

est. 2012

Historical Society of Santa Rosa

Upcoming HSSR Events

always free admission!

September 12: History Hunt

October 10: Day at the Adobe

HSSR is a 501 (c) (3) public charity Tax ID 46-2740806

Founded 2012

Vol. 2, No. 3

Summer 2015

Ed Note: In the following, Marion McMurtry recounts the participation of Santa Rosa High students in the efforts of WW II. SRHS was the only high school in Santa Rosa for 84 years—until 1958.

The War Years: A Fond Look Back

by Marion Ridenhour McMurtry

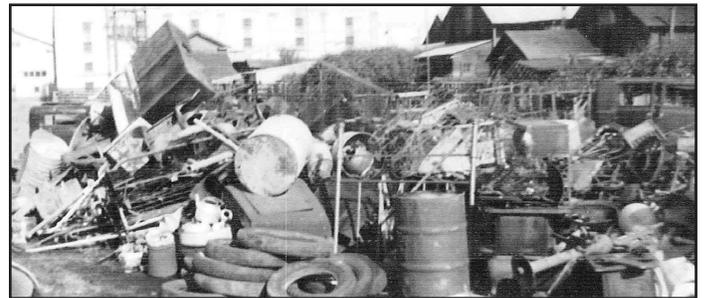
Ours were the war years, 1942 through 1945.

“We were all heroes,” Roy Grimm would tell the Press Democrat’s Gaye LeBaron in a later interview, “and we were all going to live forever.”

The events of Sunday, December 7, 1941 simply rocketed through Santa Rosa High School. On Monday word came that all dances and the Christmas play were cancelled. Air raid drills interrupted club meetings. The school newspaper printed directions on what to do in case of an air raid, and girls in gym classes practiced first aid on each other on the basketball court of the boys’ gym, to the sounds of laughter from peeking locker-room jocks.

Less than a week after Pearl Harbor, Jerry Poznanovich, Lee Pharis, Ken Ward and Randal Nelson signed out of their classes and left for U.S. Navy Boot Camp in San Diego. By June the list of enlistees was growing.

Teachers began leaving for defense jobs, and notices appeared on hall bulletin boards that the FBI was offering special training for high school seniors in the science of fingerprinting



Large pile of scrap destined for wartime reuse

--Sonoma County Library

and print analysis. Senior boys were recruited to train as fire wardens.

In the fall of 1942 the Victory Corps began training students for war service and war production with Laurie Lindsay as student director. Some of us strayed up all night as volunteer plane spotters. Zaida Formway, Sylvia Johnson, Mark Freeland and I sat in Zaida’s kitchen out on Todd Road with a chart showing the silhouettes of different aircraft for identification,

...continued on page 3

Santa Rosa—long ago

The Sonoma County Fair, a major county-wide summer event for many years, has roots in an agricultural fair held at the same fairgrounds in 1890. Fairs were held again in 1913 and 14, but World War I prevented others. In 1920 and 21 fairs were again held but then creased. The interference was the outlawing of horseracing. Then, in 1933, the legislature approved betting, and the horses and the fair were back, this time for good.

Bicycling was the major form of individual transportation and a popular form of recreation in latter 19th Century Santa Rosa. In 1899 Ben Noonan, an 1895 Santa Rosa High School graduate, raced the train from Sebastopol to Santa Rosa and won in a time of 16 minutes. The Joe Rodata Trail, today a popular biking and walking route, is the site of the former railroad tracks.

The Santa Rosa Wheelmen, Santa Rosa’s first cycling club, built a race track in 1895 opposite the Rural Cemetery on Franklin Avenue and hosted two statewide meets there.

George and Alex Schelling’s bicycle shop on Fourth Street was the unofficial headquarters for bicycle mechanics. In 1899 the brothers built Santa Rosa’s first automobile for Dr. James Jesse, who wanted to lessen the time necessary to make emergency calls. Because the car was complicated to operate, Dr. Jesse found it difficult to stop. In a well-documented story, he faced the choice of running into a vegetable wagon at the corner of Fifth and Mendocino or attempting to avoid it. He chose the latter, a choice that resulted in Santa Rosa’s first automobile wreck. The Schelling auto was totaled, and the brothers began selling Oldsmobiles.

