

Pinole Historical Society Newsbriefs



P.O. Box 285, Pinole, CA 94564

www.PinoleHistoricalSociety.org info@PinoleHistoricalSociety.org

In this issue

President's Message

— Page 3 —

County library system's 100th anniversary

— Page 7 —

Jailed in Pinole in 1900

— Page 8 —

Historic Pinole: the Church of Baseball

— Page 12 —

50 years ago: events of 1963 chronicled

— Page 15 —



Hercules school bus, early 1900s (Photo from Hercules Historical Society).

February 15 program

A TALE OF TWO CITIES

Our Friday, February 15, membership meeting will be a joint program of the Pinole and Hercules historical societies.

Pinole and Hercules have a shared history based on geography and a heritage of mutual need and cooperation. Both were part of the 18,000-acre El Rancho Pinole land grant in the early 1800s, and both grew into cities, Hercules in 1900 and

Continued on page 4

2013 quarterly meetings at Kaiser moved to Friday evenings

This year's quarterly membership meetings of the Pinole Historical Society will be held Friday evenings in conference rooms 2A and 2B of the Kaiser Permanente Medical Office Building.

Thursday evenings were no longer available, so we thought we'd try Fridays and see how they work for our members. As always, we will have an interesting program for you at each meeting.

The 2013 meeting schedule is: February 15 • May 17 • September 20 • November 15

Published quarterly by the Pinole Historical Society

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It's also posted on the PHS website.

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PHS CALENDAR

MEETINGS

February 13, March 13, April 10: Monthly Board of Directors meeting. The public is invited to attend and speak on any of the items discussed at these meetings. Pinole Senior Center, 6:30 to 8 p.m.

February 15: Quarterly Membership meeting: Kaiser Permanente Medical Office Building, 1301 Pinole Valley Road, Conference Rooms 2A and 2B, 6:30 to 8 p.m.

ONGOING

Pinole Library history exhibits. Two exhibits at the library, 2935 Pinole Valley Road. Library hours are: Monday (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.), Wednesday (2 to 8 p.m.), Friday and Saturday (12 to 5 p.m.).

PHS booth at Pinole Farmers' Market. We will return to the farmers' market in April.

Pinole **Historical** Society

Board of Directors: Marcia Kalapus, President; Jeff Rubin, Vice President; Mary Drazba, Treasurer; Jo Ann Gannotti, Secretary; Shirley Ramos, George Vincent.

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President's Message

Marcia Kalapus, President, Pinole Historical Society

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY

The Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors recently proclaimed 2013 "The Year of the Library."

The Contra Costa County Library System is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. Ian Richards, Senior Community Library Manager for both the El Sobrante and Pinole libraries, has announced the El Sobrante Historical Society will host one of five system events on March 16, this one celebrating the West Contra Costa-member libraries — Pinole, Hercules, Rodeo, San Pablo, Crockett, El Cerrito, Kensington, and El Sobrante.

Local historical societies have been invited to present brief histories of the libraries in their communities. The PHS has accepted the invitation.

The PHS will collaborate with the Pinole Library throughout the year on other projects.

There will be other displays and programs throughout the year at each of the county libraries. Visit the system website at www.ccclib.org for details.

Libraries today are in constant competition with the new electronic readers — Kindles, iPads, etc. This is all well and good, but somehow we need to keep the



Marcia Kalapus

Outside reading enhances children's curiosity and stimulates them to ask questions like "Why?" "How come?" "How does that work?" etc. The Pinole Library uses themes and provides books to cover those subjects.

Ian and Pinole Library Children's Librarian Tim Madigan are great resources and are looking for new ideas and projects.

Our children have such structured classroom time these days in order to meet the "No Child Left Behind" requirements that there is little time to just learn new things from books and to explore all that a library has to offer.

