

# Capitola Sunset

NEWS, EVENTS & INFORMATION

CAPITOLA HISTORICAL MUSEUM

FALL 2021

*Providing a future for our past.*

## Capitola Festivals Create Sense of Community

By Dave Peyton

It took a village of volunteers to pull off a month's worth of Capitola festivals this past September. Hundreds of volunteers were required to fill the many positions that support and serve the thousands who attended the 38th Capitola Art & Wine Festival and, at the end of the month, the Capitola Beach Festival which featured a series of family focused events with the theme "Community Spirit." These large events, much like our beloved museum, depend on a cast of volunteers to be successful and sustainable. Each year, new volunteers join those who have long given their time, talent and treasure to help celebrate Capitola's unique character and welcome visitors to share our good weather and friendly vibe.

After a year-long hiatus, and approval from the City of Capitola to hold the festivals, organizers shifted into high gear to put together in a couple of months what usually takes a full year to implement. These festivals would not have happened if not for able leadership, a reliable format, and ready & willing volunteers to cover the many details needed to successfully offer the long-standing and popular events.

The two-day Art & Wine Festival, with nearly 100 artisans, a full slate of wineries from throughout the Santa Cruz region, and Saturday and Sunday afternoon music concerts requires nearly 400 volunteers, according to the host Capitola-Soquel Chamber of Commerce. These volunteers set up and break down booths and venues, assist arriving artists, operate token booths, serve wine, deliver material and supplies, keep streets and sidewalks clean, and many more behind-the-scenes jobs that help make the event successful.

This year, hopeful of attracting visitors from the huge crowds entering the festival from the parking lots adjacent to the museum, the museum set up outdoor exhibits in front of the museum. Curator Deborah Osterberg wandered the festival promoting the museum dressed in an 1880s bathing outfit complete with parasol. Her costume drew stares and comments giving Deborah a chance to introduce the museum to festival attendees.

A quick two weeks later, the museum was again ready to host visitors as crowds of mostly families moved past on their way to Beach Festival events. Displays and a pitch for museum volunteers greeted visitors. It seems that the museum isn't the only organization seeking volunteers, as both September festivals also faced a shortage of available volunteers because of Covid-19 restrictions and the resulting short time frame to get everything underway. Thankfully, strong leaders, longtime volunteers, and last minute first-timers rose to the challenge and made up for the temporary volunteer shortfall.

Volunteers from the museum were well represented at the Beach Festival. Curator Osterberg could again be seen in her 1880s bathing attire, and she also served as one of the honorary judges of the lighted nautical parade while board members Pam Greeninger, Joshua Henshaw, Dean Walker and I performed a variety of tasks during the two-day festival.



The festivals and their immediate need for volunteers has subsided, but the museum, open 10 months a year, is still facing a serious volunteer shortage. The museum has recently seen many long-time volunteers retire and the pandemic remains an impediment for other regular volunteers. For those who can see themselves spending a couple of hours a month chatting with visitors about Capitola and its' rich history, you might want to get in touch. It is said among those who know, that volunteering at the Capitola Historical Museum is one of the best volunteer gigs around.



One of the lighted floats reflects its image on Soquel Creek in the favorite lighted boat parade event presented on Saturday night.

## Does This Painting Look Familiar?



This painting by Harold Gustavas Peelor closely resembles the Cipriano Dodero painting that we have on permanent museum display at the Capitola Museum.

This wonderful painting of Capitola in 1892 was the work of Harold Gustavas Peelor. The subject matter and the artist's vantage point is nearly identical to the large 1889 Cipriano Dodero painting on permanent exhibition at the entrance to our museum.

The 35"x 55" Peelor painting belongs to Mrs. Margot Bauer. In July 2021, Mrs. Bauer invited the museum curator to come see the painting and related the story of how her family acquired it. "My grandfather (Sylvain Le Deit—pronounced "Day") lived in San Jose and had a glass company there. One of the first ones in San Jose. It was called the Deit Glass Company...he was quite an artist." He was indeed. Le Deit founded the one-man operation in 1909. It grew into a full-service glass company with over 60 employees. Le Deit designed and assembled beautiful art glass windows, stained glass insets and leaded glass panes for many private homes in the Bay Area. Le Deit also repaired existing stained glass and clerestory windows in numerous local churches. He even replaced windows in the rambling home of San Jose's famed Mrs. Sarah Winchester. The large glass facility located on Lenzen Avenue continued operations until 1968.