...continued on page 2

President's Message

by Mike Grace, HSSR President



Almost halfway through 2015, the HSSR is basking in the success of past events and is looking forward to upcoming ones. In late June we hosted the second Members Only night at the Sonoma County Museum. Eric Stanley, curator of the History Museum, led a tour that evening of the Hansel Mieth and Otto Hegel photography exhibit. Both were contemporaries of famed photographer Dorteia Lange, and they worked for Life Magazine and other publications. They resided in Sonoma County after the Depression, and they bequeathed their works to the museum. For more information about them, see Gaye LeBaron's digital collection at Sonoma State University. <http://northbaydigital.sonoma.edu/cdm/ref/collection/LeBaron/id/1067>

On July 16, Allen Thomas led an admission-free walking tour of Santa Rosa's West End Neighborhood. The starting place was the restored DeTurk Round Barn, 819 Donahue Street. During the leisurely walk, Allen shared his extensive knowledge of the area, telling about many of the historic houses and their owners.

More recently, on July 20 at the 6th Street layhouse, we hosted a conversation between Press Democrat columnist and former editor Pete Golis and Congressman Mike Thompson.

The Second Annual History Hunt is scheduled for September 12 at Santa Rosa Middle School, signups beginning at 9:30 am. The hunt will start at 10. Last year, over 80 participants from 8 to 80 enjoyed the opportunity to learn about hometown Santa Rosa, get some walking exercise and have fun with family and friends. Cost is \$10 but children under 10 are free.

Next, the HSSR will host Day at the Adobe on October 10 to educate the public about the history of the Carrillo Adobe and to

demonstrate archeological research methods. The day will begin with a volunteer cleanup of the site from 9 to 11 am, followed by lunch and an informational program. Details to follow. Many Santa Rosans have stepped on the site of Santa Rosa's first non-native dwelling, so the day will be an opportunity to see and learn about its history and its potential for the future. A special session for elementary school teachers will be offered in the morning. Stay tuned for further information.

The annual general membership meeting will be in November. Tentative plans include making scanners available for members to add their historical photos and documents to the HSSR archives, as the society initiates an online database of historical material. Members are invited to share displays of their historical materials on the database. More definite plans will be publicized as they evolve.

Additionally, the HSSR plans to work with the Sonoma County Historical Museum on its Exhibit Santa Rosa after World War II. This will be an outstanding program. Also under discussion is a documentary film on the history of Santa Rosa.

HSSR has made a great deal of progress since its inception in 2012, and as the above indicates much is planned for the future. Although most events are provided at no cost to members, expenses still prevail, so please renew your membership and always feel free to send additional donations. We try to keep membership aware of our events through the newsletter and the website. Check them regularly. We don't want you to miss out.

See you at the next event,

Mike Grace, HSSR President

PS: If you are not receiving the newsletter or frequent email blasts about events, contact the HSSR at membership@historicalsocietysantarosa.org

Correction

The photograph of Maria Marta Carrillo de Carrillo in the spring edition was identified incorrectly.

Historical Society of Santa Rosa Board of Directors

Doug Bower	Denise Hill
John Bribiescas	Ron Kristof Vice President
Larry Carrillo	Dan Markwyn
Mike Daniels	Jo Markwyn
Nina Felciano Treasurer	Bryan Much
Dave Franzman	John Sawyer
Ann Galantine Secretary	Nick Tipon
Mike Grace President	

Santa Rosa-Long Ago, continued from page 1

In the 1920s through the 30s, mostly because automobiles and spending money were scarce, Santa Rosa teenagers walked downtown for social gatherings. A favorite place was Bouk's, an ice cream and candy store on Fourth Street. In the 40s the place for teens to be was The Winkin' Lantern, also on Fourth. In the 50s, as hot rodding and access to cars became popular, the teens cruised Fourth Street and hung out at Gordon's Drive In, where College Avenue meets Fourth Street.

Santa Rosa's world famous citizen Luther Burbank passed away in 1926. Frida Kahlo, the Mexican self-portrait artist who was married to muralist Diego Rivera, dined with Burbank's widow Elizabeth in 1928.

