



The Monterey **MANIFEST**

The official newsletter of the Monterey State Historic Park Association



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2022 Dues paid?

www.mshpa.org.

President's Update

I hope everyone is doing well during this time of relative confusion over whether or not we are still in a pandemic. However, the Monterey State Historic Park Association (MSHPA) is operational and moving forward quickly. Our stores at the Custom House and Pacific house are doing quite well considering the Custom House is only open on weekends. We are in the process of looking for a new store manager, since it is currently managed by a volunteer. We hope to complete the hiring of a new store manager in the next month or so. MSHPA also has a new treasurer, Jason Reed, recently elected by the board. We are all grateful for all the work that Toynette Bryant has put into the position of treasurer and the many years she has served MSHPA since its founding as the Old Monterey Preservation Society in 1975.

The First Theater projects are moving forward quickly. The Monterey Fire Marshall has approved our plan for fire suppression upgrades and that project will initiate in the coming weeks. We are also on a fast track to complete the ADA project that was funded by Save America's Treasures, an initiative of the Department of the Interior. Once these projects

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are completed, we anticipate that the First Theater of California will be able to reopen at least for a limited number of events to be determined by Monterey State Parks.

This upcoming summer of 2022, California State Parks is offering "Los Exploradores de Monterey Summer Day Camp" at Monterey State Historic Park, a three session, two-week day camp for students grades 3-5 from 9 am to 2 pm, located in the heart of Monterey. This unique summer program will have day campers exploring the rich cultural history and the natural areas throughout Monterey State Historic Park and beyond.

We look forward to seeing all of you in the near future at the Monterey Historic State Park and in California's First Theater. Monterey State Parks has ramped up their personnel and has revamped the presentation at the Custom House museum. Small group tours are available for the Larkin House and the Stevenson House. This is an ideal time to encourage friends and family as well as neighbors to become active members of MSHPA, and we encourage members to also serve as volunteers and shopkeepers. We anticipate that the next few years will be an extremely exciting time for Monterey State Parks and MSHPA.

The OLD WHALING STATION: A STORY UNTO ITSELF

by Mimi Sheridan

Most of the buildings in Monterey State Historic Park are owned, managed and maintained by California State Parks. An exception is the Old Whaling Station, which has been leased to the Junior League of Monterey County for more than forty years.

The Old Whaling Station was built in 1847 by a prominent local builder, David Wright. He soon left for the gold fields, selling the house to a tinsmith who opened a rooming house. In 1855, whalers leased it, finding it well suited for their needs since it sat on high ground near the waterfront. Lookouts at the second-floor windows sighted the whales and then brought them in for processing. In the garden is an original "trypot," a vessel used to render the blubber for whale oil, which was in high demand for lighting and other purposes. Another reminder of the whaling days is the whale bone sidewalk in the front. The building remained a whaling station until the 1880s, when the growing popularity of kerosene as a fuel and declining prices led to the end of the industry locally.



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In 1903, after a long period of neglect, Mrs. H. S. McNear bought the building and restored it to once again be a family home. She added the balcony and stone walls. It continued to be a family home, with several owners, until 1953, when it was again remodeled and operated as the Whaling Station Inn.

In the 1960s, the inn was in the middle of Monterey's urban renewal project. In 1964, the city's Urban Renewal Agency purchased it (and the neighboring First Brick House) for office use. In 1979, the historical significance of both the Whaling Station and the First Brick House was officially recognized when the state purchased them for Monterey State Historic Park.

The Junior League of Monterey County was, at that time, searching for a new headquarters. Because of the league's interest in historic preservation, the Whaling Station seemed to present an ideal solution. In November 1979, the League entered into a lease agreement with California State Parks, giving the League the responsibility for restoring and maintaining the building and its garden (with State assistance).

They may not have realized what they were getting into. League records show that making the building usable for their needs was a massive task. The electrical, plumbing and sewer systems were in poor condition (there was no heat or sewer connection). The roof needed replacement and the exterior begged to be painted.

The League realized that they had to have an income to support their new headquarters. The interior needed to be cleaned and painted and the overgrown garden renovated to serve as an appealing venue that could be rented for weddings and other events.

The League tackled all these projects the first year. Members, their families and friends worked to clean and repair the interior. They tore off the old roof, preparing it for the roofing contractor. Weekly work parties began the garden renovation, with digging supervised by an archaeologist. When they began the massive task of painting the entire structure, they received some outside help through a contract with the Soledad Correctional Training Facility. Both the painting and the roof installation were completed by September 1980.

