



THE

ELECTROLIER

Illuminating St. Helena's History

A Publication of the St. Helena Historical Society

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JANUARY PROGRAM

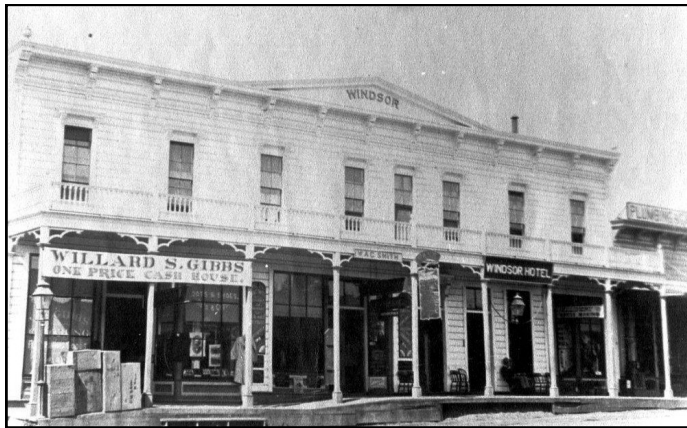
*Room at the Inn:
Lodging in the Upper Valley,
1850-2011*

Presented by Don Winter

Tuesday, January 10, 2012, 4:00 pm

**Harvest Inn, Mountain View Room
One Main Street, St. Helena**

To reserve a seat, please call 707-967-5502
or email shstory@shstory.org. For directions,
visit www.harvestinn.com.



Shown here is the Windsor Hotel, located on Main Street in St. Helena, circa 1890. Courtesy of Gail Morgan Lane.

Don Winter has spent the past three years doing research for and writing his forthcoming book, *The History of the Napa Valley Lodging Industry, 1849 to the Present*. His work has uncovered more than 600 lodging enterprises since the gold rush days! His research has confirmed that the Upper Valley has always played a prominent role in Napa Valley's vital hospitality industry. Don has served as



a hotel and restaurant industry consultant for 40 years and is regarded as one of the top experts in the nation. Napa Valley is his home, its rich history and heritage his passion.

CORNERSTONE

By Skip Lane, President



Seeing Out the Old Year

So much has happened this year! I cannot begin to summarize all the decisions that were made, the changes that happened, and the events that took place. But here are some of the highlights of this eventful year.

Changes to the Board of Directors. Everyone was sorry to see Donn Black leave the board of directors. We valued his legal advice, general wisdom, and calm demeanor. We lost Tricia Westbrook in 2010 when she resigned to become interim executive director. The board has now added two new directors: Bill Savidge and Shannon Kuleto. See the *Electroliers* for September and December, respectively, for their short bios. The board looks forward to their many future contributions.

Program Notes. The society offers many programs for its members every year. In the spring, volunteers participated in the Hall Winery's annual Cabernet Cook-off. Under the leadership of Susanne Salvestrin, the Historical Society captured first place in the dessert division, along with a cash prize.

One of the most successful programs that Mariam Hansen ever organized concerned the Chinese presence in St. Helena during the mid to late nineteenth century. Featuring Philip P. Choy, of the Chinese Historical Society of America, and Mariam as speakers, the program ended with a surprise account from Dr. Jack Jue Jr., from Sacramento, whose great grandfather once lived in St. Helena's Chinatown.



Mariam Hansen admires the Druid costume of Al Fernandez worn during the cemetery walk. Photo by Anna Hansen.

The fifth annual Spirits of St. Helena Cemetery Discovery Walk took place this fall. The walk focused on the cemetery's 155-year history and special plots owned

Cornerstone, continued

Another valuable program, co-sponsored by the library, honored soldiers who served in twentieth-century wars for Veterans Day.



Along with the Boys and Girls Club, the society sponsored a Harvest Festival wine tasting and silent auction. Our booth exhibited a group portrait of European dancers in native dress (mostly Italians), from the 1934 Vintage Festival.

Kudos to Mariam Hansen and many other volunteers for continuing to offer such interesting and unusual programming!

Technology & Design. A generous donation from one of our members made it possible for the society to purchase new computer equipment and wean itself from the library system. Tricia Westbrook, who served as interim executive director much of this year, spent many hours helping to make possible—and fairly seamless—the transition from old to new equipment (learning curves not included!).

The redesign of the *Electrolier* was rolled out in the winter issue. Thanks to our new editor, Robyn Orsini, the society now has a much more professional-looking newsletter. Look for other publication changes and additions in 2012.

And thanks to new director Shannon Kuleto, the society now has an active Facebook page. Go to <http://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Helena-Historical-Society/153288581421864>.

The Collection. Our collection includes items that we had been storing at St. Helena Self Storage. To save on the rent, we purchased a 40-foot storage container, placed it on Harold Smith & Son's property, and moved the big stuff there.

Seeing In the New Year

It will be fun to look back at this column a year from now to see what I've projected for the future and to realize all the things I don't know about what will take place in 2012!

Ten-Year Anniversary. The agenda for an ad hoc group meeting on February 5, 2002 included these words: "A St. Helena Historical Society: Is there a need? If answer is "NO": Adjourn. If answer is "YES": What are the next steps?" Clearly, the answer was "Yes," and here we are ten years later. Details will be forthcoming for a Grand Celebration on March 25th during Museum for a Day.

Board News. In February, the board of directors is planning to have a retreat and planning session, which will be facilitated by Historical Society member Mary Stephenson. Stay tuned for some of the results of the board members' brainstorming.

Upcoming Programs. Check page 1 of this *Electrolier* for news about January's program. February's program will be about Andrew Jackson Grayson.

Our big spring event will be March 25th's Museum for a Day. A number of old-time families and service organizations have committed to displaying their memorabilia.

Design & Technology. Jim Cross is working on a new logo and perhaps other "branding" materials, and production of a new website is underway. They will all be ready in time to celebrate our tenth year.

ABOUT US



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Skip Lane, *President*
Susanne Salvestrin,
Vice President
John Sales, *Treasurer*
Kim Farmer, *Secretary*
Mariam Hansen
Frank Harrison
Shannon Kuleto
Helen Nelson
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Mariam Hansen
Programs & Research
Helen Nelson
Collections & Acquisitions
Robyn Orsini
Newsletter Editor

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VOLUNTEERS WELCOME!

The Historical Society is run by volunteers, and there are lots of things you can do. Please think about how you'd like to help!

Images of America: St. Helena may be purchased for \$24, including tax. Contact the office to order your copy.