Le Deit was well known to his fellow artists.

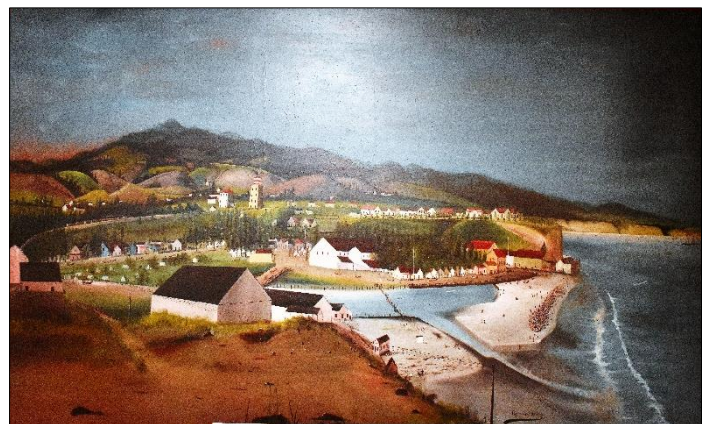
"...when the painters would come by, they would try to sell him paintings and stuff. And some of them, like Mr. Peelor, kind of ran out of money. So, my grandfather lent them money. And then if they couldn't pay it back in a certain amount of time, he was very good about, you know, not pushing them. So, they would offer him their paintings, and this was one of the paintings he was

offered and that took care of the debt. And that was back in the early 1900s...so, he accumulated quite a few paintings from the early artists."

Peelor, born in New York in 1856, was a resident of San Jose by 1880. He left school after the 4<sup>th</sup> grade and worked primarily as a sign painter. He also supposedly worked as a pastry man in a local bakery. Peelor was described as having a dark complexion, brown hair, and gray eyes. "He could often be seen sporting a straw skimmer and cigar and riding his bicycle through town with his painting gear in the basket on the handlebars." Peelor's artistic gift caught the attention of Sylvain Le Deit who hired him to assist in designing and assembling memorial stained-glass windows for churches. Peelor continued to paint landscapes, with some of his work displayed at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

An article in *The Inter Ocean*, related how California was represented at the exposition:

"...The California exhibit is by counties, a plan whereby residents of each locality were enabled to set forth the particular advantages of their abiding place. Santa Clara county may be taken as typical. Here...are displayed a collection of all the products of the county, not only material things, such as fruits and other products, but works of art. The location of the Lick observatory in Santa Clara County has led naturally to its prominence as a subject for illustration. Harold G. Peelor, of San Jose, has set forth the appearance of the observatory in a series of hand-painted plaques, which are of a high order of merit. As illustrative of the growth of art on the Pacific Coast this display is of particular interest. The subjects are as follows: Mount Hamilton and the observatory; Leland Stanford Jr. University, Palo Alto, Cal.; Hotel Vendome; Mission San Jose 1797; Old Carmel Mission near Monterey; Mission of San Diego, founded in 1769. As artistic productions these plaques are of excellence, equal to that displayed in the best paintings by coast artists displayed in the gallery of the building, and this is saying much."



This is the Dodero painting that is on permanent display at the museum. It was painted at the same angle and about the same time period as the Peelor Painting. Is this a coincidence?

(Peelor cont'd) The 83-year-old painter was living with his two maiden sisters in Milpitas at the time of his death on October 6, 1940.

