Coastside Chronicles

A Publication of the Half Moon Bay History Association

Spring 2024

In This Issue:

HALF MOON BAY HISTORY ASSOCIATION

Celebrating Coastside Legacies

Farmers and farmworkers are the backbone of coastal life.

Coastside Connections: The Roots of Agriculture on the San Mateo Coast

—Marc Strohlein

Agriculture takes many forms on the coast but virtually all have deep roots in Coastside history. The original inhabitants, the Indigenous Ohlone People, cleared the lands around their seasonal villages not only by burning, but also by intense and constant tending, using gardening activities familiar to us today—weeding, shrub and tree removal, pruning, planting, and plant propagation. The Spanish settlers brought more advanced agriculture which led to more extensive farming by many historically important families with names that still dot the Coastside, including Andreotti, Iacopi, Giusti, Lea, Arata, Pastorino, to name a few.

Farmers and farmworkers are the backbone of coastal life. They provide fresh fruits, vegetables, flowers, and dairy products, creating the amazing pastoral views that delight locals and visitors alike. Mel Mello Farm Day is an annual celebration of farmers and workers, and it made history this year with the recognition of a farm worker, Yesenia García Hernández, for the first time in its 52 years.

The luncheon was created to bring the Coastside farming community together with local community members and politicians to share a meal, build relationships, and celebrate farmers and farm workers.

This issue of the Coastside Chronicles is another form of celebration of farmers and agriculture, as it contains articles on farming artichokes, pumpkins, flowers, and potatoes.

Artichokes: The Story of Three Kings, a Boss, and a War

—Bill Scholtz

What is your favorite way to eat artichokes? Steamed with butter and lemon? Or perhaps roasted with olive oil and fresh herbs? Whatever your choice, these tasty thistles have quite an interesting history.

Courtesy of Wikipedia.

Artichokes are the edible buds of the thistle plant. They are native to the Mediterranean and cultivated over 2,000 years ago. While known throughout Europe, they were most loved in Italy and along the Mediterranean Coast.

Coming to America

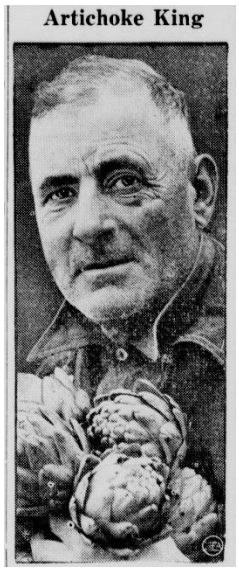
By the 19th century, artichokes had arrived in the United States. However, they were not grown for human consumption. An article in *San Mateo Times Gazette* on January 28, 1878 described how artichokes were used to feed pigs as well as horses, cattle, and sheep.

So, how did artichokes end up being grown on the Coastside for people instead of animals? Cultivated to grow in a humid Mediterranean climate, artichokes grow well in the coastal climate.

According to the March 20, 1920 *Pacific Rural Press*, "Few places elsewhere In California will one find such beautiful black, rich, loamy, well-drained soil. It was originally the washings from the hills, mixed more or less with sand. Its present fertility is due to the trainloads of manure hauled from San Francisco and worked into the soil year after year."

It is not clear who was first to grow them here. One story is that there was a test crop grown in Pedro Valley around the turn of the 20th century. What is known is that Dante Dianda was the first to grow large crops of artichokes in the area.

Dianda was born in Italy in 1875, immigrated to the United States around 1892, and moved to the Sacramento River where he started farming. When he got engaged to Silvia Belli, he decided to move due to a malaria problem in the region. He talked to a friend and decided to lease a farm near Half Moon Bay and start growing artichokes, something he knew nothing about. There were several other Italian farmers there already growing artichokes and they taught him how it was done.



Dante Dianda, the Artichoke King courtesy of the Healdsburg Tribune, 6 January 1936.

By 1900 he had a farm on rented land in El Granada with ten men working for him, all from Italy. When the Ocean Shore Railroad came in, he bought the land he had been farming. He did very well and started to buy more and more land, much of which he rented out to other Italian artichoke farmers. He maintained his farm in El Granada until at least 1940. By 1950 he had retired, living with his wife in Boyes Hot Springs in Sonoma County.

