

Capitola Sunset

Summer 2014

CAPITOLA HISTORICAL MUSEUM

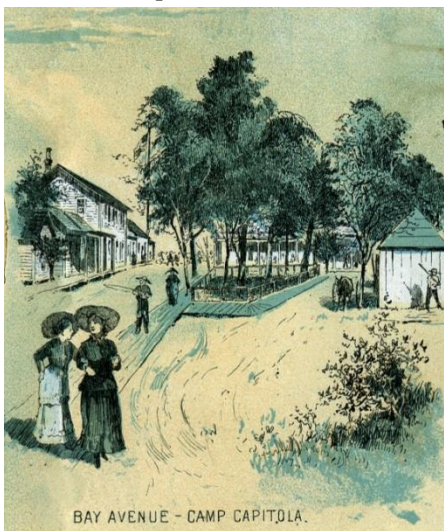
NEWS, EVENTS & INFORMATION

"Providing a future for our past"

Can you direct me to Fairview?

By Frank Perry

In doing research on Capitola history, one quickly discovers many oddities. It is almost as though someone in the distant past was purposely trying to confuse future historians. Take, for example, street names. Now one would think, given the infinite possibilities for names, that there would be no need to duplicate names in a small town like Capitola. Alas, this is not the case.



People are seen strolling at the bottom end of Bay Avenue in this early image. If you were walking there today, you would be walking on Monterey Avenue. Even the name of the town has changed through the years. First it was Camp Capitola, then Capitola, then Capitola-By-The-Sea, then just Capitola again.

A 1922 map of Capitola provides several examples. There are two Prospect Avenues, one on the west side (still there), and one to the east on Depot Hill (fortunately changed from Prospect to El Salto Drive). Even today, there is both a Cliff Drive (on the west side) and a Cliff Avenue (on the east side).

Camp Fairview was an early name for what is now the Jewel Box neighborhood, and it still appears on the 1922 map. Fairview Avenue, however, was not in Fairview. It was (and still is) on Depot Hill.

Then there are the name changes. What is now Monterey Avenue in The Village was Bay Avenue. This is not to be confused with Bay Front, which is now Esplanade, also known as The Esplanade, and Escalona Drive was once Railroad Avenue.

The Depot Hill neighborhood was originally called Capitola Park according to historian Carolyn Swift. Not until the very early 1900s, after a new railroad depot was constructed, did it become known as Depot Hill.

Old maps, especially ones of proposed subdivisions, while fascinating, can also be misleading. In reality, they did not always reflect reality. One shows Stockton Avenue as Fairview Avenue. But earlier maps and later ones show it as Stockton. Fairview was probably a proposed name that didn't stick. It's a good thing; two Fairviews in the town's history are plenty.

Open Streets Capitola

The Capitola Museum 'baseball team' showed up in full uniform on May 4 for the first Open Streets Capitola event. Volunteers dressed in very convincing baseball attire, circulating among the crowd promoting our new exhibit honoring Harry Hooper.

Stephanie Kirby is responsible for the idea to dress in the uniforms, which were a big hit. Museum trustee Tom McGranahan chose wooden baseball bat pens for a giveaway that fit the day's theme well. The baseball players and the museum exhibit in the village ended up being a Grand Slam for the Capitola Museum.



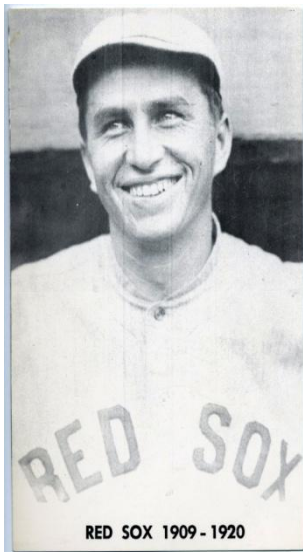
Baseball players include, left to right; Jill Beede, Ron Beck, Tom McGranahan, Sandy Wadhams with granddaughter Abby, Linda Smith and Niels "Babe Ruth" Kisling. Not pictured is Patti Bradley. Head Coach, Stephanie Kirby, appears in the center background.

Hoop-Hoop-Hoopla for Hooper

By Stephanie Kirby

On March 22nd the Capitola Historical Museum held a Grand Opening Celebration for its new exhibition "Take Me Out to Capitola—The Life and Times of Harry Hooper." The exhibit, designed and installed by Museum Curator Frank Perry, features Harry Hooper, a Hall of Fame baseball player who lived in Capitola for almost 60 years and played a major role in the community's development.

The reception was attended by many of Hooper's descendants from near and far: grandchildren, great-grandchildren, even a sprinkling of great-great grandchildren! Great-grandson Kevin Hooper came from Overland Park, Kansas. During the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Harry's daughter-in-law, Christine Hooper, and Kevin Hooper cut the ribbon to unwrap the exhibit.