By early 1981, just over a year from the date of the lease signing, the non-profit organization had largely restored a resource very significant to Monterey's history. State parks provided oversight and some materials and state funds were appropriated to update the electrical system and heating systems. However, the League's real achievement was acquiring and managing an immense amount of donated labor, small grants, and in-kind and monetary donations to achieve their goal—resulting in more than forty years of active community use.



Volunteer Coordinator's Corner by Guides Kaitlyn Moreland and Stuart Thornton



Stuart Thornton
Guide i



Kaitlyn Moreland
Guide 1

New Volunteer Coordinators Kaitlyn Moreland and Stuart Thornton have officially taken over the position at MSHP! They will be dividing responsibilities to ensure someone is always available. Kaitlyn will be helping with administrative and paperwork needs, including helping volunteers with Better Impact to record hours and sign up for activities, processing onboarding paperwork, and ensuring records are kept up-to-date. Kaitlyn will be sending out monthly updates for the calendar of volunteering opportunities and upcoming events. Please never hesitate to reach out to her if you are having difficulty with Better Impact, if you need to update your records, or if you need help filling out State Parks paperwork (don't we all!). Stuart will be recruiting new volunteers and organizing volunteer events. His dream is to secure a few dynamic speakers and authors of our favorite Monterey/California history books to come speak at our volunteer events! Let us know if you have any suggested speakers! Also, please contact us if you know of a friend or family member that would like to volunteer at MSHP!

Here are some of the latest and upcoming announcements for MSHP:

- There will be no docent shift in Custom House on Wednesday, May 25th, as the park will close for our staff to attend an all-hands State Park meeting. If any volunteers are available for a shift in the Custom House Store during Memorial Day Weekend, we request that they sign up even if they see someone is already signed up for the shift that they want! We have multiple shifts available for the Memorial Weekend porch sale.
- In June, we would really appreciate any extra assistance from volunteers in keeping the Custom House Store open. Several of our most valued shopkeepers are unable to sign up for shifts in June, so even volunteering for just one shift would be extremely helpful! We will be available to offer refresher training for any volunteer who has not yet been trained or has not volunteered in some time. June marks the beginning of the Los Exploradores MSHP Summer Camp with our staff spread thin with lots of activities, so docents in Custom House would also be very appreciated.
- Keep an eye out in the schedule released next month for 4th of July volunteer opportunities in historic dress! We'd like to host activities like street games, leather stamping, tortilla making, butter churning, and to have docents available to rove the gardens and join the 4th of July Parade!
- We are excited to invite all volunteers to the first in-person volunteer meeting in several years! It will take place at the **Stevenson House (530 Houston Street, Monterey) on June 23rd from 6pm to 7:30pm**. We want to introduce ourselves as the new volunteer coordinators, and will be hosting a fascinating talk by Mimi Sheridan titled "Secrets of the Memory Garden." In addition, we will be providing pizza and beverages for the gathering. It will be a great opportunity to catch up with other volunteers and Monterey State Historic Park staff while learning more about one of the park's underrated resources.

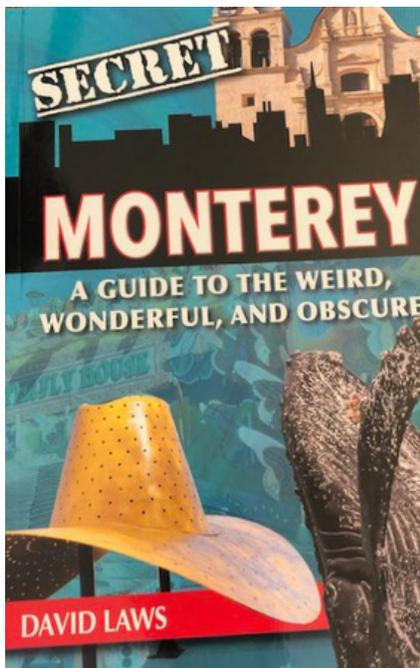
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- Finally, due to administration requirements, volunteers who have not volunteered or have logged hours since January 1st, 2019, have now been registered as an inactive volunteer in Better Impact. If you would like to be registered again as an active volunteer, please reach out to us so we can refresh your Bear in Mind Training and relist you as active! If you think you've been listed as inactive by mistake, please get in contact to let us know!

