

# SONOMA and PETALUMA ADOBE STATE HISTORIC PARKS



## Docent and SPParks GAZETTE Fall 2024



### DOCENT ORGANIZATION UPDATE

This year's docent picnic in August had ample food and drinks to please all attending. SPParks provided the BBQ ribs and chicken, as well as soft drinks and dessert. And the pot luck sides were delicious. The beautiful private park at the end of Andrieux is a perfect location – thank you, Suzanne and Karen for allowing us to use it. Jim also set up a Trivia challenge for everyone, just to let us all know how much we still have to learn. Thanks to everyone who came early or stayed late to help set up and clean up, it was a lovely day. Be sure you don't miss it next year!

At our September quarterly meeting, Ed Purkey began by asking for a volunteer to join Karen Pregler as co-chair for next year. Jennifer Hanson, returning after a leave of absence, (welcome back, Jennifer!) gave us an update on Volunteer activities. Sharon Douglas and Mike Owens reported on news from SPParks. Jerome Knill reminded us of the upcoming lectures and concerts at the Mission. Dee Katson and Lisa Tremblay reported on the Gazette and docent library.

Kit spoke for Yvonne Bowers about the upcoming Victorian Christmas Craft Workshop which will be November 10th, from 11 am - 3 pm. Volunteers are still needed. If you can help, please contact Yvonne at [treasurer@sonomaparks.org](mailto:treasurer@sonomaparks.org).

Suzanne Berube, spoke of special docent led tours that each bring \$75 to SPParks. Karen Pregler volunteered to lead one, and I have one coming up at the Petaluma Adobe. Finally, Rob Pickett reported all the news from the State Parks. The co-chairs again requested someone to step forward by the December meeting to become a new co-chair.

We will meet again December 7th for the last meeting of the year, followed by a holiday lunch. See you then!

*Kit Foster, Docent Co-Chair*

### SPParks UPDATE

Hello my fellow SPParkers, Summer came and left, but not before State Parks hosted the Nature and Community Fair in the Casa Grande Plaza in August. It was one of the hottest days of the summer, but Mike Owens, Sue Vargas, Jerome Knill, Yvonne Bowers, Suzanne Berube and I were there with a SPParks information table. We managed to capture one new member! Later this year, you all will hear from Mike regarding membership renewals and the gifts thereof.

This Autumn, we have a full plate of events continuing with first Thursday's Music in the Mission and third Thursday's Lectures. The musicians and lecturers for these events are listed on page 3. Check it out and see what intrigues you. I think Travis Wagner will be particularly interesting – don't miss that lecture. Let Jerome know if you have a suggestion for a talk/lecture. The music is already scheduled through 2025! Thanks Jerome, JD, Sharon, Suzanne and SHP staffer Denise Fowler for setting up, taking down and monitoring every event.

Also thanks to Yvonne and Sue for taking the money and keeping track of who is who. Good job all around!

November brings the Victorian Christmas Crafts Workshop on the second Sunday. Yvonne is Chair for that event, and the "man in red" will be there also. Decorating cookies or candlesticks, making rose sachets, beaded stars or a Christmas 'popper' will all be part of the fun.



Quilled Christmas ornament

*(continued on page 2)*

**SPParks Update** (continued from page 1)

This is a great day to volunteer, as all the crafts are prepped and ready for the little ones to create with your help. Are you a **Quiller**? We'd like to add a quilling craft to the Workshop this year. Supplies will be provided, but we need practical advice and instructions (remember we are working with young children) to make it happen. Can you help? If so, please contact me at [anne.m.cox@gmail.com](mailto:anne.m.cox@gmail.com). If you are crafty this is a fun day, no kidding!

The AGM, Annual General Meeting, to which all SPParks members are invited, will be Wednesday, November 13th, in the Sonoma Barracks starting at 6 pm with drinks and nibbles. There will be a video presentation of our past year's accomplishments (thank you Sharon Douglas) and a business component including the Treasurer's report and nominations for Board positions, as well the slate of SPParks Board Officers. Jim Carr, Sharon, and Suzanne are on the Nomination Committee. Feel free to toss your name in the hat!! Saving the best for last...A light supper with desserts will be served!

December showcases the Holidays on the Northern Frontier with all the sites in the Sonoma State Historic Park lit up and ready to entertain you for the evening.