Dianda was the first with the moniker "Artichoke King" in 1904 because he was the first to ship artichokes to New York. The artichokes were hauled over the hills by horse and wagon to San Mateo where they were loaded onto trains. He could have used the marketing slogan 'Artichokes: not just for pigs anymore.'

Perhaps not surprisingly, artichoke farming was largely done by Italian immigrants. Even as late as 1930, of 36 farmers listed in the census as growers of artichokes, all but two were born in Italy or sons of Italian parents. The Coastside residents born in Italy accounted for 13% of the population of the Coastside, up from 6% in 1900. Most of the adult males farmed artichokes or Brussels sprouts.

Artichokes are perennials and as such, typically bore fruit in the end of summer or early fall putting them in competition for acreage against all other vegetables. But the growers discovered that mowing the plants down to the ground would delay flowering and

harvesting, enabling them to extend the harvest to between October and May.

Dianda was the first to wear the moniker "Artichoke King."

Even though most native-born Americans had never eaten an artichoke, they were a very profitable crop. There were enough Italians in the US for the demand to far exceed what Dianda and others could produce. Farms sprung up from Pacifica all the way down to Monterey. But the epicenter for the product remained on the Coastside at least into the 1930s.

To increase demand, growers created the California Artichoke Producers' Association. By 1912, the association had agents in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Boston, Kansas City, St. Louis, and New Orleans. Their job was to educate consumers on the value and preparation of the artichoke.

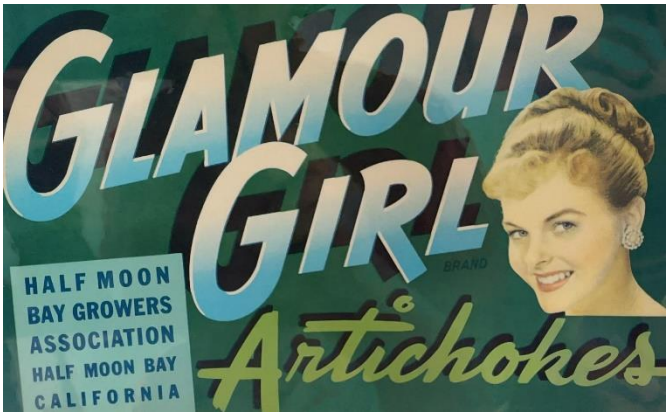
The Coastside production was growing fast. By 1912, there were 200 railcar loads worth of artichokes shipped for a total value of $1,000,000. By 1920 there were between five and six hundred carloads shipped from San Mateo County with 95% of the artichokes grown between Pacifica and Santa Cruz.

Farms sprung up from Pacifica all the way down to Monterey. But the epicenter for the product remained on the Coastside at least into the 1930s.

Time to Organize

By 1917 it was time for Coastside growers to have their own association. John Debenedetti was the son of Joseph Debenedetti, the county supervisor who built both the concrete bridge and Debenedetti building in Half Moon Bay. John, soon to become the next "Artichoke King," was not a farmer, instead a banker and financier, but exactly what the association needed.

The association was named the Half Moon Bay-Coastside Artichoke Growers Association, later shortened to the Half Moon Bay Growers Association.



Glamour Girl was the brand name used by the Growers Association.

Their work focused on making the farmers' jobs easier, including market development, shipping, packing, canning, and supplying labor.

One packing plant was located at 845 Main Street in Half Moon Bay for 70 years. Today, fittingly, it is Pasta Moon, an Italian restaurant.

One of the first things DeBenedetti did was to contract with American Express to get products to the east coast faster. American Express started out as the FedEx of its day, able to get artichokes east in a few days rather than the few weeks other shippers required.

Debenedetti also increased the labor supply by arranging for hundreds of Italians, mostly from the Genoa area where his family originated, to come to the Coastside. He arranged for their housing and work and for this his son said, "he was given the Cavalier's Cross, which I think is equivalent to knighthood or something, by the King of Italy."

After about 15 years of running the association John must have caught "the bug" as by the early 1930s he retired from his position and he and his son started farming artichokes. On about 1,000 acres, they farmed artichokes, Brussels sprouts, asparagus, and other vegetables. They branded their vegetables "Fog Kist."

