

# Capitola Sunset

Spring 2017

CAPITOLA HISTORICAL MUSEUM

NEWS, EVENTS & INFORMATION

*"Providing a future for our past"*

## New Exhibition Opens March 25

"The Nature of Capitola" is the first ever exhibition at the Capitola Museum devoted entirely to the history of the town's natural features. There are displays about the beach, creek, birds, trees, seashells, fossils, and much more.



Capitola's history is closely linked to the region's natural resources. The town was founded in 1874 as a summer resort because of the beach—still Capitola's biggest attraction. The beach, in turn, formed due to a combination of geologic factors, including the shape of the coastline, the location of Soquel Creek and its valley, the supply of sand, and the movement of that sand by waves and currents. Without the beach, Capitola would never have been established as a campground and later as a town.

People have long found solace in the region's natural beauty. The poet Georgina Lecky described Capitola in 1897. Here is part of her poem, *To Camp Capitola*:

*I've roamed thru' every grove and dell  
where flora love to dwell,  
and strayed along its sandy beach  
to gather moss and shell.*

*I've clambered up the giddy heights  
to view the scenes around,  
and plucked the choicest roses  
that everywhere abound.*

In addition to unusual specimens and artifacts, historic photos and quotations are sprinkled throughout the exhibit. "Capitola has long been celebrated for its natural beauty," says Curator Frank Perry. "I hope that this exhibition will encourage people to be more aware of Capitola's natural wonders. There is a lot to see!"



Before Capitola was established as a resort, the Capitola Wharf was called Soquel Landing. It was a commercial wharf situated at the end of Soquel Wharf Road. Generations of visitors and locals enjoy fishing from the wharf.



Since the mid-1800s, generations of children have visited Capitola Beach, one of our greatest assets. Those children brought their children. Like today, visitors come to escape the heat, relax by the seashore and take in the beautiful views.

**The opening reception for "The Nature of Capitola" is Saturday, March 25, noon to 2 p.m. The exhibition runs through December.**

# Capitola Museum Loses Board Member... to City Council

By Stephanie Tetter

Kristen Petersen has been actively volunteering at the Capitola Museum since 2014, and she served on the museum board as our treasurer from early 2015 until her election to the Capitola City Council in November 2016.

She is a busy woman. She works full-time as a congressional aide in Congressman Jimmy Panetta's Santa Cruz office, serves as a member of the *Community Action Board of Santa Cruz County*, and has served as a volunteer for *Planned Parenthood Mar Monte*. She continues her work with the *Capitola Friends of the Library* in addition to her shifts at the museum.

If that weren't enough, following her graduation from CSUMB with a degree in Global Political Communication, she is now working on a Masters' Degree in Public Administration from CSU Northridge! (Yes, she has a LOT of energy!)

Kristen's great-grandparents, Walter and Lois Petersen, owned Petersen's Coffee Shop in the Village during the 60s and 70s, and her grandfather, Herb Ross, worked for the Capitola Police Department. With these deep roots in the community and her active participation in local activities, she was inspired to run for the Capitola City Council in November 2016. She was the top vote-getter, receiving more than twice as many votes as the nearest incumbent candidate!



Kristen is in the foreground with fellow board members during a light moment at the museum's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party. From left to right; Pam Greeninger, Stephanie Tetter and Kathleen Church.

As an elected official of the city, Kristen can no longer sit on the museum board (our loss is the council's gain), but she is continuing as an active volunteer. She sees the museum as an educational public space with a unique role to provide visitors to the museum opportunities to get acquainted with city history. She loves learning about local history, meeting visitors from out of town, and talking to people who have Capitola memories or enjoy sharing their personal history of Capitola.

Kristen's hobbies (seriously, how does she do it all?) include politics, collecting tattoos, playing the guitar and singing (including a previous stint in her mother's band, "The Room Shakers"). Her unique body art consists of several tattoos, all of them either in honor of her family members and/or representing her values and beliefs.

She is already deeply involved in her duties as a council member, having been assigned to various committees. She is working on a project to bring back Capitola's Youth Council which once served to give the city's youth a voice in city government. She welcomes input and feedback from everyone in the community, encouraging residents to take an interest in what is happening in Capitola by attending meetings and/or communicating with the council. You can email Kristen at [ladykpetersen@gmail.com](mailto:ladykpetersen@gmail.com) or catch her during one of her shifts at the museum!!