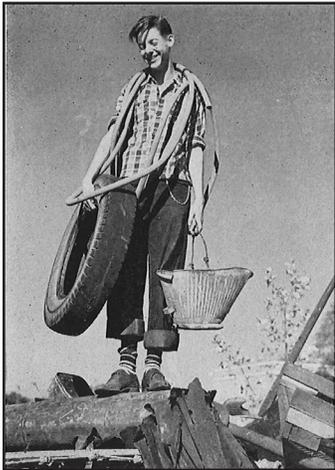
The population of Sonoma County in 1948 was about 98,000. Today it's just over 500,000.

In 1968, the recently opened Cardinal Newman High School football team began a run of 47 straight wins under the coaching of Ed Lloyd.

The War Years, continued from page 1

but in an ink-black sky who could tell? I think we finally gave up and fell asleep.

Then there was the campaign to raise money for a Jeep and donate it to the Army. We sponsored food sales, noon sock-hops in the gym (35 cents a ticket!), dances and sport days for two years, but on that wildly satisfying day when a general assembly was held and the check for \$1,023.23 was actually accepted by a representative of the government the surge of pride we felt was indescribable. By 1945 the student body had raised enough money to train three seeing-eye dogs for the young servicemen who were coming home either blind or nearly so.



SRHS student Don Huntington stands on scrap pile --Santa Rosa High School collection

Fervent editorials in the campus newspaper urged us to buy war bonds and saving stamps on sale in Vice-Principal William Evatt's office and in bond drives. There were blackouts and brownouts, food stamps and fuel stamps, and if a project could support an organized drive, we had one. There were drives to collect books to stock ship libraries, drives to collect scrap iron, and a drive to collect silk stockings, which were turned over to the Red Cross and recycled into parachutes. History teacher Phoebe Struckmeyer sponsored the drive to collect jewelry. It was sent to the Red Cross. It then went to the South Seas where it supposedly was given out by the service men to the natives in lieu of monthly pay for help with hard labor, such as climbing trees for coconuts, digging trenches and for help in caring for prisoners!

A more visible act of wartime patriotism occurred every morning in the front of the school, when fifteen minutes before the first bell, Bob Davis, Calvin (Rusty) Tabor and LeRoy Milne performed a stirring flag-raising ceremony to a blare of bugles and a gathering of students. It wasn't unusual for passing motorists to stop.

Early in 1942 a small group of our fellow students (22) donated funds they had raised from skating parties to the Red Cross. A few days later they were gone, gathered up and sent away with their families as part of the Japanese American relocation program.

That year also saw the threatened student strike over the

dismissal of journalism teacher Mary Frances McKinney. "Petie," as she was known, was an immensely popular teacher. An unprecedented uproar developed when the school board threatened to fire her on the grounds that female teachers must be unmarried when hired. Petie was married to a Navy pilot who, at the time of her hiring, was missing in action. The ensuing outbreak of support for her in both the school and the community was historic. Chaos was averted when her letter of resignation to the board was read and accepted at a student assembly. I remember whole classes sitting out on the front lawn in a show of defiance.

I also remember the Variety Shows with Emcee Bob Davis and the sweet sounds of Barney Wilen playing his signature song, "Stairway to the Stars" on the big concert grand. How about Barbara Baker and Delores Titus singing the solos and Everett Shapiro's hilarious depiction of Hitler, Mussolini and Hiro-Hito? And at the final curtain, the tremendous ovation for drama teacher Mr. Glen Guymon, who had originated and directed the show, but who had left for active service the day before?

This, then, is my tribute to the war years in high school—we were the best!

Visit the HSSR web page!

www.historicalsocietysantarosa.org

Find us on Facebook and YouTube

Historical Society of Santa Rosa Membership Application

The Historical Society of Santa Rosa intends to build a strong and diverse organization of individuals, families and groups to investigate, record and relate the history of the City of Santa Rosa. Members will receive the newsletter and discounts on events and purchases.

Memberships make wonderful gifts! Share the benefits of membership with your family and friends. Dues are paid annually and membership is valid for the current year, expiring on December 31 each year.

\$25 Individual membership | \$40 Household Membership

Name _____ Amount Enclosed _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email Address _____ Telephone _____

I prefer the newsletter delivery via U.S. Postal Service, not an electronic version.

