

Capitola Sunset

CAPITOLA HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Fall 2013

NEWS, EVENTS & INFORMATION

New Museum Curator Frank Perry

By Niels Kisling

Capitola's new museum curator, Frank Perry, has been a researcher of its history most of his life.

Frank's mom, Edith Perry, was three months old in 1918 when she arrived in Capitola by train from Hanford. The family settled in Live Oak where both Frank's mother and his grandfather worked at Brown's Bulb Ranch.

At Soquel High Frank told his career counselor that he wanted to be a museum curator. The advisor did not know what that was and Frank had to explain it to her. Frank likes to say, "I have loved museums since I was a kid. I am happy that I have finally become a museum curator. It might have happened sooner if it wasn't for that setback with my high school counselor."



New museum director, Frank Perry, poses outside of the museum recently. Perry has hit the ground running by already reaching out with social media to broaden our fan base. You can now 'Like us on Facebook!'

Frank Perry has had a successful career that spans thirty years as a researcher, designer, and builder of museum exhibits and displays. He estimates that he has built between 300-400 exhibits, doing a lot of the work with his own hands. His mom and dad were both artists and Frank studied science in college at UCSC. He has also researched local history for as long as he can remember.

Among his most visible projects is the mounted blue whale skeleton that is now on display at Long Marine Lab. This is the World's largest blue whale skeleton at 87 feet and only one of four blue whale skeletons on display in North America.



Frank is also proud of the visitor centers that he created from scratch at Butano, Half Moon Bay and Natural Bridges State Parks. For Monterey County, he designed the visitor center at Lake San Antonio and has contributed to many more visitor center projects around the state.

Our new curator is also a published author. He contributed to several issues of the *Santa Cruz County History Journal*, published by the Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History. He has also authored, *Lighthouse Point*, *Lime Kiln Legacies*, and *Notes from Santa Cruz* detailing the history of music in our county from the 1870s to 1970s.

Frank's vision for the Museum is to increase its online presence, to reach a wider audience, and to have more people involved. He looks forward to working with the board and volunteers to achieve these goals. I know the museum is in good hands



An early photo of Frank playing in the Capitola Lagoon with a wooden paddleboat that his father made. Frank's father was an artist and woodworker. Along with his tools, he handed down to Frank his passion to build stuff with his own two hands.

Capitola Book Now Indexed

At Carolyn Swift's retirement party, historian Stanley D. Stevens presented her with an unusual gift: an index to her new book. *Images of America-CAPITOLA* does not have an index, but a good index can be very valuable. Trying to remember which page mentions architect Edward Van Cleeck? Want to know the pages for all the Ole Ravnos photos? Stan's index has the answer.

To the casual reader or people who mostly just look at the photographs, an index might not seem important. But to people doing historical research or those who just want to look up a certain person or thing, this index is a wonderful and useful addition.

Copies are available at the Museum for a \$6 donation.

Thank you Stan!

A Way to Make Them Smile

The smiles were contagious at this year's museum-hosted event, Begonias to Go, Head-to-Toe, held in Esplanade Park. There were smiling young people, old people, medium people, and the smiling museum volunteers who made it all happen. Begonias-to-Go is a community event where we provide begonia blossoms that festival goers use to decorate hats, dogs, kids and anything that'll stand still.



Dave Dominquez and his ever-faithful canine companion, Koa, got in on the action showing the true meaning of Begonias-to-Go. These begonias covered some miles cruising through the village with Dave, Koa and the blossoms all proudly on display.

Volunteer David Shoaf deserves special recognition for his natural talent as a begonia coach, patiently teaching newcomers how to wire each begonia blossom in place.

This year's event, held on Sunday before the nautical parade, drew early crowds all eager to get started. Steve Swift had to hold them at bay until museum volunteers showed up to 'get the party started.' Steve drove to the

fields in Marina the day before and loaded a pick-up truck with over 125 flats of begonia blossoms. The blossoms were picked by area volunteer Boy Scouts.

Museum volunteers Stephanie Kirby, Niels Kisling, Tom McGranahan and Gordon van Zuiden worked very hard during the 2-hour begonia blossom flurry.

As each flat of begonia blossoms was laid out, it magically disappeared, keeping true to the "Capitola Magic" theme of the 61st annual festival. This went on for hours until they were all gone. Then the blossoms began magically reappearing among the crowd of smiling faces on the Stockton Bridge, the train trestle, around the edge of the lagoon and in the streets of Capitola.



If we awarded prizes, this couple shown with Steve Swift would have been in the finals. Her hat features dozens of begonia blossoms complemented by an all-begonia Hawaiian style lei.

Decorated hats were everywhere and a true testament to a successful event hosted by the museum. A Doobie Brothers song from July 1972 goes, "What the people need, is a way to make 'em smile. It ain't so hard to do if you know how." The Capitola Historical Museum knows how and the proof is in the pictures and in the great memories created that day.



These three young ladies had it all; big smiles, decorated hats from the Capitola Museum's Begonias-to-Go event and front row seating on the lagoon for the nautical parade.

