



CARMEL RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION NEWS

CELEBRATING 23 YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

MAY/JUNE 2010

Hear about Monterey County wines and taste them as well!

A ficionados have always known that conditions in Monterey County are perfect for grapes—superb soil, warm sunshine, cool ocean breezes and a longer growing season, allowing up to 60 days longer for slow and leisurely ripening. So, it is no surprise that, after five-plus decades of commercial wine production, labels listing Monterey County as the origin of the grapes are among the most well known in the world.



For our May 27 meeting, Program Director **Roberta Miller** has asked **Julie Rosenau**, Sales & Development Director of the **Monterey County Vintners & Growers Association**, to give us an overview of “Wines of Monterey County.”

Immediately following her presentation, Rosenau will present a tasting of three varieties of Monterey County wines. The meeting is open to the public, but an advance reservation is needed to participate in the tasting.

To sign up for the wine tasting, please send a \$6.00/person check, payable to CRA, to arrive no later than May 21, to Roberta and Monte Miller, P.O. Box 3085, Carmel, CA 93921.

MEETING

Thurs. May 27
4:45 p.m. Julie Rosenau
“Wines of Monterey County”
 Vista Lobos Meeting Room
 (Torres between 3rd & 4th)

Wine tasting following the meeting
 (See details for signing up at left)

Summer Activities

This is the final issue of CRA News until September. Below are scheduled Carmel Residents Association summer activities.

CRA Summer Beach Cleanups

Saturday, June 26, July 24 and August 28 — Cleanups begin at 10 a.m. at the foot of Ocean Avenue.

Members’ Twilight Barbecue at Indian Village, Thursday, August 19

This is one of CRA’s most popular events. Headed again this year by **Jane and Tony Diamond**, it will be a festive evening. A flier with details will be mailed to all members in early August. If you would like to help with the barbecue—which involves fun and camaraderie in addition to work—give Jane and Tony a call, *before June 1*, at 622-9620.

CITY WATCH

This ongoing column, which began with our March issue, is devoted to keeping our members and other citizens informed of the status of important community issues—how and when resolution will be reached and, if not, what happened and why.

❖ No water for Fourth Avenue Walkway

One of the original conditions for winning grant funding from the State of California Department of Parks and Recreation for the 4th Avenue Riparian and Riverine project was the city’s promise to use recycled water to irrigate all the landscaping. After 10 long years, the city finally moved ahead even though it had substantially modified and diluted the original design. Still, they had not secured an on-site recycled water source even though the project includes an irrigation system specifically designed for that type of water.

To receive grant funds, the city’s solution was to assign an

employee and tank truck to hand water the new landscaping. This task will be accomplished by drawing water from the city’s recycled water allocation across town at the Rio Park property and transporting it to the Fourth Avenue site. The landscaping stretches from Monte Verde to San Antonio, four city blocks—no small task.

The lack of an on-site permanent water source for this project takes the city’s two part-time tree planting/watering employees away from their critical task of nurturing new replacement trees downtown and in our neighborhoods. Residents

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It's all over, including the shouting!

The election is over and the voters have spoken—loudly.

We extend our congratulations to the winners— Jason Burnett, Mayor Sue McCloud and City Council Member Paula Hazdovac. Burnett was elected to the City Council by an unprecedented landslide. Seventy-two percent of those who voted cast a vote for Burnett. His campaign message of listening and responding to citizens' concerns for our community, ensuring transparency in our government and being fiscally responsible clearly resonated with the public.

We also want to congratulate mayoral candidate Adam Moniz, who earned a very strong showing, and to thank Gerard Rose for his many years of service on the council.

The Carmel Residents Association Board of Directors, along with many others, had great concerns about the hiring of a private consultant to run the election. Now that the election has passed, we think that our readers will find the perspective of CRA board member Richard Flower, who was very involved in monitoring the election process, interesting and informative.

Dick writes, "I observed several aspects of the recent city election. I watched the validation of signatures on mail-in ballots at the County Elections Department. I attended the orientation session for volunteer poll workers. And I spent ten hours as a poll watcher at Precinct One on election day. I would like to share some impressions gleaned from those experiences.

"Most importantly, throughout, I observed no irregularities that could have any significant effect on the outcome of the election.

