



THE ELECTROLIER

Newsletter of the St. Helena Historical Society, Summer 2006, Vol.4 No.2

A Scorcher in Pope Valley

By Betty Studebaker

Members of the St. Helena Historical Society and guests had a great day in Pope Valley on Sunday, June 25th, even with the temperature at a sweltering 102 degrees by early afternoon.

Our day of adventure started at Henry Haus' Blacksmith shop. Joe Callizo, a local expert on Pope Valley history, was our guide for the day and entertained us with many interesting stories of the area. Henry and his two brothers, Ed and Otto, were born in Switzerland and came to this country in the 1860's. Henry moved to Pope Valley in 1889, at the age of sixteen. The Haus brothers, Henry and Ed, married sisters, Regula and Bertha, who had also come from Switzerland. Henry and his wife, Regula, had four sons – Herman H., Ernest U., Henry Jr., and George H. In 1910, Henry Sr. patented a device designed to cut and bevel the ends of a heated horseshoe. He died in 1955.

Inside the Haus Blacksmith Shop, Gordon Kirby, a blacksmith from Sonoma, explained the use for many of the tools we saw. Gordon learned his trade from his Scottish grandfather and is passing it on to his daughter, who works with him. Even though it was a very warm day, we all crowded into the shop to try to see everything. The steel comes out of the fire at about 2000 degrees. Now that's HOT!! Gordon told us that blacksmiths keep the lighting low in their shop to make it easier to see the color of the steel, as various temperatures of steel are different shades of red when they are ready. In 1984, Herman H. Haus donated the "Henry Haus Blacksmith and Wagonmaker Shop" to the Napa County Historical Society. Our thanks to their members for opening the shop for the tour.

After the Blacksmith Shop, we caravanned our way over to the Pope Valley Cemetery where Joe Callizo told many interesting stories about the cemetery and some of the

folks buried there. Elias J. Barnett was one of the early settlers, arriving in the valley in 1843. He died in 1880 and is buried in this cemetery. Jesse and Lorana Barnett owned the farm where this cemetery started in 1895 as a family cemetery. It officially became the Pope Valley cemetery in 1907. Postal worker Susan Lynn Valva was buried here in 2003 when she died suddenly at the age of 58. Mark Salvestrin was then appointed Postmaster for Pope Valley. Everyone enjoyed walking around and reading all the familiar surnames of Pope Valley ancestors.



Joe Callizo in front of Haus Blacksmith Shop

Next we all drove to the Pope Valley Winery, where we enjoyed our picnic lunches under the wonderful large old trees, then went inside to do some touring and tasting. Our guides for the day, Jackie Strasburg and Shelly Byrne, told us about the winery, which was originally the Burgundy Winery and Olive Factory and was managed by Ed Haus until 1959. It was abandoned until 1972 when the Devitt Family purchased it. In 1998, long time Pope Valley residents, the Eakle family bought it. Nestled among the twelve acres of the property, is a small vineyard of 100+ year-old Semillon grapevines that were planted by Ed Haus. The winery was constructed in 1897 from massive timbers that were moved from the Oat Hill quicksilver mine. We toured the historic three-story gravity flow winery and a hand-dug cave that took over

9 years to complete. The winery was bonded in 1909. Joe Callizo, Jackie, and Shelly told us many other stories about the valley and the winery, including a story that Al Capone had wine shipped to San Francisco, then on to Chicago – a real killer Cabernet.

What a great day we all had. So much history was shared and there is much more to learn. Thanks to all who helped with the arrangements for our day in Pope Valley and a big thank you to Joe Callizo for telling us so many interesting facts. We had a hot time in that old town!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

The official beginning of the St. Helena History Center campaign took place on April 23, 2006, with the first meeting of Charter Advisors at the historic St. Helena Oddfellows Hall. Nearly 100 citizens contributed their opinions and suggestions at the community brainstorm session. They were a diverse group, from many walks of life. There were historians, ranchers, vintners, grapegrowers, business owners, educators, reporters and many others. Sumptuous appetizers and desserts were enjoyed by all, thanks to Board Member Susanne Salvestrin and her team. Fine wines from local supporters enhanced the culinary delights.

Historical exhibits followed the themes "The Road to St. Helena" and featured vintage artifacts and photographs of the St. Helena Southern Pacific Railroad. Included in our collection is a desk thought to have been used in the station and a large, hand painted, wooden "St. Helena" depot sign. A display on the proper care of artifacts and a sampling from our collection of Sentinels rounded out the exhibit.

Thank you to all who volunteered and to those who participated, the event was a huge success.

A few days later three board members attended the American Association of Museums convention in Boston. They attended at least twenty seminars on museum planning, marketing, exhibit design, management, and funding between them. This will enable the strategic planning team do a better job of making the St. Helena History Center a reality.

In July, your board of directors held its second annual planning retreat at the Upper Valley Campus. Thanks to member Bonnie Thoreen for allowing us to use a classroom on the campus.

The first day we met with Matthew Dawson from the international museum planning firm Lord Cultural Resources. The services available to groups like ours who are planning a new cultural facility were described by Matthew in a three hour session. The three realms his company addresses are visitor experience, facility planning and business planning.

The second day was dedicated to improving the daily operations of the Society and its office at the library. New volunteer Betty Studebaker will begin working in the office, along with Susanne Salvestrin. We will soon keep regular office hours and have more volunteer staff.