Keep Them Guessing

The Capitola Museum created a history display at the 31st Annual Capitola Art and Wine Festival thanks to the Capitola/Sequel Chamber of Commerce. We displayed some great pictures this year including one from the late 1800s that featured a view looking down The Esplanade from approximately where our booth was located. It provided a fascinating look back in time. People were awestruck by the comparison and by the tents, shacks and outhouses that filled the frame. This was a true to life image of the birth of 'Camp Capitola.'



Museum Trustee, David Shoaf, explains to a visitor that, from where she is standing, she is looking at the same angle of the Capitola Esplanade in this early 1880s picture.

We also set up the interactive history game, BYOH—that stands for 'be your own historian.' Visitors provided clues by adding sticky notes to a 1950s aerial photograph of Capitola and Live Oak. The object was to provide us with clues so we could date the photo. Based on one woman's input, her house was in the picture and it was built in 1952. Another good 'clue' is that the Surf and Sand mobile home park was developed in 1956—the land appears as an undeveloped dirt lot in the photo.



A visitor to the Capitola Museum history booth plays our interactive history game, 'Be Your Own Historian.' She, and dozens of others, added clues that helped us to roughly determine the year the photo was taken. This was a big hit with festival goers again this year.

One can assume, if the input is accurate, that the photo was taken after 1952, but before 1956.

Carolyn Swift made a special appearance Saturday afternoon to sign her new book, *Images of America—Capitola*. Many visitors clustered around Carolyn to have their books personally signed by our retired museum director. She brought along her sidekick, Steve, an ever-faithful museum volunteer. Being married to Carolyn all these years has helped Steve with his historical facts about Capitola and he stepped right in to help greet the crowds that surrounded the booth.



Retired Museum Director, Carolyn Swift, came down on Saturday to sign her new Arcadia Book, *Images of America—Capitola*.

The weather cooperated and the weekend proved successful for the museum and proved once again that you can have a fine time mixing history with a little art and wine.



Capitola is special to many people in many different ways. It probably takes a certain passion to have 'Capitola' along with the Capitola Wharf tattooed to your stomach. This guy was really into it and he made a point to stop by and share his artistic history with us.



Volunteer Spotlight: Stephanie Harlan

Capitola Mayor and Museum Volunteer, Stephanie Harlan, has both politics and a passion for history in her genes. Her mother was a Todd, directly related to Mary Todd Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln's wife.

Born in Alameda, Stephanie ended up in Capitola after a journey that took her to Texas, Southern California and back to the Bay Area where she graduated from UC Berkeley in 1969 at the end of a turbulent decade.



Stephanie says; "I love the museum, the local history and meeting interesting people."

One of the most interesting people who Stephanie met while taking a shift at the museum was a lady who walked in one day and recognized the building itself. She told Stephanie that our museum used to be her

home. She was raised in the museum building and grew up in it when it was a private residence. This was before museum founder, Phil Walker, bought the structure and had it moved to Capitola from Live Oak.

When Stephanie is not volunteering or 'mayoring' she is a Telemetry Nurse at Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital where she has worked for 16 years. She has also been a teacher and she developed a love for the outdoors by spending two full years working for the Yosemite Park and Curry Company in her younger days.

Her love of the outdoors inspires Stephanie's vision for the future. She says, "I am looking forward to the development of the Sanctuary Scenic Trail, especially along the coastal route." The Capitola Museum is lucky to have Stephanie Harlan as a volunteer who gives us her time as time allows.



Don Ramie www.ramie.net

Capitola Museum has recently received generous donations from:

Ed Botorff	Dianne & Steven Burbank
Ted Burke	Carol Fuller
Dianne and Ron Graves	Winnie Johnson
Carol Matson	Paul Parsons
Barbara & Jim Reding	Ettamae Shaffer
Dorothy & Don Washam	

New Acquisitions:

Bonnie Cunningham

10th Annual Begonia Festival Program, circa 1962.

Dennis Norton

An authentic bathing suit from 1885.

Niels Henrik Carlsen og Herdis Vogl

Brass ink blotter set complete with ink well and blotter.

Thanks to the following volunteers who gave their time to keep the museum open during a very busy summer. You helped us set new visitor attendance records!

Bob Anderson

Joan Armstrong

Ron Beck

Marcia Biancalana

Al & Marion Carlson

Minna Hertel

Steve Kayser

Stephanie Kirby

Niels Kisling

Tom McGranahan

Joan McNair

John Nicol

Paul Parsons

Vicky Price

Harrison Pugh

David Shoaf

Linda Smith

Kathleen Sullivan

Gordon van Zuiden

Sandy Wadhams

Valerie Webb

Marilee White

Special thanks go out to Paul Parsons who came in on the Fourth of July and on Labor Day to open the museum to 139 additional visitors!

Published by the Capitola Historical Museum

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Museum Hours:

Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday 12 to 4 p.m.

Museum Curator: Frank Perry

Board of Trustees: Linda Smith (president), Bob Anderson (vice president), Tom McGranahan (treasurer), Stephanie Kirby (secretary), Gordon van Zuiden, David Shoaf, and Niels Kisling

Look for our new **Facebook Page** and **You Tube Channel** under:
Capitola Historical Museum
Participate in our video history quiz.