"It is completely inaccurate to say the election was conducted by Martin and Chapman—it was conducted by city staff with some technical assistance from Martin and Chapman. Its success is almost entirely to the credit of City Clerk Heidi Burch and her deputy Molly Laughlin and to a remarkable corps of volunteer poll workers.

"I drew three conclusions from observing the validation of signatures on mail-in ballots: 1) the County Elections Department has designed an excellent state-of-the art system for this process. 2) Heidi and Molly were meticulous in employing this system, seeking advice from Elections Department staff when even the slightest uncertainties arose. 3) Elections Department staff were completely cooperative and graciously provided any needed assistance.

"The poll worker training provided by Martin and Chapman was grossly inadequate. My opinion was corroborated by a volunteer who, like me, is a former teacher. A single-sheet handout was distributed. Thereafter, the presentation relied on a series of power point slides of complex charts and forms which were indecipherable even from the front row. The session lasted for about an hour and a half. Such training is normally assumed to require at least a half day. It fell far short of the *Poll Worker Training Standards* set by the Secretary of State.

"The relatively efficient operation of the polls can be attributed to oversight by Heidi and Molly and to the volunteers. Either

Heidi or Molly or both were present before the 7:00 a.m. opening until they had to go to City Hall at 4:00 p.m. They returned at 8:00 p.m. to oversee closing procedures. Martin and Chapman personnel put in two brief appearances. Two came at 3:00 p.m. to collect accumulated absentee ballots and one returned at 8:30 p.m. to transport ballots to City Hall. Major credit for the relatively error-free operation of Precinct One belongs to Don Kirk, the volunteer who served throughout as inspector. In view of the inadequate training session, he confided that he spent the entire previous weekend studying every available bulletin on the conduct of elections. A particularly hazardous period was between four and eight p.m. when Heidi and Molly had to be at City Hall.

"If cost is an important consideration—and it certainly should be—the issue of Carmel holding a special election, rather than combining it with either a primary or general election should clearly be re-considered."

"I understand from the poll watchers that many more problems occurred at Precinct Two. There were extended periods when no inspector was present. There was considerable confusion among the ill-prepared poll workers, particularly when Heidi and Molly could not be present. Not only did the confusion complicate the process unnecessarily, there were also instances where voters were given inaccurate information.

"If the primary reason for engaging Martin and Chapman was economic, this decision is questionable. The conduct of the election required an exorbitant investment of city staff time. This cost must be considered in making decisions for future elections. If cost is an important consideration—and it certainly should be—the issue of Carmel holding a special election, rather than combining it with either a primary or general election should clearly be reconsidered. We would request, while memories are still fresh, this item be placed on the agenda for next month's Council meeting or as soon thereafter as possible.

"Despite my positive impressions of the conduct of this election and my admiration of the leadership of Heidi and Molly, some careful reevaluation is in order. Even though I observed only a few minor and irrelevant irregularities, I also observed many points at which the process is vulnerable. Fundamentally, I believe that elections should be conducted by disinterested third parties. It is unwise to assign dominant roles to personnel who are answerable to city officials who have a stake in the outcome of the election. If future elections are to involve a private contractor, the contractor should assume complete responsibility for the conduct of the election, not merely serve as technical assistants to city staff."

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Barbara Livingston

The devil is in the details



Barbara Livingston

I suspect that the reason visitors, business people and residents are drawn to our village-in-a-forest-by-the-sea, is because they respond subconsciously to the unusual details which define Carmel—the maintenance of our urban forest and beach; respect for the historicity of our homes, municipal and commercial buildings; and the rustic, rural ambiance of our neighborhoods.

The details of how our village looks and grows is left mainly with the staff and commissioners of our Planning Department. These people understand the weighty responsibility for maintaining the quality of life that we cherish here. As Yoko Whitaker, a former planning commissioner, used to say, “The devil is in the details.”— It is the details that make our village so unusual.

