

PINOLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY Newsbriefs

Spring 2008



Pinole Historical Society, P.O. Box 285, Pinole, CA 94564

THE SCENT OF MUSEUM IS IN THE AIR!

By Jack Meehan
Interim Secretary

Living in the turn-of-the-century, 1894 classic Fernandez Mansion at the foot of Tennent Avenue, the Mariottis considered its past, and its future, too, if it was to have one!

It was 1974 when Dr. Joe, his wife, Gretchen, and a few others decided to take steps to establish a Pinole Historical Society. Small steps, yes, but with lasting footprints.

A constitution, formal articles of incorporation, and a set of basic by-laws ensued. Lacking was a groundswell of interest and support from this new and expanding community, but a core of old-timers saw merit in keeping this kitchen-table organization going, nurturing it as best they could. It nearly faded away, sustained by only

a few dedicated people.

Today, Dr. Joe's collections (he has no more space to store them) have grown beyond the mansion's capacity, and he arranged to have a retired and condemned-to-the-scrap yard South-

ern Pacific caboose moved onto his property. It quickly filled up. Commercial storage space is also being rented in Pinole.

Enter Kaiser Permanente, which bought the Faria home-stead site. The Faria

House was moved to Heritage Park in downtown Pinole, and lights went on! Prematurely. The Pinole Historical Society was literally a skeleton, held together by Dr. Joe (an orthopedic surgeon, coincidentally), a few tenacious followers and visionaries. The society was nearly non-functional, incapable of accepting the needed obligations then proposed.

A spirited group, including charter members Dr. Joe and George Vincent, began rebuilding the society from its very foundation. Though it was incorporated in 1974, it needed structural rejuvenation, sustained financial support, and a focus.

On May 22, the society will declare its revised, updated, and functional by-laws at its first annual meeting since reorganizing last fall. A board of

ANNUAL MEETING MAY 22

The Annual Meeting of the Pinole Historical Society will be held Thursday, May 22, at 6:30 p.m. in the Alex Clark Room of the Public Safety building.

All society members are urged to attend the meeting, as there will be exciting news to report.

Additionally, this will be a great opportunity not only to meet and mingle with new society members, but also to examine the newly re-organized society records of the last year. An organized collection of museum records and secretary's official records, plus a document entitled, "The Pinole Historical Society — Its Origin & Organization" will be on exhibit, along with several historical photos and artifacts. The exhibit will be set up for viewing by 6 p.m.

Light refreshments will be served.

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PHS: OPERATION SUCCESSFUL, RECOVERING IN ICU

By **Marcia Kalapus, President** and **Linda Brooks, Treasurer**

Most organizations function with paid employees or dedicated, unpaid volunteers, plus reliable sources of income to meet expenses. That means MONEY!

Pinole Historical Society annual dues in 2008 are just \$20 per Individual, and a hike to \$30 in 2009 is already scheduled. Over the years about 18 people have become Lifetime members (\$150), and new Business Members pay \$50 annually.

Then there are the Donors — bless those few, but much appreciated. The late Tessie Baldwin willed the society \$10,000. There have been substantial gifts of

\$100, \$500, and \$1,000, plus generous “no-billings” for paper, postage, printing, professional services, etc. Over the past 34 years, minimal demands on resources allowed the society to accumulate today’s bank holdings of about \$17,670.

Nice, you say. But even success has its price. Membership has recently spurted to nearly 60 — too many for the “kitchen table” organization we were until only recently. Now we meet in a city meeting room — the Alex Clark Room rent free, but with a catch: we must provide our own liability

insurance or pay the city an equivalent amount — \$160 per year. Soon we will need to have Directors & Officers insurance, and that will cost us about \$1,300 per year.

Commercial storage costs for overflow holdings awaiting a museum home are \$716 annually. Realistic costs for office supplies are estimated to be \$500.

The board has before it a sound budget to present at the Annual Meeting May 22. These costs total at least \$2,700 annually. Convert that to annual membership dues and we’ll need 90 new

members in 2009 just to cover these costs to function safely, legally and effectively. And that’s still without a museum to run!

Alternatively, of course, there are fundraisers, donations, bequests, grants, etc. Our work is cut out for us, even before we have a Pinole Historical Society Museum.

We’re ready to meet that challenge. Want to help? Please fill out the membership application on the back page and help the Pinole Historical Society hold on to its history.

PINOLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

President

Marcia Kalapus

Vice President

George Vincent

Treasurer

Linda Brooks

Interim Secretary

Jack Meehan

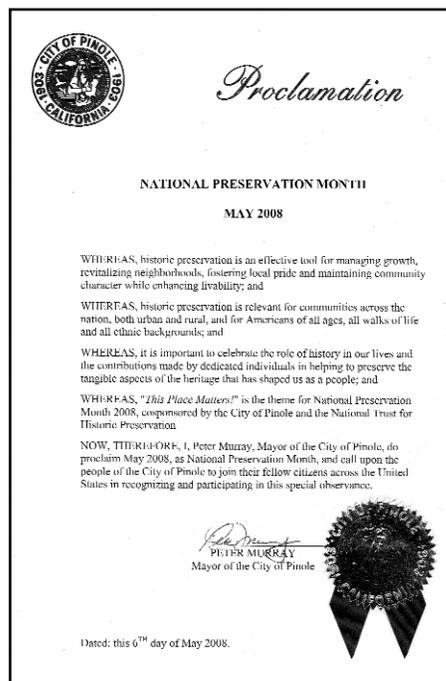
Board of Directors

Carol White

Dr. Joe Mariotti

Tom Brooks

Richard White



NATIONAL PRESERVATION MONTH IN PINOLE

Mayor Peter Murray recognized the work of the Pinole Historical Society in preserving and championing the history of Pinole when he presented PHS President Marcia Kalapus a proclamation at the May 6 Pinole City Council meeting recognizing May as National Preservation Month.