Regarding Peelor's 1892 painting of Capitola, Mrs. Bauer said that "...as a little girl, [I] fell in love with this painting and always wanted it. And so, there was a time that my grandfather said you can have the painting now. So, I kept it in my homes. When I was a little kid, he drove me around in his car and showed me where Mr. Peelor sat at the cliff to make this painting. And that was very interesting to me. I can bring anyone over there and show you where the cliff is, and you'll see the same thing here. "

The similarities of the Peelor and the Dodero paintings are striking. Perhaps Peelor knew of the Dodero oil painting, which was commissioned by Capitola's founder, Frederick Augustus Hihn in honor of the resort's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Though it reportedly hung for a while at the Hotel Capitola, Hihn apparently rejected the work because of its primitive style. Dodero's painting became the property of Josef and Maria Averon, heirs of Martina Castro Lodge, grantee of Soquel and Soquel Augmentation Ranchos. The painting eventually wound up in the Lodge Mansion on Capitola Avenue. In 1970, Capitola Museum Director Phil Walker arranged for the purchase of the Dodero painting by the City of Capitola.

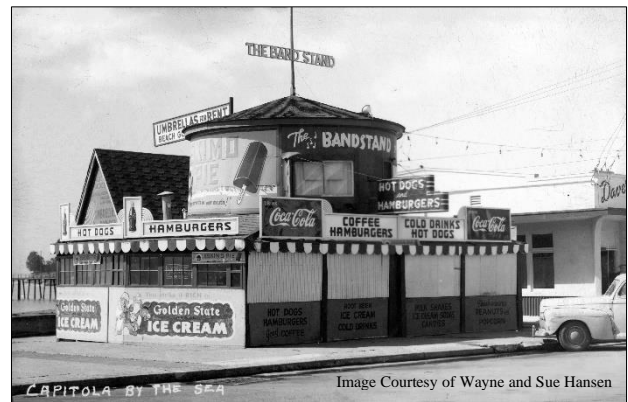
Both primitive style paintings provide a view of Capitola from the cliff above Soquel Creek. Peelor demonstrated a greater artistic complexity than Dodero. While the sky above Dodero's rendering of Capitola is dark blue with a few faint clouds, the sky in Peelor's painting is quite different. The sunlight illuminates what appear to be storm clouds and is reminiscent of the Hudson River School artists, who often used "...special lighting techniques to convey lofty emotions through contrasts of light and dark." Both paintings show tourists enjoying a day at the beach, though Peelor's depictions are more realistic and detailed. The two paintings include nearly all the same buildings and infrastructure with one notable exception. Can you tell what important structure (existing at the time and still here) is missing in the Dodero painting?

to take the photographs. A copy of the Peelor painting will be on display next to the Dodero painting at the Capitola Historical Museum as part of the 2022 exhibition which will focus on the variety of artistic renderings of Capitola over the years.

## The Bandstand Restaurant—More Than Just Fries and a Shake

By Niels Kisling

After buying the historic Capitola Bandstand, Babe Yakobovich opened a namesake restaurant there in 1946. Babe's Bandstand featured food that was honest grill food served from the best quality meats and freshest ingredients. His signature offerings eventually included steak sandwiches and Babe's Famous Fries. The legendary French Fries were made from thick cut steak fries, sliced in-house daily from fresh potatoes. They were deep fried in lamb's lard to a golden perfection.



Babe Yakobovich's Bandstand Restaurant in the pre-1960s. The restaurant was added onto around the original Capitola Bandstand. The building was replaced in the early 1960s.

For 29 years Babe cooked food that pleased residents and visitors to Capitola, and that pleased Babe as well. He proudly estimated that his Bandstand sold 100,000 steak sandwiches from 1955 to 1975. John Macdonald, with a real estate office in the village, enjoyed a close relationship with Yakobovich. Although not yet listed for sale, Macdonald knew that Yakobovich would sell his business to the right buyer.

From a different world, Wayne Hansen and his wife Sue made their living from the game of golf. Wayne was a golf pro at the La Rinconada Country Club in Los Gatos, and the couple owned a golf shop in San Jose.

Growing up here, Sue knew Santa Cruz and Capitola well. She graduated from Holy Cross High in 1947 and worked summer jobs at her father's Ideal Fish Restaurant. Located at the foot of the Santa Cruz Wharf, Sue's father Tom Edwards and partner Joe Olivieri would later rename the business, calling it Olivards.



Museum curator Deborah Osterberg and Margot Bauer (right) take a moment with the Peelor painting that Margot's grandfather acquired so many years ago.