This event is also a great time to volunteer if you haven't before. People are generally of good cheer, the Park shines and you probably will see your local friends and neighbors! Our Barracks Store will be open that evening, so you can stop by and see what Elizabeth has in stock for any gifts you have in mind. Remember, money raised from the Store, as well as from memberships, goes to support SPParks 3 pillars: *Awareness, Interpretation and Preservation*. Elizabeth welcomes volunteers in the Store for morning or afternoon shifts. Our customers, local, as well as out-of-towner, out-of-state, and out-of-country are always interesting.

Last of all I would like to give a shout out to Dee Katson, Gazette editor. Dee produces a varied, colorful, interesting and accurate newsletter 4 times a year! Anyone who has worked on a group's newsletter, knows how daunting that can be! She does that and keeps her smile. Thank you Dee.

**Volunteers are the hands that make things happen. Join in the fun!**

*Anne Cox, Board President*

This just in... from *SPParks V.P. Sue Vargas*:

SPParks has received a \$1,000 grant from the City of Sonoma Recreation and Community Services Program to fund Children's Day at the Park in 2025. Thank you, Sonoma.

**DOCENT QUARTERLY MEETING  
& HOLIDAY CELEBRATION**

**Saturday, December 7, 2024  
10:00 AM  
BARRACKS A/V ROOM**

**Professor Jim's  
History Mystery Quiz**

1. What is the oldest surviving Spanish building in California and where is it located?
2. In what presidio were Mariano Vallejo and Francesca Benicia Carrillo married?
3. Where do bison graze freely in California?
4. What historic service started between Sacramento and St. Joseph, MO on April 3, 1860?

Answers on page 6

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**LECTURES:** Third Thursday of the month, 7 pm Mission Chapel. \$10 general public, \$5 SPParks members, Docents and Park staff free.

- October 17 - **Travis Wagner** presents "The 1st New York Volunteers: Pioneers of Sonoma."
- January 16, 2025 - **Janet Sands** - A New Look at California Mission History
- February 20, 2025: - **David Rickman** - Early Alto Californian Clothing
- March 20, 2025: **April Farnham** - Watercolor painter Eva Scott Fenyes
- April 17, 2025: **CW Bayer** - Lecture & Gold Rush Songs from the 1850s
- May 15, 2025: **Emily Walski** - Following Padre Altimira's Path

**MUSIC IN THE MISSION:** First Thursday of the month, 7 pm Mission Chapel. \$10 general public, \$5 SPParks members.

- October 3: **Jazelle** - Love Songs to Literature
- November 7: **David Aguilar & Peter McCauley**
- February 6, 2025: **Bobby Edmondson** - 60's & 70's fun tunes
- March 6, 2025: **Oscar Mooneyhan** and Friends
- April 3, 2025: **Dawn & Tony**
- May 1, 2025: **Chris Caselli & Sue Albano** with Scarlett Letters
- June 5: **Lisa Davis** - chamber music

**Victorian Christmas Crafts Workshop:** Sunday, November 10, 2024, 11 am - 3 pm, Vallejo Home. Rain or shine. Admission \$3 adults, children free.

**Holidays on the Northern Frontier:** Saturday, December 14, 2024, 5 pm – 8 pm. All Sonoma State Historic Park venues. Free. If you can volunteer for craft tables or other duties, contact Tyler Markley at [tyler.markley@parks.ca.gov](mailto:tyler.markley@parks.ca.gov)



## SAVE THE DATE - SPParks ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING



The Annual General Meeting for SPParks Members will be Wednesday, November 13, 2024 at 6 pm in the Sonoma Barracks. Details will be coming soon.

"A Year in Review" - highlights of 2024  
Nominations for Board Seats  
Presentation of Slate of Officers 2024-2025  
Light Supper \* Refreshments \* Desserts

Members interested in joining the Board should contact Anne Cox, SPParks President at [anne.m.cox6@gmail.com](mailto:anne.m.cox6@gmail.com)

## Membership News

### PLEASE JOIN US IN SUPPORT OF OUR PARKS!

As of October 1st, all new SPParks memberships are good until the end of 2025. Join us with your contribution of \$40 or more. For more information visit our membership page on our website:

<https://www.sonomaparks.org/about/membership/>.