Where There is Money, There is Crime

While the crop was very lucrative, farmers and farm laborers were not getting rich. Throughout the Coastside, about 50% of the farmers owned the land they worked, but for Italian farmers, it was well under 10%. They leased farms from others, and rents were based on the value of the crops being grown.

Some leased acreage from the association, others from farmers who realized they could make more money leasing their land for artichokes, and the rest rented from wealthy landowners, most notable of whom was John Patroni.

John, or Giovanni Patroni, was born in 1878 in Italy and came to the US around 1901. Today he is best known as the owner of Patroni House (where the Half Moon Bay Brewing Company is located today), Patroni's Wharf, and his colorful life as a smuggler during Prohibition. While he owned or controlled vast tracks of land in and around El Granada that he rented to Italian immigrants he never earned the title of "King," but he was known as "Boss Patroni."

Enter the Mafia

On December 21, 1935 at 6:50 am, two New York City Police Department trumpeters with a large police entourage behind them marched into the Bronx Terminal Market in New York City. They were heralding the arrival of first-generation Italian American and first-term mayor Fiorello LaGuardia. He climbed onto the back of a vegetable truck and announced a ban on the sale of artichokes in New York City. He said that "an emergency exists which threatens the peace and order of the city… I know you dealers are honest men, and as long as I am Mayor, no racketeer, thug or punk is going to intimidate you."

NYPD trumpeters courtesy NYC Municipal Archives.

The ban was intended to break the Mafia's control of the artichoke market and was combined with several indictments. Three days later arrests were made, the ban was lifted, and LaGuardia declared victory.

Mob involvement in artichokes started early on. The Morello-Terranova family, under the direction of Sicily-born Ciro Terranova, imposed a tax of between $25 and $50 on every train carload of artichokes entering the city in the 1910s.

By the 1920s he had set up a corporation, Union Pacific Produce Company, through which all artichokes had to be shipped. He limited the supply coming into New York and forced the growers to accept low prices. He then sold them to wholesalers for a huge markup. By the 1930s this was bringing in about $330,000 a year. It earned Terranova the third crown of "Artichoke King."

Ciro Terranova, known as the Artichoke King courtesy of Wikipedia.

By 1930 he had started physically intimidating the California growers. In what became known as the "artichoke war," he was hijacking truckloads of artichokes in both San Mateo and Monterey Counties. During the first week of January in 1931 alone over $10,000 worth of artichokes were stolen by the mob from the Coastside. In some cases, plants were hacked to the ground with machetes.

The loss and damage were estimated to have cost the California growers about $100,000 in 1930. All this was to force the growers to sell through the Union Pacific Produce Company and sell for prices that Terranova dictated.

It earned Terranova the third crown of "Artichoke King."

Intimidation was not restricted to the west coast. Frank Mortori was a NYC vegetable merchant who refused to buy from the mob. One day, four of his drivers were abducted and badly beaten. According to the head of the California growers, people who were investigating the racketeering were threatened with death unless they "left town in a hurry."

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By the time of the artichoke ban Terranova had already been pushed out of the artichoke business by younger and more aggressive Mafia bosses. At the time of his death in 1938 the "King" was penniless.

As part of the ban, LaGuardia asked the growers of California to start selling to independent wholesalers rather than the mob when the ban was lifted. They responded through a newspaper reporter from San Francisco that until the parties were convicted and in prison it was too dangerous to bypass the mob. They said, "the growers will not care to risk retribution in physical violence and property damage." LaGuardia forwarded that message to J Edgar Hoover.

The ban was coupled with several arrests, but what ultimately broke up the Mafia control of artichokes was the dissolution of their intermediary Union Pacific Produce Company.

The growers of the Coastside sent a letter to LaGuardia thanking him profusely for breaking up the monopoly. It was signed by 19 Coastside residents, the first and largest signature was that of Dante Dianda, our first "Artichoke King."

When the ban was lifted, LaGuardia reached out to restaurants and asked them to include artichokes in their menus. That request, plus the press coverage of the ban boosted the sale of artichokes in New York City.

Coastside Dethroned

During the first 35 years of artichokes growing on the Coastside, the community prospered. However, the Italians who did all the work didn't benefit as much. The immigrant farmers were squeezed on one side by the landowners and on the other side by the Mafia. But by 1935 that was changing.