This was brought vividly home to me when I attended the April Carmel Planning Commission meeting. A subcommittee of commissioners Janet Reimers and Victoria Beach, local architect Bill Vasilovich, and city planner Marc Weiner submitted their proposed policy on windows appropriate for our village. The issue had been driven by a slew of applications for vinyl and aluminum windows. Applicants argued that these windows would last longer in our coastal climate. The subcommittee made a great effort to research all window manufacturers, read all the purported claims, spoke with window representatives and came to the conclusion that, for aesthetic reasons, unclad wood windows should continue to dominate the architectural landscape. Yes, they said, there are times when aluminum, steel or even vinyl might be considered, but wood will continue as the window of choice per our adopted Design Guidelines. In speaking for the adoption of the policy, Planning Chair Janet Reimers said that her thinking had been transformed by serving on the committee. She realized that the patina and the character of our village architecture depend on the patina and character of building materials, including windows. The Planning Commission voted 4-1 to adopt the policy.

What makes Carmel different from other coastal cities is our forested upper canopy of pine, cypress, redwood. Sadly, the details of maintaining our unique urban forest, can sometimes escape the scrutiny of some residents and business people as well as city officials. A mini park at the SW corner of Lincoln and 5th disappeared one day to be replaced by a garishly-painted asphalt triangle with metal and yellow reflector stakes. And a lovely street tree in front of the post office was unceremoniously yanked out and a replacement planted in a smaller

space smack dab up against the façade of the building where it cannot possibly thrive. Trees increase not only the aesthetics and therefore the property values of our village, but also improve the quality of the air we breathe. Just take a ride to the San Joaquin Valley this summer and you will appreciate what our trees do for us.

Details of village life do not remain stagnant—there is always room for interpretation, for bending a little. Case in point— allowing live music in restaurants down town. This has worked out well. The decibel level is monitored and there has been no repercussion from downtown apartment dwellers, who live adjacent to or above these businesses.

When I moved back to Carmel, I started attending council and Planning Commission meetings. At one I remember a business owner applying for a particular sign to hang over his shop. To my then undiscerning consciousness, there was no reason to deny the fellow. But the commissioners knew their municipal code and voted unanimously not to grant the sign. Carmel’s municipal code, as well as the policies, guidelines and ordinances, guides council members and commissioners in making their detailed decisions for our benefit.

The Carmel Chamber of Commerce understands details. The board gave a small grant to the Friends of Carmel Forest to help with the Friends’ downtown sidewalk-beautification efforts. Spearheaded by Greg D’Ambrosio and Steve Brooks, with the help of the City Forester Mike Branson, existing street trees were surrounded by drought-resistant plants. Adjacent businesses, who recognize these nice details, care for the planters with buckets of water from their shops—5th Avenue Deli, Coach, Perspectives and International Estates. There are more to come. People take joy working for our village—as does the Carmel Residents Association beach cleanup group, which has been at it for over 17 years.

Last year the Carmel Residents Association published a booklet—Everything you need to know about *Carmel from A-Z*—in which we made the case for the details that make us all so proud to live here. The rustic, rural look of our hand-made streets with rolling berms instead of curbs, haphazard unpainted grapestake fences at our front property lines, trees growing in the middle of our narrow winding roads, the absence of suburban lawns, mail delivery, neon lights, stop lights and street addresses. Yes, we sacrifice the small conveniences we had in Cleveland and other places from which we came, but it is these devilish details that make our little one square mile Carmel, the most beautiful little town in the world!

For your copy of *Carmel from A-Z*, please contact me at 626-1610 or by e-mail at barbaratlivingston@earthlink.net.

Barry Swift elected to CRA board

Barry Swift is the newest member of the Carmel Residents Association Board of Directors. A native New Yorker, Swift attended Hofstra University and served in the U.S. Army. Upon discharge, he entered the textile and apparel industry, working for one of the largest U.S. companies. In 1969, he moved to San Francisco to start his own business, Swift & Company, focusing on importing, distributing and selling textiles. He was chairman of the Northern California Textile Trade Association. Barry and his wife Kathleen purchased a home in Carmel in 1976 and moved here full time

in 2006.

Cochair of the “Dines Out” Committee, Barry is also active with the Community Hospital Auxiliary, volunteering his time on the bloodmobile which travels throughout the Peninsula. He is also involved with the Naval Postgraduate School Foundation, Gentrain Society, Foreign Affairs Council of Monterey Bay, the Carmel Foundation and the St. Francis Yacht Club.

Also elected for second three-years terms to the board were Jim Emery, Richard Flower and Skip Lloyd.



