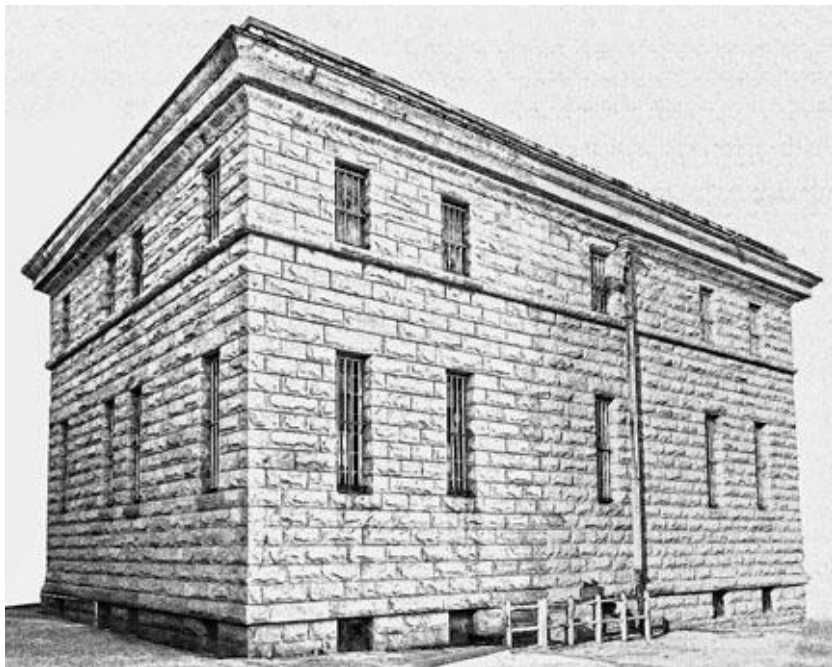


Architectural Gem Preserved – for now...

Tara Weber



It's not every day a beautiful, century-old building is in jeopardy of being demolished.

That was the inescapable fate of the 1903 County Jail in downtown Martinez until the non-profit Architectural Preservation Foundation of Contra Costa County (APFCCC) stepped up to save it from becoming a pile of recyclable stone. The newly formed non-profit APFCCC, headed by Dean McLeod, achieved this huge success in March of this year. Thanks to regular correspondence and meetings with the Capital Projects division of the County Administrator's Office, the County Supervisor, and the CCC Public Works, the organization was able to reach an agreement to delay any further action on demolishing the jail for TWO YEARS.

Built of rough cut Vermont Granite blocks, the 1903 jail was built to house 38 inmates and was designed to match the larger Court House building (now the Finance Building) that it sits immediately behind. The two matching buildings are part of the "Court House Block" as defined in the National Register of Historic Places, a designation that came as the result of an application submitted in 1989 by Betty Maffei, the Director of the Contra Costa County Historical Society.

The 1903 jail building was designed by William S. Mosser, a well-known architect at the time. Among his designs were plans for the Santa Barbara Courthouse, the S.F. Maritime Museum, and the Inglenook Winery and Beringer House in St. Helena, CA.

So, where does the APFCCC go from here? Their efforts are now focused on developing a "viable" plan for the restoration & reuse of the building, raising funds to cover expenses such as consultation fees to full cost of restoration. Just as important is the search for volunteers to assist with publicity and grant writing as well as story writing from the substantial collection of fascinating history they have accumulated.

To learn more or assist, contact the APFCCC by phone: (925) 352-3334 or by email: savethecountyjail@gmail.com.

The World War I Draft Comes to Contra Costa County

Lisa Gorrell

Sometime after 7 a.m. June 5, 1917, Enoch Wisner Crozer of Alamo filled out the draft registration card at the Alamo Post Office in the presence of the assistant registrar, D.C. Bell. Enoch, a medium build, twenty-nine-year-old with brown hair and blue eyes, worked as a farmer for E.L. Crozer near Alamo. He was the first man to register for the draft.