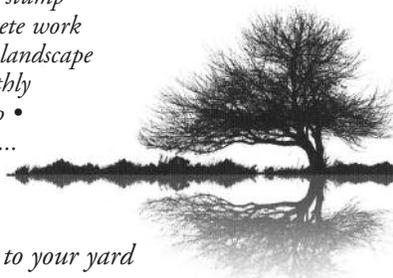
Positive experiences in a library teach children to randomly pick books off the shelves and just sit on the floor and look through them. As they get older, we, as concerned citizens and parents, must encourage

context of the book alive. There is nothing more satisfying than holding a book and reading it while enjoying a cup of hot tea, hot cocoa, or iced lemonade in a comfortable chair outdoors under a shade tree. I have spent many hours in my off time doing just that.

I raised my children in a sea of books, magazines, and many, many trips to the library. Their lives did not center on TV programs except Captain Kangaroo — a must!

Continued on page 4

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Continued from page 3

children to go to the library to look up their school assignments using real books.

If children use only their computers to research on-line, they miss an opportunity to learn how to browse other books and magazines and resources that might have more information. We must encourage an ongoing effort to teach children these func-



tions in order to prepare them to do research at the university level.

I am hoping the community at large—parents and others—will join the PHS in 2013 in helping the library put on these programs and be volunteers along with us.

Happy New Year.

A Tale of Two Cities

Continued from front page

Pinole in 1903.

The program will focus on the interaction and cultural ties of the communities; the mutual need for water, schools, and jobs will be highlighted, with

oral histories and a Powerpoint presentation.

The program will be presented from 6:30 to 8 p.m. in conference rooms 2A and 2B of the Kaiser Medical Office Building in Pinole. It's free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served.



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The Pinole Historical Society promotes awareness and appreciation of history through preservation and education, and chronicles the city's heritage for current and future generations.

PHS PRODUCTS FOR SALE

We have postcards, greeting cards, and refrigerator magnets—featuring photos from our book, *Images of America: Pinole*. You can order them at www.PinoleHistoricalSociety.org.

To order on-line, print the order form and mail it with your check to the Pinole Historical Society, P.O. Box 285, Pinole, CA 94564.

All of the photos in our book—and others in our collection—are available for purchase in any size you want. These items make great holiday gifts. For more information, contact us at (510) 724-9507 or info@pinolehistoricalsociety.org.

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PHS SEEKING FAMILY FILMS FOR HISTORICAL ARCHIVE

Got film?
 The Pinole Historical Society is embarking on a major project to archive the city's history — family by family and event by event. Our objective is to establish a permanent, digitized collection of Pinole's history.

Do you have film of past Holy Ghost parades, Pinole Valley High School Homecoming parades, Memorial Day or July 4 parades?

How about important athletic events, such as a high-school football, basketball, baseball, softball, or volleyball game?

Perhaps you have film of an important event that took place in Fernandez Park, or a ribbon cutting or an event that has a place in Pinole's history—such as the 1958 flood?

We're looking for any video or film you have—VHS,

Beta, camcorder, DV tape, 8mm, Super 8mm, 16mm, 35mm, motion picture.

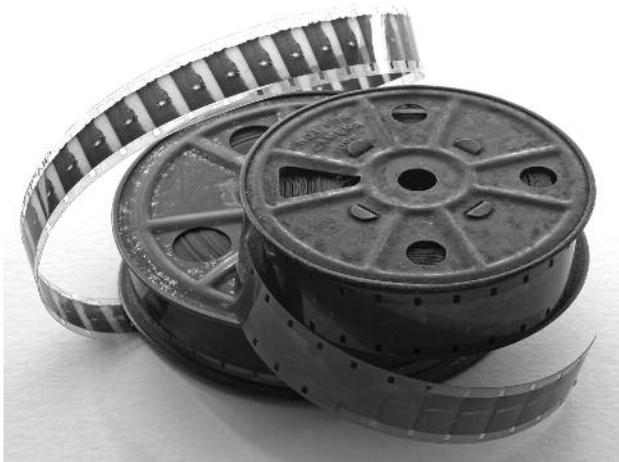
Nearly everyone has taken home movies. That makes everyone who has taken film a historian.

