

Capitola Sunset

CAPITOLA HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Fall 2012

NEWS, EVENTS & INFORMATION

Begonias-To-Go: *If you pick them, they will come!*

For the 60th Anniversary of Capitola's Begonia Festival, the Capitola Museum hosted their annual Sunday event, Begonias-to-go, head-to-toe. Museum volunteer Steve Swift headed out early to the begonia fields in Seaside. He filled Board President, Linda Smith's pick up truck with 200 flats of fresh picked begonia blossoms of all varieties and colors.

The Brown Bulb Ranch donates the blossoms each year. They need to be picked before fall sets in so the begonia bulbs go dormant and return next year stronger than ever.



These ladies have been coming to the Begonia Festival for many years. According to her son, his 94-year old mother lives for the museum-hosted, Begonias-to-go event. She is assisted here by her daughter-in-law.

After hosting this event for many years in a row, we are starting to see the same families showing up again and again. Children are growing up with this event and many kids bring their cousins and friends to participate.

Others simply stumble upon the event and are delightfully surprised. Everyone agrees that Begonias-to-go is a wonderful way to 'show off your colors' and immerse yourself into our tight, little community. The smiles speak for themselves.

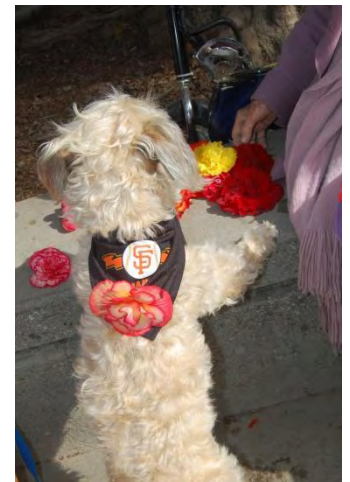
The choices are difficult—did they want the lace begonia, or a double ruffled picotee? Would they tie them to a hat, a baby's stroller, bicycle, scooter, or the dog's collar?



Families come together to decorate and the smiles linger long after the begonia blossoms are gone. Museum volunteer, David Shoaf, is a wonderful 'begonia decorating coach' and he is pictured in the background (blue shirt) along with this group.

By noon on Sunday, the entire lot of flowers had disappeared into the crowd. Colorful hats, decorated dogs and extra-fancy baby strollers were seen wandering throughout the village all afternoon.

Extra thanks are extended to Julia Garcia for helping us again this year. Our newest board member, Stephanie Kirby brought along her husband Dennis who dove right into the action. Thanks also to all the Capitola Museum Volunteers who make-it-happen each year.



Frank Hill's Soquel Post Office Murals

By Niels Kisling

Wouldn't it be fun to be a cartoonist or an illustrator? Frank Hill of Soquel thinks it is. Of course he has the talent needed for the job. After attending and then instructing at the Academy of Art in San Francisco, Frank went on to begin an illustrious career that continues to this day. He has worked with many well-recognized cartoons including; *Bugs Bunny*, *Betty Boop*, *Yogi Bear*, *Felix the Cat*, *Tom and Jerry*, *The Flintstones*, *The Jetsons* and *Pink Panther* to name a few.

He was associated with Hal Ketchum off and on for over 30 years providing scripts and drawings for the Dennis the Menace cartoon series. Frank took over the syndicated cartoon, *Short Ribs*, in 1973 after its creator, Frank O'Neal, retired. Frank Hill's *Short Ribs* appeared in thousands of newspapers around the world for the next eight years.

One day back in 1985, Frank Hill was at the Soquel Post Office where the postmistress knew him well. She suggested that he fill the blank walls above the post boxes with a mural of Soquel. Their first thoughts were to create a diorama depicting Soquel history, but she and Frank decided that might be too structured, too tedious and might exclude too many historical events.

The Soquel Postmistress ended up hiring Frank to simply decorate the walls above the post boxes. He had no deadline to meet and no artistic restriction—it was a dream job for this cartoonist/illustrator.



Two of Frank Hill's murals are pictured above. The first Soquel Elementary School is pictured on the left. 'Cock-eyed Charley' Parkhurst is seen driving his stage coach on the right.

