

# CAPITOLA SUNSET

June 2008, Volume 2, Issue 2

## A Volunteer Celebration with an Historic Touch

It was a gorgeous sunlit afternoon in late May when the Capitola Historical Museum director, trustees, volunteers and other invited guests gathered at the historic home of Niels and Joanne Kisling for the annual volunteer appreciation dinner. Niels and Joanne's home was once owned by Brad MacDonald, former Capitola mayor and cofounder of Shadowbrook restaurant.

Some of the museum's newest volunteers attended the party, including Bill Roberson, Roy C. Pendley and Janet Merrick. In addition, members of the MacDonald family joined the celebration. Jack and Linda MacDonald, owners of the Vitamin Center in Capitola, were spotted chatting with Penny and Chuck Starbird. Jack and Penny both knew Brad MacDonald as "Uncle Brad."



Joanne and Niels Kisling welcome guests

## MacDonald House: Yesterday and Today



The house in the 1940s. The sign is still there today above the menu box.



The house today at 1820 Wharf Road

Niels Kisling had an easy way to give people directions to his house for the volunteer party. "It's just a little ways down from Shadowbrook," he said.

Niels smiled every time he said it, because he knows the answer to a mystery about the dining establishment that Brad Macdonald and Ed Phillipet

founded back in 1947. It's a bit of Shadowbrook history that's been forgotten.

The puzzle is that in photographs from the 1940s, there's an extra shadow near the Shadowbrook. Another building is sitting square at the entrance. Niels has the clue. It was his house!

Brad Macdonald and his family, during the early months of setting up the restaurant, had owned and lived in the house. Tired of getting deliveries in his living room, Brad eventually decided to move the two-story, revival style structure down the street on a portion of the Rispin estate. He was proud of "jacking the house up and putting wheels under it" to move it. Once relocated, Brad's parents, Jack and Mabel Macdonald, moved in and lived there through the 1950s.



The original two-story house was oddly arranged with two rooms, a bathroom and a kitchen on each floor and exterior stairs connecting the two. Four hundred and fifty square feet of living space on each floor made for tight quarters. When Niels and his wife Joanne bought the home from his parents in 2003, they added inside stairs, a half-bath upstairs and fully remodeled the upstairs by turning two small bedrooms into one large one.

## President's Corner

By Linda Smith

The Capitola Museum has always felt like home to me. Only a year ago, former Museum Board

President David Shoaf wrote about what a superb volunteer team we have. At the time, I had only been a volunteer myself for a short time. Looking back now, I can see that it's the volunteers—the experienced and the new—along with our museum visitors that have created the comfortable feeling of "home."

As previously mentioned, we recently held our annual volunteer appreciation dinner. The event was a smashing success. My brief message this quarter is a sincere "thank you" to all the volunteers who dedicate time, energy and talent to help the Capitola Museum extend a comfortable welcome to everyone who comes through the door.

Vacationers and residents are made to feel they are appreciated. They enter the museum as a place that feels comfortably familiar. The volunteers create that atmosphere and keep it going, showing visitors that Capitola is not just a destination, it's a place where they belong.

Summertime is once again upon us. It's nice to know we have a place that will welcome returning family and friends, as well as the many foreign visitors that come to escape the heat in Capitola.

## All is Now Well with the Bell

This is a tale about a bell that couldn't ding and dong but still cried for help. For more than forty years, everyone has believed the tintinnabulum in the Capitola Museum tower is real. Then one day, Steve Swift discovered our ringer is really a wooden replica. A few months ago, it was unhooked during a storm and nearly bounced out of its cupola. Since then, alarmed passersby and city staff have been stopping in to inform Carolyn Swift, our museum director, that our bell was loose from its belfry. Carolyn kept forgetting to do anything (call Public Works...get a ladder...collar a volunteer). Finally, the firefighters of the Capitola Station of the Central Fire District across the street--those who had the best view of the bell askew--came and offered to put it right. Captain Derek Ridpath

authorized the rescue carried out by fire fighters Larry Phillips and Scott Harway, who, armed with duct tape, were able to set the bell straight in no time.

What would we do without great neighbors?