From the 1930 census, farm ownership was up to 30% and the breaking of the Mafia monopoly allowed them to get more money for the artichokes.

Dante Dianda, the Artichoke King, on left on his El Granada artichoke farm courtesy of HMBHA.

However, for some, that was too little too late. By the 1930s, the bulk of the artichoke production had started to move south.

The Coastside is an excellent place to grow artichokes, but northern Monterey County is even better. The Coastside was the first artichoke capital of the United States, if not the world. But like so many other things, those days are gone.

How Half Moon Bay "Capitalized" on Pumpkins

—Marc Strohlein

Half Moon Bay is often described as the "pumpkin capital of the world," despite the fact that Brussels sprouts crops far outpace pumpkins in economic value--$8,250,000 in sales versus $1,258,000 in 2022. Pumpkins arguably scored a major publicity coup in usurping the sprouts for naming supremacy, and further cemented that win with the advent of the Half Moon Bay Pumpkin festival.

Every fall, orange globes dot fields along the coast, reminding locals and visitors of the gourd's pre-eminence, as hundreds of thousands flock to the coast to buy and celebrate pumpkins. But how did the lowly gourd ascend to such lofty heights? Thanks to the perseverance of farmers and promoters, a bit of serendipity, and, of course, the nature of the pumpkin itself.

Evidence of the cultivation of pumpkins dates to between 7000 BCE and 5500 BCE in Mesoamerica (Mexico and Central America) making them one of the oldest cultivated plants. The species, *Cucurbita pepo*, also includes acorn squash, ornamental gourds, and zucchini. Native Americans on the east coast famously introduced pumpkins to early European settlers, yet pumpkins were not grown or used by early Indigenous Ohlone people in the bay area.

The gourds made their way north from Mexico to the Plains States and then east but not into California and the West Coast until later. Irish immigrants brought pumpkin carving to America. They had carved Jack-O'-Lanterns out of potatoes or turnips in their homeland, but in America, used pumpkins because they were easier to carve. Fun facts about pumpkins:

- Pumpkins are 90% water but still float.
- Fully 90% of California pumpkins are grown for Halloween.
- English settlers are believed to have made pumpkin pie using the shell as crust as they had no flour.
- In 1863, President Lincoln named the 4th Thursday in November as a national holiday, Thanksgiving, raising the prominence of the pumpkin.
- The first mention of pumpkin carving in the U.S. was in a children's magazine in 1866.

In the 1800s pumpkins grown on the coast, served largely as fodder for livestock. The December 10, 1887, issue of the *Pacific Rural Press* included a story in which a traveler noted that although "less rain is required along the coast than inland, it would prove a most welcome visitor. Dairymen are compelled to depend upon hay, pumpkins, and beets principally to maintain their herds until new grass comes, which cannot grow without rain."

The *Arata Pumpkin Farm* website relates the story of how pumpkins moved from animal feed to decoration, stating "In the early 1930's teenage brothers John and Clarence Arata planted pumpkin seeds to feed the family's hogs, on the site the farm sits on to this day. One day, while hauling pumpkins along Highway 1, they were stopped by a passing motorist who asked to buy a few. They sold the pumpkins for a quarter apiece and just like that a business and tourist attraction was born." Today, the farm is a major destination in the fall with its pumpkin patch and giant hay bale maze.

Source: aratapumpkinfarm.com.

The Arata family may have kick-started the pumpkin mania on the coast, but many other farmers helped achieve the scale that built the pumpkin capital.

Enrico and Lorraine Pastorino started farming in 1957, with flowers as their primary business. Son Hank started the pumpkin patch in 1971 and Hank and his son now manage the business.

Farmer John Muller started pumpkin farming to help kids learn about farming and how and where pumpkins grew. The success of his educational venture led him to open Farmer John's Pumpkin Farm, which he and wife Eda ran until retiring in 2021—the farm is now run by Danny Bretao and Danny Lopes and their families. Other family-run pumpkin patches include Andreotti Family Farms, Lemos Farms, Pastorino Farms, and Bianchi Family Farms.