There you will find a table showing membership levels and benefits. You can join by making a donation through PayPal or by credit card. There is also a link to the application form which can be printed and mailed with a check. If you have any questions or would like me to send you an application, please email me at [SPParks.membership@gmail.com](mailto:SPParks.membership@gmail.com).

Please join us in supporting the Sonoma and Petaluma State Historic Parks.

*Mike Owens, Membership Chair*



## *Travel Bug - aka Enrichment Opportunities*

### Visit to the Larkin House in Monterey

story and photos from **Tim Long**, Docent

Aren't we lucky to have such incredible opportunities to explore the past? Our experiences are enhanced with the help of our fellow docents, and our wonderful park personnel.

This summer my wife and I traveled to Monterey with friends who had never been to California. We thought that Monterey would be a great place to give them "the rest of the story." After all, California is not just palm trees and surfboards, right? Our very own Tyler Markley helped us link up with Park Interpreter I, Aaron Gilmartin of The Monterey State Historic Park. We met with Aaron and several of Aaron's Interpreters-in-training at the Larkin House on Calle Principal.

The Larkin House is a very special place to visit. You must be accompanied by a tour guide. There is a good reason for this. The Larkin house is chock full of precious historic objects. For instance, there is a picture of San Francisco, before the discovery of gold, hanging in what Aaron thinks is Larkin's old office. It is inscribed by "Gen' M. G. Vallejo" to his friend Thomas O. Larkin. This home was a business and a home while Larkin lived there. What used to be the Larkin store is in the front of the house on Calle Principal. Today that room holds portraits of the family, priceless breakfronts, tables, silver decanters, and a family grandfather clock.



The Larkin House is thought to be the first two-story house in California. Larkin added architectural features that combined Spanish Colonial building methods with New England architecture. The result was a new style called Monterey Colonial.

Aaron described how the redwood framing also allowed for greater strength when added to the adobe. Adobe bricks are not fired, so they tend to crumble under pressure. Using redwood, the Larkin house was built with bigger windows and doorways using redwood support. He used redwood to extend the second floor as a balcony. Then covered the balcony with an extended roofline. This protected the underlying adobe. The house still looks great.

All in all, we enjoyed a great tour by a real professional. I highly recommend a trip to Calle Principal and the whole Monterey Historic Park. And finally, GREAT BIG THANK YOU TO TYLER for his support of my Travel Bug Visit to the Larkin House in Monterey!!



Thomas O. Larkin

After he was appointed US Consul by Secretary of State James Buchanan in 1843, Larkin House also became the US Consulate. In 1850 the house was sold and went through many owners. Eventually, in 1922 Larkin's granddaughter bought it as a residence and filled it with the many Larkin era objects of art and family heirlooms that we see today.



Aaron Gilmartin, Interpreter I

*Travel Bug - but wait, there's more...*

EXHIBIT OF POMO BASKETS at SRJC

from **Kit Foster**, Docent Organization Co-Chair

On August 5, 2024, fourteen docents and parks personnel went to the Santa Rosa Junior College Museum to view the **Elsie Allen Pomo Basket Collection**. What a treasure! We learned that in times past, when a basket maker died, she was buried with her baskets, or her baskets were burned. This tradition changed with Elsie Allan's mother, who asked that her baskets not be destroyed upon her death. She realized that there was a decline in the work and she wanted her daughter to be able to use her baskets as a teacher to help carry on the legacy. That was a very important decision that was not viewed with pleasure by some of her people. Change always comes slowly.

There are over 130 baskets in the collection. I liked the working baskets best, but there were also gift baskets and very tiny baskets. (Just showin' off that you can make them that small?). The skill it takes to make these tiny treasures, well you can guess.

I encourage everyone to attend this exhibit. It is free, but donations are gladly accepted. Parking is a challenge, but you can walk slowly from the parking lot to get there.