Erratum: The author for Volunteer Coordinator's Corner in the Winter 2022 edition was inadvertently missing. That section was prepared by Erica Hedlund, and it provided a listing of MSHP employees and their responsibilities. We wish Erica well in her new assignment as the volunteer coordinator at the Asilomar State Parks.

Book Review of new guide book- *Secret Monterey: A Guide to the Weird, Wonderful, and Obscure*, by David A. Laws, now at Custom House Store



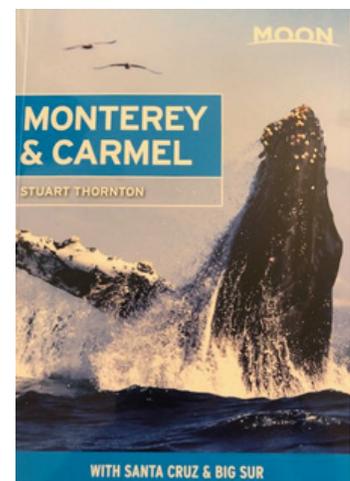
Did Sir Francis Drake really claim Monterey for Queen Elizabeth? Why did the new nation of Argentina attack the port of Monterey? Did General Sherman really jilt the beautiful Senorita Bonifacio?

Monterey County is known nationwide for its agricultural bounty, a bay bursting with marine life, world-famous golf courses, annual displays of automobile extravagance, and Big Sur, one of the top ten scenic road trips in the nation, but what about the stories and places that don't appear in traditional travel guides?

Secret Monterey: A Guide to the Weird, Wonderful, and Obscure reveals the unexpected and little-known stories behind major attractions, as well as numerous other spots replete with history, mystery, and intrigue. Local author, travel writer, and historian David Laws answers these questions and introduces you to the other side of Monterey County, a trove of unexpected and unique places just waiting to be explored.

Also in the Book Section, PH and CH Stores

Both stores have the new edition of *Moon Monterey and Carmel* and copies of the popular hiking book, *Day Hikes around Monterey & Carmel*, and for bicyclists, *Bicycling along the Pacific Coast*. Our California and Monterey history section contains old favorites, such as *Testimonios*, *Lands of Promise and Despair*, and *Life in a California Mission*, and new titles such as *So Rugged and Mountainous*, *Shipwrecks of the California Coast*, *The Death and Life of Monterey Bay*, and many others.



What's New at the Stores? by Donna Gibson

We are busy preparing for a **Memorial Day weekend clearance porch sale** of store merchandise, including soaps and salves, lanterns, selected books, treasures from storage, and more. Our policy of offering quality merchandise at a reasonable price continues!. We want to thank Kimberly Wright for preparing our last big batch of mexican hot chocolate mix, a perennial favorite amongst our customers, in addition to her many years of service as store manager.

Some recent offerings for our windy spring days include several popular kites- butterfly, pocket, and octopus kites that all come with hand cords, as well as the build-a-bird kits.



We have added to our jewelry lines with earrings in sterling silver or gold vermeil that feature pearls, sea glass, and spirals. New grass-woven bracelets and white copper bracelets join the popular line of cloisonne and ceramic bracelets in stock.



For the home, we have added bone china cups, poppy coffee mugs, colorful poppy glasses, and additional telavara pottery serving pieces.



Come by and visit! Be sure to ask for your 10% member discount when purchasing!

Have your Renewed Yet for 2022 ?

by Harish Joshi, Membership Chair

If you have yet to renew, please take a moment now to renew your membership and to help grow our membership. Furthermore, please consider making a charitable donation to allow us to continue our education and preservation efforts. The easiest way to renew or donate is online at www.mshpa.org. Individual membership \$25; family membership \$40; preservation circle membership \$75; and business membership \$125. Membership includes 10% store discount at both museum stores and two discounted special event tickets annually. And there is the added bonus of discounted tickets for Christmas in the Adobes 2022, tentatively scheduled for Dec. 9 and 10, 2022. We hope to offer in-person events as we emerge from the pandemic that will be open to all members. Join us by giving back, become a donor, volunteer, attend an event, or shop in one of our museum stores.

Co-editors:

**Donna Gibson &
Nicollette Eason Trottier**

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**We welcome your stories
and ideas.**



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