The pumpkin itself did the "heavy lifting" in establishing its utility and value, but the town of Half Moon Bay took things to the next level. The history of the Half Moon Bay Pumpkin Festival is recounted in the October 19, 1978, *Half Moon Bay Review*, noting that "the idea of holding such an event was recommended to the chamber of commerce by El Granada's then postmaster Clayton Fountain.

They both claimed to be the pumpkin capital of the world.

The idea quickly shifted to the Main Street Committee for Beautification," and aided by a substantial group of volunteers, the first festival was held in 1971. No official records of attendance were kept but the event was publicized in California newspapers and some national outlets.

The event grew quickly, from 5,000 attendees in 1972 to 30,000 in 1973, and 50,000 in 1974. Today the festival attracts over 200,000 attendees with vendor booths lining Main Street, and numerous venues for entertainment and food.

The now famous Safeway World Championship Pumpkin Weigh-Off started in 1974 as a contest between Circleville, Ohio and Half Moon Bay, California, both at the time claiming to be the Pumpkin Capital of the World.

The October Oct 13, 2021, *Half Moon Bay Review* contained an interview with former Half Moon Bay Mayor Al Adreveno, who said that "Frank Barnhill, at the time the mayor of Circleville, Ohio, was visiting Half Moon Bay when he saw the prolific local pumpkin-growing culture."

Barnhill asked to see the Half Moon Bay mayor, who was Adreveno at the time." Adreveno said "They both claimed to be the pumpkin capital of the world. That's when the two towns decided to square off in the first weigh-off, hauling the largest gourds to their respective city halls for competition."

The Half Moon Bay pumpkin, grown by John Minaidis weighed 132 pounds and won by one pound. Minaidis won in 1975, and 1976 with pumpkins weighing 273 and 208 pounds, respectively. Weigh-off winner weights have scaled dramatically more recently, breaking 1,000 pounds in 2001, 2,000 pounds in 2017, and the winning 2,749 pounds for the 2023 winner, Travis Gienger.

Image courtesy of miramarevents.com. 2023 Half Moon Bay Pumpkin Weigh Off Champion Travis Gienger.

As Coastsiders brave the onslaught of visitors during the month of October, it is important to remember that the pumpkin is a cornerstone to coastal farming, life, and history. And when traveling around the country, and even the world, it is not uncommon to find people who know Half Moon Bay for its pumpkins and festival, this gorgeous gourd helped put the town on the map!

The Bloomin' Coastside

—Ellen Chiri

The Coastside has long been a-bloom with flowers of all kinds. From flower fields near Martini Creek in Montara to greenhouses in Pescadero, hundreds of Coastside acres have produced flowers for the San Francisco market and beyond.

The Higaki family is among the earliest San Mateo County floriculturists. In 1910, Nobuo Higaki started his nursery in Redwood City, growing carnations, roses, chrysanthemums, and gardenias for San Francisco florists. During World War II the Higaki family were victims of Executive Order 9066.

The order authorized the forced removal of people deemed to be threats to national security, sending them to internment camps inland and resulting in the incarceration of thousands of Japanese-Americans. The Higaki family was sent to an Idaho internment camp, abandoning their nursery and home.

Harry Higaki in a greenhouse full of hydrangeas courtesy of the Higaki family.

From the camp, Harry Higaki joined the Military Intelligence Service and in 1947 he was honorably discharged as a U.S. Army Sergeant. Happily, their business survived thanks to a friend who watched over it, enabling the family to resume business when they returned. After the war, the family returned to the nursery and incorporated the business as Bay City Flower Company, relocating to Half Moon Bay in 1960. Under Harry Higaki's leadership, the family business expanded, with Harry's son Harrison following his father in leadership.

The company eventually shipped products—chrysanthemums, hydrangeas, lilies, and many more blooming plants—to all 50 states. After 109 years and four generations in floriculture, Bay City Flower Company closed its doors in 2019.

Twenty years ago, floriculture represented 80% of San Mateo County's $180.6 million-dollar agriculture production value, according to then-agriculture commissioner Gail Raabe.

Much of that value came from the Coastside. Since then, growers have faced increased competition from imported cut flowers, and some have diversified into other crops.

Farmers' Market abundance courtesy of Colleen Granahan.

Despite the adverse effect on floral imports, blossoms still hold a strong and vivid place on the Coastside, as a visit to the Saturday morning Half Moon Bay Farmers' Market makes clear!

