

San Pedro Bay Historical Society Newsletter

LATE SPRING 2019

JUNE

DAR Awards Historic Preservation Grant for the Muller House Museum

The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution announced in May that they will donate \$4,485 to help cover expenses for much-needed preservation work at the Muller House Museum. Funding for this project was made possible through the sponsorship of the Point Vicente Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, of the Palos Verdes Peninsula.

If you have visited the museum recently, you may have noticed the toll that time and the coastal weather have taken on the front porch, particularly the flooring, newel posts and balustrade. The grant will address the preservation of the porch area as well as the historic stick flagpole from the E. K. Wood Lumber Company in the front yard, plus two spots of the under-flooring inside the house.

We feel very fortunate that they have chosen to assist us in these preservation efforts. We would like to thank particularly Paula Hawkins, Regent of the Point Vicente Chapter; Karin Amour, District XIII Director and State Chair, Public Relations and Media; and Society member Terry Bergman, also of the Point Vicente Chapter, who first brought the grant opportunity to our attention.



Standing on the Muller House Museum front porch, SPBHS Secretary Frank Anderson and President Mona Dallas Reddick show off the grant-check replica from the Point Vicente Chapter, NSDAR.

The DAR grants program was started in 2010. Funding is awarded to support projects in local communities which promote the organization's mission areas of historic preservation, education, and patriotism. Hundreds of grants applications are received each year, making competition high. Groups applying must be sponsored by a local DAR chapter, and the Point Vicente Chapter provided valuable guidance and wrote an enthusiastic letter of support.

The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution was founded in 1890 to promote patriotism, preserve American history, and support better education for the nation's children. Its members are descended from patriots who won American independence during the Revolutionary War. It has over 185,000 members in approximately 3,000 chapters worldwide, making it one of the world's largest and most active service organizations.

A sampling of the awards made in the category of historic preservation reflect a broad concern with historically significant records, artifacts, and architecture.

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For the Cow Neck Peninsula Historical Society (NY): headstone restoration; The Speaker's House (PA): kitchen restoration; Bluffton Historical Preservation Society (PA): digitize genealogical files and storage; Cumberland University (TN): restoration of portraits; Bartholomew County Historical Society (IN): farmhouse windows restoration. Our application was the only one awarded in California in the category, so we are indeed pleased.

San Pedro Gets Married: Wedding Attire at the Muller House Museum

For the traditional wedding season, Kara McLeod and Toni Martinovich have set up a display of wedding attire that has a San Pedro connection: two bridal gowns, a bridesmaid's dress, a mother-of-the-bride ensemble, and some trousseau items. One bridal gown dates from the 1939 wedding of Lillian Larson and Karl (Brud) Peterson, who was an owner of the former Peterson's Market at Weymouth Corners (now Pirozzi's Italian Deli). Reporting on the Peterson wedding, the *News-Pilot* said of the bride, "She wore a princess style gown of white satin, fashioned en train. Her long veil fell from a coronet of orange blossoms. She carried lilies of the valley and orchids."

A second gown, donated by Judith Webb, dates from the late 1950s and has the distinction of being worn by four different brides, including Judith. The 1939 attire will be displayed downstairs at the Muller House, and the 1950s gown upstairs.



1869 American wedding gown, Metropolitan Museum, NY

Make the Wine Taste a Success!

Gather with friends and members on the Muller House Museum patio, Saturday afternoon, July 27, to sample wines and enjoy hors d'oeuvres. Take a turn at bidding on eclectic offerings in the silent auction. This year several vintage side chairs will be part of the mix. See the reservation form on page 5 of this newsletter.

We appreciate everyone who can support this event by donating items to the silent auction or bringing food items for the buffet. It's our most important fundraiser of the year.

If you have something for the silent auction, please contact Toni Martinovich at xxxxxx. Popular items include merchant certificates, tickets for cruises, sports events, films or theatre, gift baskets, nice jewelry or home decor, and always San Pedro memorabilia.

This year, Linda Howat and Mona Dallas Reddick are handling the food arrangements. If you can contribute a "finger-food" item, please give Mona a ring xxxxxx or send an email to mdalred@gmail.com.

