

Pinole Historical Society Newsbriefs



P.O. Box 285, Pinole, CA 94564

www.PinoleHistoricalSociety.org info@PinoleHistoricalSociety.org

PHS PREPARES TO CELEBRATE NATIONAL PRESERVATION MONTH

May marks the annual celebration of National Preservation Month, and the Pinole Historical Society plans to participate with a number of activities.

"The celebration of the history of the United States is one of the most important ways for us to honor our ancestors and all those who came after

them," says PHS President Marcia Kalapus. "After all, we wouldn't be here without their perseverance, their struggles to survive an untamed wilderness, and the foresight to provide us with an everlasting document, the Constitution, that has prevailed for more than 230 years.

"Locally, it is also important to honor the

early immigrants from Spanish Mexico in the early 1800s, because without the land grant to Don Ygnacio Martinez, Pinole wouldn't be in existence either.

"We owe these national ancestors our respect and gratitude.

"So, it is our duty to set aside this special month and plan events to
to page 2

PINOLE BOOK ON SALE

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today!*
— back page —

Our newsletter has expanded

This newsletter may appear a bit meatier than past issues—for a good reason!

We have expanded this newsletter to 12 pages. So much is happening in the Pinole Historical Society that four pages was not sufficient to report all the news.

We have also increased our press run from 900 to 2,000 copies. We've noticed that within a few days after filling the Newsbriefs racks (see page 2 for locations) with newsletters, they were empty.

Our goal is to always have copies for patrons of

these businesses to read and take home to their families.

To expand the newsletter and print more copies, we have sold business-card-size ads, which appear at the bottom of each page. We could not afford to print a 12-page newsletter without the support of these wonderful businesses. Please patronize our advertisers!

If you would like information on purchasing a business-card ad, please send an e-mail to info@PinoleHistoricalSociety.org.

Published quarterly by the Pinole Historical Society

NATIONAL PRESERVATION MONTH

from front page

show our appreciation for all those who came before us."

Those events include a proclamation by the City Council, declaring May as National Preservation Month. This will be presented to Marcia at the May 5 Pinole City Council meeting.

Also in May, Pinole Community TV will re-run a very enjoyable inter-

view by former Mayor Betty Boyle with prominent Pinole citizens. This first aired in 2002, and is worth repeating to hear the wonderful stories of those who grew up in a different Pinole in an era gone by.

Finally, historical presentations by PHS vice president and historian George Vincent, and newsletter editor Jeff Rubin (co-authors, along with Joe Mariotti, of the

upcoming book, *Images of America: Pinole*) will be made at the Pinole City Council meeting (May 19), the Pinole Library (May 20), the PHS annual meeting (May 21), and Pinole Rotary (May 28).

Get involved in Pinole's history, and join the Pinole Historical Society in celebrating

National Preservation Month.

☆ ☆ ☆

For more information on National Preservation Month, visit the website of the National Trust for Historic Preservation at www.preservationnation.org/take-action/preservation-month/.

RECENT DONATIONS TO PHS

The society is grateful to the following people for donations to our archives:

• **Connie Lopez (from the Marge Doty estate):** SMC typewriter, 10-key adding machine, check printer

• **Thelma McPherson:** A signed copy of Jessie Howe Clark's 1975 book of poems, *Of a Number of Things*.

• **Elaine Sturtevant (Friends of the Pinole Library):** An autographed copy of the book, *Peepers, The Tall Proud Duck*, by Pinole author Ruth Wallace Haley; a copy of the book, *Doctors Hospital: Twenty-Five Years of Building the Future*, by Margaret Finnerty.

WHERE TO FIND NEWSBRIEFS

You can find the Pinole Historical Society *Newsbriefs* at these locations:

AccuTech Auto Care, The Alley Cafe, Antlers Tavern, Bank of the West, The Bear Claw, Blue Sky Sports, Bronze Buns, China House, Collins Elementary School, Crocketts Premier Auto Body, Embers, Farmers Insurance (Madeline Crandall), Farmers Insurance (Carol White), Douglas Gordon, D.D.S., Hairitage Bead and Boutique, Happy Sashimi, Kendall Financial Services, Ladies Workout Express, Lakeridge Athletic Club, Mechanics Bank (Pinole Valley and Pinole Vista), Old Time Realtors, Park Pharmacy, Attorney Donald E. Patterson, Peet's Coffee, Pinole City Hall, Pinole Creek Cafe, Pinole Library, Pinole Paws, Pinole Police Department, Pinole Senior Center, The Red Onion, Ristorante due Rose, Sashay's Salon, and Top Floor Salon.