Here is a fun flower fact. You might wonder why the shopping center on the west side of Highway 1 in Half Moon Bay is named Strawflower Village. Until the mid-1980s, a field of strawflowers flourished there!

The strawflower is a member of the aster family. The flowers' bracts feel firm—like stiff paper or straw—even when fresh. They open into brightly colored rings. Because they keep their shape and color when dried, they are prized for long-lasting arrangements.

Joe Hagler in a field of strawflowers, 1969; photo by his 5th-grade teacher John Stuart, courtesy of Deb Wong.

You Say Potato…

—Jo Fry

When you think of our coastal crops, what immediately springs to mind are artichokes, Brussels sprouts, and our iconic orange pumpkins. But did you realize that one of our largest crops was once potatoes?

The history of starchy tubers growing along the coast pre-dates European settlement of the area. A native wild plant known as Indian Potato, or Wapato (in Latin Sagittaria latifolia) grows in marshy, wet environ-ments.

Indian potato plant, image from Native Foods Nursery website.

Rich in carbohydrates, protein, vitamins and minerals, a single healthy plant can produce up to 40 tubers which can be harvested in fall. It would have been a good supplement to a diet also rich in the bounty of the sea.

Early settlers in the area may have come to California searching for gold in the mid-1800s, but out of necessity fell back to earning a living doing what they knew best when they didn't strike it rich, and that was farming. San Francisco was a growing, hungry town, and the Coastside's farmers were happy to supply this staple.

Potatoes were planted on Irish Ridge. The October 26, 1871, Shipping Intelligence section of the Daily Alta California reported that the steamer Donald Debney was four hours from Amesport, where it would be picking up 363 sacks of "pot-toes." On that same date the Sea Nymph was 14 hours outside of Pigeon Point, where it would load 298 sacks.

In 1872 Gordon's Chute was completed in Tunitas Creek, and soon sacks of potatoes were hurtling down the high cliffs toward waiting steamships (of course, the fabric sacks would often break from the friction, spilling potatoes into the sea).

Drawing of Gordon's Chute from Half Moon Bay Memories.

In Purissima Valley Henry Dobbel had 900 acres of the crop planted by 1878. Dobbel also rented 500 acres near the Johnson House in the 1870s, which were all planted with this single crop.


Daily Alta California, Volume 23, Number 7885, 26 October 1871

Shipping Intelligence.

SAN FRANCISCO.....OCTOBER 26, 1871.

Arrived.

Oct 25—Stmr Donald, Debney, 4 hours from Amesport

"pot-toes" picked up from Amesport.

Potatoes were such an important crop that an award-winning invention was developed to help local farmers who were growing them.

Robert Israel Knapp moved to the coast in the early 1870s and opened a blacksmith shop. It is said that the wagonmaker was a fixer and tinkerer, so when locals complained about the difficulty of using the existing Kilgore plow to till potatoes on our rocky and hilly soil,

R.I. Knapp took on the task of designing a better plow. He fashioned a plow that was both sturdy and lightweight with a locking mechanism that allowed it to swivel. It worked so well that he patented the device in 1875 and soon was inundated with orders. Between 1878 and 1907 Knapp won 14 awards at local and state fairs, and even in the prestigious World's Exposition in New Orleans.

1886 Copper medal from the Mechanics Institute of San Francisco, awarded at the Industrial Exhibition to R.I. Knapp for his Side Hill Plow.

So, why don't we see fields of potatoes today, like we see artichokes?

Although you can find potatoes in the local farmer's market, and I personally have them growing in my backyard, they aren't the large commercial crop that they were in the heyday of the 1870s.

Our bounty of potatoes, taken by farmers to the warehouse connected to the bustling Amesport Pier, began to dry up. According to June Morrall, the booming potato business at Amesport slipped into decline because "A pesty worm destroyed the future of the crop and the little steamers stopped less frequently at Amesport." The Shipping Intelligence records corroborate this timing, as we can see the decline of the pier's activity starting in the 1880s.

As other crops replaced some of the fallow potato fields, our coastally grown artichokes even becoming nationally important in the upcoming decades, the importance of the humble spud to the lives of our townspeople became a distant memory.