At right, Susan Klusmire, executive director of the Carmel Art Association, displays the Certificate of Appreciation presented to her at the April Carmel Residents Association meeting by President Barbara Livingston, seen at left. Founded in 1927, Carmel's oldest gallery, on the west side of Dolores between 5th and 6th, features the work of more than 120 professional local artists, displaying a wide variety of styles and media and changing its exhibitions monthly.

BEACH CLEANUP

**Saturday, May 22
10 a.m. - noon**

- Meet at foot of Ocean Ave.
- Please bring gloves
- Coffee and cookies served courtesy of Carmel Coffee House and Safeway Stores, Carmel
- Thanks to the *Pine Cone* for the ad donated each month!

The CRA Board wishes to assure our members that we do not sell, trade, lend or in any other way share our mailing list with any organization or company. This list is held in the strictest confidence for our organization's use only.

August library book sale will move to new venue

This year's August 19, 20, 21 highly-anticipated book sale held annually by the Friends of Harrison Memorial Library, will be in a new location—the Carmel Mission Gymnasium at the Mission's Junipero Serra School, adjacent to Larson Field on Rio Road.

The Friends promise “acres of books, carefully sorted for your convenience.”

If you are a member of the Friends, you are eligible to attend the Thursday, August 19 *Members' Preview* (think kid in a candy store). If you aren't a member and want to come on Thursday, you can join at the door.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

CRA Beach Cleanup

Sat., May 22, 10 a.m. to noon
Foot of Ocean Avenue
(Details this page)

CRA General Meeting

Thurs., May 27, 4:45 p.m.

Julie Rosenau

“Wines of Monterey County”

Wine Tasting after the meeting
(Details page 1)

City Council Budget Workshops

Thurs., May 20 and 27, 4:30 p.m.

City Council Chambers

(May 27 meeting will be held only if budget is not adopted on May 20.)

City Council Meeting

Tues., June 8, 4:30 p.m.

City Council Chambers

Summer CRA Beach Cleanups

Sats., June 26, July 24, August 28
10 a.m. to noon

Foot of Ocean Avenue

(Details page 1)

Members' Twilight Barbecue

Thurs., August 19, 5 p.m.

Indian Village, Pebble Beach

(Details page 1)

Ongoing city meeting dates

All held in City Council Chambers.

Check with City Hall for updates.

City Council, 1st Tues., 4:30 p.m.

Forest and Beach Commission, 1st Thurs., 1:30 p.m.

Planning Commission, 2nd Wed., 4 p.m.

Community Activities and Cultural Commission, 2nd Tues., 9:30 a.m.

Historic Resources Board, 3rd Mon., 4 p.m.

Library Board of Trustees, 4th Wed., 9 a.m.

Please see the CRA's web site for the year's schedule of meetings and events.

www.carmelresidents.org

Council meeting broadcast Sunday after meeting, 8 a.m. - noon, Channel 26.

VILLAGE PROFILES

Charles (Most of us know him as “Chuck.”) August lives in a neat, private two-story home in the village. We were invited into his garden on a beautiful spring morning for this chat. Optimistic, self-assured and modest, Chuck was ready for anything we had on our minds. Read on—We learned a lot about one of our cherished neighbors.

You’ve lived and worked in and for Carmel for many years, Chuck. What brought you to this village?

My family took a motor trip to California from our home in Wyoming and stopped off in Carmel in ’59. My dad fell in love with Carmel and moved our family of five to this lovely little village in 1962. I’ve never left and I never want to.

You have two adult children.

Yes, my son is a fashion model based in New York City, and my daughter lives in Salinas and is employed by California State Parks Department.

Can you make a comparison of the Carmel when you first arrived and the present Carmel? Is it essentially the same place or has it changed for the better or less than better? What has endured; what hasn’t?

In my early days, when summer was over you could “roll up the carpets” in town, and the streets were free of cars and visitors. I was a kid and I remember complaining to my folks that the town didn’t even have sidewalks! Calm and tranquility are not what kids are looking for. The village came alive again with the spring—fancy cars, fancy people.

Today it’s fancy twelve months a year. Now that I’ve been around for a few years, I can’t think of a more beautiful place to live in the world.

Would you care to comment on the village in terms of second homes? How has the trend affected your neighborhood?

It’s not an issue where I live. We’re mostly full time residents. We know each other, we chat, help one another, watch out for our neighbors.

You’re a fireman by profession. What are

your thoughts on the consolidation considerations for the Carmel Fire Department?