This summer Mrs. Bauer kindly allowed the museum to take photographs of the Peelor painting. President of the Soquel Pioneer & Historical Association and retired professional photographer, Jim Hobbs, donated his time

(Bandstand cont'd) Wayne and Sue were thinking about an escape to a smaller town, and Capitola was a good fit. After renting a house on Riverview Drive, Wayne began daily walks in the village dreaming of a way to make a living for his family in Capitola.

In Wayne's own words, "I was looking to open a business in the village, any business." The stars aligned one day when Wayne and John Macdonald chatted. The Bandstand came up as potentially being for sale and a meeting between Wayne and Sue Hansen and Yakobovich was arranged for the next day.

According to Wayne, they were \$20,000 apart from Yakobovich's asking price. On the walk to the meeting in the village Sue convinced Wayne to simply pay the asking price. She said, "If we live here for 20 years, that \$20,000 will come back to us."

Wayne credits Sue for her pragmatic view and the meeting went well—so well in fact that the negotiation was concluded in less than an hour. August "Babe" Yakobovich felt so good that he offered up his best bottle of bourbon to seal the deal right there on the spot. A handshake concluded the meeting and a few days later the sales contract was signed by both parties.

In record time, and with the help of local handyman Bob Summerville, the Bandstand underwent a transformation from an 8-stool grill to a 46-seat, sit-down restaurant. To accommodate more customers Wayne and Bob spent weeks building heavy tables. The wood tabletops were lovingly distressed by hand and coated with a thick resin. Looking for a way to further enhance the atmosphere, Wayne found a mushroom grower that was getting rid of their old, well-used, redwood grow boxes. The ten-foot planks from the disassembled boxes gave the interior walls a charming, rustic feel. The same redwood planks were added as siding to the stucco exterior.

Everyone, including Babe, was delighted with the transformation. Wayne told me that, "Babe made the food famous, with me and Sue creating the new atmosphere. That, and the ability to serve more people brought it all together for us." Miraculously, just two months after the papers were signed, the new Bandstand opened on a Wednesday in February 1975.

Capitola was ready for this business model—the improved atmosphere and good, honest food made the new Bandstand an instant success. The first Saturday after their opening, they filled the restaurant in 15 minutes and a line continued out the door all night long. There was plenty of chaotic excitement in the kitchen that night. Wayne recalled, "I kept dreaming of all the money we'd be making while Sue kept pleading and calling out for more burgers, steak sandwiches and fries to keep up with the stream of customers."



Wayne and Sue Hansen's Bandstand Restaurant was an instant success from the first day they opened in February 1975. Their recipe for success was to keep the elements in place that worked for Babe Yakobovich and improve on the atmosphere and seating capacity.

Under new ownership with Wayne and Sue Hansen at the helm, The Bandstand was born again and better than ever.

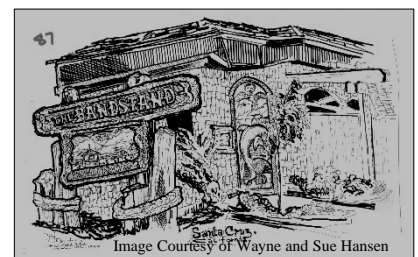
Babe and Wayne developed a special relationship, so special in fact, that Babe asked if he could return to cook for the restaurant. This worked out well for Wayne because Babe taught him what he knew while working for a restaurant wage. Babe was a proud man and I'm sure he knew that Wayne was at the receiving end of a good deal, but Babe was just happy to remain involved. This arrangement lasted more than three years with Babe taking the day shift and Wayne working nights.

As part of her contribution, Sue baked the best spice cake ever served in Capitola—a dessert that quickly became legendary like Babe's Steak Sandwich and Famous Fries.

Under new management some changes were bound to occur. For example, the tiny cup of ketchup for which Babe charged a penny was now free and unlimited. Other things, like Babe's Famous Fries, remained the same to preserve the established business model. Sue had a friend that sold them the meat and potatoes. Their supplier exclusively set aside the longest, best-looking potatoes to be fresh cut in house daily. Babe's Famous Fries lived on.