We want to collect, digitize, catalog, and preserve old movies on DVD (and whatever formats are to come) to exhibit, educate, and entertain.

The PHS will share these videos on a film archive that we will establish, similar to the The Pioneers Film Archive on YouTube created by the California Pioneers of Santa Clara (www.youtube.com/sccpioneers).

Film connects with the past in a unique way. It's immersive, educational, and entertaining for young people. It's a way to get young people interested in history.

Got film? Please contact us at info@pinolehistorical.com



GOT HISTORY?

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PHS interviews on city of Pinole website

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Not a problem. The city's website now has a dedicated section devoted to PINOLE HISTORY on its "Videos Online" page.

You can view the numerous PHS programs right

on your computer. Go to www.ci.pinole.ca.us/about/videos.html and scroll down to PINOLE HISTORY. You'll find our interviews, Veterans Day programs, both of George Vincent's Walking Tours of Historic Downtown Pinole, and the very fine PCTV-produced, 12-part series based on the Historic Walking Tour brochure. It's great TV!

PHS to participate in 100th anniversary of county library

The Pinole Historical Society will be among several West County historical societies participating in the 100th anniversary celebration of the Contra Costa Library system Saturday, March 16, from 1-3 p.m. at the El Sobrante Library.

The participating historical societies will present short programs on the libraries in their communities. The PHS is preparing a Powerpoint program to go along with the history of the Pinole Library.

The Contra Costa County Library will be celebrating its 100th anniversary on July 21, 2013. In honor of this momentous occasion, the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors has proclaimed 2013 "The Year of the Library."

The Contra Costa County Library will commemorate "100 Years of Bringing People and Ideas Together" with five regional events throughout the county, followed by various other displays and programs during the year.

In 1912, a few Pinole and Hercules women met at the "Idle Hours Theatre" (Pinole Skating Rink) to



Pinole Library prior to 1926 (space provided by Mrs. Annette Brandt in front of her home). Photo courtesy of Contra Costa Historical Society and Donald Bastin.

offer suggestions for the betterment of the town. One idea was for a community reading room.

By 1913, the ladies had formed a "library movement," and the first meeting was held at the Pinole Opera House. Mrs. Whitbeck, the county librarian, wanted to place a branch at Pinole. Because of lack of money for a reading room, Pinole's first

library consisted of a cache of books in the small cloakroom at the Opera House on Tennent Avenue. Books were checked out by Pinole's first librarian, Mrs. Annette Brandt.

The Pinole Opera House served as the branch library from February of 1914 until 1917. Then, Mrs. Brandt's husband built a small one-room, corrugated sheet-metal building on their property on School Street. This served as the town library until 1926, when the new City Plaza fire house, jail, and library were built (see photo on page 9). Mrs. Brandt retired from her position in 1946 after 32 years of volunteer service.

Continued on page 11

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Back in the day

By George R. Vincent

JAILED IN PINOLE IN 1900

The location and occupants of Pinole's first jail have been lost in time and memory.

A few pictures survive of early Pinoleans exiting the wooden structure in a playful pose for the camera. But no records have been found to pinpoint its location. This has all changed with the recent discovery of a court case dating back to June of 1900.

This last year of the 19th century found Pinole as a boomtown of 13 plus saloons, all doing a brisk business from the employees at the California Powder Works at Hercules who boarded and drank in Pinole.

Saturday nights were

rowdy and drunks were aplenty. Barbershops and saloons stayed open until 2 a.m. to accommodate ranch hands from the valley and locals from Pinole and Hercules.

Pinole law enforcement consisted of one town constable in charge of Township #11, which was made up of Pinole and Rodeo. Those disturbing the peace were thrown into the small jail to sober up and be released next day. More serious offenders were brought to the county jail in Martinez.