Let me just say that even when I joined the department in ’72 there was a wonderful group of volunteer fire fighters.

The horn would go off and the shop



Chuck August is pictured above with the incredibly-beautiful dragon he carved for the entrance to Jane and Tony Diamond’s new house.

keepers would close their doors and run to the aid of the firemen. Of course today that’s not feasible. Merchants can’t afford to leave their businesses. I have to say there are 10 fire departments on the Monterey Peninsula, including Seaside, Marina, Pebble Beach, the mouth of the Valley, Carmel Valley, the Highlands, the Navel Post Graduate School, Pacific Grove, Monterey and Carmel. Is that too many? Is it too expensive in terms of Fire Chiefs for each department? In short, I believe that some sort of consolidation should be investigated and acted upon.

Well, here you are retired. Now the former

fire fighter has morphed into a master wood carver. We’ve seen some of your work and it is frankly stunning. You’re too modest to say, it but we can—you’re one of our prized local artists.

My dad taught me the proper use of tools when I was seven. I worked in his garage helping him and building models of airplanes, ships, cars, Soap-box Derby Racers.

I work everyday in my studio building ship models, carving wooden figures for clients, competing in the Model Race Car Concourse—where I have won four national championships. I love working with my hands. It’s so Zen, me and the glue!

What’s the next creative project, Chuck?

I want to build a model, vintage American railroad passenger car, circa 1800—1/8” scale, about 9 feet in length. So I have my work cut out for me. Of course I can’t start that until I finish

my current project: a Mississippi River Boat. Not the real thing, just a model.

Any thoughts on retirement, changing gears, reinventing oneself?

The gears are changing all the time. I’m doing what I always wanted to do.

Chuck, if you hadn’t chosen to be a fireman, what other life work would have been appealing?

If I had another life I think I’d choose music. I play the guitar.

And with this last remark, Charles August inserted a disk into his player. It was a recording of his own performance of *But Beautiful*. And it was.

by Tom Parks

For more than twenty-five years, Tom Parks was a dialogue coach for many of the biggest names in Hollywood—Bob Hope, Carol Burnett, Julie Andrews, and the cast of *Laugh In*, to name a few. He moved to Carmel 25 years ago and has since written, directed and performed in several plays and revues to broad critical acclaim and the delight of local audiences. He serves as a board member of the Carmel Residents Association, the Carmel Public Library Foundation and the Alliance on Aging.

Continued from page 1

fought long and hard to convince the council to fund these critical positions in an effort to help renew and sustain our renowned urban forest—now in serious decline.

This is a classic example of advanced planning at its worst, poor use of very limited staff resources and expenditure of our limited tax dollars. This plan needs new creative thinking and a better solution.

In the future, approval of any major municipal project requiring a significant amount of water should be contingent upon the identification of a permanent source.

❖ Economic Revitalization Program

This program has had several variations over the past few years. None have been clear about the mission, its direction and goals—or why the city has taken over an area normally considered the job of the Chamber of Commerce. The relationship between City Hall and the Chamber of Commerce was an ongoing issue during the recent political campaign. With funds so scarce, it seems essential that both entities make every effort to avoid duplication of efforts to ensure that businesses and residents get the most value out of their hard-earned financial resources.

❖ Charcoal on Carmel Beach

In a discussion about beach fires, both the Forest and Beach and Planning Commissions thought this Carmel tradition should stand, but strongly recommended that the City Council budget funds necessary to keep the beach free of charcoal. We hope that during the budget process adequate provision is made to protect the whitesands of Carmel beach. The purchase of a beach rake at first seemed like a good solution, but fire pits have to be dug out to be cleaned and it is doubtful if a rake could accomplish this. Nor would a rake be able to pick up charcoal dispersed by wind into the dunes. So, even if the city purchased this tool, a large outlay for workers to clean the beach would still be necessary. The increasing amount of charcoal left from legal and illegal beach fires makes it impossible for Beach Cleanup volunteers to accomplish this task alone.

CRA Board's Budget Priorities

The Carmel Residents Association Budget Committee (Jim Emery, Greg D'Ambrosio, Skip Lloyd, Richard Flower and Betty and Dick Dalsemer) presented its priorities for the 2010/2011 budget to the City Council at its March 23 budget meeting. Below is a brief review of the main points made in their report. These recommendations are similar to those made in 2009 because most of these items have remained unfunded.