Frank began his project at the post office with historical images of Soquel in mind. He preferred to work on the project in the evenings when no one was around, but still, people popped-in occasionally and offered him historical tidbits and creative ideas. Soquel resident Lee Blair, a top illustrator for Walt Disney, enjoyed keeping Frank company and they soon became close friends. Frank says that he learned a lot from Lee and they went on to collaborate on several television commercials.

Most of Frank Hill's inspiration for the project came from within, from history books and from Santa Cruz Sentinel archives. Other ideas came from Frank's vast local knowledge—his family came here when he was just six years old. Most Soquel citizens know about the legend of stagecoach driver, 'Cock-Eyed Charley' Parkhurst.

After Charley died, it was discovered that he was a she. In 1868, as a result of Charley's biological secret, she became the first female registered to vote in California. There is a plaque at the Soquel Fire Station stating that—right on that same spot, (where the Park-House hotel once stood), Charley Parkhurst became the first woman to vote in California. Frank honored 'Cock-Eyed Charley' by painting a mural of her driving her signature stagecoach.

Frank also told me that one of his murals depicts a rumored house of ill repute. Frank slyly smiles when he says, "I think a bar should get that one to put on display."

Frank is very pleased that the Capitola Museum has taken on the task of trying to save his murals. The museum hopes to frame the most historically significant murals and place them on loan, where they can be viewed and enjoyed by many. As the murals are transformed, Museum board members will be seeking partners within the local business community willing to display the images.

President's Note

By Linda Smith

When the Capitola Museum received the Frank Hill murals, they were still attached to the studs and header boards, where the dry wall had been when Frank painted them almost 20 years ago. Knowing that the task would be daunting, we set out to sequester the images so that preservation for public display could be investigated.

With the help of Paul Parsons of the Soquel Pioneers, and the Capitola Art & Cultural Commission, we have developed a preliminary plan to transform some of the images so that they can continue to tell the story of our past.

The murals are a challenging opportunity for the museum in that the images are large, and cannot be displayed within the confines of our exhibit. Transforming the images into framed caricatures will enable us to find appropriate display locations throughout the community.

Everyone will be able to enjoy the stories they tell.

A Fine Time Mixing History and Wine

After a hectic weekend of volunteering at the 60th Annual Capitola Begonia Festival, museum volunteers Steve Swift and David Shoaf dug even deeper to volunteer at the Art and Wine Festival. Both David and Steve had put in many volunteer hours the previous weekend.

We all had a blast representing The Capitola Museum and showing off our stuff. As usual, the Capitola Chamber of Commerce provided the museum with a display table under the palm tree where we could 'beat our history drum,' telling visitors who we are and what we do.

Through an accidental collaboration between Carolyn Swift and museum volunteer, Niels Kisling, an excellent interactive history display was born. For lack of a better name, we called it "Become Your Own Historian."

It was accidentally created because Niels and Carolyn went through our storage archive the day before looking for cool, old stuff to show off. Carolyn found an aerial photograph taken the late 1950s and knew at once it would be a crowd pleaser. The thought of making a game out of the picture came to Niels very early Saturday morning and he put it together hours before the festival.

The game featured the historical photograph, shot from the air and facing west. The image spans Capitola from the Venetians and lagoon in the lower right hand corner with 41st Avenue running through the center. Live Oak with 7th Avenue is seen at the top of the photo.

The object of the game was to guess the year the shot was taken. In addition, festival goers were encouraged to add a sticky-note to the photo identifying a key feature like their house, (or, in many cases, the lack of their house) or any other significant features.



Museum Volunteer, David Shoaf, is pictured here with the photo game, "Become Your Own Historian." The photo is covered with sticky notes from festival goers identifying their own special places and historical features in the image.

Some clues we learned along the way are that; Brommer Street did not yet go through to 7th Avenue—it ended at 30th before Rodeo Creek. The Harbor Lights motel was not in the picture—it appeared as an empty corner lot in the photo and 41st Avenue was basically one, big cow pasture.

A lot of discussion ensued about the model years of the cars parked on Capitola Wharf—we found out many people are passionate about old cars! Several visitors found their grandparent's summer homes and told stories of past summer vacations spent visiting Capitola.