Additional Donation Enclosed _____

The HSSR has IRS non-profit status.

Ed. Note: The following excerpt is reprinted from "The Carrillo Family in Sonoma County: History and Memories" by Alma McDaniel Carrillo and Eleanora Carrillo de Haney. Number two in a series.

Rancho Cabeza de Santa Rosa

The Carrillo family was a large one, (the senora and ten of her thirteen children) and it had many Indians who helped with all the duties necessary for living around the home and in the fields.

The building of an adobe home was one of the first steps toward comfort and pleasure in the family's new surroundings. [ed. note: The Carrillo family had arrived from San Diego in 1838 and sought permission to claim Sonoma County land. Granted by the Mexican government in 1841, the rancho totaled close to 9,000 acres.] The bricks had to be made first by the Carrillo boys—Joaquin, Jose Ramon, Julio, Dolores and Juan. The Indians and Salvador Vallejo assisted. The bricks were 22 by 11 inches and 3 to 4 inches thick.

The thick walls kept out heat in summer and cold in winter. The walls were about 28 inches thick on one part of the "L" shaped building and 36 to 42 inches on the long part. The last section of this hacienda was about 32 feet long and 18 feet wide. One section extended from the east and was much longer, about 142 by 18 feet. The overhanging roof formed an inner courtyard, the tiles of which were formed over the Indians' thighs.

Hitching posts for horses were placed a short distance from the house, and each family member had his or her own horse, which was brushed and saddled each morning and brought to the posts. A Spaniard never walked any distance and always rode his own horse because wild animals and cattle would attack anyone on foot.

Senora Maria Ignacia Lopez de Carrillo's own horse was trained by her sons for her special use in the fields to supervise planting, cultivating and harvesting. She supervised everything on the rancho but left the managing of livestock to Jose Ramon and his brothers.

Senora Maria Ignacia had about 3,000 head of cattle, 1,200 or so horses and some sheep. Just imagine the work for that much livestock! With the help of Indians, the Senora cultivated large acreages of wheat, oats, barley, peas, beans and corn and all kinds of vegetables to feed her family and the Indians.

The Senora was a graceful lady, as all the Carrillo women were. It seems a characteristic of their race. After giving birth to 13 children, enduring many hardships, supervising a large rancho and raising a growing family—really, it seems impossible! You must remember the country was wild—no cultivation and no house—when the family arrived. They made many of the tools used in the fields in the blacksmith shop on the rancho.

A part of the rancho was used as the "Matanza," or slaughter yard. It was the size of a long city block. The creek named "Santa Rosa" ran along the northern stretch of land while "Matanza" Creek was along the southern edge. These two

creeks joined at the southwest corner and made a nice corral to hold the cattle.

A large barn and smaller corrals with high fences ran around the outside. These corrals were used to train the colts because they couldn't jump over the fences. The barn and corrals remained until Santa Rosa decided to build a civic center on the property.

Calves were branded and cows slaughtered on the Matanza, and the hides and tallow sold. The sale of those were the Carrillos' largest source of income, and it was managed by Don Jose Ramon Carrillo.



The Carrillo adobe in an earlier state of decay
--Sonoma County Library

Newsletter Submission Guidelines

The Historical Society of Santa Rosa is looking for articles to fill the pages of its newsletter. Submissions can range from research about the history of Santa Rosa and its people to personal reminiscence and anything in between. Photos accompanying text are especially welcome.

While payment is not available, writers can experience the joy of seeing their names in print and sharing their work with a wide audience of readers.

Please submit articles without anchors and in unformatted text. A length of 500 to 1,000 words is desirable. Please submit photos separately from text but do provide identity of subjects and other relevant information. Send submissions to mdaniels@sonic.net

All submissions are subject to editing and become the property of the HSSR. All photos will be returned. Next deadline is July 1.

HSSR Welcomes New Members

Michael Franchetti	Robert Reinking
Sharon Franchetti	Joan Reinking
Sonoma County Library	Abigail Greene Ryan
Chrisy Martignoli	Sherie Sbrazza
Marion McMurtry	Art Valencia
John Murphey	Chris Zeek
Bob Parker	