



# THE ELECTROLIER

Newsletter of the St. Helena Historical Society, Fall 2005, Vol.3 No.4

## Highlights from "Spirits of St. Helena" Cemetery Tour by Mariam Hansen

The third annual "Spirits of St. Helena" Cemetery Tour took place on November 5th at the St. Helena Cemetery. Surrounded by colorful autumn foliage under a clear blue sky, docents led visitors through the cemetery, stopping at the grave sites of Civil War veterans to hear stories of their lives. Each of the 43 graves of Civil War veterans buried here was marked with a flag. Nine of the veterans were highlighted and their stories portrayed by members and friends of the St. Helena Historical Society. Research on the veterans was done by Kathy Kernberger and a crew of volunteers.

Jeff Farmer portrayed Congressional Medal of Honor winner William Simmons. Simmons won the medal for bravery in the Battle of Nashville. Russ Hansen, a Civil war re-enactor in Confederate uniform, looked the part of a friend of James Tucker, a Virginia smuggler who snuck through the Union naval blockage with vital documents for Jefferson Davis. Steve Yost was Brig. Gen. George Rutherford, who placed coins on Lincoln's eyes at his death. John Sales told of Royal Haskins, who was with the Illinois 9<sup>th</sup> Cavalry. Mariam Hansen played Oliver Saunders widow, Alice. She told of her husband who was present at many fierce battles where there were extreme casualties. Albert Derrick told of his ancestor John W. Scott, who was in both the 9<sup>th</sup> Illinois Cavalry and the 117<sup>th</sup> Illinois Volunteers. Charles Nesten participated in General Sherman's march to sea, where a 60 mile wide path of destruction was laid, according to Betty Studebaker. Gwen Becker told that Christian Schnoor never made it out of San Francisco, but played in the military band.



Jeff Farmer as William T. Simmons

During the tour, St. Helena High School students filmed the narratives, under the direction of teacher John Harrington. They will produce a Ken Burns style documentary, with images of the Civil War interspersed with video of the narratives.

Organizers were pleased with the record attendance and everyone appreciated what they learned about the Civil War.



Betty Studebaker as Mrs. Charles Nesten



Russ Hansen as a friend of James Tucker

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

What a wonderful year it's been for the St. Helena Historical Society! We inaugurated a fantastic new event called "Museum for a Day. The "Spirits of St. Helena" Cemetery Tour on Nov 5 was a great success. We have visited interesting, beautiful sites for our monthly program meetings.

Many new exciting visits await us in 2006. See the calendar for more info. "Museum for a Day" will return February 19, 2006 at the Native Sons Hall. This year we plan to have a special focus on life in St. Helena from 1900 to 1915. This will include the turn of the century, impact of the 1906 earthquake and the 1915 Vintage Festivals. We will invite local organizations to exhibit items from the period. Anyone with interesting local history related items may participate. Please call me at 963-5748.

"Discover Hidden Treasures of the Valley" antique appraisal fair will return on September 10, 2006 at the Native Sons Hall. This will include an antiques and collectibles silent auction. Please let us know if you have an item to donate.

The Society is pleased to announce the addition of two new members to the Board of Directors. At a special board meeting at historic Sunny Acres on November 16, Skip Lane and Roberta Oswald were elected to the board. Skip is a real estate broker with Ritchie Hallinan Company. A long-time resident of St. Helena and former member of the St. Helena School Board, Skip has been handling media relations for the Society. He is also interested in making a contribution in the areas of Fundraising, Membership, Planning/Organization and Facility. Roberta is also in real estate with Up Valley Associates and a long-time volunteer with the Society. She is a member of the Nichelini Winery family and helps to operate the business. Roberta is a member of several professional real estate groups and a former small business owner. She would like to make a contribution in the areas of Event Planning, Fundraising and Planning/Organization. Their skills, enthusiasm and commitment are greatly appreciated. We look forward to welcoming one more new board member before the end of the year, and an additional 2 in each of 2006 and 2007.

