



6101 Main Street

Clayton Chronicles

A Publication of the Clayton Historical Society

PO BOX 94 • CLAYTON, CALIFORNIA • 94517

(925) 672-0240

www.claytonhistory.org

Winter 2012

Issue #141

35th Annual Camellia Tea

Wow, 35 years and counting! Please join us for the 35th Annual Camellia Tea, which honors the descendants of Clayton's pioneering families. Drinks and cookies will be served at the Museum.

Sunday, February 12th from 1:00 – 4:00 pm

Enjoy refreshments while visiting with Clayton's residents, old and new. Also, check out the newly unveiled exhibit – Yum-Yum Bubble Gum – that catalogues the history of candy in the USA since 1800.

There is no admission charge, although donations are always welcome. Children accompanied by an adult are also welcome. Hope to see you there!



Society Completes 2nd Successful Christmas Home Tour

The Clayton Historical Society's second annual Christmas Home Tour was very successful. We had 186 guests come through on Friday, December 9th. We wish to thank the many people for their enthusiasm as they toured the five beautifully decorated homes! We also wish to thank the homeowners for generously opening their lovely homes for all to see. Lastly, we could not have the tour without the many volunteers and committee members that worked so hard.

This was an important fundraiser for the restoration of the Museum's garden. We wish to make this an annual event and at this time have two wonderful people that have offered their homes for 2012, which will be held Sunday, December 16th. However, since we show five homes, we need three more. If you have a home or know of a home that would like to be on the tour, please contact JoAnn Caspar at 925-672-8680. If you are worried about having your home on the tour, then please ask the homeowners that participated this past year. They truly enjoyed sharing their beautiful homes!

President's Message

by Ted Meriam & Sheila Driscoll



Dear Donors & Friends:

As we begin a new year, we wanted to update you on our new approach to memberships and annual giving in support of the Clayton Historical Society. Like many non-profits, we rely upon the individual gifts of time and money as we preserve and promote our local history. Historically, our members have provided annual donations in exchange for a membership in the Society.

In 2012, we will continue this membership model, but in a more simple way. **Starting this month, we will be moving to a yearly membership that aligns with the calendar year.** This will provide a more consistent time table for your annual dues, removing the need to wonder when your membership expires. We are also pleased to announce that you can now easily renew your membership online at: <http://www.claytonhistory.org/donate.aspx>.

If you'd like to continue supporting the Museum, please decide on your membership category below for 2012 and submit your membership renewal this month. Your donations are tax deductible under our 501(c)3 non-profit status and allow us to continue operating the Museum's exhibits and programs throughout the year.

We would like to thank you for your continued support of our fine Clayton Historical Society and Museum!

Ted Meriam, President

Sheila Driscoll, VP of Membership

(925) 672-8100 | www.tedmeriam.com

(925) 672-7949 | sheiladewey@juno.com



Society Yearly Donation Categories for 2012:

- Senior Couple - \$15
- Individual - \$20
- Couple - \$30
- Student - \$10
- Senior - \$10
- Sustaining - \$50
- Business - \$100
- Volunteer - 25 hours/year in the previous calendar year.
- Other

Major Gift Categories for 2012:

- Life-Individual - \$500
- 1857 League-Individual - \$1,857



Please check the donation category and print all of the following information:

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Email Address: _____

Make checks payable to the Clayton Historical Society

P.O. Box 94
Clayton, CA 94517

Questions? Contact...

Sheila Driscoll, VP of Membership
sheiladewey@juno.com | 925-672-7947



Communications from your Curators

From Mary Spryer

Adela Oldford really talks up our “free” field trips to her teacher-friends. The **Calvary Temple Christian School 2nd Graders** visited for the first time in June 2010 and their teacher, **Mrs. Sadler** came again in September with her new batch of 2nd-graders. They had a wonderful time. Most of our field trip crew was there: **Dick Ellis, Dan Richardson, Leslie Howell, Donna Kullman and Marj Ditzel.**