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

Capitola Hotel	Al DaDalt
Rickey Feldner	Marvin Jensen
Kathleen King	Lynn Lance
Molly & Mickey Ording	Joe & Gayle Ortiz
Paul Parsons	Karen Ruland
Jerry & Robynn Walters	Yvonne Zannis

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

Jeff Canepa: Scans of photographs  
Richard Emigh: Book  
Ron Graves: Scans of photos and clippings  
Warren Kossub: Photographs and map  
Bruce McPherson: Scans of photo and booklet  
Rick Messina: Capitola booklet, 1952  
Karen Nevis: Paintings of Capitola  
John Nicol: Photograph  
Santa Cruz Museum of Natural History: postcards

**Thank you to all of our great volunteers for staffing the museum and contributing at special events. Volunteerism is your gift to the community.**



Capitola appears to be ready to bust out into spring under sunny skies while large, dark winter clouds loom overhead. This image was taken on March 6.

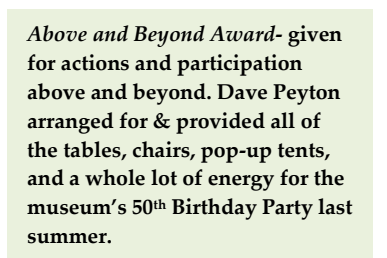
# Volunteer Orientation

Each year before the soft opening of our exhibition, Frank Perry puts together a short program for the volunteers to get them oriented with the next exhibit. The museum board hosted this orientation for a few dozen volunteers on February 25.

Before the presentation we honored some of our volunteers with special recognition certificates. All volunteers were honored for their participation last year.



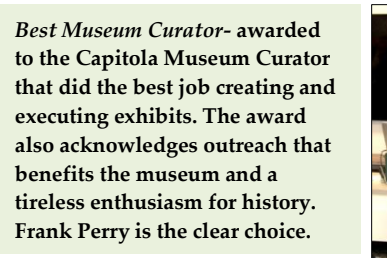
**Top 5 Outstanding Volunteers-** awarded to the five volunteers taking the most shifts during last year's exhibit. Pictured here are John Nicol and Paul Parsons. Dave Peyton, Kathleen Church and Georgette Neal are also Top 5 Outstanding Volunteers.



**Above and Beyond Award-** given for actions and participation above and beyond. Dave Peyton arranged for & provided all of the tables, chairs, pop-up tents, and a whole lot of energy for the museum's 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party last summer.



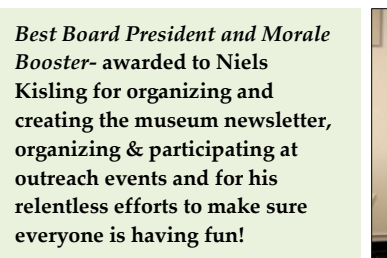
**Outreach Award-** given to the volunteers who gave extra time at off-site events. This was presented to Deborah Lorber, Kathleen Church and Stephanie Tetter for their help picking begonias in Marina and helping at the Begonias-to-Go event.



**Best Museum Curator-** awarded to the Capitola Museum Curator that did the best job creating and executing exhibits. The award also acknowledges outreach that benefits the museum and a tireless enthusiasm for history. Frank Perry is the clear choice.



**Enthusiasm Award-** clearly Georgette Neal is the best choice, having been recognized as a Top 5 Volunteer and giving extra time to off-site museum events like our Begonias-to-Go. She also enthusiastically interviewed for her board position last month.



**Best Board President and Morale Booster-** awarded to Niels Kisling for organizing and creating the museum newsletter, organizing & participating at outreach events and for his relentless efforts to make sure everyone is having fun!



**Most Ambitious Volunteer-** awarded to Kristen Petersen for her desire to answer a greater calling by running for, and winning, a seat on the Capitola City Council. Along with a very full life, she continues to be a valued museum volunteer.

There were two volunteers who could not attend the volunteer orientation to receive their awards.

Pam Greeninger is recognized for *Outstanding Fundraiser/Party Planner* for her efforts to help plan and organize Capitola Museum's 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party. Pam also arranged for our participation in Shadowbrook's Community Night where we raised almost \$600 for the Capitola Museum.

Gordon van Zuiden is recognized for *Best Museum Presentation* for his off-site Ole Ravnos presentations at the 2nd Santa Cruz History Fair and at the Capitola Museum Volunteer Appreciation event held last summer at Stephanie Harlan's house.