The city has long-term obligations and has made responsible commitments to manage and maintain the beach, the urban forest and its park lands based on management plan documents included in the Local Coastal Plan. Many of these obligations have not been met and few have been funded. We recommend that the city identify each of those management programs and act upon them by budgeting sufficient funding to accomplish these annual maintenance tasks.

Programs to implement/projects to fund

Below are the seven projects we strongly feel should be funded and implemented:

1. Carmel Beach Shoreline Management Plan—realistic annual program funding.
2. Mission Trail Nature Preserve Man-

agement Plan—realistic annual program funding.

3. Eliminate dead and dangerous trees, and replant one for one.
4. Invest in street projects based on the Nichols Engineering Study.
5. Complete storm water system mandates.
6. Increase annual emergency response training for all city staff.
7. Expand code enforcement.

The Carmel Residents Association is committed to the protection and enrichment of the traditional quality of life in Carmel-by-the-Sea and the preservation of its heritage and natural beauty through education, community activities and advocacy. It is in that spirit that we have offered these recommendations for the Carmel City Council's serious consideration.

Councilman Burnett seeks public input

Newly-elected Carmel City Councilman **Jason Burnett** has launched two initiatives to elicit input from residents.

- He has transformed his campaign web site into a "community conversation" site, where any resident can have a dialogue with him—citizens he will answer questions, and where we can see what others in the community are con-

cerned about. The web site address is: <http://burnettforcarmel.com/>

- He will also host regular town hall gatherings in advance of City Council meetings. The first was held on Monday, May 3rd. If you missed it, a similar session will be held on Monday, June 7th, from 8:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. in the Babcock Room at Sunset Center.

Happy 100th to the Forest Theater!

On July 9, 2010, the Forest Theater will celebrate 100 years of plays and musicals, children's theatre, Shakespeare, and the classics of yesterday and today.

An official Forest Theatre Centennial event will be held Sunday, August 29, 2010, at 4 p.m. Devendorf Park, followed by a parade to Forest Theater and a performance at 7 p.m.

Local History Librarian Rose McLendon explains, "Attending a play or musical at the beloved Forest Theater is a long-standing Carmel tradition, followed annually by residents and visitors

alike. Longtime Carmelites treasure memories of their first magical visit to the city's 'open-air playhouse,' or of long-forgotten words to a role in one of the early plays or pageants. Visitors have heard tales of renowned luminaries gracing the stage. Young and old share in the wonder of live dramas, comedies, musicals, children's theater, and feature films, all presented under a summer's night sky.

"As the Forest Theater begins to celebrate its first centennial, you are invited to discover the rich history of the 'oldest outdoor theater west of the Rockies.' "

Carmel in the Great Depression—local “dollars” and more

by Richard Flower

Like many other CRA members, I spent my “formative years” during the Great Depression. Though I didn’t spend them in Carmel, I have been reliving them as I pursue my volunteer project in the Library’s Local History Department: indexing significant *Pine Cone* articles from the 1930s.

We often think of Carmel’s early history as dominated by



This photograph of a Depression era “Carmel Dollar” is courtesy of Henry Meade Williams Local History Room, Harrison Memorial Library. Thanks to Rose McLendon, local history librarian, for her continuing helpfulness.

colorful, if irresponsible, bohemians. Actually, at least by the 1930s, it was mostly a friendly village where people looked after each other. The more fortunate did what they could to help the less fortunate. Every organization imaginable gave fundraising events—clubs held benefit dinners; theater groups gave benefit performances; musical groups gave benefit concerts. Cynics might question how much assistance was actually forthcoming, but clearly people did what they could.

The business community’s response was particularly impressive. Most shop windows displayed signs with the National Recovery Act blue eagle logo, proudly announcing “We Do Our Part.” Especially unique was the *Carmel Dollars* program.

Unemployed citizens who engaged in public service projects were paid in *Carmel Dollars*, scrip which could be used to purchase groceries and other necessities. The scrip gradually acquired monetary value when, each Friday, holders affixed a three-cent stamp. When enough stamps were affixed, the Dollars could be exchanged for U.S. currency at local banks. I have yet to read an appraisal of the success of this program, except for complaints that people frequently interrupted the necessary circulation pattern. The Dollars were designed by Jo Mora, Carmel’s famous artist, hence they were hoarded as souvenirs rather than affixing the stamps and sending them along.