Without volunteers, we can't open the museum during CBCA's Oktoberfest. The following docents worked on September 24th and 25th: **Mary Spryer, Renee Wing, Charmetta Mann, JoAnn Caspar, Sally Turner, Peggy Arundell, Marj Ditzel, Pat Spada, Martin Easton** and student docent, **Samantha.** In October, we held the drawing for the quilted wall hanging. **Patricia Derickson,** was the lucky winner of “I'll be Home for Christmas” pieced by **Linda Pinder** and quilted by **Elaine Beattie** from **In Stitches Quilting,** Walnut Creek. Later in October, **Boy Scout Pack 262, Tiger Den 3** arrived for a tour. Eleven Tiger Cubs, 6 siblings and assorted mothers enjoyed learning about olden times in Clayton. The Sunday after the Tiger's visited, **Pack 262, Tiger Den 3's Den Mother, Judy Gibb,** called for a work party at the museum. Thanks to Vince and **Aklysa Pelose** and **Nick Gibb** and their parents who raked the leaves and swept the sidewalks around the grounds.



November 20th brought a new exhibit to the museum's dining room called YUM-YUM BUBBLE GUM. It's an exhibit featuring PEZ dispensers and M&M collectables along with a lot of fun history facts about candy. **Assistant Curator, Renee Wing,** did much of the research and helped me mount the display. Student docents, **Kate** and **Samantha** helped with some of the planning and had some great ideas that were implemented. **Patrick Hyde, owner of Hyde Printing on Willow Pass Road in Concord,** loaned some of his M&M collectables for the exhibit. Clayton residents, **David Manoguerra** and **Michael Tuohey** have their PEZ dispenser collections on loan and **Dick Ellis** loaned some See's Candies truck and car collectables to round out the display. A special thanks to Clayton's own **Elaine's Toffee Co.** and **Beverly's** for their help with our display. Thanks to one of our docents, **Marj Ditzel** and her daughter, **Katy Barker** who brought their granddaughter/daughter, **Sarah Barker,** to the museum and ended up on the FRONT COVER of a recent issue of **the Clayton Pioneer** which featured our newest exhibit.

The museum was decorated this Christmas by **Barbara Allen, Peter Spryer, Kirsten Spryer, Sher Laurence, Marj Ditzel, Renee Wing** and **Dick Ellis.** Our Kids' Corner was decorated by **Marj Ditzel** and her four granddaughters **Taylor Ditzel, Annalise Natali, Julie Barker** and **Sarah Barker** (the paper chain queen)! The museum looked beautiful for the Second Annual Christmas Home Tour. Volunteers working at the museum during the tour were **Adela Oldford, Julie Pierce, Renee Wing, Kirsten Spryer, Barbra Fogerson, Barbara Allen, John Rubiales, Judy Bates, Sally Turner** and **Ted Meriam.** The museum was especially wonderful the day of the tour due to a display of the reproduction wooden toys made for our Christmas display by volunteers from the **Diablo woodworkers** using the descriptions and dimensions found in toy catalogs from the Victorian Era. A particular thanks to **Diablo Woodworkers, Jeff Traeger, Richard Scherin, Dick Ellis** and **Ron Kersey** for spearheading this project. Tour goers got a bonus this year when **Sarah Skow,** owner of the **Royal Rooster** on Diablo Street at Main, gave them discounts on holiday décor and ornaments the day of the tour.

If you missed the 2011 Christmas Tour, you can still see the wooden toys on display in the children's bedroom upstairs in the museum. There are also reproduction antique dolls still on exhibit as well. Five of the seven beautiful dolls that were recently donated to the museum from the estate of **Varine Horton** are still on display. These dolls are works of art and I was so glad Varine's daughter, **Sher Laurence** thought to ask if we'd be interested in displaying them at our museum. **Sher** also donated Christmas lights, bulbs, ornaments, ribbon, beads, trees and other decorations which added to the beauty of our museum this year. What goes up, must come down so thanks go to **Barbara Allen, Marj Ditzel, Sally Turner, Peter Spryer and Kirsten Spryer** for helping pack up the museum decorations.