Light refreshments were served at the morning orientation. Coffee, tea, cheese and crackers with a veggie plate, and best of all, home baked cakes and *chocolate covered butter death bars* were organized and created by Stephanie Tetter, Deborah Lorber and Kathleen Church.

The volunteers all enjoyed being recognized, well-fed and well-oriented by Frank Perry and the Capitola Museum Board.

## Capitola Begonia Festival Courtesy of the Begonia Festival Committee



The 2017 Begonia Festival returns for its 65th annual and final festival on September 1-4. The Begonia Festival celebrates the begonia growing and water festival history of Capitola. The brilliant begonias remain the festival's focal point even as the number of additional festival events

has blossomed. The "gem" of the festival is the Nautical Parade of begonia covered floating barges, highlighted by the arrival of millions of begonia blossoms. Nearly every Capitola resident has memories of building a float, picking begonias, or watching the parade.

Begonias once grew in Capitola. In the mid 1970's, the growing fields moved to Marina and Brown Ranch Begonias, now known as Golden State Bulb Growers, continued to be the generous and now singular source of flowers for the festival.



Golden State Bulb is retiring from the business of growing begonias. They have, however, agreed to partner with the Begonia Festival Committee to grow begonias one last year for the 65th annual and final festival.



A goal of the Begonia Festival Committee is to memorialize how this long standing special event touched the lives of so many in our community. As such, a "Gratitude Gala" is being planned for October. Festival organizers are seeking memories of written word, photographs, or both to share during the gala event. The festival committee is also interested in identifying those who have a desire to be invited to the Gratitude Gala.



If you have memories to share (please send copies or electronic files only—we are unable to return photos) and/or a desire to join the gala, please provide us with your name, address, phone and email. Please e-mail us at [begoniafestival@gmail.com](mailto:begoniafestival@gmail.com) or direct mail to Capitola Begonia Festival, P.O. Box 501, Capitola, CA 95010. Please submit information no later than May 1, 2017.

The Festival Committee and Golden State Bulb encourage all who have been a part of the Begonia Festival for the last six decades to come out in September, share your memories, and celebrate the end of a long time Capitola community tradition.



## Volunteers Make It Happen

By Niels Kisling

It takes two volunteers each day we are open to run the museum, and we need you.

"Volunteering at the museum is one of the easiest volunteer activities I do," says Dave Peyton. "I open the doors and for the next two hours I get to meet some of the coolest people while hanging out in the coolest museum in Capitola."

Our volunteers open the museum on the first shift from noon-2 p.m., or they close the museum at the end of the second shift from 2-4 p.m. During your two hour shift you greet and interact with visitors.

We have no minimum time service requirement. Some volunteers give two hours a month, some give two hours a week and some give much more. It's up to you.

You don't have to be a history expert either—all of the answers are usually in the captions of the exhibit. Some questions are asked so frequently, the answers become second nature.

The best way to see what we do is to visit the museum during open hours, Thursday to Sunday, Noon-4 p.m. Meet the volunteer on duty and see if this might be a fit for you. There's a volunteer brochure at the desk for more information on how to sign up.

This year, Dave Peyton, has volunteered to mentor new volunteers. You will not be alone as you begin your experience volunteering for the Capitola Museum.

Give us a try. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain! E-mail Niels Kisling at [nkisling@pacbell.net](mailto:nkisling@pacbell.net).

# Capitola Memories Project

By Niels Kisling

For the past few years the Capitola Museum has been accumulating interviews with citizens of Capitola and Santa Cruz County who have a story to tell about our past. Most are 'old timers' who have been associated with our town for a long time. Several have been here for a few generations and give us a unique snapshot of what Capitola was like in the pre-1900s.

The Capitola Memories Project is a series of interviews captured on video by Kathy D'Angelo of VisualContact at the direction of Frank Perry. The videos are now available in the public domain on YouTube. This allows everyone—even those not born yet—instant access to these historically important snippets for generations to come.

**YouTube 101**—For those (of us) who may be technologically challenged (old), here is a brief description of how to find these videos on YouTube. First, search on your Internet Browser (Google, Yahoo, Firefox, AOL, Safari) for [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), or simply use the words 'YouTube.' Once you are on the YouTube website, simply search for 'Capitola Historical Museum.' Our site, called a channel, will be at the top of the list. Click on the picture of the museum and all of our videos will be there!