## Acknowledgments

Funds received in response to the March newsletter will be used to complete work on the washhouse, which to date has been done without City funding, and begin restoration of other historically significant artifacts in the museum collection. Many thanks to the following generous people:

- Dori and Bruce Arthur
- Lin and Mike Banks
- Cheryl Barkey
- Mike Clarke
- Diane and Donald Cooley
- Myrle Deasy
- Ted Durkee
- Emil Edgren
- Rick Feldner
- Darcy Horton
- Dick Nutter
- Gayle and Joe Ortiz
- Karen Roland
- Larry Smith
- Susan and Nels Westman

## New Acquisitions

The 1920s popcorn/peanut machine with its big wheels and shiny red paint stood out on the warehouse floor, even though it was stuck between a linotype machine and a wringer washer. Dared we hope for it? We did, and we got it!



History San Jose sent a message in early May that it was moving out of a warehouse slated for demolition. Would the Capitola Museum be interested in some artifacts? (Does a mouse like cheese?)

It took a little coordination, but we asked for and received some impressive additions to the collection. Among them is a bank of rustic post office boxes, a fireless cooker used for camping, two good-sized pieces of marble (perfect for a soda fountain counter top), and a beautifully un-restored wood carousel horse, c1910.

Added to these new assets in the past few months have been other welcome gifts. Anita Wolpman, the daughter of former El Salto Resort caretakers Louie and Letizia Giudici, donated, among things, her father's garden tools, three c1915 Kodak cameras, and a child's 78 record player, c1947. A child's trunk had an extra surprise—a vintage sock doll, strapped in as if waiting to arrive from a long trip. Trunk and doll were both popped immediately into the cottage exhibit and appear to be right at home. Another appreciated cottage donation came from Emil Edgren, a former museum board member and longtime supporter. He supplied a painting done from an early Camp Capitola photograph.

Mary Arnold of Mesa, Arizona, offered to copy and send two CDs of photographs taken by her

grandmother, Mary Isabelle Thompson Shanks, who had spent her youth in Santa Cruz. Mary Arnold's gift, along with family descriptions, provides an insight into life in the era just prior to WWI.

In early June, the museum received its first CDs in a series from the Jazz Society of Santa Cruz County Archives 2008. These archives document the jazz history of Santa Cruz County through audio, visual, and written materials. The compilation was made possible through jazz society member donations and a grant from the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County. Each CD features historic jazz groups such as "Warmth," and notable musicians like Frank Leal and Bill McCaig. Included with the set is "Santa Cruz Swings," a documentary on the regional history of jazz music produced by Ken Koenig.

On lucky Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> of June, John Smith appeared at the museum with a story and packet of photographs. His pictures were taken in 1943 by his father, John H. "Smitty" Smith of Twin Lakes, who left on March 12, 1943 as a truck driver signed to work on the Alaska-Canadian Highway or Alcan Highway. More on this exciting adventure will be told in an upcoming issue!

## Volunteer Spotlight: Bob Anderson



There's a good reason why Bob Anderson looks so relaxed these days. Earlier this year he retired from his job as a senior buyer at Northrop Grumman Marine Systems after 36 years. He says that he's still getting used to being on an "eternal vacation."

Bob has been fascinated by museums for years. He loves the idea that they give people a sense of their place in history—a connection to both the past and present. In addition to being a volunteer and trustee for our museum, Bob has been associated with the Mission Adobe in Santa Cruz and the Ironman Museum at the Northrop Grumman plant, which is dedicated to the ironworkers who built ship engines during WW II.

In his spare time Bob hikes and bikes all over the Monterey Bay area, including Butano Park, Point Lobos and Big Basin. You can also find him walking his dog Stevie, a Border Collie mix, or hanging out with his two grandchildren Maura (6) and Riley (4). Life is good!

## Is it Summer yet?



Soquel teacher Elaine Love's second grade class stopped in for one last history lesson on their way to the beach. They were the last group to visit the museum this school year.

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Museum Hours: Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday from 12 to 4 p.m.  
**Museum Director:** Carolyn Swift  
**Board of Trustees:** Linda Smith (President), Darcy Horton (Vice President), Tom McGranahan (Treasurer), Topsy Smalley (Secretary), Gordon van Zuiden, Bob Anderson, and Niels Kisling