. Why did you join our volunteer docent program and what is especially important to your involvement at the museum?

While looking for more volunteer activities in my retirement, I came across the museum's "help wanted" ad in the Volunteer Center website — and here I am! I'm delighted to learn more about Capitola and how its history weaves into my knowledge about Santa Cruz County.

Your experiences at the museum have been limited to this point, but does something stand out as significant?

Visitors are always surprised and delighted at what they find inside the museum — and many are happy to find the doors open as they often see them closed. Some visitors clearly love to talk about *their* Capitola memories!

We often refer to the two-hour docent shifts as "museum magic". Have you experienced this "magic"?

After my first shift at the museum I took home the walking tour handout, then followed the tour the next day — I learned a lot about Capitola from that tour and at my next museum shift was able to direct visitors to a nice walk along the river (with the handout as their guide), it was a great resource to utilize.

What other volunteer or community service work have you been involved with?

I volunteer in several capacities in our region: I have spent over 12 years with Santa Cruz's Evergreen Cemetery research and restoration, I am a docent at Wilder Ranch, I help administer a large scholarship for the Native Daughters of the Golden West, I assist in an archeology program at the Santa Cruz Mission, and I have been assisting with large scale public mosaics around the county including the Watsonville Brillante (covering a six-story parking garage) currently in its fourth year of a five year project.

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The Museum Collection Project by Deborah Osterberg

Since its inception the museum has collected and preserved a wide variety of historic Capitola artifacts (and some from adjoining locales), period artifacts, art, photographs, and archival documents from which I can select items for exhibitions, writing projects, and research. As Museum Curator I felt it was important to get a better handle on the wonderful array of historic objects we maintain. Also, this year the museum upgraded to the Web Edition of the museum catalog software, Past Perfect.



Textile racks in the Artifact Storage Room

Only a portion of the museum's collection was documented on the old version of the Past Perfect catalog software, so I know we have a big job ahead of us to get all the collection in the database. This process will necessitate compiling information from multiple hard copy and Excel inventories into the current catalog software. Over the coming months (and probably years) we will endeavor to get all our collection artifacts fully documented in the catalog software which will make tracking and searching our collections far more efficient.

The first step is to conduct a full inventory of the museum's storage collection. Thankfully my predecessor, former Curator Frank Perry, gave us a head start by working with Kathleen Aston (Curator of the Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History) by making an inventory of the museum's artwork and ensured that the majority of archival items were housed in acid-free boxes and folders by museum specialist, Madeline Horn.

Each week, beginning this May, I've gotten together with Board member Emmy Mitchell-Lynn and Youth Board Representative Juliette Thompson to make this inventory. In July we just finished making a room schematic, labelling locations, and inventorying our Archives & Art Storage Room. We also began to better protect our array of paintings and framed festival art posters using acid-free foam dividers. We discovered that as much as 1/3 of our archival materials were not yet fully cataloged.

Board Youth Representative Juliette Thompson in the Archives/Art Storage Room



Next, we will begin the same inventory process for our Artifact Storage Room (which includes a large collection of historic textiles – again thankfully already housed to museum standards). The Artifact Storage Room is jammed packed with a wonderful array of historic items, many acquired by former Curator Carolyn Swift. Unfortunately, most of them are in non-museum quality boxes which must be replaced. To improve storage and promote the longevity of our collections, I requested and received additional funding from the City for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, so that we can obtain additional storage space. Also, at the end of last year, I ordered some appropriate museum storage materials. This year, with Museum Board approval, I plan to use some of the museum's fundraising account on the purchase of several museum quality storage cabinets. Such cabinets will create micro-environments providing for more stable temperatures and relative humidity, as well as better protection from environmental hazards such as insects and potential water damage. Our goal is to make sure that the physical embodiment of Capitola's history is preserved and maintained for future generations to enjoy. I also plan to develop some special volunteer projects related to this effort. Stay tuned .

Volunteer Profile —Kate Clark—continued

Do you have a favorite historical moment?