Form 1		1 REGISTRATION CARD		No. 15
1	Name in full	Enoch Wisner Crozer	29	Age in yrs
2	Home address	Alamo		State
3	Date of birth	Apr 29	1888	
4	Are you (1) a natural-born citizen, (2) a naturalized citizen, (3) an alien, (4) or have you declared your intention (specify which)?	Natural Born		
5	Where were you born?	Alameda	Cal	U.S.A.
6	If not a citizen, of what country are you a citizen or subject?			
7	What is your present trade, occupation, or office?	Farmer		
8	By whom employed?	E. L. Crozer		
9	Where employed?	Near Alamo		
10	Have you a father, mother, wife, child under 12, or a sister or brother under 12, solely dependent on you for support (specify which)?	No		
11	Married or single (which)?	Single	Race (specify which)?	Caucasian
12	What military service have you had? Rank			
13	Do you claim exemption from draft (specify grounds)?	No		
I affirm that I have verified above answers and that they are true.				
Signature of registrant		Enoch Wisner Crozer		

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the United States’ entry into World War I. Congress voted to declare war against Germany on April 6, 1917. At this time, the federal army numbered about 120,000 soldiers and the National Guard around 180,000. The army needed one million and only 73,000 had volunteered in the weeks since the declaration of war.

The Selective Service Act was enacted on May 18, 1917 to raise a national army. To sell the idea of the draft, some 75,000 speakers presented four-minute speeches in cities and towns across America.

So what happened in Contra Costa County on registration day?

The draft, set for June 5, required all men aged between 21 and 31 to register in person. A total of 4,648 local draft boards were responsible for the classification, physical exam, the claim for exemption, and the appeals process. They also maintained lists of men ordered to report to the board for induction.

Articles in the local newspapers explained the procedures for the upcoming draft. All men, except those already in the military, who had reached their 21st birthday and not yet reached their 31st birthday, had to register on June 5. The articles explained that the registration was a “public duty” and that the possibility of imprisonment would be the penalty. All saloons and bars were closed and no alcohol was to be served during registration, which lasted from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

The newspaper listed the registration places. Each community had at least one registrar, some more than one. For example, Concord had four. The men filled out two-sided cards, where the first side had information about their name, address, age, birthplace, birth date, occupation, whether they had requested an exemption, and their signature. The reverse side listed their physical description and the signature of the draft board registrar. Copies of WWI Draft Cards can be viewed at FamilySearch.org.

After the registration day, the newspaper printed the names of all of the men who registered along with their registration number. The purpose of this was to show who had registered and to have residents see who might not have registered. The “slackers” as they were referred to were urged to come in and register.

The next day’s paper also made a headline about how many men claimed exemptions. Of the total of 6293 men who registered in Contra Costa County, 2256 men claimed exemptions. These exemptions were for having a wife and children, being a supporter of his parents, or working in important industries. The Local Exemption Board asked the general public “to

read over carefully the list of names who claim exemption from Military Service as they appear in the daily newspaper each day, and if any person knows of any reason why the claim for exemption should not be granted, it is the duty of such person to notify this Board at once, in order that it may make proper investigations of each case.”

An editorial was written about alien exemptions. One commentator indicated that no aliens had volunteered for service. Another complained that . . . “It’s pretty nice to reside in America as these people are doing: enjoy the benefits of freedom, the big wages and salaries and driving about in \$3000 automobiles and then refusing to fight for such blessings on the pretense that they are aliens.”

African Americans were segregated in the armed forces; the registrar was instructed to tear off the lower left-hand corner of the card to tag African Americans (see below). Most African Americans who were drafted performed manual labor jobs such as road-building, unloading of ships, and other common labor work.

Form 1	REGISTRATION CARD	No. 44
1	Name in full <i>Everett Ray Gaines</i>	Age in yrs. <i>31</i>
2	Home address <i>Berkeley St Martinez Calif</i>	
3	Date of birth <i>July 1st 1896</i>	
4	Are you (1) a natural-born citizen, (2) a naturalized citizen, (3) an alien, (4) or have you declared your intention (specify which) <i>1 Natural Born Citizen</i>	
5	Where were you born? <i>Martinez California U.S.A.</i>	
6	If not a citizen, of what country are you a citizen or subject?	
7	What is your present trade, occupation, or office? <i>Clerk</i>	
8	By whom employed? <i>W.E. Snyder</i>	
9	Where employed? <i>Martinez</i>	
9	Have you a father, mother, wife, child under 12, or a sister or brother under 12, solely dependent on you for support (specify which)? <i>None</i>	
10	Married or single (which)? <i>Single</i>	Race (specify which)? <i>Negro</i>
11	What military service have you had? Rank <i>None</i>	branch
12	Do you claim exemption from draft (specify grounds)? <i>No</i>	
I affirm that I have verified above answers and that they are true.		
<i>E.R. Gaines</i> (Signature of registrant)		

There were two additional registration days: June 5,

1918 for men who had become 21 after June 5, 1917, and September 12, 1918 for men who were aged 18 through 45.

