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Museum News



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will be donated to MHM at no extra cost to you.

As we begin 2019, we acknowledge the significance of preserving and sharing our local history and are reminded of Martin Luther King Jr's words: "*We are not makers of history. We are made of history*". Your support makes it possible for us to continue to grow and expand our efforts to collect, preserve and promote Marin's heritage.

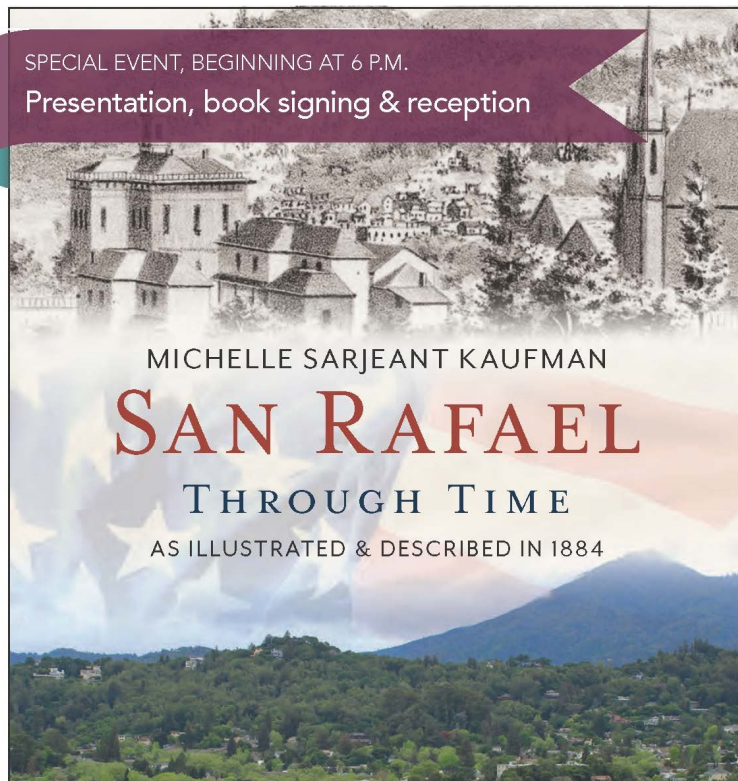
(Note: Because donations are made by the AmazonSmile Foundation, they are not tax deductible by the consumer). Many Thanks!

Museum Events

Marin History Museum presents:

Feb. 28 • Elks Lodge 1312 Mission Ave, San Rafael

6:00 book launch & signing 7:00 presentation



SAN RAFAEL THROUGH TIME: AS ILLUSTRATED AND DESCRIBED IN 1884

Presented by Michelle Sarjeant Kaufman

Join us to compare and contrast the notable homes and businesses of late-19th century San Rafael with their present-day selves. In this presentation Michelle Kaufman will examine lithographs from 1884, designed to bring newcomers to the town, alongside her own photographs of the same buildings taken from 2016-2017.

Advance sales, call 415.382.1182 — \$23.99. Purchase price includes admission to presentation & reception.

6:00 p.m. Book launch and signing. No-host bar with appetizers at the Elks Lodge Bar. Raffle \$1/ticket: Book combo, Early San Rafael and Modern San Rafael

7:00 p.m. Presentation

Suggested donation is \$10.

Free for Elk members with current card.

Please RSVP for the event

info@marinhistory.org · www.marinhistory.org

415-382-1182

Feature Article

Valentine's Day in Marin

Valentine's Day in Marin has always been celebrated with flowers, candies and cards to show that special someone you care. For Mexican-born Californians, February 14 is known as *El Día del Amor y la Amistad*, "The Day of Love and Friendship," and includes all close friends and family.

During the early 1900s, merchants decorated shop windows with red hearts and cupids, florists stocked up on bouquets, while postmasters and carriers prepared for unusually heavy mail deliveries. Young people planned Valentine's Day dinners at private homes, couples attended Masquerade Balls at fancy hotels, clubs hosted Valentine's dessert parties and children made cards for friends and teachers. During WWII, young ladies sent photos to their favorite GIs - in 1942 four photos cost \$2.95. In the 1950s, newspapers ran recipes for red velvet chocolate cake and coconut cupcakes with maraschino cherry icing.

Roses were the classic choice if your sweetheart liked flowers. From 1922-83, the

Niven greenhouses in Larkspur grew some of the state's most beautiful roses and orchids. Red roses meant love; pink roses, "I like you" and yellow roses, friendship. Giving an exotic orchid, a rare flower treasured by royalty, was said to show even deeper love and affection.



Source: Susan Cluff

Candy was popular then too. Back in the days of rail travel, every Marin town had at least one confectioners shop, often doubling as an ice cream parlor. From 1906-1921, Stocking's in San Rafael specialized in handmade filled chocolates in different shapes.