We acknowledge these wonderful volunteers who helped maintain the Museum these past months:

- **Steve Lane** for repairing a garden sprinkler valve
- **Ted Meriam** for mounting a fire Extinguisher and for installing the cable between our new laser printer and our computer.
- **John Rubiales** for repairing the screen door
- **Dick Ellis** for building a corner sign-in table for volunteers

And the following donors for their contributions:

- 10 Vintage Nancy Ann Story Book Dolls, 5 small vintage dolls and exhibit case from **Jeanne Groschwitz**
- Victorian Reproduction Wooden Toys from **The Diablo Woodworkers**
- 7 Reproduction Antique dolls and Christmas decorations from **Sher and Pete Laurence**



2012 CLAYTON GARDENS TOUR

CAN YOU BELIEVE IT?!?!?!?

2012 is the 20th Anniversary of the Clayton Historical Society's Gardens Tour!

So this year we are having 20 of your favorite gardens to celebrate our 20th anniversary.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

May 19th and 20th, 2012!
20 GARDENS for 20 YEARS for \$20.



Calendar

- February 6 Old Timers
11:30 am, Museum
- February 9 CHS Board Meeting
3:30 pm, Museum
- February 12 Camellia Tea
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm, Museum
- March 5 Old Timers
11:30 am, Museum
- April 2 Old Timers
11:30 am, Museum
- April 12 CHS Executive Board Meeting
3:30 pm, Oak Street
- May 7 Old Timers
11:30 am, Museum
- May 10 CHS Board Meeting
3:30 pm, Museum
- May 19 & 20 20th Annual Gardens Tour
Pick up Tickets at Museum

An Especially Yummy Exhibit...Tastefully brought to you by the Clayton Historical Society

YUM-YUM BUBBLE GUM

CANDY IN THE UNITED STATES

SINCE 1800

U-NO You've got to SEE'S This!
If you don't you are a DUMDUM.
All the SMARTIES will be there!
You can see it NOW AND LATER
So TAKE 5 and come down to the Museum.

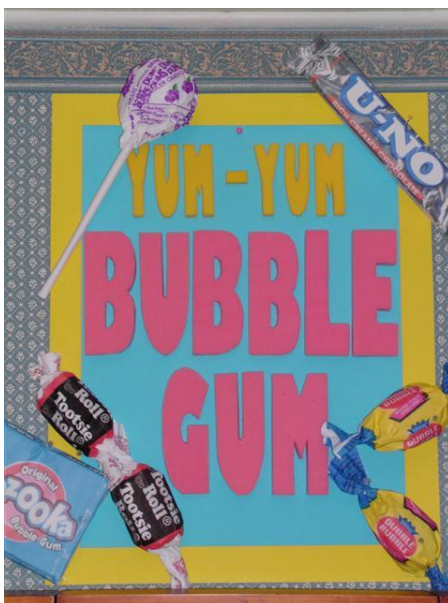
Featuring Displays of



Collectables

Now Through May 2012

Clayton Historical Society Museum
6101 Main Street, Clayton
Open Sundays & Wednesdays
2-4pm



Memorial Donations

As a lasting way to honor someone special, your gift to the Clayton Historical Society supports the preservation and promotion of Clayton's rich history. We thank the following donors for their recent memorial gift:

In memory of the following friends of the Museum:

- For **Elora Hoyer** from Sandra Watson and Roxie & Jerry Enneking.
- For **Earl Duncan** from Alfreida and Llyod Duncan & Family, Janet Easton, Charmetta Mann, Barbara Allen, W.C. & Mary Delamater, Marie Larson, Tom & Sharon Duncan, and Sally Turner.
- For **Enroy Gomez** from W.C. & Mary Delamater, Claudia Joaquin, Richard Ellis, Barbara Fogerson, Helen V. Grubb, and Arele & David Skuba.
- For **Ronnie C. Pimental** from Janet Easton and Charmetta Mann.
- For **Gloria Patten Edwards** from Alan Edwards.
- For **Varine Horton** from Barbara Allen.
- For **Devin Churchill** from Charmetta Mann and Janet Easton.
- For **Fred Hornbarger** from Janet Easton and Charmetta Mann.
- For **William & Metta Stockfleth Frank, George & Carmen Frank, Willmetta Frank Mann, Phyllis Frank Easton, and Doris Mann Allen** from Bonnie & Tony Layne and Robert, John, and Chloe Reynolds.