The first man drafted in the county was Clarence R. Darby of Antioch, Antonio Reggiardio was the first from Martinez, D. Mercurio was the first from Pittsburg, Edwin L. Reed was the first from Nichols, A.E. Reynolds was first from Danville, Nizo Goto from Concord, Verne Carter Ross from Walnut Creek and Edward M Sheppard from Port Costa.

Company H

A local unit of the California National Guard, Co H., actively recruited. Men who were drafted could sign up into Company H before they were called up. All men could choose the service in which they wished to serve before being drafted into the regular army. On August 13, the National Guard became a full-fledged unit of the U.S. Army.

Women & Children

The Red Cross urged many to join in the service of making bandages and gauze sponges. They were looking for persons willing to sew and do other work. Mrs. AF Bay and Mrs. GW Sweetser were in charge of the Martinez office in the Bank of Martinez building. Volunteers also collected old newspapers and periodicals to be sold to junk dealers and the money went to the general fund of the Red Cross. The National Guard appealed to all to supply yarn, woolens, and winter materials for warm garments. Instructors would be furnished to teach knitting. They also had benefit dances such as the one held on October 6 featuring the University of California “Jazz” orchestra.

Children got involved, too, collecting items



to sell, collecting money for the tobacco, soap, and candy drive. School children also made Christmas boxes for soldiers, filled with homemade candy, cookies, fruit, and almonds.

The San Pablo Historical Society

Janet Pottier, Executive Director

The area that was to become San Pablo existed for thousands of years as the home of the Huichin, an Ohlone tribe that lived on the bay and along our creeks. Their life changed radically with the coming, in 1776, of the De Anza expedition from Mexico. The native population was transported to the San Francisco Mission and many of them died there. The ones that remained became laborers on the Ranchos.

The caretaker of the Mission land was Francisco Castro who came with the De Anza expedition as a child. When the land passed from Spanish to Mexican rule, Castro was able to get a land grant for the Mission land. The grant, over 17000 acres, encompassed present day El Cerrito, Kensington, Richmond and San Pablo.

When he died the land passed to his wife, Gabriela, and children. Her son Jesus Maria built her an adobe.



However, this house soon became the home of Gabriela's daughter Martina and her husband, Juan Alvarado, Governor of Alta California.

When Gabriella died in 1851, she left her share of the land to her daughter, Martina. However, due to family squabbles and conflicting claims from people who had purchased land from the Castros, as well as squatters, ownership of the land was a tangled mess. In 1867 Joseph Emeric who had purchased 2000 acres sued Juan Alvarado for clear title to his land. The case, Emeric v. Alvarado et al had almost 200 respondents. It was not until 1894 that the courts

issued the decree dividing the land into 148 parcels. Many of the names of those who benefited are familiar to West County residents as the names of our streets, parks and schools. After receiving clear title to



their land Henry and Fredricka Blume built a home in the San Pablo hills in 1905. This house is

now one of the San Pablo Museum buildings.

By the time the case was settled San Pablo had become a main stop for stagecoaches traveling between Oakland and Martinez. It was also a stopping off place for farmers taking their loads of hay and grain to the markets. By 1916 San Pablo had a constable, a jail, a post office and a library. But it was not until 1948 that San Pablo incorporated as a city.

In the 1970s San Pablo built a Civic Center that echoed its Rancho past, rebuilt the home of Governor Alvarado that had been destroyed in 1953, and relocated the Blume House and bunk house into the Civic Center. Today, San Pablo is now planning to move its City Hall across Church Lane. The Adobe and Blume House will remain on the present site.

For those interested in learning more about San Pablo's history, the San Pablo Historical and Museum Society published a history of the city in 2016 entitled "Stepping Stones: The Story of San Pablo, California" by Daniel C Smith. It is available for \$25.00.