Museum Volunteer and handyman, Steve Swift, made this cartoon cut-out safer for use by the public this year. The cut-out was wildly popular and this is just one of thousands of images captured during the Art and Wine Festival. With most cell phones having built-in cameras these days, hundreds of visitors went home with a special souvenir thanks to Steve and to the Capitola Museum.

The museum would like to thank all of the visitors who came to see us, and especially the visitors who showed their support by passing on their stories and donations. Carolyn knows, for sure, the year of the photograph in "Become Your Own Historian," but she won't even tell us. She says, "Come back to next year's Art and Wine Festival for the bonus round and I'll provide the answer."

Until then...become your own historian.

Capitola Museum recently received generous donations from:

Steven & Diane Burbank	Arthur & Pam Darin
Emil Edgren	Tony & Kathryn Gualtieri
Betty Mello	William & Anna Mork
Jed & Helen Myall	Jim & Barbara Reding
Ettamae Shaffer	Paul & Judy Parsons
Demian Sherinian & Yvonne Zannis	

Marv Jensen in memory of Beatrice MacDonald

Volunteer Spotlight: Sandy Wadhams

Sandy (Sandra) Wadhams spent her teenage youth coming to Capitola Beach and loved seeing movies at the Capitola Theater. She and her husband have traveled the world, visiting several continents, but their favorite place to spend time together is Capitola.

Luckily for the Capitola Museum she and her husband were walking in Capitola recently and noticed the museum was open. They came in and enjoyed the exhibit so much that Sandy became a museum volunteer.

Born in Santa Cruz, she moved to the Bay Area when she was just three years old. Her roots run deep as both of her parents graduated from Santa Cruz High and her grandfather had a successful bulb and flower business at the end of Morrissey Boulevard at the foot of De Laveaga Park. This led to many trips here, spending time with her grandparents while her family lived in the Bay Area.

Sandy clearly remembers her grandparents taking her to the Boardwalk to ride the carousel and swimming in The Plunge with her father and brother. The Plunge was an indoor salt water swimming pool—complete with a giant water slide—located where the miniature golf course is at the Boardwalk.



In 1980, Sandy moved back to Santa Cruz County with her young family. In Scotts Valley, the family was active in Glenwood 4-H where Sandy was the Community Club Leader in charge of the horse project. With an AA degree from Cabrillo College, she discovered her passion for working with young children. Sandy went on to become the Director of Sherwood Christian Pre-School, a position she held for 12 years.

Sandy volunteers regularly at the museum and she recently hosted a man who remembered her grandfather. This man, a young boy at the time, worked for a cigar store in downtown Santa Cruz. He remembered Sandy's grandfather, right down to the way he dressed and what he bought—pipe tobacco and his daily newspaper. On that day, 50 years after her beloved grandfather died, the Capitola Museum probably became as important for Sandy as she is for the museum.

Sandy says, "The thing I like most about volunteering is the people you meet." The thing we like most about Sandy is her enthusiasm as she enjoys meeting and greeting the people who visit our museum—the biggest little museum in Capitola!

New acquisitions:

- **Hobbs Family – trunk and clothing from Mary Elizabeth Capen Cunningham Wilson, 1880's**
- **J. Allendorph – 1930's "Marvel Leaves" tracing pad produced by Rainbow Manufacturing Co. in Capitola**
- **Mary Comfort – antique doll collection with clothing**
- **Carolyn Morris- Five postcards**
- **Debbie Thompson – 1960's era photos**
- **Chris Marin – collection of articles and memorabilia from Mabel and Lee Gutterman**
- **Stephanie Harlan – framed theater photo and framed Antonelli Begonia poster**
- **Kim Hogan – framed lithograph of painting by AJ Keller of 1890's Santa Cruz**

Capitola Sunset is published by:

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Museum Hours: Wednesday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday from Noon until 4:P.M.

Museum Director: Carolyn Swift
Board of Trustees: Linda Smith, President, Bob Anderson, Vice President, Tom McGranahan, Treasurer, Stephanie Kirby, Secretary, Gordon van Zuiden, David Shoaf and Niels Kising