In 1978 Wayne was hospitalized for an infection. During his hospital stay and recovery, a whole new staff was trained to run the restaurant. Once Wayne recovered, he faced a tough reality of having to let the temporary staff go. Rather than taking away his temporary staff's jobs, Wayne decided to use them by opening another Bandstand restaurant on East Cliff Drive.

At first, Sue was reluctant to open another location, but Wayne convinced her that it was the right thing and Bandstand #2 opened in 1980. This location operated for five years with Wayne as the day cook. Bandstand #2 was sold in 1985.



(Bandstand cont'd) A few years later Wayne and Sue made the decision to sell the original Bandstand in Capitola. It sold in five days after putting it on the market.

This is a story of dreams being realized on a handshake with perfect timing. Good intentions allowed the stars to align for Wayne and Sue. These same stars aligned for the Yakobovich's who, after years of hard work, were rewarded both financially and emotionally by selling their business to good people.

When you come from a good place at the right time, the world usually looks out for you and your stars are often allowed to shine bright.

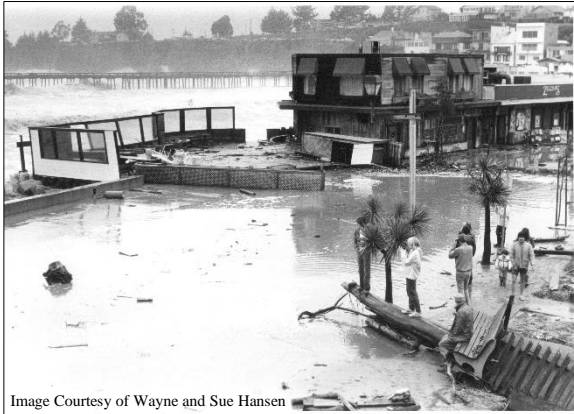


Image Courtesy of Wayne and Sue Hansen

The great Winter storm of January 1983 roared through The Esplanade damaging almost every business in its path. The Bandstand weathered the storm in good shape with hardly a scratch.

## David and Jeanne Macdonald Come Home

By Niels Kisling

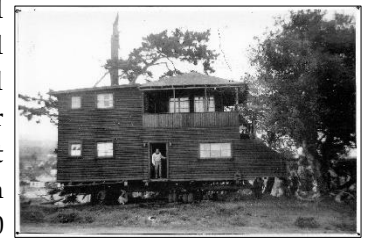
David and Jeanne Macdonald's roots run deep in Santa Cruz County, but their family tree has an incomplete branch.

Born and raised here by families with deep area roots, three generations of Macdonalds attended Soquel Elementary School—Papa Brad, David and David's son Damon. The early 1960s were quieter around Capitola and Soquel, with Papa Brad and David often riding their horses on the beaches between Seacliff and Twin Lakes.

Along with business partner Ed Phillipet, Brad Macdonald co-founded Shadowbrook Restaurant which opened in 1947. Brad was on the first Capitola City Council in 1949 and he went on to create the Saba Club & Caribbean Ballroom in 1953 with his father Jack as a business partner.

Their roots anchor a solid family tree, but that tree has an incomplete branch that beckoned David and Jeanne's return to Santa Cruz County for a recent visit from their home in Utah.

In the 1950s, Brad Macdonald's mother and father, Jack and Mabel, lived on Wharf Road near Shadowbrook in a house that Jack and Brad moved from the top of the property 300 feet down the street. Nearby, in a little house that still exists today, lived Mabel Macdonald's mother, Amy White.



Amy's branch on the Macdonald family tree stops with her. In 1873, as an infant, Amy was dropped off on the steps of Mission San Juan Bautista. David and Jeanne came home to Capitola last month hoping to learn more about Great Grandma Amy White and her yet-to-be-discovered family heritage.

Records at the mission were said to have existed just a few decades ago, but this year the trail went cold and Amy White's branch remains incomplete until another day.

David and Jeanne planned to spend a week in Santa Cruz County right next door to my house—the house that their grandparents lived in so many years ago.

It was a busy week for David and Jeanne researching family history, catching up with old friends, rediscovering old memories, experiencing the Capitola Beach Festival, and visiting our museum which honors their family's past.