But what was the jail like, and where was it in town? We know from very old-timers' memories that it was made mostly of wood, dilapi-



People "sneaking" out of the old Pinole jail.

dated, and that drunks sometimes dug their way through the rotted floorboards.

It was not until 1926 when the first Pinole City

Hall was built downtown that a small, but secure, jail cell was included for overnight revelers. It was then that Constable Jerry McDonald and his

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famous nightstick subdued brawlers at the Pinole Opera House dances on Tennent Avenue before being escorted to Pinole's new "bar hotel."

What made Pinole's first jail unique was that it once housed the town's first female prisoner whose incarceration caused a community uproar and near-downtown riot.

The drama unfolded when Mrs. Maggie Gomez, who ran a boarding house in Pinole, was accused of the felony crime of grand larceny due to a burglary at her Willow Street residence.

Boarder George Pfeiffer's property, consisting of a rifle, shotgun, three suits of clothes and \$65 in gold coins, was stolen from his room while he was at work in Hercules. Mrs. Gomez professed her innocence, having four male boarders each paying \$20 a month.

Pinole's constable at



Pinole library, fire station and jail, April 1926. The jail was in the back.

the time was Michael Scanlan, a renown tracker of horse and cattle thieves and a no-nonsense Irish law enforcer.

On a Saturday evening at 6 p.m., Scanlan arrested Mrs. Gomez at the corner of Main and Tennent avenues as she walked home from the

Southern Pacific Train Depot. She and her 16-year-old daughter were returning by train from Martinez.

Scanlan had no warrant for her arrest and forcefully took her to lock-up (the old jail). He declared that the weeds were so high around the

jail that he had to tramp them down to get her inside.

The following is Mrs. Gomez's testimony from the later trial:

"He said if I would not mind him, he would treat me like a man. He put his hand on my shoulder

Continued on page 10



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JAILED IN PINOLE IN 1910

Continued from page 9

and said I was his prisoner. He pushed me like a man, opened the jail door and wanted me to go in and I refused. He tried to force me in. People gathered around. He was stronger than I was.

"He said, 'Don't you know who I am? I am the constable. I have the law in my hands and can do what I please.'

"The street was crowded with people. He kept me in jail 3-4 hours until night came and I was shivering with cold and shame with all the people looking at me. It was 9 p.m. when I got home. I was sick in bed two days and under a doctor's care."



Pinole jail, rear of library, 1926.

Scanlan had numerous confrontations with prominent citizens arguing her cause, including her husband and son. Finally, to avoid conditions building up to a riot, the stubborn

Scanlan released her to her husband and son.

Scanlan eventually got a warrant for her arrest. He added insult to injury when he performed what we today call a "strip search" while at her home, still pressing the case against her, an outrageous act for the time.

Mrs. Gomez sued Scanlan for false arrest and imprisonment and emotional distress. In 1903, an all-male jury awarded her \$2,000 in damages, a tidy sum for the time.

The courtroom testimony of Gomez vs. Scanlan revealed invaluable historical information.

The old Pinole jail was located at the east end of Pear Street by Pinole Creek. The Lehmann Brothers' building in 1900 (where Scanlan was waiting) was a general

merchandise store before becoming the Antlers Tavern.

Mrs. Gomez's husband and daughter had died by 1903. She would remarry one of her boarders, George Lumsden, and continue to operate her boarding house, now known as the Lumsden Boarding House.

Boarder George Pfeiffer who was robbed, would marry young Lottie Race of Pinole. Pfeiffer, a carpenter at Hercules by trade, would remodel the home on San Pablo Avenue for his bride, now occupied by the Pinole Creek Cafe.

Abraham Greenfield, another single boarder, would open Pinole's largest three-story merchandise store at the corner of Tennent Avenue and Pear Street, across from St. Joseph's Church. He had begged Scanlan to release Mrs. Gomez from jail.

Greenfield would have Pinole's first telephone and number — Pinole 1. The old Greenfield building still stands, with apartments above and businesses below, including the Alley Cafe.