Due to a shortage of volunteers we are only open on an irregular schedule but we are always glad to arrange tours for interested visitors. We also welcome new volunteers. Reach us at sanpablomuseums@gmail.com, or a message left at 510-215-0000.

More information at:

<http://www.ci.san-pablo.ca.us/943/History>

Special Author Event, May 6, 2017

The Man Who Lit Lady Liberty: The Extraordinary Rise and Fall of Actor M.B. Curtis History talk and book signing with Richard Schwartz

The Martinez and Contra Costa County Historical Societies joined to invite the County community to be the first to hear author & historian Richard Schwartz talk about his new book *The Man Who Lit Lady Liberty: The Extraordinary Rise and Fall of Actor M.B. Curtis*.



Richard's presentation revealed the life of this incredibly influential immigrant actor of the late nineteenth century. As the first Jewish male actor allowed to portray a Jewish male on stage in America, Curtis' story was one of immigration, assimilation, theatre history and how the invisible wings of comedy can affect the nation's direction. It is also a story that connects the actor intimately (though forgotten until this book) with the Statue of Liberty, Mark Twain, a murder, and the greatest African American entertainment troupe of its day. After all that, Curtis became a pioneer in the still-infant silent movie industry. Focusing on the actor's early days in San Francisco's theatrical history and his overnight rise to stardom, Schwartz's talk revealed how San Francisco became the actor's home base as he toured the country from the 1870s through the 1906 Earthquake and how the earthquake almost ended his life.

Richard Schwartz is an historian and the author of *Eccentrics, Heroes, and Cutthroats of old Berkeley*; *Earthquake Exodus, 1906; Berkeley, 1900*; and *The Circle of Stones*. Originally from Philadelphia, he holds a bachelor's degree in English Literature from Temple University. He now lives in Berkeley, where he works as a building contractor and documents early Native American sites in the Bay Area. *The Man Who Lit Lady Liberty* is his fifth book. Further information: www.richardschwartz.info



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Please consider CCCHS in your estate planning. It is simple, and any gift is tax deductible. We have a Schwab account that makes it easier for members and others to donate shares of stock to the Society, a good way to make a year-end or other contribution

A Tribute to Bernard Freedman



Priscilla Couden

Bernard (“Bernie”) Freedman, long-time volunteer researcher, passed away on March 1 at the age of 99. The Society and its archives owe Bernie a great debt of gratitude

for his contributions to our archives. When he retired in 1981, he had been 31 years with the State Compensation Insurance Fund and was executive Vice President at that time.

Bernie had a master’s degree in history. After retirement, he came to the Contra Costa County History Center and began to collect information for the many indexes and reference works he later published. He created indexes for the three most important books in our library—Slocum & Co. 1883, Hulaniski 1917, and Purcell 1940, all histories of Contra Costa County. He is the author of *Pioneer Jews of Contra Costa County*, *Italians in Contra Costa County*, *Portuguese in Contra Costa County*, *Aviation in Contra Costa County*, *Death Notices 1860-1998*, and *Americans at Play in Contra Costa County 1876-1889*.

After moving to Vacaville in 2011, he added two reference books of Vacaville obituaries. He was also a public lecturer on such topics as his favorite, United States Presidents, and was a Master Gardener who won prizes for his roses. He is survived by his children, Irene, Lynn, Richard, and Gary, 11 grandchildren and many great grandchildren. We are fortunate to have known him. We now use his works on an almost daily basis at the History Center to deal with queries we receive from around the world.

Wish List Update:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Goal</u>	<u>Donors</u>	<u>\$ To Go</u>
Computers Software	\$3000	Jean Boyd; Lorraine Bray, Earl Turner, Jr.	\$2450
Vol. Desk	\$250	Margaret Ready	\$200
Camera	\$100	Jennifer & Jeff Apkarian	\$0
Doc. Storage	\$425	J & J Apkarian	\$275
Fire Detection System	\$17000	John Burgh Paul & Peggy Grunland; Roxanne Lindsay; H.B. Martin; John Mercurio; Pleasant Hill Rotary Foundation	\$14920
Flatbed Scanner	\$1000	Michael Hibma	\$750
LED Exterior Security Lights	\$200	John Greitzer	\$0
Metal Bookends	\$200	Richard Sandvick Lisa & Norman Gorrell	\$0
Motion Detector	\$375	Ralph & Marilyn Cozine; John Greitzer	\$0
PG&E Bill	\$8400	Lorraine Bray Mike Anderson	\$8150
Magazine Files	\$200	John Greitzer Ralph & Marilyn Cozine	\$0
Map Room	\$1000	Paul & Peggy Grunland; Nancy Colchico; Jeff & Jennifer Apkarian	\$500

Thank You to All Our Donors!