Stocking's Candy Store Source: MHM

For cards, store-bought ones are most convenient, but there's nothing like a one-of-a-kind love letter. Local stationers like Standler's in San Anselmo carried the makings for elaborate homemade cards - cutwork lace, ribbons, trimmings, etchings of birds, butterflies, hearts and flowers. Now what to write inside?



Valentine to Louise Boyd, 1931 Source: MHM

Printer's assistant Joe McNeil who faithfully courted teacher Ellen Redding through the U.S. Mail must have written something right, the couple eventually married. We're lucky enough to share Ellen's pleasure in beau Joe's envelopes, forty-six of them, beautifully illustrated.



Source: Anne T. Kent Room, Civic Center Library

Sausalito poet Daniel O'Connell (1849-1899), still in love with his wife after seven children, penned this:

"And so our love – beyond the rim of storms it glows forever. Nor rolling cloud nor fog wreaths dim, nor sun or sea may sever."

Then, as now, it's the thought that counts. Happy Valentine's Day!

By Susan Cluff

Faces of Marin

JOSEPH D. McNEIL

(1898 – 1975)



Joe McNeil self-drawing

SOURCE: Anne T. Kent Collection, Civic Center Library

Between 1925 – 1933, Joe McNeil wrote faithfully to his fiancée Ellen Redding in San Rafael. Joe worked for a lithograph company in Los Angeles and carefully illustrated and colored each envelope, adding comical notes and directions.

Joe would draw scenes from their daily life — him at his desk working, a favorite picnic spot, a trip to the beach, a rainy day. One shows Ellen on horseback in west Marin, another, in a classroom with children. Ellen was a teacher at Burdell Ranch, a one-room schoolhouse, and rode there daily from her family's farm. Later, she taught fifth grade at 4th Street Grammar School. Anticipating their wedding date, Joseph drew a picture of the two of them driving away “just married” with tin cans clattering along behind.

Joe and Ellen were married at the old St. Mary's church in Nicasio. They had two daughters and two sons. After Joe died, Ellen was interviewed in 1980 about her early life and family. Her [oral history](#) and [Joe's illustrated envelopes](#) are in the Anne T. Kent Collection.

By Susan Cluff

JAMES NIVEN

(1867-1933)



Source: Susan Cluff

Scotsman James Niven moved to Larkspur in 1921 after working on the Henry Bothin estate in Ross as a gardener. An avid baseball fan, he'd scouted the county wherever he went to watch baseball games for the best climate and hours of sunlight for flower growing.

James and sons Walter and George constructed dozens of glass and metal greenhouses on a sixteen-acre site near downtown, becoming one of the state's largest growers and suppliers of orchids, begonias and roses. When horticulturist John McLaren who built Golden Gate Park visited in 1928, he pronounced the nursery "perfect, second to none." In 1932, one of Nevin's prize-winning orchids was valued at \$10,000.

In 1929, James' son Walter died tragically in a boiler accident. James passed away in 1933 leaving George Nevin (1900-1962) to carry on the business. The Nevin family continued to run the nurseries until 1983. The greenhouses then became derelict and in 2013 were torn down for the Rose Lane subdivision.

By Susan Cluff

CHARLES F. STOCKING

(1866-1949)



Detail from Stocking store photo Source: MHM

Charles Stocking was a merchant in San Rafael who operated a candy and ice cream store in the Dubois Building at 726 Fourth Street. Born in Oregon, the son of a California Pioneer and Forty-niner, Stocking opened his first confectioner's shop on Polk Street in San Francisco in 1887.

After the earthquake and fire of 1906, Stocking moved his business and family to San Rafael. His shop was a real old-fashioned soda parlor with plate glass windows, marble and wood trim, white tables and chairs. Stocking made chocolates and hard candies using hand-cranked and electric machines. He also made ice cream. In 1912, he encouraged readers of the *Marin Tocsin* to try "the new drink Malted Milk... the most healthful and delicious drink you've ever tasted." It was a concoction of ice cream, chocolate syrup, milk and malt powder, mixed and frothed in an electric blender.

Charles Stocking ran the candy store for fifteen years, his wife Nettie and daughter Abby working beside him. He passed away in 1949 in Napa at the age eighty-three.

By Susan Cluff

Community Events of Interest

Wednesday, February 6, 2019 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

Mill Valley Historical Society

Mill Valley Library

First Wednesday: Saving Tamalpais Number 9

The Mt. Tamalpais Scenic Railway thrust 19th century Mill Valley onto the world stage. In 1930 the railroad was swept from the mountain, its cars burned, rails sold and relics scrapped. Today, one piece, the last locomotive purchased, survives. Historian Fred Runner will talk about the lost railroad and the project to save engine #9. With special musical guests Dore Collier & His Millbillies!