Sources:

Nativefoodsnursery.com

California Digital Newspaper Collection (ucr.edu)

Half Moon Bay Memories, June Morrall

https://historysanjose.org/research-collection/knapp-plow-collection

Introducing the Collections Corner

—Bill Scholtz, Collections Manager

The newly formed collections team has been organizing and documenting new and existing artifacts.

We work with both the Museum and the Collections Archive. The difference between the two is that all the artifacts in the museum will be part of the archive, but not everything in the archive will be in the museum.

The team is available for research and can supply photos for projects such as this newsletter.

The museum's purpose is to share our history with our community and visitors in ways that are interesting and enjoyable.

Not everything in the archive may be useful for that purpose.

The goal of the archive is to ensure that we do not lose the past and includes documents, old phone books, ledgers from businesses, voter registration records, and many other kinds of items.

The photography collection includes prints, negatives, and a few glass negatives. Recently we added digital scanning allowing people to donate scans of old photos and keep their originals. Several hundred pictures have been added so far.

Among the donations received in the last few months were Half Moon Bay High School graduation programs and class photos. These are very welcome because they record information on each class, building a living history.

What we are looking for: We are amassing a good collection of memorabilia, documentation, and photos for HMB High School. However, we have almost nothing for Coastside grammar schools or Pescadero High School.

If you have memorabilia or photos for any of the schools and would like to let us scan or photograph them, please reach out to me at HMBHAcollections@gmail.com.

President's Message

—Vicky Mitchell, Acting President

A HUGE shout out to all of you who supported us through Coastside Gives this year! Thanks to you we met our goal, raising just over $10K and qualifying for a generous matching grant. Look for new exhibits in the museum and an improved yard space over the coming year. We could not do this without your help and support, and it is just one of the things that makes our efforts so gratifying!

What's New at the HMB History Association

As we approach our one-year anniversary of the museum's grand opening last June, I am profoundly pleased with what our Board, along with many association supporters, has accomplished and excited about our next stage of growth! Our design team has been working diligently to expand and complete the exhibits on the interior of the barn as well as begin planning for a much more inviting and useful exterior landscape. Repeat visitors are noticing that the museum is not static!

The collections team has been working with HMB high school students to document and organize existing as well as new artifacts, continually expanding our knowledge of this amazing community. The education team hosted three additional field trips for two local schools and provided a tour for the Hope Services community. It is rewarding to share our museum with the community and see children actively engaged in using mortars and pestles, making butter, and listening to stories about the people and events that shaped our landscape and culture.

The first half of 2024 included the following:

- An additional 3,000 visitors from all around the world.
- Two speaker engagements, covering, glass artifacts and Miramar history and Firefighting on the Coast. These are great opportunities to learn and actively engage with our local resources.

Do not miss our Spring program! Join us on Tuesday May 21 at the Half Moon Bay Library to hear Chris Hunter, author of *Ocean Shore Railroad*, talk about the Coastside's short-lived but well-loved railroad. Originally planned to connect San Francisco to Santa Cruz, an earthquake and the automobile combined forces to prevent the little railroad enterprise from achieving its goal. Doors open at 5:30 pm and the program starts at 6:00 pm sharp.

As always, we welcome volunteers who are interested in being museum docents and writers for the Coastside Chronicles. We also welcome donations of local artifacts, including written anecdotes (tales of the past!) to enhance the appreciation of our history and vibrant community. For more info, email us at Volunteer4History@gmail.com.

Be sure to stop by the Museum if it has been a while—we continue to develop our exhibits and facilities. We look forward to seeing you!

Help Preserve Coastside History

The Half Moon Bay History Association is dedicated to bringing together all members of the community, to preserve and share the history of the San Mateo County Coastside, from Montara to Año Nuevo. Our history is the lives and works of all the cultures that made the Coastside what it is today, from the times of the earliest Ohlone villages, to the Spanish and Mexican periods, through the early American period, to modern times. Our mission is to preserve and share Coastside history.

Let Us Hear from You

Stop by the museum at 505 Johnston Street, Half Moon Bay, CA.

Follow us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/HMBHistory/.

Send email to info@halfmoonbayhistory.org.

Send mail to Half Moon Bay History Association, PO Box 248, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019-0248 or call (650) 479-1935.

Click **here** for our YouTube videos.

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