From The Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Another quarter has come and gone, and we are in the midst of our Summer Appeal.

Thanks to those who have already donated!



I have updated the gifts designated for specific items on our wish list. Some wishes have been completely fulfilled, others are still in process, and others are ongoing. I want to make sure that each person who donated funds for a specific project knows the status of that project, and to say thanks for these gifts. To acknowledge these gifts and to let you know what has been donated and how much still is needed for each project, I have included a chart (see previous page). An additional \$1,060 was donated by those already listed, joined by Thomas E. Patterson and Stephen R. Lawton. These numbers do not include recent donations toward the new database. I will report on that in a future issue. We appreciate each and every donation!

I am very much looking forward to an end-of-July visit by Barclay Ogden of UC Berkeley, consultant on our NEH grant. Barclay last visited the Society in 2014, when he performed a Preservation Assessment of our archives. The recommendations of that report are still guiding our progress in the archives.

Please save the dates for our events (see the list on the last page of the *Bulletin*) and visit the History Center soon!

Priscilla

From The President:



I just got back from a vacation in Great Britain and France and, while the purpose of our visit was a wedding; and the weather was generally quite good; history was on my mind almost constantly. Those two countries with their

capital cities of London and Paris are the sites of centuries of important events. Along with that, one cannot ignore the architecture in the grand public buildings as well as the individual homes which have their own connections to history.

One thing that struck me was the foresight that was present centuries ago to preserve for public knowledge and enjoyment important landmarks and artifacts. *The Louvre* in Paris opened (in the former palace) in 1793, the *Versailles Palace* was welcoming visitors in the nineteenth century and *Windsor Castle* accepted tourists by the 1740s.

We should keep these early efforts in mind and draw from them inspiration for our own efforts in Contra Costa County. Although our own history does not reach back anywhere near as long as Europe's, we strive to preserve documents and photographs that tell the story of our county and its people. But unlike those European landmarks mentioned which have significant government backing, our history center has modest county government support, so we make up the remainder from our members and grants from various non-profit foundations. And this is one of our greatest challenges.

One of the highlights of our vacation was a day trip out to Salisbury Cathedral where the best preserved of the four remaining original copies of the *Magna Carta* is on display. This seminal legal document was written in 1215 and covers one large page of animal skin "paper". As I looked at this page, written in tiny lettering with black ink, I marveled at its incredible condition. Each word is completely legible. Of course, you have to be able to read Latin, and abbreviated Latin at that. But, because of extreme care, this document is available to us today.

Our goal at the Contra Costa County Historical Society is nothing less than what has been achieved in Salisbury, England. I would hope that our materials would be available to researchers eight hundred years from now.

John Mercurio



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Mark Your Calendar

Saturday, July 15 – Ice Cream Social.

Saturday, August 19 – Martinez Vintage Market.
Downtown Martinez. The Society will be hosting a booth with photographs, maps, and a wide selection of books for sale. History Center will be open.

Saturday, September 16 – Author in the Archives,
In the Shadow of Diablo, Novel by Dan Hanel.

Saturday, October 21 – National Archive Month, Open House.

Saturday, December 2 – Annual meeting & holiday luncheon. Location TBD.

Mission Statement

Our Mission is to Preserve, Protect and Provide public access to the records and heritage of Contra Costa County, California.

Contra Costa County Historical Society Officers and Directors:

President.....John Mercurio
1st Vice President..... Donald Bastin
2nd Vice President.....John Burgh
Secretary..... John Greitzer
Treasurer..... Steven James

Andrea Blachman Oliver Bray
Lisa Gorrell Beverly Lane
Kathy Leighton Scott Saftler
Tara Weber Betty Maffei – Member Emeritus

Executive Director: Priscilla A. Couden, Ph.D.
Newsletter Editor: Donald Bastin

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Open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, 9 am – 4 pm
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