Greg Piini attended the Grand Opening Celebration. As seen here, he bears a fairly strong resemblance to his great grandfather, Harry Hooper. At last count, more than 15 Hooper descendants attended the opening for, "Take me out to Capitola—The Life and Times of Harry Hooper."

Christine and her daughter, Donna Hooper Danza, both live locally and provided family photographs used in the displays. Both were open and eager to answer many questions and to help sort out who was who!

Guests enjoyed the discussions, the reminiscences and the refreshments. Locals, Ross Gibson and Katie McKee, performed the song "Hoop Hoop Hooper Up for Red Sox," written in 1915, and the audience sang boldly along with the help of printed lyrics.

Paul Zingg, the author of a book about Hooper, and local historian Geoffrey Dunn, who loaned the Museum some of the items for the exhibit, were also in attendance and added their expertise to the gathering.

It was universally agreed that Harry was quite the guy and has made his family proud, not to mention being the star subject of the gathering. The museum would like to thank all who participated and contributed to a very enjoyable and enlightening reception.



The people in this photo are, left to right, historian and musician Ross Gibson; Harry Hooper biographer Paul Zingg; Paul's wife, Yasuko; Christine Hooper (Harry Hooper's daughter-in-law); and Museum Curator Frank Perry. *Contributed photo Mary Lee*

Head's Up/Foot Down for Walking Tour

On Sunday, July 20, 9:30 to 11:00 a.m., Museum Curator Frank Perry will lead a historical walking tour titled: "Harry Hooper's Capitola." Participants will visit historic sites around the village that have links to Harry Hooper and learn some of the ways that he shaped Capitola's history. The walk is less than a mile but involves climbing stairs. Space is limited, so please register in advance to participate.

Email capitolamuseum@gmail.com or call 831-464-0322 and leave your name and phone number.

Wharf Heroics

By Carolyn Swift

One morning in November, 1913, Alberto Gibelli was startled awake by the rhythmic thudding of breakers pounding the Capitola wharf. Powerful rollers slammed the length of the pier, ran into the fishing village, through the esplanade concessions, and up the streets toward Capitola Avenue.

The 54-year-old fisherman immediately set out to pull boats and gear to safety. All at once the pilings swayed and his companions yelled for him to run. The pier sagged and two hundred feet came smashing down with a thunderous crunch. Stranded on the ocean end and drenched by the waves, Gibelli "calmly flirted with death," according to news reports.

(continued on next page)

(Carolyn Swift continued)

Such courage was nothing new for him. A native of Genoa, Italy, he was fishing near San Francisco one day in 1901 when he heard cries for help. First on the scene to aid a sinking ship, he plucked twenty-four passengers from the rigging. Rewarded for saving their lives, Gibelli became "The Hero of the *Rio de Janeiro*."



This image from 1913 shows the debris that ended up on the beach and the broken Capitola Wharf in the background.

On the Capitola pier a dozen years later, he remained steady as other heroes were called on to rescue him. At some point that long morning, Boston Red Sox baseball star and Capitola and local champion Harry Hooper came forward. With a degree in engineering, Hooper measured the odds of throwing out a baseball attached to a life-line. The force of the storm was too rough, he knew. Gibelli would not be reached with the strongest pitch. Everyone waited. Finally, around noon, Santa Cruz fisherman Giacomo Stagnaro was able to get his boat near enough to toss Gibelli a line.

Attached was a life preserver. Gibelli put it on, tied the rope around his arms, took a deep breath, and leapt into the waves. Seeing their man drop like a sinker, rescuers on the other end reeled as fast as their arms could pull. Several tense moments passed before Gibelli popped up "as calm as a cucumber," evidently none the worse for wear. He was "the least ruffled of anyone in the crowd."

Capitola Self-Guided Tour of Public Art & Historic Sites

By Gordon van Zuiden

Capitola has its own iPhone app! The free Capitola self-guided tour of its public art and historic sites was launched to the public at the Capitola street fair in early May.

With the embedded Google Maps of the Capitola village, you can stroll through downtown Capitola to learn about the public art in and around the town as well as visit Capitola's historic sites. A red or purple pin designates the exact location of a public art or historic site.