It's also posted on the PHS website.

UPCOMING PHS MEETINGS

May 21: Annual General Membership (presentation)

June 18: Board of Directors (members welcome)

July 16: Board of Directors (members welcome)

August 20: General Membership (presentation)

Meetings are open to members and prospective members. Meetings are held the third Thursday of each month in the Alex Clark Room, Pinole Public Safety Building; doors open at 6 p.m., meetings begin at 6:30 p.m.



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President's Message

**Marcia Kalapus, President
Pinole Historical Society**

CELEBRATE HISTORY IN MAY

May is National Preservation Month, as designated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

The celebration of history, whether it's national or local, is very important. It's important to remember and cherish all that has happened before us, to celebrate the lives of people who contributed to the history of our community, and to preserve and chronicle the city's past and present history for current and future generations.

During National Preservation Month, the Pinole Historical Society will join the national celebration with several activities, including historical presentations to the City Council (May 19), at the Pinole Library (20), to our membership at our annual meeting (21) and to Pinole Rotary (28).

George Vincent, PHS vice president, long-time teacher, and resident his-

torian, and Jeff Rubin will be giving these Power-Point presentations.

Next year we plan to bring the history of Pinole to the schools by working with school principals to present in classrooms and assemblies.

This is just the beginning of our outreach program to service organizations, schools, and the community at large.

The last year has been an active and exciting year for the society. We have accomplished a great many things—a book, a website, a newsletter, and a Veterans' Day event. More events that celebrate the city's history are being planned.

Most importantly, we are making progress with our museum project — we are collaborating with the city for a feasibility study that will establish the groundwork for a Pinole municipal museum.

You will notice that

this newsletter has more pages than previous issues. We had so much information to report that we expanded this issue to 12 pages, and our press run to 2,000 copies. To do this we had to sell ads.

We are very grateful to the advertisers in this newsletter. This is the first time we've solicited ads, and considering the economic climate, the business people who purchased ads are true supporters of the society and the Pinole community. Their participation is truly appreciated. We urge you to support their businesses.

I also want to acknowledge all of the people who gave us photos, and told us stories, for our book. They have also contributed much history and memorabilia in support of our goal of establishing a museum.

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**Marcia
Kalapus**

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PINOLE'S CLEAN, GREEN, RENEWABLE FUEL!

By Jack Meehan

Imagine a renewable, solar-generated energy medium, to fuel local transportation in metropolitan centers—San Francisco in this example—shipped there via wind-driven, low-impact, water-borne vessels that would have little or no atmospheric impact . . . and even have a significant after-market value in production of human food!

Well, a Portuguese immigrant, a Pinole pioneer and businessman, saw a need—and filled it. El Rancho Pinole's verdant hills (seasonal, of course) provided abundant hay and other field grasses. Ranch hands harvested it and brought it to the Pinole warehouse and wharf run by Bernardo Fernandez at the foot of (now) Tennent Avenue. He, in turn, shipped it by no-impact, wind-powered boat and sold it in San Francisco, where it fueled the horses hauling carriages, wagons, and street cars.

No noise, almost. No harmful emissions. Well, OK, but that after-market by-product—manure—became prized as a mushroom-growing

Back in the day

medium. Yum. Some even claim mushrooms symbolized San Francisco politics of the day.

Was Bernardo ahead of his time, or have we,

today, regressed?