Mariam Hansen, President

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Officers and Directors

Mariam Hansen, President
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Gwen Becker, Secretary
Kim Farmer, Treasurer
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Larry Hlavsa, Ex-officio Director
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Roberta Oswald
John Sales
Tricia Westbrook

Committee Notes:

The **Collections Committee** coordinates and manages the acquisition of new materials. It meets the last Monday of the month at 9:30am in the library upstairs meeting room. Current chair of the committee is Frank Harrison. You can email him at jackielfrank@aol.com

The **Events Committee** plans and presents events to teach the public about our local history. The Committee is currently working on the 3rd annual Cemetery Tour on Nov 4, marking the 150th anniversary of St. Helena Cemetery. To help, call Mariam Hansen at 963-5748.

Questions? Comments?

Call or email the Newsletter editor,
Kim Farmer, at 963-0630,
ksfarmer@seedgrain.com

I'd like to join the St. Helena Historical Society!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Individual: \$30 Family: \$50

Business/Organizaton: \$150 Life: \$500

I would like to: Volunteer _____ Make a donation to the Society _____

A Reminder...

Renewal letters were mailed in June. If you have not already done so, please renew your Historical Society membership today using the form in this newsletter.

Tour of CIA in May

On May 2, Society members and guests visited the Culinary Institute of America at Greystone. Tour guide Sam Leach met the group in the grand ninety-foot high atrium and gave a brief history of the building.

The group proceeded to the second floor barrel storage room, where the principles of a gravity flow winery were explained. Grapes enter the building's top floor, dropping to consecutive floors as they are converted to wine. This large space is now used for special events.

The next stop was the 15,000 square foot teaching kitchen and pastry instruction area. Each cooking island includes refrigerators, sinks, ovens, cooktops and tool storage areas. There are at least 5 islands.

The tour concluded in the Rudd Center for Professional Wine Studies, housed in the restored Christian Brothers Sherry House. Two tasting classrooms are set up with more than 30 stations for serious examination of wine, each with a sink, water and light table.

The visit provided an eye opening overview of this world class facility in our midst.

DISCOVER HIDDEN TREASURES RETURNS!

February 18, 2007
at the Native Sons Hall
from 10-4pm

Dealers will be selling antiques and collectibles. Bring yours for appraisal. A Silent Auction will be part of the event.

We are seeking donations of collectibles & wine for the Silent Auction.

Please call Mariam at 963-5748 if you have items to donate.

It's About Time!

By Tricia Westbrook, Chair, Planning Committee

Our April gathering of Charter Advisors for the St. Helena History Center was successful and very heartening. Response to our plans to build a dedicated History Center for St. Helena by the year 2010 was overwhelmingly positive. Thank you to the many members who came. We received invaluable direction for our work.

Attendees told us two things very clearly; 1. The St. Helena History Center must embrace the full diversity of our history and the cultures who create it; 2. The experiences and activities offered through this Center must be dynamic and relevant to St. Helena today. Partnerships with the Community Forum and other local organizations were brainstormed and the seeds were planted for a history-based column in the St. Helena Star which addresses current St. Helena issues.

We reviewed and got feedback on the alternative types of facilities we are considering. Participants also ranked the St. Helena Historical Society's current programs in order of the importance they hold for the community. We were advised to continue to develop and improve all of them and to add new ones. The following were listed as the most important ones:

1. Collecting the artifacts, photographs and documents related to St. Helena history.
2. Recording oral histories— the "Voices of St. Helena" Program.
3. Expanding the research/reference library on St. Helena History
4. Producing regular, educational programs at local historic sites

Our signature events, the "Spirits of St. Helena" annual cemetery tour, and the bi-annual Museum for a Day event, also received significant support as did exhibits, original research and publications.

We have taken the input we received and begun, with the help of museum facility and management experts, to define the "core visitor experience" that awaits a visitor to the St. Helena History Center. Learn about that at our Update! Event on Sept. 10th at the historic Vine and Fig Tree Farm. See you there! (See box on p. 4)



Betty Peters, Katherine Hall and Dorothy Mackay-Collins discuss options during Breakout Session at It's About Time! Event in April

CALENDAR

Call our voicemail at St. Helena Library to reserve a space: 707-963-5244 x 187. See our website: www.shstory.org

August

Aug 28: Collections Committee Meeting, 9:30 am, Library Community Room.

Aug 30: Events Committee Meeting, call Mariam at 963-5748 for location and time.

September

Sep 1: Cemetery Tour Event Committee Meeting, 2pm, Cemetery Office Meeting room, 2461 Spring St.

Sep 10: It's About Time Event at Vine and Fig Tree Farm, 3-5:30pm, see below and page 3 for details.

Sep 25: Collections Committee Meeting, 9:30 am, Library Community Room.

October

Oct 3: Whiting Nursery and J.I. Logan House history program, 4:pm, 438 Main Street, reservations required.

Oct 30: Collections Committee Meeting, 9:30 am, Library Community Room.

November

Nov 4: 3rd Annual Cemetery Tour, celebrating the 150th Anniversary of St. Helena Cemetery, 1pm, 2461 Spring St.

Nov 6: Board Meeting, 4:30 pm, Library Community Room.

Nov 27: Collections Committee Meeting, 9:30 am, Library Community Room.

December

Dec 5: Christmas Party Pot Luck at refurbished St. Helena Star Building, 6pm, reservations required.

Mission Statement

The St. Helena Historical Society is a public educational organization. Its mission is to collect, preserve, exhibit, and provide access to historical materials of all kinds from our community as well as to promote public awareness and participation in the collection of such materials.

ST. HELENA HISTORY CENTER

It's About Time!
Update Gathering

Sunday,
September 10
3 to 5:30pm

At the Historic
Vine and Fig Tree Farm
2455 Sulphur Springs
Avenue

Hear a brief update on St. Helena History Center progress, and a talk by Oscar de Haro as you enjoy wine and goodies on the lawn at this historic estate.

St. Helena Historical Society
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