## Dick Arthur

The actual web address is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x3gZTBIChVY>

## Jerry Clarke

The actual web address is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8T8VjcZJ6LE>

## Ron Graves

The actual web address is:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83U7-K\\_0W3A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=83U7-K_0W3A)

## Tom King

The actual web address is:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ubVqM947T\\_A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ubVqM947T_A)

## Steve Lawton

The actual web address is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o77CNpRRv-8>

## Ted Maddock

The actual web address is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CItG0Ls6jHM>

## Barbara Reding

The actual web address is:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3HUPEL2cJ\\_8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3HUPEL2cJ_8)

## Jo Jo Urbancic

The actual web address is:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r69QCKZb9n4>

## Venetian Court (Skipper Nurre & Rosemary Shaffer)

The actual web address is:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G97\\_r46iH\\_8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G97_r46iH_8)

There are ten videos in the Capitola Memories Project series (so far). There will be more. Kathy D'Angelo painstakingly uploaded these videos to YouTube—a feat in itself.

I had the pleasure interviewing Jo Jo Urbancic. Even though I have known him for 45 years, I quickly discovered that I didn't really 'know him.' His story is good and for me, it captures why I love to live in Capitola. Our tight sense of community clearly comes out in the story Jo Jo tells.



The people of Capitola quickly embraced Jo Jo when he arrived here to live permanently in June of 1961. He came to Capitola with basically nothing but a high school degree from Balboa High School and the clothes on his back. Moving away from his family in San Francisco, Jo Jo was familiar with Capitola, having come here with them since the

1950s. According to Jo Jo, for a month after his arrival he slept under boats, in storage sheds and here & there. He was quickly accepted by our community, and Capitolans have never stopped loving him and helping him to provide for himself.

His huge heart and inspirational soul come out strongly in the interview. The rest of his story, as they say, is history that you will have to experience for yourself by watching the Jo Jo Urbancic interview, now part of the Capitola Memories Project.



## A Volunteer's Journey

Georgette Neal came to Santa Cruz County in 1964 and graduated from Santa Cruz High School a few years later. After traveling the United States and Europe, she attended Cabrillo College and graduated from UCSC in 1978.

With a career as a paralegal, she raised her family in the Bay Area and moved back to Santa Cruz County in 2011 to retire. In her own words, she says, "I came back to Santa Cruz to rediscover the history of my youth."

Her first self-appointed volunteer position was providing companionship and caring for a former high school journalism teacher, and former water department official. Both suffered from dementia. Both had contagious fervor for local history and Georgette caught the history bug.

After their passing, part of Georgette's healing process was walking through Capitola Village, along the creek and to the end of the wharf—a ritual she continues today. Her walks took her past the Capitola Museum and she was always intrigued by the façade as it captured her attention.



Her association with the museum began last April at a meeting for *Vision Capitola*. She visited the museum display at the meeting and discovered our volunteer recruitment brochure, soon joining the ranks of volunteers for the Capitola Museum in May 2016. It didn't take long for her to realize that she had really found something worth her time—the museum seems to fit her calling well.

And, it didn't take long for the museum to discover that we had someone special among the ranks of our newest volunteers.

Georgette's arrival last year was timely for curator Frank Perry. As the Programs Officer for the Santa Cruz Bird Club, the museum has taken advantage of her knowledge in ornithology as we prepared the current exhibit centered around, and titled, "The Nature of Capitola."

Georgette is also a voracious reader and has now consumed dozens of local history books from the museum's book collection. She and recent board appointee Dave Peyton are said to be having a reading contest to see who gets through all of the hundreds of books in our collection first. We will keep you posted.

With deep roots in our community, Georgette doubled-down last month on her commitment to Capitola and to the museum by applying for, and being chosen, to serve as a Capitola Museum Trustee. About her appointment, she says, "I look forward to involving the young in the wealth of what has made our beautiful community what it is, and the ways in which we can build on it."

It is safe to say that the public will be well-served by Georgette Neal. And, we are confident that the Capitola Museum will be able to hold her attention as the history bug tightens its grasp on her.



People watch the water activities from the Stockton Bridge (made of wood). The bath house is in the background. Swimming and seasonal water activities in the creek were more popular back when it was both deeper and cleaner than it is today.

Capitola Sunset is published by:

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Curator: Frank Perry

Board Members: Niels Kisling (President), Stephanie Tetter (Vice President), Pam Greeninger (Secretary), Kathleen Church (Treasurer), Georgette Neal, David Peyton & Gordon van Zuiden