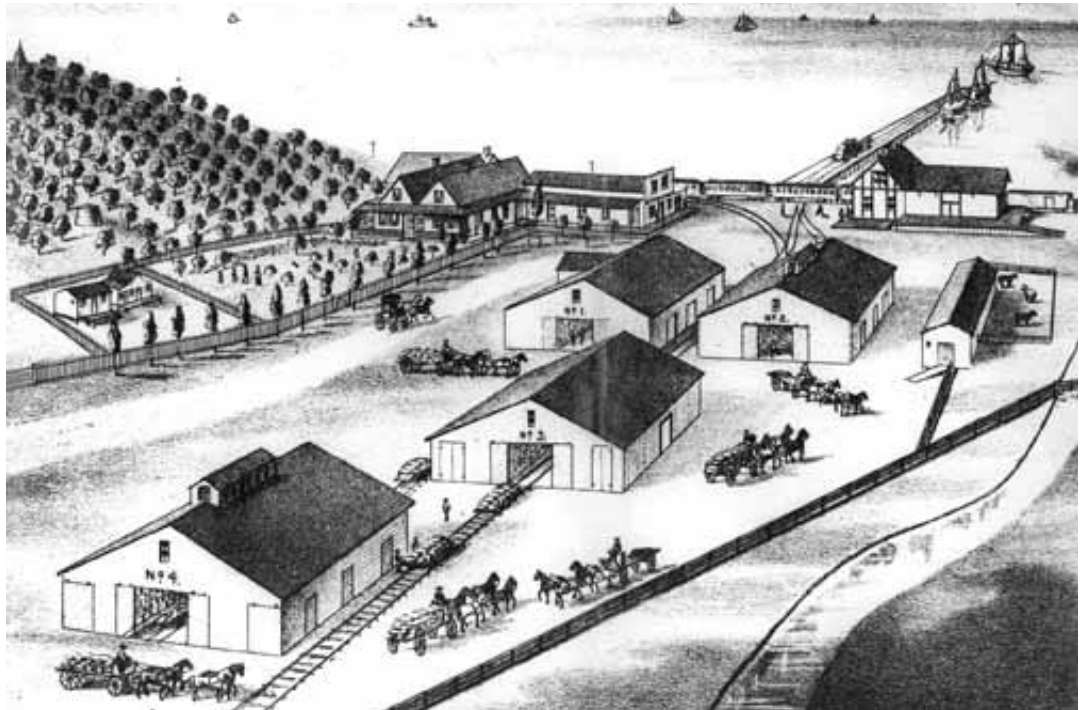
A riddle of history, perhaps, but worthy of intellectual examination.

Go history!

During the 1850s, Bernardo Fernandez started a mercantile business on this site at the foot of Tennent Avenue. He built a supply store, constructed warehouses and wharves, hauled farm products, and handled the mail to become very instrumental in the early establishment of this city and become Pinole's leading businessman. (Photos courtesy of Edward Armstrong.)



Bernardo Fernandez



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PHS ACQUIRES 1882 PORTRAIT OF PIONEER RODEO BUSINESSMAN

By George Vincent

This portrait of Patrick Tormey was purchased by the Pinole Historical Society from a 93-year old former resident of the Richmond-San Pablo area. She bought the picture 25 years earlier at a rummage sale because she liked the man's looks. The San Pablo Historical Society referred her to our society, since Patrick Tormey had a regional influence on Pinole's formative years.

The 127-year-old portrait is a black & white line drawing done in 1882, when Patrick Tormey was 42. It is encased in an oval, glass-covered frame of the period and is embossed with fancy gold trim. It stands an imposing four-feet high by three-feet wide. It is elegant enough to have once graced the Tormey mansion.



The PHS also acquired a proclamation by the California Sheriffs Association that was issued shortly after Tormey's death, lauding Tormey for his contributions to law enforcement.

THE TORMEYS

Brothers John and Patrick Tormey were Irish immigrants who arrived in Contra Costa County in the mid 1850s. They soon became involved in Pinole's early history. In 1865 and 1869, they purchased five divisions, or 9,000 acres, of Rancho El Pinole from the Martinez heirs. They eventually became quite wealthy from the grain and cattle business. They had extensive land holdings and built stately mansions.

The Rancho El Pinole purchase was divided. John Tormey's western portion included the old Martinez adobe homes and part of Briones Valley. Patrick Tormey's eastern share included the Rodeo Valley, where the Martinez family once held annual "rodeos," or round-ups, of thousands of head of cattle.

Patrick Tormey founded the town of Rodeo. He brought the

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WHEN IS A TREE PART OF HISTORY?

It's just a seedling, but when planted to honor the memory of special people, these soon-to-be-big trees become a part of the history of the state and the organizations that sponsored them.

The Pinole Garden Club, like many members of California Garden Clubs Inc., participates in Penny Pines, a nationwide USDA Forest Service reforestation program that plants trees on burned-over and brush-covered areas that are potentially productive timberlands.

Garden clubs throughout the state have a



collection at each meeting for this, and when

they reach \$68, they purchase an acre of seedling trees to be planted in the forest of their choice.

Why \$68?

At the start of the program in 1941, seedlings could be produced for about one cent each.

Approximately 680 seedlings were used to plant a typical acre. For \$68, seedlings for 10 acres could be purchased.

"Clubs can buy these plantations either 'in honor' or 'in memory' of individuals in their clubs,

and this has become very popular," says Pat York, president of the Pinole Garden Club.

Some clubs, such as Pinole's, use these plantations as a "thank you" for members, deceased members, or chairmen.

If you would like to make a contribution to Penny Pines, write a check payable to the Pinole Garden Club and mail it to Carol Hosking, 2636 Ramona Street, Pinole, CA 95664.