Mrs. Gomez won her case against Scanlan. But she still had to face charges against her for burglary.

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PHS to participate in 100th anniversary of county library

Continued from page 7

Mrs. Anna Smith was appointed librarian from 1946 until 1956. Mrs. Zoe LeFebvre became librarian in 1957. The library then moved to a smaller building on San Pablo Avenue and then to a city building on Pear Street until 1974.

New library

Due to the efforts of the Pinole Library League, the new library opened its doors on October 23, 1974, to serve a growing population. The library was located on the site of the former Lee Bros. Grocery across from Pinole Valley High School.

The new library was

the showcase in architecture and innovation. It boasted 45,000 volumes of books and could serve up to 30,000 people. It had the latest in multi-media and audio-visual equipment as well as a large meeting room and a reading room to accommodate 120 readers.

The head librarian was Arnold Miller, with Sally Johnson the children's librarian and John Mendonca the young adults librarian. In addition, two large display cases were provided for local history displays.

Murals and mosaic

The library used natural lighting from large windows and skylights and was carpeted in gold with the brick and blue color

theme also continued inside. The outside murals and 70-foot mosaic reflected Native American themes and were designed by noted muralist Emmy Lou Packard.

Formal dedication

The library was formally dedicated on Sunday, December 8, 1974, and attended by more than 200 city and county officials, members of the Pinole Library League, and many citizens.

Master of Ceremonies was Pinole Library League chairman, Charles Smith, who traced steps in funding and locating the project. California State Librarian Ethel S. Crockett gave the main address.

Two plaques were

dedicated. One was presented by the Pinole Library League to the late building architect, John Hans Oswald. Pinole Councilman James Chakedis represented the City of Pinole and dedicated a plaque commemorating Pinole's three former librarians, Mrs. Annette Brandt, Mrs. Anna Smith, and Mrs. Zoe LeFebvre. The three had served sixty years.

Many books

More than 1,400 books were checked out the first day of operation compared to 150 a day in the old, pre-1974 Pear Street Library.

— By George Vincent

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It happened back then



Historic Pinole: The Church of Baseball

In 1892 a Baptist pastor heard that some Pinole young men preferred baseball to hearing him preach on a Sunday.

The pastor had expected them to be in attendance at church. So he called for their benching – not to the dugout, but to the pews.

With Spring Training camps set to open in February, we thought the following excerpt

from an article about various religious happenings would be an appropriate kickoff to another glorious season of baseball.

The article appeared in the July 11, 1892, edition of the *San Francisco Call* newspaper, under the headline "The Religious World":

"Last Sunday afternoon when Pastor IT. A. Flsk of the Baptist Church went to fill his appointment



Ruff's baseball team, Pinole, 1920s.

at Pinole, he found that a number of young men who might be expected to be in his audience were out at a baseball game.

He at once announced that on next Sunday he would use as his subject 'Three Strikes and Out,' showing where the career thus begun by the young men would end."

Editor's note: This article is from the California Digital Newspaper Collection, Center for Bibliographic Studies and Research, University of California, Riverside <http://cdnc.ucr.edu/cdnc>.

These articles about Pinole were featured on *Pinole Patch*. We thank former *Pinole Patch* Editor Rob Shea for preserving and promoting the history of Pinole.

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INDIAN ABDUCTION LEADS TO DEATH

By Nilda Rego
Contra Costa Times Correspondent
REPRINTED WITH PERMISSION

There were laws against kidnapping Indians, but the ranchers of the 1850s didn't pay much attention to them. When certain Contra Costa ranchers needed cheap labor, a vaquero was sent to raid the Indian villages to the north.

On June 10, 1850, Ramon Berryessa came to Contra Costa County with four Indians who had been abducted from Clear Lake. Two were adults and two were boys of about 11.

On his way to Martinez, Berryessa stopped at the Soto ranch in Pinole. He was welcomed and fed breakfast, as were his captives. By noon he was back on the road. It was the last time that any of his friends saw him alive.