David and Jeanne toast to a good visit. Dinner was at my house which was moved down the street from Shadowbrook in 1951. I like to say that at my house, the food is cheaper, and my view is better!

Earlier this summer I discovered three Macdonald scrapbooks held by the Museum of Art and History. I told David and Jeanne about this collection at MAH and they made plans to come see them along with a plan to visit Mission San Juan Bautista. The scrapbooks were assembled by Grandma Mabel Macdonald, and they contain newspaper clippings related to Macdonald family history from the mid-to-early 1900s. David and Jeanne had never seen the scrapbooks and they were delighted to lay eyes on them.

(Macdonald cont'd) The end of their week-long visit was punctuated by a very special tour of Shadowbrook Restaurant guided by owner Ted Burke. It was clear that Ted was honored to show off his business to the founder's family. They also got to meet the property owner (and head maintenance man), Michael Clark. Mike sold the restaurant part of the business to Ted in 1978. David and Jeanne were both impressed and humbled to see the thriving business that their Papa Brad and his wife Bea started over 70 years ago.



Ted Burke (middle) with David and Jeanne Macdonald during their visit to Shadowbrook. David's parents started it over 70 years ago.

Their last stop before heading home was a visit to the new Capitola Library. Ted Burke sent them down there to see the Brad Macdonald Conference Room that Ted named for David's father honoring Brad Macdonald as a business leader and a major contributor to Capitola's history.

David and Jeanne are proud to be part of a community that honors the memory and legacy of their family roots that run deep here in Capitola.



Image Courtesy of the Macdonald Family

This is an image of a festive dinner taking place in my home before it was moved down the street. LEFT to RIGHT: Bea Macdonald, Laura White, John Macdonald, Alice Macdonald, Amy White, Brad Macdonald, David Macdonald, Mabel Macdonald, Ed Phillipet, Virginia Phillipet and Irma Phillipet. Not pictured is the photographer, Jack Macdonald.



**Get your souvenir buttons and stickers while they last! Buttons are \$2.00 each or 4-for-\$5.00 suggested donation. Stickers are \$3.00 each or 2-for-\$5.00 suggested donation. Available at the museum.**

**The Capitola Museum has recently received generous donations from:**

Michael J. & Susan Austin	Margot Bauer
Steven & Diane Burbank	Tory Del Favero
Craig and Mimi French	Dianne Graves
Carin Hanna	Stephanie Harlan
Marvin Jensen	Lynn Lance
Susan B. Lynn	Ricki Mancebo
Joan Gilbert Martin	Paul and Judy Parsons
Barbara Reding	Emma and Mike Rock

**Recently, the following artifacts were generously donated to the Capitola Museum:**

The Mary Lee Lincoln Family donated the 1893 Santa Cruz High School graduation dress of their ancestor Mabel Agnes Lincoln. The ensemble includes Ms. Lincoln's silk bodice and petticoat, lace overskirt, embroidered overskirt, two belts, long gloves, and shoes. *Mabel A. Lincoln (1873-1963) was born in Boston, Massachusetts. She came to Santa Cruz when she was about 6 years old with her parents Orlando and Sarah. After graduating from Santa Cruz High School, she taught elementary school, mostly at the Laurel School. Mabel lived in downtown Santa Cruz until about 1910 when she moved out near Schwoann Lagoon to care for her aging parents. Mabel passed away at the age of 89 in 1963.*

Mr. Mark Pozzi donated a large, framed display of 87 individual portraits of Santa Cruz County Pioneers including Capitola's founder, Frederick Augustus Hihn.

Mr. Mees Wijnen donated a scan of 1906 postcard with hand drawing of Capitola Wharf.

Mrs. Margot Bauer allowed the museum to photograph her 1892 Harold Peelor painting of Capitola.

Capitola Sunset is published by:  
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**Museum Hours: Friday-Sunday Noon-4:P.M.**

Curator: Deborah Osterberg

Board Members: Niels Kisling (President), David Peyton (Vice President), Pam Greeninger (Secretary), Brian Legakis (Treasurer), Emmy Mitchell-Lynn, Dean Walker and Gordon van Zuiden  
 Museum Youth Board Member: Joshua Henshaw