PHS ACQUIRES 1882 PORTRAIT

from page 5

Union Stock Co., a large meat-packing plant, to the area. Unfortunately, the Panic of 1893 (the worst financial crisis to hit the United States in its history to that point) and the 1906 earthquake combined to bring financial misfortune to his enterprises. The plant closed due to the business and bank recession, and the brick buildings were later toppled by the quake.

Patrick Tormey served 26 years on the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors. The town of Tormey, east of Rodeo, grew around a railroad stop and was named in his honor. Remnants of the town still exist. Tormey died of food poisoning on May 7, 1907, from tainted corned beef eaten at an Oakland restaurant. This was the ultimate irony, as he made his living in the cattle business. His five-block-long Martinez funeral procession on May 10 was the largest ever seen in Contra Costa County.

For more information on the Tormey's' history in West County, visit www.tormeyclan.com.

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AMERICAN FLAGS AVAILABLE FROM HISTORICAL SOCIETY



May 25 is Memorial Day, June 14 is Flag Day, and July 4 is Independence Day—all good reasons to acquire a made-in-America United States

flag from the Pinole Historical Society to fly on these important occasions.

The PHS has about two dozen 3x5 nylon American flags—50 stars, all-weather, embroidered—available for a donation of \$25 to the society.

And, we have a limited supply of basic flagpole kits (pole, bracket, etc.) at our quantity cost of just \$6. So, a flag and flagpole can be yours for a donation of only \$31 (plus postage if we mail them)!

Pick up your flag/pole at one of our monthly meetings (see page 2 for the schedule), at our Pinole Farmers' Market booth, or e-mail us at info@PinoleHistoricalSociety.com and we'll make arrangements to get these items to you via U.S. mail. We accept checks and Visa, MasterCard, and American Express credit cards.



Check the Pinole Historical Society website for information on PHS activities and events – and, of course, the history of the sweetest city in the East Bay.

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PINOLE COMMUNITY TV SERIES CHRONICLING CITY'S HISTORY

Pinole Community TV has premiered an ambitious 16-part series based on the City of Pinole Historic Walking Tour brochure.

The series features 16 segments, each lasting two to three minutes. Host Elizabeth Ciabattari, a Pinole native and aspiring actress, is visiting some of the more prominent locations in the city, offering viewers a glimpse into the past of each.

Once completed, each segment will run for a week on PCTV channel 28. The segments will run several times an hour, all day, seven days a week, between scheduled programming.

The series was Elizabeth's idea, says producer Dave Arnold.

"The first approach was to do all 27 stops on the tour, but we consolidated a few and ended up with 16 segments," Dave says. The final scripts were written based on information from the brochure.

"Elizabeth's on-screen presence and talent is obvious, and these programs should pique the viewers' interest to investigate the history of Pinole further."

The series includes these stops: Greenfield Department Store; Baldwin House; Italianate Hip Roof Cottages; Pinole churches; Pinole murals; Quinan Street Homes and Brandt Cottages; Tennent Avenue; Antlers, Bank of Pinole, and Nunes Building; Boyd Home, William Clark Home and Theodore Woy Home; Square Deal Garage, TJ Stats Home, Jerry McDonald Home, and Captain's Cottage; Santa Fe Train Depot; Downer Mansion; Site of original Pinole-Hercules School; Fernandez Mansion; Dr. Manuel L. Fernandez House; Faria House.

Local businesses are sponsoring the series. Interested sponsors should contact PCTV Cable Access Coordinator Dave Snell at (510) 741-3862.



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WORKSHOP FIRST STEP IN MUSEUM FOR CITY

Members of the PHS were among 33 participants in a Community Leadership Visioning Workshop for a proposed municipal historical museum on February 28, facilitated by the city's museum consultant, Kathleen Brown.

The workshop's purpose was to: articulate a vision for the Pinole Historical Society Museum, understand the context in which the museum would operate and thereby set realistic expectations for its development and operation, identify community needs and their implications for the Faria House redevelopment, and explore possible partnerships with existing organizations to support the museum's development and ongoing programming.

Among the key conclusions were:

- The museum will have a community-based vision that reflects rich diversity today and historically
- History contributes to overall quality of life
- The museum will take on the responsibility to communicate the importance of history to the community
- The museum will focus first on Pinole, then on the broader El Rancho Pinole land-grant area.
- The Faria House to be renovated not as an historic-house museum, but as a home for the community, designed with flexible use in mind
- The museum will involve the entire community in renovation and in programming.

The PHS thanks The Bear Claw and Noah's Bagel's for their generous donations of food for the workshop.