The next day, William Hendricks spotted a saddle by the side of the road, and near it was Berryessa's body. He had been stabbed several times.

A posse was organized to search for the missing Indians. They were found hiding in the tules across the Carquinez Strait. The Indians were brought to Martinez for trial.

Dr. Samuel J. Tennent, who lived in Pinole with his wife, Rafaela, was in Martinez that day. He felt sorry for the little boys and persuaded Judge Absalom Peak, who was presiding at the preliminary hearing, to let him take the boys home to his ranch.

Rafaela welcomed the 11-year-olds. She insisted the two be baptized and given the Christian names of Diego and Jose Maria.

The trial of the adult Indians was not held until September. By this time the



Nilda Rego

two had been locked up for three months. The young boys, on the other hand, had been enjoying their stay at the Tennent ranch, which they found very much to their liking.

It turned out that young Jose Maria was the son of the Indian chief in the Clear Lake area. He knew several Indian dialects. When the time came for the trial, Jose Maria translated what the captive Indians said to a third Indian, who then translated for the judge.

According to trial testimony, Berryessa was changing saddles when the Indians saw their chance to escape. They grabbed him from behind and ordered the boys to get his sword. The two adult Indians then took turns stabbing Berryessa.

As one of the Indians thrust the knife into Berryessa's body, he yelled, "Why should you ill treat me? I am a man."

The jury found the two guilty of manslaughter. They were sentenced to two weeks in jail, which they had already served, and fined \$1, and were told they could go home.

The judge told Diego and Jose Maria they could go back to Clear Lake, too. But the two decided they'd rather live with the Tennents in Pinole. The judge gave Samuel J. Tennent custody.

The story of Diego and Jose Maria was written by the late Mary Tennent Carleton in 1966 for the Contra Costa County Historical Society. She was Samuel's granddaughter, and had heard the story from her father, James Hugh Tennent.



Students compete in annual PHS essay contest

Students from Pinole's five elementary schools — Collins, Ellerhorst, Shannon, Stewart, and St. Joseph) are busy writing essays for the fifth annual Pinole History Essay Contest.

Students will write 250-word essays on this topic: "What Makes a Community Like Pinole so Special?"

The contest will run through the end of February, and awards will be given to students who write the best essays at each school in March.

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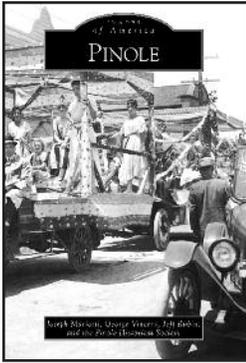
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LOCAL HISTORY BOOKS AVAILABLE FROM PHS

The Pinole Historical Society stocks Arcadia books about Hercules, Richmond, El Sobrante, El Cerrito, Crockett, Rodeo, Martinez, and Port Costa. And, of course, we have plenty of Pinole books.