Mayor Murray recognized that historic preservation is an effective tool in nurturing growth, revitalizing neighborhoods, fostering local pride, and maintaining community character while enhancing livability.

He also recognized the relevance of historic preservation, and said it is important to celebrate the role of history in our lives.

THE SCENT OF MUSEUM IS IN THE AIR!

From front page directors formed at that time is driving hard to deserve its viable “charitable, private, non-profit organization” category, capable of negotiating

meaningfully with the city of Pinole, and deserving of needed sustained financial support from foundations, grants, bequests, etc.

The place for a muse-

um? Undecided. But now we’ll soon be in a much stronger position to deal with that question in coming months or years.

Sense the scent of museum in the air?

PINOLE THROUGH THE YEARS

A NEW PICTORIAL HISTORY OF PINOLE

By George Vincent
Vice President

In 1976, the new Pinole Historical Society compiled for publication, *Pinole, a History in Pictures*. It was assembled to celebrate the bicentennial and give the public a look at the society's efforts to preserve Pinole's history.

The PHS has embarked on a similar, but more expansive, project to record the photographic memorabilia of Pinole's past.

This project is more ambitious with a proposed format of some 180-240 photos with captions and a chronological chapter outline.

We have formed a committee to explore publishing this work with the professional assistance of the Arcadia Publishing Company. This is a company that publishes local and regional histories in picture-book fashion.

The books are attractive and of high quality. Local bookstores carry their works, such as the *History of Richmond*.

Our task will be to assemble the images and text for the company's approval. Royalties from the project will be shared.

Our kickoff and planning meeting was held April 24 at Dr. Joseph Mariotti's home. We had an enthusiastic gathering. Our next meeting will be



From the collection of Dr. Joe Mariotti.

held at Dr. Joe's home on June 5 at 6:30 P.M.

Committee members are asking the public to contact the society if they have any photos of Pinole to submit for project consideration. Pictures will be scanned and promptly returned.

This project will be an excellent primer for those who wish to have a visual introduction to Pinole's history.

Photos for Pinole book needed

Photographs of good quality — human or other subjects, circumstances, and, above all, relevance to Pinole history — accompanied by legible text and date taken, are wanted by the Pinole Historical Society for inclusion in the book that is being prepared about our city.

Please bring photos to the May 22 Annual Meeting, and be prepared to grant a release and permission to reproduce them, or donate them to the society. Or, contact Shirley Ramos at 758-2416 to arrange to have your photos included in the book.

Publication of a Pinole history in text and photos is under way; Vice President and charter member George Vincent is the head of the book committee.



From the collection of Shirley Ramos.

WHY A PINOLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY?

Memories fade or corrode with passing years. "I remember when . . ." needs to be recorded on paper, photos, on "tape," and then preserved for later reading, viewing or listening. Much later, personal experiences related orally are frequently lost.

Documentation is a key. Preservation is essential. Our goal is to collect our history, organize it, study it, exhibit it. That's the purpose of the PHS: to stimulate interest in our past, to satisfy curiosity, to learn the foundations of what we are today, where we've been, and — yes — where we're headed in the future.

Interested? Explore our past, become part of our future, and join the Pinole Historical Society. An application is on the back page of this newsletter.

100 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH IN PINOLE

On May 10, 1869, at Promontory Point, Utah, the nation was symbolically linked by rail with the driving of the famous golden spike. That's why May 10 is National Train Day!

In 1908 the Chicago Cubs won the World Series (their last)! Mother's Day was first celebrated, in Philadelphia; and Muir Woods and the Grand Canyon became National Monuments.

Closer to home, a railroad tragedy took five lives. The place: the Southern Pacific tracks at the foot of Pinole Shores Drive where, on May 19, 1908, the Southern Pacific



Second section of the Oregon Express #16.

ic Oregon Express, train #16, crashed.

The engine, baggage, and express cars left the track and overturned. Three coaches left the track. A small, rocky

knoll saved the engine from going into San Pablo Bay.

It is thought that a defect in the engine's running gear caused the wreck. The first section

of #16 had passed over a few minutes before. (The first section is a separate train, followed closely by the second section, usually overload from a regularly scheduled run.) Service on both east- and westbound tracks was disrupted for 14 hours.

The site today is at the north end of Pinole Shores Drive, readily visible from the East Bay Regional Park trail overlooking the Southern Pacific (now Union Pacific) tracks.

This photo and description of the wreck is courtesy of Dr. Joe Mariotti, PHS founder. From the Louis L. Stein Jr. collection, Berkeley.

PINOLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2008 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION, AND SEND CASH OR YOUR CHECK,
TO PINOLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, P.O. BOX 285, PINOLE, CA 94564

MEMBERSHIPS ARE FOR THE 2008 CALENDAR YEAR (EXCEPT LIFETIME MEMBERSHIPS)

NAME (each person): _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/ZIP: _____ Phone: _____

E-MAIL (please!): _____

CIRCLE ONE: Annual (\$20) Life (\$150) Business (\$50) Sustaining \$(500)

AMOUNT ENCLOSED: [] Cash \$ _____ [] Check # _____ \$ _____

DATE PAID: _____