Expansion and professional development of our Board of Directors is one outcome of the 2005-2010 Strategic Plan we created this summer to guide our work. Implementation of the plan will expand the collections, educational programs, research archives and reference library of the St. Helena Historical Society and transform them into a dedicated history center for the city of St. Helena by year 2010.

We would like to invite you, our loyal supporters and friends, to join us on Sunday afternoon, January 29th, 2006, to enjoy a presentation on our plans and to serve as advisors to us as we take these important, first steps on behalf of the St. Helena community. PLEASE RESERVE JANUARY 29TH ON YOUR CALENDAR TODAY! Details on place and time will come soon.

*Mariam Hansen, President*

### ***I'd like to join the St. Helena Historical Society!***

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Individual	\$20	Family	\$30
Business/Organizaton	\$100	Life	\$500

***I would like to:*** Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_ Make a donation to the Society \_\_\_\_\_

St. Helena Historical Society  
P.O. Box 87  
St. Helena, CA 94574  
Voice mail: 707-963-5244 X 187  
Email: shstory@shpl.org  
Website: www.shstory.org

### **Officers and Directors**

Mariam Hansen, President  
Susanne Salvestrin, Vice President  
Gwen Becker, Secretary  
Kim Farmer, Treasurer  
Frank Harrison  
Larry Hlavska  
Skip Lane  
Roberta Oswald  
John Sales  
Tricia Westbrook

### **Committee Notes:**

The ***Collections Committee*** coordinates and manages the acquisition of new materials. It meets the last Monday of the month at 9:00am in the library upstairs meeting room. Current chair of the committee is Frank Harrison. You can email him at jackiefrank@aol.com

The ***Events Committee*** plans and presents events to teach the public about our local history. The Committee is currently working on the Museum for a Day event which will take place February 19, 2006, at the Native Sons Hall. Call Mariam Hansen, 963-5748 for more information.

Questions? Comments?

Call or email the Newsletter editor,  
Kim Farmer, at 963-0630,  
ksfarmer@seedgrain.com



## HISTORICAL SOCIETY ACTIVITY BRIEFS

### *Ink House Tour*

by Betty Studebaker

The St. Helena Historical Society had the opportunity to tour the Ink House on September 6th. Owner Kevin Outcalk gave the assembled group a brief history of the property and allowed everyone to tour the house, barn, and what was formerly the carriage house. He said the large barn is still all original. The house was built by Theron Ink, who moved here in 1852 from St. Joseph, Missouri, and at one point owned most of Pope Valley. Kevin said that the property, named the Helios Ranch by Mr. Ink, has been operated as a bed and breakfast since the mid 1980's. An interesting fact about the house is that the Elvis Presley movie, *Wild in the Country*, was filmed here. Also, each of the seven bedrooms had indoor plumbing when construction was completed in 1884. The group enjoyed the great valley view from the cupola up at the top of the house, which lends itself very nicely to the "ink well" shape of the house.

### *BV Rutherford House & Marvin Collins lecture*

In October we visited Fred Ewer's house, now BV Rutherford House. The large craftsman style home was designed by Luther Turton and was owned by Mary Morton.

Even better was the fascinating lecture presented by author Marvin Collins titled "Wineman—the Glorious Wineries of Hamden McIntyre." McIntyre was an engineer, who designed gravity flow winery interiors, including many in Napa Valley. His association with the Napa Valley began when he met Captain Niebaum while working for his Alaska Commercial Company, which made its fortune hunting fur seals in the Pribiloff Islands off Alaska. McIntyre's Napa Valley Wineries include Trefethen, Far Niente, Adamson (Frogs Leap), Beaulieu, Greystone Cellars, Rennie/Brockhoff (Flora Springs) and Chateau Montelena. In gravity flow wineries, grapes were delivered to the top floor of the winery via a wagon ramp built into the hillside. Pressing and fermentation occurred at the top of the winery. Gravity was used to transport the wine to lower floors for aging and storage.