Programs such as the WPA and the PWA were also prominent in Carmel, financing construction projects involving the beach, the Forest Theater, and the Fire House (unfortunately

that project was marred by a roof collapse), among others. Many local artists, writers, and musicians were engaged in WPA arts projects, not only as beneficiaries, but also in regional and statewide administrative and supervisory positions. The state headquarters of the Writers Project was in Carmel.

Often forgotten, during this era some of the nation’s free-thinking intelligentsia were questioning whether capitalism was the best economic system for America. Among them was Carmel resident and famous muckraking journalist, Lincoln Steffens. Even more outspoken was his wife, Ella Winter, who visited Russia and was impressed by their social experiments. A local chapter of the John Reed Club was organized; although denying accusations they were a Communist front, they were certainly at the far left. They were countered by a group of concerned businessmen and by the Carmel Post of the American Legion.

An intriguing story emerged from concern about Carmel’s liberal “elements.” One Charles Bakcsy, alias “Captain Charles Sharkey,” who lived here for several months, announced that he was actually a government spy, assigned to investigate a



The reverse side of a “Carmel Dollar” shown above has all of the required 3-cent stamps affixed, allowing the unemployed citizen to exchange it at a local bank for \$1.08. Courtesy of Henry Meade Williams Local History Room, Harrison Memorial Library.

nefarious plot whereby funds were received directly from Russia and smuggled to San Francisco to finance the longshoremen’s strike. He revealed his story in a sensational speech to the local American Legion Post. His claims received enough attention to encourage the FBI to send an agent to Carmel to expose the “Captain” as an imposter.

In many respects, Carmel responded to the Depression like most small towns in America—but, as we would expect, with some only-in-Carmel embellishments. I will leave it to others to contrast those responses with responses to today’s economic crises and to conclude what the contrasts tell us about life in the United States in general and Carmel in particular.

A plea for help for the Hovick family

Many of you are already aware of the plight of the Hovick family. Marcia Gambrell Hovick, founder and for many years the heart and soul of the Children's Experimental Theater (CET) at Carmel's Indoor Forest Theater, has been devastated by stroke and heart attack — a crisis that leaves her unable to continue her work. Already reeling from her own serious illness, Marcia's daughter Gwyneth Hovick has been trying to keep an aging house, which was mortgaged to supply funds for CET, from foreclosure.

In her half-century struggle to keep community theater alive in Carmel, Marcia transformed the lives of hun-

dreds of children. Her classes and traveling shows brought self-esteem, strength of purpose and often simple delight in the arts to the county's youngsters. She was also the inspiration for the Staff Players Repertory Company, also housed at the Indoor Forest Theater.

Many of our local actors, directors, producers, technicians and audience members have taken classes at CET, taught classes for CET, or performed with the Staff Players Repertory Company. Pacific Repertory Theatre's Stephen Moorer is a notable product of CET!

If you would like to help this unique family, please visit their web site at www.savemarciashouse.com.

Spotlight on Members

At its April meeting, the City Council accepted a \$1,000 grant from the Dorothea "Terry" Layne Fund for the beautification and maintenance of Carmel Beach. In all, the city has received four similarly generous grants from Col. Layne.

In March, Melanie Billig was presented with the 2009 Preservationist of the Year Award by the Alliance of Monterey Area Preservationists (AMAP) for her efforts to retain the Flanders property as permanent parkland within the Mission Trail Nature Preserve.

Signs seen by your editor lining Front Street in Lahaina, Maui ...

Paul Laub

for

Maui County Council

(Paul still helps the Friends of the Library with their weekly book collection when he is in town and with their August sale.)

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"The people of Carmel have always understood how easy the beauty of this unique place could be destroyed, and from the beginning they have banded together to fight that threat. This is a large part of why Carmel is as beautiful as it is today."

—Clint Eastwood, from the documentary *Don't Pave Main Street*

What is CRA all about?

The Carmel Residents Association is committed to the protection and enrichment of the traditional quality of life in Carmel-by-the-Sea and the preservation of its heritage and natural beauty through education, community activities and advocacy.

Carmel Residents Association
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Board of Directors:

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