



ILLUMINATING ST. HELENA'S HISTORY

THE ELECTROLIER

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**HELP CELEBRATE ST. HELENA HIGH SCHOOL'S
FIRST 100 YEARS – August 1, 4:00–6:00 pm**

**Honoring the Past, Celebrating the Future
Opening Ceremony & Campus Tour – Food & Entertainment**



The community is invited to celebrate the 100-year anniversary of building Vintage Hall, original site of the St. Helena Union High School. Alumni are invited to meet each other and share stories of their days at this venerable school.

After a dedication program at 4:00 pm, the community is invited to take self-guided tours of the new Vocational Education Complex. Food and beverages will be served under the redwoods on Grayson Avenue. See you there!

On June 6, 1912, with great fanfare, the new building housing St. Helena's Union High School was dedicated. Along with notable citizens and well-wishers, the president of Stanford University addressed the rapt crowd. The school came none too soon.

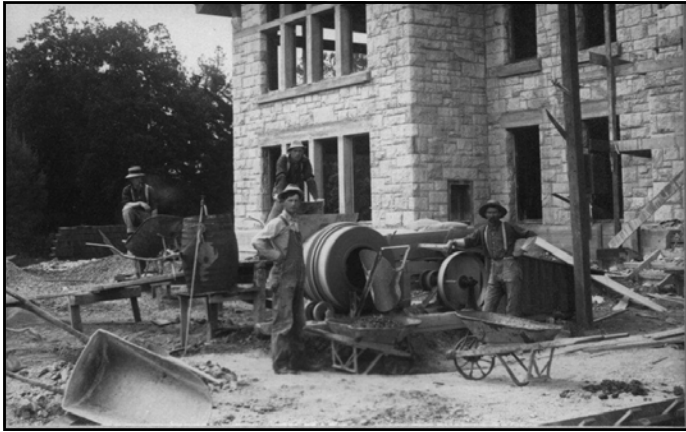
A high school education was not always free in St. Helena. The first high school, formed in the early 1870s, was private. The first free classes were held in 1895. Two years later, the three elementary school districts in the area voted to create and maintain a public high school district. The stage was set—but there was no building.

From 1899 until the new school was built, classes were held in the Turnverein or Turner Hall (located on the site that is now Lyman Park), a large athletic facility used for dances, sports, and other gatherings primarily by German-speaking residents.

Recognizing the need for a proper school, Mrs. Frances Grayson Crane willed 15 acres of her ranch, about one-half mile south of town, on which a building could be erected. Mrs. Crane died in 1908 and her heirs saw that her wishes were carried out.

It remained for a school board to be elected,
(continued on page 2)

St. Helena Union High School, continued from page 1



money to be raised through school bonds, and plans to be drawn up.

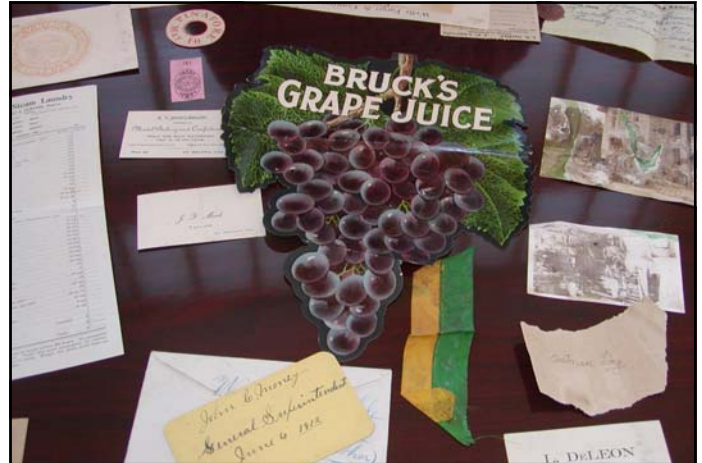
In 1911, a school bond was approved to construct a high school building on the donated land. In January 1912, San Francisco contractor E. T. Thurston's crew began the project. The cement work was done by Harry Thorsen (shown above center); the building was made of reinforced concrete and faced with stone quarried in Conn Valley. The roof was made of slate. (Courtesy of the Harold Thorsen family.)