Following Collins lecture, Society members and guests enjoyed touring the house and tasting BV wines and appetizers. A small group finished up with a tour of BV Winery.



### *Napa Valley Masonic Lodge*

For our November visit to the Ritchie Building in St. Helena, Lodge Secretary Jim Whiteley and his wife Cheri hosted us and provided refreshments. Jim gave a history of the lodge and building, which was constructed in 1892. The St. Helena Lodge was founded in 1855 and just celebrated its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We saw a bible presented to the lodge by George Yount, signed and dated by him. The original minutes books from the first meetings were in excellent condition.

*Ritchie Block, ca. 1900.* "The building just north of the Lodge was a barber shop where you could get a bath for 25 cents. Having cleaned up, you could then have some ice cream next door to celebrate the event. If the ice cream gave you a toothache, Smith's Drugstore could help you out in there. Finally, you could stop at the Bank of St. Helena and get some cash to replace what you had just spent." Photo (and comments) courtesy of Kathy Kernberger.

## WELCOME! NEW MEMBERS DURING 2005

Patti Antanacio  
Jane and Bill Ballentine  
Marie and Frank Bowen  
Dale and Cynthia Brown  
Ruth Clark  
Inge Hovanesian  
Polly Keegan  
Betty Kimlinger  
Gail Morgan Lane

Malcolm McVickar  
Donna and Marty Oldford  
Joe and Robyn Orsini  
Linda and Jeep Rice  
Marion Richter  
Thomas and Patricia Roseler  
Salvestrin Winery,  
Rich and Shannon Salvestrin  
Catherine Schmidt and Robert Karp

Cecelia Setty  
Ellen Shifflett  
Bill and Betty Studebaker  
Carol Troy  
Gail Unzelman  
Varozza Vineyards,  
Jack and Dianne Varozza  
Linda Williamson  
Joan Zoloth

## CALENDAR

Call our voicemail at St. Helena Library to reserve a space: 707-963-5244 x 187. See our website: [www.shstory.org](http://www.shstory.org)

### December

**Dec 6:** Christmas Party, 6:00pm at Sutter Home Inn, 277 St. Helena Hwy. Potluck Dinner & lecture. Enjoy potluck dinner in this beautiful home built by John Thomann, as you learn more about him, the Sutter and Trinchero families. A-H, salad or soup. I-Z, main dish. Reservations required.

### January

**Jan 3:** No Meeting.

**Jan 29:** see below.

### February

**Feb 7:** History Tour of Beringer Winery with tasting, 3:30pm Beringer Winery, 2000 Main St. Reservations required.

**Feb 19:** Museum for a Day: Life in St. Helena 1900—1915. Native Sons Hall, 1313 Spring Street.

### March

**Mar 7:** St. Helena's Post Office: History and bomb shelter tour, 4:00pm St. Helena Post Office, 1461 Main St. Reservations required

### April

**Apr 4:** Keenan/Conradi Winery, Spring Mountain. 4 pm, at the Winery, 3660 Spring Mountain Rd, Reservations required.

### May

**May 2:** Behind the Scenes tour of the CIA, 4 pm, at the CIA, 2555 Main Street. Reservations required.

### June

**Jun 10:** Saturday, Pope Valley History Tour and Picnic. More info in next newsletter.

### *Mission Statement*

The St. Helena Historical Society is a public educational organization. Its mission is to collect, preserve, exhibit, and provide access to historical materials of all kinds from our community as well as to promote public awareness and participation in the collection of such materials.

*On Sunday  
Afternoon,*

*January 29,  
2006*

**The St. Helena  
History Center**

*Begins . . .*

***SAVE THE  
DATE!***

*(See President's  
Message for  
Details)*

St. Helena Historical Society  
P.O. Box 87  
St. Helena, CA 94574