Workshop facilitator Kathleen Brown (far left) led a four-hour workshop that challenged participants to create a vision for a Pinole municipal museum. Councilmember Mary Horton acted as this group's scribe during one of the exercises.

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NATIONAL PRESERVATION MONTH CALENDAR OF EVENTS

To celebrate National Preservation Month, the Pinole Historical Society is presenting these events:

- April 27 to May 31: Pinole Community TV, Channel 28: Betty Boyle interview with prominent Pinole citizens, airing daily.

- May 5: Pinole City Council proclamation of National Preservation Month in Pinole, 7 p.m.

- May 19: Historical presentation at Pinole City Council meeting, 7 p.m.

- May 20: Historical presentation at Pinole Library, 6:30–8:30 p.m.

- May 21: Historical presentation at Pinole Historical Society annual meeting, 6:30 p.m.

- May 28: Historical Presentation to Pinole Rotary, noon.

Please join us for one of these presentations, which will highlight sections of our book, *Images of America: Pinole*.

We look forward to seeing you!

The PHS thanks Mechanics Bank for a grant that enabled us to purchase an LCD projector for our presentations.

PHS TO HAVE PRESENCE AT SEVERAL EVENTS THIS SPRING AND SUMMER

The Pinole Historical Society will be present at several community events throughout the spring and summer months.



Look for our booth at the **Pinole Farmers' Market** on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. beginning April 25.

We'll also be at the **Cruisin' in the Sun** car show from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, June 28.

And, look for us on eight consecutive Thursdays during the city's **Summer Sounds in the Park** concert series from July 9 to August 27. Concerts run from 6:30 to 8 p.m.



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CELEBRATE HISTORY IN MAY

from page 3

When you buy your copy of *Images of America: Pinole*—there's an order form above—take a look at the acknowledgements page. It's one of the longest lists in Arcadia Publishing history.

Without these people, we could not have completed this project, the

first book about Pinole published by a major book company.

We invite you to be excited with us. We meet on the third Thursday of every month in the Alex Clark Room of the Pinole Public Safety Building, 880 Tennent Avenue.

At our May 21 meeting, which will be our annual meeting and election of

board members, we will have a special PowerPoint presentation by George Vincent and Jeff Rubin that will feature photos from *Images of America: Pinole*. (See page 10 for a complete calendar of PHS events in May.)

Our membership has tripled in the last year. You don't have to live in Pinole to be a member

of the Pinole Historical Society; all you have to have is an interest in the history of our region. We welcome everyone.

There's a membership form above; we'd love to have you join our exciting, active organization as we make progress toward accomplishing our goals.

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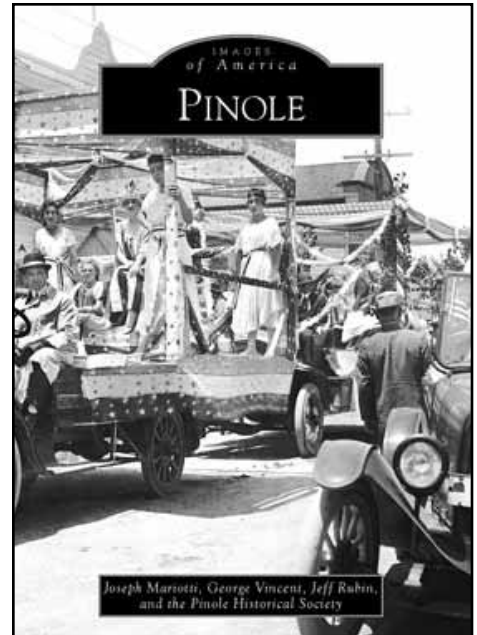
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ORDER YOUR COPY OF PINOLE BOOK

The Pinole Historical Society has begun taking orders for our about-to-be-published book, *Images of America: Pinole*.

We have received word from Arcadia Publishing that our books will be published July 27, which means that's the day it will be available at bookstores.

The PHS expects to get its complement of copies within a few days after the publication date.

To order your book(s), please fill out the above form (also available on our website) and mail it to us at P.O. Box 285, Pinole, CA 94564. Or, bring your order form to one of our monthly meetings.

We will mail the books to you (\$27.23 per copy) or you can pick them up (\$24.14 per copy) at one of our third-Thursday meetings or at our booth at the Pinole Farmers' Market and Summer Sounds in the Park.

Books will be mailed as soon as they arrive.

There will be a book launching/signing event Wednesday, August 5, from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Alex Clark Room, Public Safety Building, 880 Tennent Avenue.

Authors Joe Mariotti, George Vincent, and Jeff Rubin will be there to autograph your books.

We will have refreshments—and books for sale, of course—at this event.



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