[*Editor's Note*: Due to the positive community response to this exhibit, the museum has decided to keep the *Elsie Allen Pomo Basket Collection* up permanently! For more information, visit the [SRJC website](#)]



SRJC Museum (photo by Kit Foster)



SRJC Museum (photo by Kit Foster)



Santa Rosa JC Museum (photo by Dee Katson)

**ALEJANDRO BRITTES**, lecture/concert – August 15, 2024

SPParks event committee chair Jerome Knill introduced a new blend of our Lectures and Music in the Mission series this summer. Brazil-based Argentine composer, accordionist, and researcher Alejandro Brittes introduced us to Chamamé, an ancestral rhythm connecting us with the Earth and the Universe through music and dance. This indigenous music genre was born of the encounter between the ritual musicality and cosmic vision of the Indigenous Guaraní people and Baroque music, within the context of the Jesuit missions in a cultural region encompassing Argentina, central and southern Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay.



Carlos de César, Alejandro Brittes, André Ely  
(Photo by Anne Cox)

We are grateful to Claudia Mendoza-Carruth for expertly translating Portuguese into English. Watch for more blended musical learning opportunities in the future.

**SAVE THE DATE****CALIFORNIA MISSIONS AND PRESIDIOS  
CONFERENCE 2025**

The 42nd Annual CMF Conference will be held at Mission San Jose next year in Fremont, CA on President's Day weekend, February 14-15, 2025.

To learn more about the CMF, visit [California Missions Foundation](https://www.californiamissionsfoundation.org)

**History Mystery Quiz****Answers**

1. Serra Chapel (Mission San Juan Capistrano)
2. The Presidio of San Diego (on March 6, 1832)
3. Catalina Island
4. Pony Express



### PETALUMA KIDS CREATE ADOBE BRICKS - June 26, 2024

This year's State Parks Week in June featured a muddy lesson in the fine art of Adobe Brick making at the Petaluma Adobe State Park. Led by Carmen Vanni, Park Interpretive Specialist, and Docents Skye Bailey and Jerry Pozo, young visitors learned how to combine ingredients with their feet to make the essential building blocks that form General Vallejo's Rancho Petaluma. What a cool way to beat the heat and "study" history during summer break!

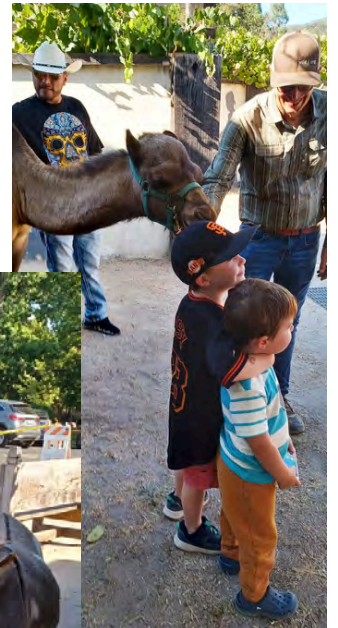
(photos by Jerry Pozo)



### NATURE & COMMUNITY FAIR – August 10, 2024

Sonoma State Historic Park and SPParks hosted the annual Nature and Community Fair on a beautiful warm evening in downtown Sonoma in early August. The fair is a blend of nature, environmental and community agencies and organizations. This gathering provides the public a wonderful chance to learn, explore, and experience nature and local community through a variety of exhibits and stations.

(photos by Dee Katson)



**MOVIE NIGHT AT THE BARRACKS – SEPTEMBER 6, 2024**

On a hot September Friday, the inaugural *Movie Night at the Barracks* brought out more than a few stormtroopers and Imperial soldiers, along with Leia, Rey, and plenty of light sabers as *Star Wars* lit up the courtyard. Prizes were awarded for great costumes, and the big screen was the center of attention for a fun family event at Sonoma State Historic Park.

(photos by Tyler Markley)

**LINKS**

GAZETTE Editor: Dee Katson:  
[administrator@sonomaparks.org](mailto:administrator@sonomaparks.org)

Sonoma Petaluma Parks Association (SPParks):  
[sonomaparks.org](http://sonomaparks.org)

Sonoma State Historic Park  
<http://parks.ca.gov/sonomashp>

Petaluma Adobe State Historic Park  
<http://parks.ca.gov/petalumaadobeshp>

**MEETINGS**

SPParks Board meets 2nd Tuesday of the month,  
10 AM

Docent Quarterly Meetings at 10 AM in the Sonoma  
Barracks A/V room on the 2nd Saturday in March,  
June and September and on the 1st Saturday in  
December

Sonoma Petaluma Parks  
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