In memory of Gordon Easton:

- Sandra Tesch
- Richard Ellis
- Sally Turner
- James Hartman
- Dolores Austin
- Ruth M. Eseltine
- Paula Hornbarger
- Karlyn McDermott
- Janet Easton
- Charmetta Mann
- Barbara Allen
- Karen Larson Sutherlin
- W.C. & Mary Delamater
- Marie Larson
- Kirk and Karen Watson & Family
- Douglas and Cheryl Foskett
- Greg and Lani Watkins
- Bonnie and Tony Layne
- Robert, John, and Chloe Reynolds

Memorial Funds

A gift of any amount to our Memorial Fund is a lasting way to honor someone special. Their names will be placed in the "Book of Memory" that is permanently displayed at the museum. Send your memorial donation to CHS—Attention Memorials, PO Box 94, Clayton, CA 94517

I would like to make this contribution of \$_____ In Honor of In Memory of (check one)

Name of person(s) to be honored or memorialized:

 _____ 

Please Send Acknowledgement to: _____

Address: _____ City, State, Zip: _____

Donor(s) _____ Address: _____

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Spotlight on History: Keller Ranch

The property known as the Keller Ranch is thought to have been the principal village site of the Chupcan or Volvon people who occupied the areas around Mt. Diablo dating back three to four thousand years. The land currently occupied by the Keller house may have been a part of Rancho Del Diablo, a Mexican land grant. It was subsequently owned by Joel Clayton.

Vincent Liberty was a rancher and operated a “road house” on the Fairfax-Bolinas road. Vincent Liberty left his wife in Marin County in 1891. His 24 year old daughter, Elodia, chose to live with him and his son remained in Marin County with his wife, Mary Jane Liberty. Liberty leased the ranch on the Clayton property and he and Elodia lived in the house that is now the Clayton Museum.

In 1897, Elodia married Charles Henry “Harry” Keller, a man whom she had met in the course of his making deliveries from his butcher shop in Concord. The Kellers built a house on Galindo Street in Concord to and lived there.



The 1900 census shows 63 year old Vincent Liberty living on a rented farm on the Clayton estate, his occupation “farmer”. His marital status was “married”. Living with him were two servants, Julia Holdway, age 40, a widow and Henry Frank. At the time of Liberty’s death in 1923 he was married to Julia Holdway, Mary Jane having died in 1919.

Harry and Elodia Liberty Keller purchased the property in 1910 from the Estate of Joel Clayton. Voter registration records show that his occupation changed from “butcher” to “rancher” between 1910 and 1912. It is said that the Kellers camped under a huge oak tree on the site while the house was being built.

The Keller house, named Casa del Sierra, “has been locally identified as a rare surviving building of this period and a fine example of custom home building of the early twentieth century.” It is of the Mission Style with Craftsman elements. Magnificent gardens and a fish pond surrounded the home, tended by Elodia. The property had large barns and cattle yards.

Harry Keller operated the ranch until his death at the end of 1940. From 1940 until her death in 1954 Elodia Liberty Keller retained a life estate of the property but it was leased it to Bob Flackus. From the early 1960s until 1972, trustees of the Keller estate leased the property to Manuel DeJesus who continued ranch operations.

In 1972 the property was sold to Pacific Coast Construction Company. An economic downturn and resistance from the Native Americans prevented its development. Seeno Construction Company bought the property in 1978. Wanting higher development standards and more protection of natural terrain, the voters rejected Seeno’s proposal in 1983. In 1987 Prestley Homes bought it. In 1991, the City of Clayton acquired a small parcel holding the Keller house and the property on which the Clayton Library sits. The Keller house was determined to be of significant value in 2001 and was added to the California Register of Historical Resources.

Clayton Historical Society
6101 Main Street, Clayton



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