Volunteer for the Saturday, August 17 Yard & Boutique Sale

Preparations for the popular sale will begin soon. Could you spare a few hours to help with pricing, making and posting signage, or being present on the day of the sale, which runs from 8:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.? Set-up and staffing the gate on the sale day starts at 7:00 a.m. To volunteer, please contact Mona at xxxxx or send an email to mdalred@gmail.com.

Members of the San Pedro Bay Historical Society receive the newsletter by mail or upon request by email.

Those interested in preserving and celebrating San Pedro's rich heritage are invited to join the Society. Membership information is available on our website. See back of newsletter.

Newsletter written and produced by Mona Dallas Reddick.

Thank you to mailing volunteers: Mary Jo Walker, John Mattson, Bob Reddick, and volunteers at the Archives.

March Quilt Show

Equipped with a vintage Singer Featherweight, expert quilter Julie Sawyer (shown in photo below) demonstrated piecing techniques in the Muller House living room on both show Sundays. She brought examples of old patterned flour sacks, which women would use as a source of quilt fabric, and also her mother's 80-year old baby quilt, backed with a feed sack. Visible in the photo of Julie is Carol Larsen Harshaw's quilt, made in honor of her daughter, Tiffany, who served in the U.S. Navy from 1989 – 1993. Carol supplied her with blank muslin squares on which Tiffany wrote accounts of her navy experiences every Friday for two years. Carol then pieced these squares with patterned fabric frames and included at the top a panel of miniature American flags, creating a diary quilt of her daughter's service.

Others showing quilts were Joe and Martha McKinzie. Joe's mother's charming "Ride 'Em Cowboy," created for the young McKinzie, was another featured item. Andrea Luse Anderson showed off her mother's work, including a baby quilt made for her brother, our current secretary Frank Anderson. Mona Dallas Reddick brought her grandmother Victoria's 90-year old red-and-white bear-claw patterned quilt and an appliqué quilt top of Americana and nautical motifs made by San Pedro commercial artist Helen G. Kane, between 1933 and 1936.



Julie Sawyer demonstrated piecing quilt squares and explained techniques.

In Memory of Nan Roberts

We are sad to report that Nancy "Nan" L. Roberts passed away on May 8, 2019. A few of her many contributions to the SPBHS are highlighted here. The *Daily Breeze* published an obituary May 24.

Nan was one of the important figures in the creation of the Muller House Museum. After the house was relocated to its present site, she worked alongside husband Bill Roberts and others on the interior restoration. Bill's *Shoreline* article of June 1997 tells of reaching a certain point in the progress: "It was about this time that the interior paint crew moved in. The crew consisted of my wife, Nan. She had the doubtful privilege of scrubbing walls and woodwork, scraping countless layers of paint from doors and trim . . . [all this] needed to be done before she could even think of applying the necessary coats of paint."



Nan on right, with Mary Jo Walker holding the city's bronze plaque naming the Muller House as Historic Monument No. 253.

In addition to her splendid work as a painter, Nan donated furniture and artifacts, collaborating with the interior committee to establish a "look" for the house representative of a prosperous middle-class family of early twentieth-century San Pedro. As the house was readied for the public, she wrote "The Muller House Docent Handbook" and continued to advise volunteers on house matters for many years. For the old SPBHS bulletin, she penned articles written in the voice of a personified Muller House which eagerly awaited "her" guests and enjoyed the attentions of the volunteers. She often led special house tours for school children and

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with her culinary expertise created the luncheons that used to be enjoyed there.

Services for Nan will be held Saturday, July 14th, 2:00 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church, San Pedro (8th and Averill). Rather than flowers, the family requests that any donations be give to San Pedro Meals on Wheels and New Horizons. The websites, respectively, are:
www.sanpedromealsonwheels.org
<https://newhorizons-sfv.org>

Other Passings

Sadly, other San Pedro members and friends left us this spring. Well-known and much-loved Kuzma "Matty" Domancich passed away May 18. He was devoted to the town, its residents, and supported many civic and social organizations, particularly the San Pedro Elks Lodge. The half-tone picture at the left comes from a 1944 Todd Shipyard employee newsletter in the Archives. It shows a very young Matty shortly after he enlisted in the U. S. Navy during World War II.