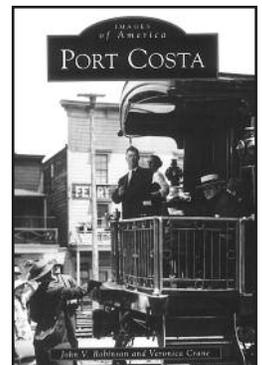
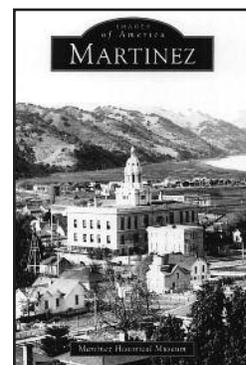
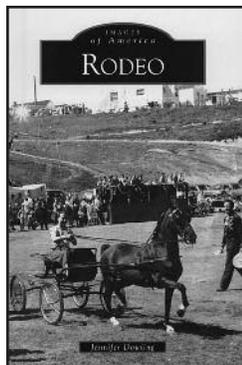
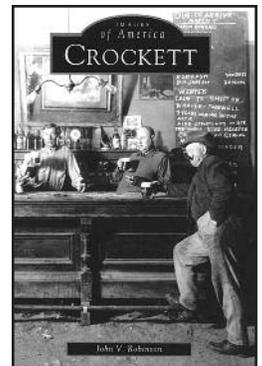
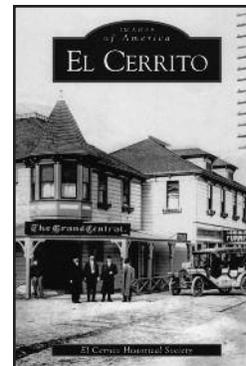
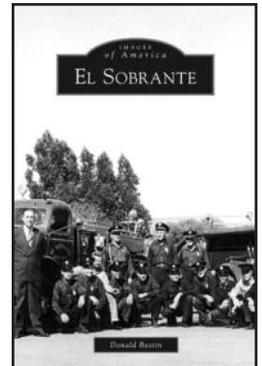
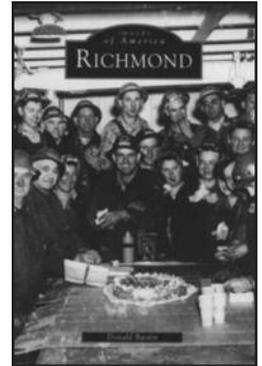
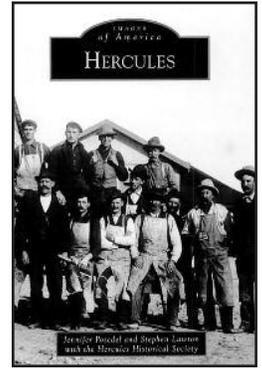
You may purchase one or more of these books from us at the Pinole Farmers' Market—we're there every other Saturday from April through December.

Pinole, Hercules, Richmond, El Sobrante, and El Cerrito books are **\$24**, including 8.75% sales tax.

Crockett, Rodeo, Martinez, and Port Costa books are **\$22**, including 8.75% sales tax.

You may order one or more by mail and we'll ship them to you. Send your order to **Pinole Historical Society, P.O. Box 285, Pinole, CA 94564.**

Mail prices, including sales tax and postage are: Pinole, Hercules, Richmond, El Sobrante, and El Cerrito: **\$27**; Crockett, Rodeo, Martinez, and Port Costa: **\$25**



50 years ago — 1963

January 5: San Diego Chargers beat Boston Patriots, 51-10, in American Football League (AFL) championship game.

January 6: "Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom" with Marlin Perkins debuts on NBC.

January 7: First Class postage raised from 4 cents to 5 cents.

January 14: George C. Wallace sworn in as governor of Alabama. His address states, "Segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever!"

January 17: Wilt Chamberlain, of the San Francisco Warriors, scores 67 points against the Los Angeles Lakers.

February 9: First flight of Boeing 727 jet.

February 20: Willie Mays, of the San Francisco Giants, signs a record \$100,000 per-year contract.

February 25: Beatles release their first single in the United States, "Please Please Me."

March 31: Los Angeles ends streetcar service after 90 years.

April 8: At the Academy Awards, "Lawrence of Arabia" named Best Picture. Anne Bancroft ("The Miracle Worker") and Gregory Peck ("To Kill a Mockingbird") named Best Actress and Best Actor, respectively.

April 9: Winston Churchill becomes first honorary U.S. citizen.



Winston Churchill

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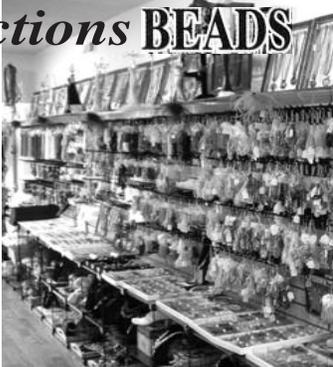


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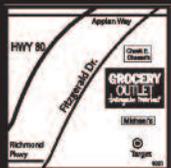
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