Fred is historian of the Mt. Tamalpais Scenic Railway and the West Point Inn. He is author of *Mount Tamalpais Scenic Railway*.

Saturday, February 9 1pm-2pm

Bay Model

Ship Operations in the Bay

Join Captain Craig Thomas of Agile Marine as he provides a better understanding of commercial shipping operations and movements in the Bay. The program includes the types of ships, ship construction and layout, commercial considerations, types, and locations of terminals in the Bay Area, manning requirements including careers and International, U.S. and California Regulations. A typical voyage for a tanker and container ship will be tracked from outside the bay, into a terminal, carrying out cargo operations, and departing to sea towards the next port.

Monday, February 25 6-7:30 pm

Marin County Library (See below for location)

Shipwrecks of Marin

Marin County is a graveyard of ships. Its steep rock-bound shores, treacherous currents and frequent fogs have been the doom of hundreds of ships for over four hundred years. Local historian Brian K. Crawford has done extensive research fleshing out the details of famous wrecks from contemporary accounts, and identifying

more than a hundred wrecks not documented elsewhere for his comprehensive new book, *Shipwrecks of Marin*, just released this month.

PLEASE NOTE LOCATION OF EVENT: Anne T. Kent California Room Map & Special Collections Annex, 1600 Los Gatos, Suite 182 (via Lobby B) San Rafael.

For more information on this free event, call 415-473-7419.

Monday, Feb 25, 2019, 10:30 – 11:30am

Corte Madera Library

The Olive In California: History of An Immigrant Tree

Dr. Judith M. Taylor, author of *The Olive in California: History of An Immigrant Tree*, will trace the tree's journey, beginning in the sixteenth century, when it arrived in Mexico, through the present day.

From the Collection

Candy Roller used in Stocking's Candy Store



Cast iron “drop” candy roller with brass rollers and wood handle, c. 1900, manufactured by Thomas Mills & Bros., Philadelphia.

Victorian-era hand-operated machines, like this one, produced fruit-flavored candies in a variety of irresistible shapes. Confectioners of the day would hand-feed strips of warm, pliable sugar through interchangeable brass rollers. Hard candies emerged,

separated by a thin layer of brittle sugar. Candy makers lightly dropped the cooled sheets to separate the candies. You can watch the process [here](#).

Our records indicate that Charles Stocking molded delicious drops with this roller at his cherished confectionary and ice cream shop once located near the corner of Fourth and B Streets in San Rafael.

Sources: Marin History Museum, mentalfloss.com

By Heather Powell, Collections Manager

In the News - 100 Years Ago

From the *Marin Journal*

February 1919

Hunters of Skunk Shoot Mt. "lyin"

We have just read a Marin county "Lyin" story in the San Francisco Chronicle.

Residents of the county need fear not, for the beast is a dead one. He was mistaken for a skunk by some mighty hunters from across the bay and was dispatched by their trusty big game rifles.

The animal was shot in a vital spot somewhere between San Anselmo and Wood acre. They didn't leave it "lyin" there; they took it to San Francisco, along with the tale of the beast, which they took off and told to the newspapers.

The hunters who have denuded Marin county of its first and last mountain lion in twenty-five years are O. C. Barrymore of San Francisco and F. W. Eckert, of Oakland. It measured 7 feet and 2 inches - the lion. The story in the papers measured 2 inches.

**

VOLUNTEER JOB OPPORTUNITIES

We can use your help! Have a little time on our hands and looking to help a local

non-profit? Below is a list of some of the volunteer positions we need to fill.

Please let us know if any of these look interesting to you by emailing info@marinhistory.org or calling 415-382-1182. We would love to hear from you!

Writer

We are starting to create a lot of content for our eNewsletters, social media sites, and future traveling exhibitions and publications. If you like to do historical research and write short articles, we could use your help.

Editor

Along with writers, we need editors to give the final article its blessing before it goes to print. This volunteer job can be done from home or on site. Let us know if you have that required eagle eye and grammatical tenacity to tackle this job.

Photographer

Capture the moment for us! Your photos of the Museum's special events and exhibitions will be invaluable for public outreach, future fundraising campaigns and our institution's historical record. We could use your help documenting our history!

Are you a student looking for community service hours? Know a student who needs hours before graduating? The Marin History Museum is a 501(c)3 and can grant students their community service hours.

Let us know and we'll take care of it!

Marin History Museum - Craemer Family Research and Collection Facility

45 Leveroni Ct Novato CA 94949

Please call for an appointment: 415-382-1182

Mailing Address: PO Box 150727, San Rafael, CA 94915

For more information: www.marinhistory.org info@marinhistory.org