While looking for someone to assist in translating some Japanese headstones for Evergreen Cemetery I made contact with a family in Santa Clara Valley who helped translate and eventually made contact with a living descendent in a very small village in Japan. This elderly relative knew stories about her ancestor who left for California over a 150 years ago — the family never knew where he ended up — it was a tearful and touching connection. Please note that this outreach was conducted on Twitter and involved over 30,000 Japanese people who participated in finding the family.

Capitola Memories Project by Emmy Mitchell-Lynn

The Capitola Historical Museum is reviving our Capitola Memories Project! This long standing, video oral history project aims to capture the stories and memories of Capitola locals, and others alike, who hold deep connections to Capitola history. These stories are invaluable for providing insights into our past. With over 40 videos and nearly 10,000 views on our YouTube channel, our collection of memories allows folks the privilege of learning or reminiscing about Capitola's rich and colorful history. Visit the Capitola Historical Museum's YouTube channel and check it out for yourself!

P.S. We're always on the lookout for memories to add! If you know someone who may be a good candidate for an oral history interview, please email Museum Curator Deborah Osterberg at dosterberg@ci.capitola.ca.us



Visit the Capitola Historical
Museum YouTube Channel
for Oral Histories & Tours



“Capitola—Signs of the Times”

The 2023 Capitola Historical Museum exhibition, “Capitola – Signs of the Times” will run through the end of December. According to the American Sign Museum, signs are “... *an often overlooked part of our culture that hides in plain sight as part of our daily lives.*” The signs in this exhibition help tell the story of Capitola, from its pioneer and resort beginnings to its character today as a popular beach town, artists' colony, and desirable coastal residential community. The exhibition features dozens of photographs of resort and commercial signs, both past and present, as well as several vintage signs from Capitola's past businesses.

A rare sight was revealed this Spring along the Esplanade. During storm renovations at My Thai Beach restaurant ... a vintage sign for Pearls Fountain and Skee Ball was uncovered. The sign, applied directly to the old stucco is gone now, but not before we preserved some wonderful photographs of it.



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The museum's display at the 2023 History Fair in Felton on May 13th. l to r—Curator, Deborah Osterberg, Board Youth Representative Juliette Thompson and Board Member Enrique Dolmo

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Deborah Osterberg

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Juliette Thompson - Youth
Representative

Newsletter published by the
Capitola Historical Museum

Our Museum Landscape by Deborah Osterberg

"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes."
Marcel Proust

We are fortunate that our museum is situated on a visitor friendly spot along Capitola Avenue. Most folks coming down from the City's public parking lot walk past our gathering of historic buildings.



Steve Kayser is doing a great job as our current volunteer gardener. Though thankfully each season, staff from the City's Public Works Department help keep back the weeds and ivy, we are also fortunate to have many volunteers who take it upon themselves to grab the broom or hose during their shift to help maintain our landscape. Thanks also go to the small crew of young people from Hope Services for the developmentally disabled, who help keep the area around our museum and parking lot clean each week.

Thanks to Public Works our latest addition is a tool shed on the side of the museum for the broom and gardening tools. This allows us more room in our museum closet for cleaning supplies, a new upright, HEPA filer vacuum and museum collections emergency recovery supplies.

A new Museum Landscape Plan is being developed to help make the entry way to our museum a little more attractive, historic, and much safer. The Museum Board is currently working to develop a new museum logo and once that is complete, we will work on designing a new museum sign with better visibility for passing cars and pedestrians.

A meeting with City officials on feasibility and projected costs will take place in the near future. Highlights include installing pavers in front of the museum sign and photo-op for a smoother, safer surface for display tables and ensuring better visitor access to the photo-op. We also hope to replace the rest of the river rock with something like decomposed granite. We plan to make the area next to the Beach Cottage into a Native Plant Garden with small interpretive signs about how indigenous people used the plants. Existing potted plants would be relocated along the parking lot walkway. The project will likely be completed in stages and a call for volunteers will be likely. Additional donations and/or grants may also be sought for it. It is hoped that work on at least portions of the new landscape would start before the end of the year.



The First People of Capitola by Ann Thiermann