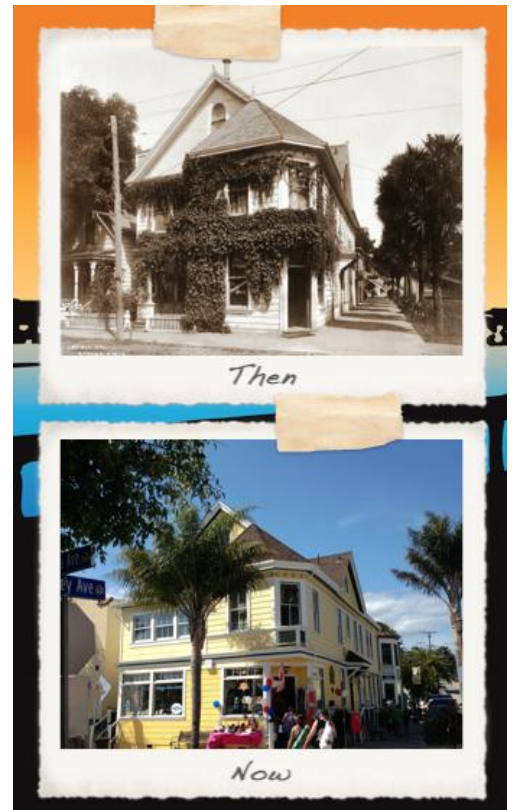
Once you are at one of the historic sites you can view the historic image of that site on your iPhone or iPad and read the narrative that describes the location as it existed at the beginning of the 20th century. Best of all, you can raise your iPhone or iPad and view the street scene image you see today super-imposed on the image of yesteryear via the camera lens built into your Apple device. Line up the image that existed over 100 years ago with today's view and get a perfect "then and now" rendition of the scene at your location. Think of this location as an "App Moment" instead of a "Kodak Moment." These locations around the village will bring Capitola's yesteryears into today's landscape and give you a unique perspective on how the town has changed over the last century.

Once you have snapped your "Then and Now" photo you can share it with friends via email or print it for your own historic photo collection—the perfect way to share and preserve your excitement for the history of our unique coastal resort town.

The application has information for over 40 artworks and sites—with a drop pin associated for each site.

With an internet connection, you can access links to a schedule of cultural events in Capitola.

Download your free Self Guided Capitola App today and get some healthy exercise walking around town and learn first-hand about Capitola's colorful history and cultural art displays. And be sure to tell your friends to download this application on their iPhones!



Make a difference in your community by volunteering. The museum needs volunteer docents to keep the doors open Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Our contact information appears on the back page.

Volunteer Spotlight— Gordon van Zuiden

By Niels Kisling



Gordon van Zuiden's fascination with Capitola history began in the early 1990s on Fanmar Way. He and his wife had just purchased a vacation home on Fanmar that displayed some unusual characteristics, and Gordon just had to know why.

His investigations led him to discover that their new house was a Sears kit home, purchased from the Sears catalog in 1929. These were sold from 1906 to 1940, and their kit home cost around \$200 when it was assembled on Fanmar Way back in 1930.

This triggered a deeper interest in Capitola's history, and in the mid-1990s Gordon discovered the Capitola Museum and Carolyn Swift. Carolyn introduced Gordon to her book co-written with Sandy Lydon called, *Soquel Landing to Capitola-by-the-Sea*.

Gordon says, "Carolyn's enthusiasm sparked the flame for me. If I'd gone to any other museum, I might not have gotten so into the town's history."

From an extensive collection of Gordon's Capitola images, he and Carolyn Swift went on to publish the book, *The Grand Hotel Capitola*, and he keeps talking about another book he'd like to produce someday featuring his favorite Capitola photographer, Ole Ravnos.

Gordon's interest in historical images and technology led him to an idea for the creation of a historical app for Capitola. He researched his idea and found a similar app created for Tulsa, Oklahoma called *Then and Now*.

In conjunction with the Capitola Art and Cultural Commission, and a lot of support from Linda Smith, Capitola's *Then and Now* app was just released last month. Gordon says, "This app brings history to life and that is what makes history interesting for me. History crosses all generations and boundaries."

Gordon, not unlike other museum trustees, is on a mission to leave Capitola's history out in the open where future generations can clearly see where we came from.

Clockwise from left to right: 1946 Ford Super Deluxe, 1959 Desoto "Firesweep," 1960 Chevrolet Impala, 1970 Plymouth Roadrunner

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

Leslie Newcomb: Collection of historic newspaper clippings, photos, and memorabilia

Geoffrey Dunn: Audio recording of Harry Hooper
Mary Lee Lincoln via her daughter, Janet L. Rupp: Medicine bag and gloves that belonged to the Lincoln family of Live Oak.

Karen Nevis: Syllabus from Sandy Lydon's Santa Cruz County history class

John Nicol: Photo of train and photo of old Capitola

Susan Westman: Photos of the Rispin Mansion

Cynthia Mathews: Venetian Court photos

Carolyn Swift: Military pin

Capitola Museum has recently received generous donations from:

Dori and Bruce Arthur

Emil Edgren

Craig French

Carin and Glenn Hanna

Marvin Jensen

Jed & Helen Myall

Ettamae Shaffer

Stan and Carly Stevens

Dianne & Steven Burbank

Rick Feldner

Carol Fuller

Christine Hooper

Betty Mello

Paul Parsons

Topsy Smalley

CAR QUIZ: From the recent Capitola Rod and Custom Car Show, identify the following automobile makes and model years. Answers are at the bottom of the page.



Published by the Capitola Historical Museum

410 Capitola Ave., Capitola, CA 95010

Website: www.capitolamuseum.org

Email: capitolamuseum@gmail.com

Phone: 831.464.0322

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