Matty was laid to rest at Green Hills Memorial Park on May 28, after a funeral Mass at Mary Star of the Sea Church. For a fuller account of his life, please see the online version of the obituary in the *Daily Breeze*.

Ann Gusha of Williams' Book Store passed away in May. Son Jerry Gusha reports that at this time arrangements have not been finalized. Ann was born to Croatian parents in the Seattle area but grew up here, where she raised three children and entered the book business as an employee of Williams' Book Store in 1941. In 1980, with Jerry, she purchased the store and was a constant presence almost until its closing in 2013. How many fondly remember stopping by for a quick visit whenever we were downtown!

Harvard and CSULB Students Visit the Archives

In March, Harvard University students spent an afternoon examining records and photos in the Archives. Funded by the university, they were carrying out field research in San Pedro and Wilmington as part of a course that explores how these areas have developed. Their goal, they explained, is "to expose what underlying forces shape . . . cultural identities and conflicts" here.

Then in April, a series of California State University Long Beach students visited in pursuit of historical San Pedro buildings and sites, a kind of scavenger hunt assigned in their "Human Geography" class. Archives staff helped them with historical facts and the layout of the town.



Harvard students, from left: Elena Clarke, Corinne Morain, and Jennifer Matchett



CSU Long Beach students, from left: Fabian Arteaga, Victor Rivera, Kevin Villatta, and Nancy Bautista

San Pedro Bay Historical Society's

2019 Summer Wine Taste



Saturday, July 27, 3:00 to 6:00 P.M.

The Muller House Museum

1542 South Beacon Street, San Pedro

Spend the afternoon sampling wines and tasty hors d'oeuvres, plus bidding on exciting Silent Auction items.

Obtain tickets from SPBHS Board Members or send in your reservation with the form below. Space is limited.

A \$25.00 donation is requested.

For more information, call (310) 365-8873

Name _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Number of tickets _____ x \$25.00 each = Total \$ _____ enclosed

Please make your check payable to: **San Pedro Bay Historical Society** and mail with this portion to **Toni Martinovich, P.O. Box 6905, San Pedro, CA 90734.**

Receipt of your check will be acknowledged by phone or email, and your ticket will be held at the gate. Proceeds support the San Pedro Bay Historical Society — Thank you!

San Pedro Bay Historical Society

P.O. Box 1568

San Pedro, CA 90733-1568

Summer Calendar at the Muller House Museum

Details about events can be found on our website and inside newsletter.

Thursday, July 4: Ice Cream Social & Fireworks Viewing.

Beginning Sunday, July 7: Bridal gowns on view

Saturday, July 27: Annual Wine Taste & Silent Auction.

Saturday, August 17: Yard & Boutique Sale, 8:00–12:30

Yard & Boutique Sale Donations Still Needed

Thank you to everyone who has already donated items for the Saturday, August 17, sale. We still welcome more donations of items in good salable condition. Drop-offs are accepted during Muller House Museum open hours on the first two Sundays of the month, and pick-ups can be arranged by phoning the Archives. Email is often the quicker method: sanpedrohistory@gmail.com. Furniture items must be small. Unfortunately, we cannot accept everyday clothing, most books, or VHS tapes. Electrical items should be in good working order.

San Pedro Bay Historical Society's Archives

6th Floor of the

John S. Gibson, Jr. Municipal Building

638 S. Beacon Street, San Pedro, CA 90731

Phone: (310) 548-3208

Open Mondays & Wednesdays, 1:00–4:00

The first Saturday of the month, 11:00–2:00

The Muller House Museum

1542 S. Beacon Street

San Pedro, CA 90731

Phone: (310) 831-1788

Open the first two Sundays of the month

1:00 to 4:00

The last house tour starts at 3:30

Visit the Muller House Gift Shop for SPBHS publications, china, glassware, and the unexpected.

www.sanpedrobayhistoricalsociety.com

Contact us at sanpedrohistory@gmail.com