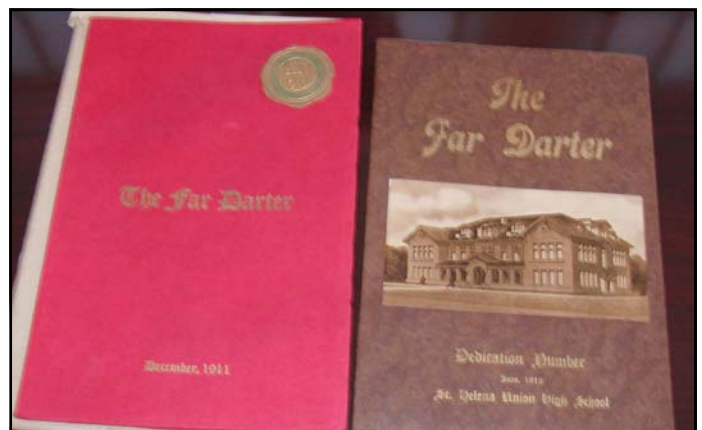
This photograph shows the rear of St. Helena Union High School circa 1930. (Courtesy of St. Helena Historical Society.)



Professor Meeker was the principal of the high school during the time the new building was being constructed. He was involved in all aspects of the project.



As part of the dedication ceremony, a time capsule was cemented behind a cornerstone plaque. It was opened in June 2004 when the building was being renovated. All the items placed there in 1912 were like new. The capsule contained (at top) the card of John C. Money, the project manager; Bismarck Bruck's label; and a program from the 1910 school production of HMS Pinafore; (above) a note written by John Henry Steves, owner of Steves Hardware, who constructed the time-capsule box and sealed it; and (below) the December 1911 and June 1912 literary magazine called The Far Darter. (Courtesy of St. Helena Historical Society.)





The men shown here in 1912 were members of the Chamber of Commerce and active in the local schools. Such leading citizens were behind getting St. Helena High School built. From left to right are (front row) H. Taubner Goethe, Frank Mackinder (St. Helena Star), Bismarck Bruck (winegrower), and Walter Metzner (pharmacist); (back row) Tom Boalt, Gardner DeVeue, Alfonse N. Bell (retail store), Frank Alexander (banker), and Harry Chinn. (Courtesy of St. Helena Historical Society.)



Shown above are students in the domestic science class of 1918. Girls were taught to prepare and serve meals with the most nutrition for the least cost. World War I made it necessary to learn canning, make war bread, and prepare bandages for the Red Cross. Also taught was a course in designing and sewing clothes. Miss Maud McCarty was the home economics teacher. (Courtesy of Historic Photos Publishers.)

New to the Collection



This 1902 map of St. Helena by C. H. Wallace is one of about 150 items donated by the St. Helena Public Library and recently accessioned into our permanent collection.



Cornerstone

By Skip Lane, President

I am pleased to announce the recent election of John Komes to the board of directors. John is the president of Flora Springs Winery and a building contractor. He brings great enthusiasm and a wealth of ideas to our meetings.

Two board members recently had a meeting with Congressman Mike Thompson at his office in Napa. Mike has a longtime interest in local history and I believe he will be a valuable ally in many of our future endeavors.

The society has made lots of headway in the technical arena. Shannon Kuleto created our own Facebook page. Kudos for her on-going willingness to keep the page updated on upcoming events, plus lots of photos of past activities.

The society also completed its

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

It's a busy September for SHHS. Mark your calendars now! Watch for October's line-up in the next newsletter.

September 11th: **The History of Sports at St. Helena High School**
September 22nd: **Cemetery Tour of European Winemakers**

new website this year, along with our new logo. Thanks go to Kim Farmer for keeping the website current.

The society recently sent out a letter to community members who might be interested in becoming members. I'll report next time on the results of the mailing.

We're continuing the search for expanded quarters, including the proposal for a hotel with community buildings near the library.

Thank You, Mariam

Thanks go to Mariam Hansen, SHHS's research director, who provided all the information about how the town managed to get a new St. Helena High School building in 1912. See her article on the subject on the society's website, and also see the article in the *St. Helena Star* on July 26th.

ABOUT US

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Facebook Page

Thank you, Shannon Kuleto, for continuing to supply the society's Facebook page with lots of photos from our programs. The photos about *Pollyanna* are from that site, as are the maps on page 3. To get to the Facebook page, type in the society's name in the search box.



The scene at Lyman Park on June 15th (above), while waiting for Pollyanna to screen. Before the show, Mariam Hansen told the crowd what it was like when the movie was filmed here. The exhibit board (right) was created by Susanne Salvestrin.

