



the VOICE

OF THE CARMEL RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

CELEBRATING **30** YEARS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

JULY • AUGUST 2017

My Whimsical Summer 'Staycation' in Carmel Not now, Voyager.

BY TOM PARKS



Lauren Banner

It's summertime. Vacation time. The other day someone asked me where I'd like to spend my holiday. There's a world waiting for me. Where will I go, what places would I choose? Kinda like a kid in a candy shop.

Not easy to travel these days – overbooked, cramped seating in the air. The price of a cup of coffee in Honfleur. An arm-and-a-leg ticket to the Bolshoi. I'm free, I have a zero balance on my Visa card. I'm revved up. So, I made a list.

There's always New York. I'd like to see Lincoln Center again. But then, we have the Sunset right here in Carmel. What about the castles on the Rhine? Here at home, overlooking the Pacific, is the Robinson Jeffers Tor House. I'm going to pass on the Rhine.

I've always wanted to visit the Bibliotheque Historique in Paris; well, who wouldn't? Yes, but we have the Harrison Memorial right there on Ocean Avenue. And I have a library card.

I like good music. I guess we all do. July is the best month to visit Salzburg for the Summer Festival. Then I remind myself that the Carmel Bach Festival plays at the same time. And I can walk to it.

I've never stayed as a guest in an English manor house, like Cliveden in Berkshire. You know, the grand house of the Astors. It would be lovely but, well, what about the Flanders Mansion when Hilton takes over (kidding!)? This isn't easy.

Why Tour d'Argent when we have the Village Corner? Do I need to see the Acropolis when there's talk of rehabbing the Scout House?

Yes, Berlin has the new Reichstag, but Carmel has a charming city hall. Goodness, decisions, decisions. What to do, where to go? Ah, the fog's rolling in. The sea air is so fresh it stings the nose. There'll be sunshine in late afternoon.

To quote Noel Coward:
"Why do the wrong people travel, travel, travel- When the right people stay at home?"

Not now, voyager. Wrong or right, I'm stayin' home this year.

- SAVE THE DATE -

July 4, Tuesday: Independence Day picnic in Devendorf Park. The CRA will provide fresh fruit behind the park on Sixth Avenue. The fruit is free. Donations are appreciated.

July 15, Saturday: Beach clean-up, foot of Ocean, 10 a.m.-noon.

Aug. 5, Saturday: Carmel Treasures Sale, San Carlos and 13th Avenue NWC, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Aug. 19, Saturday: Beach clean-up, foot of Ocean, 10 a.m.-noon.

Aug. 31, Thursday: Fiesta Goes Luau, Indian Village, Pebble Beach, 5 p.m. For CRA members and their guests. The traditional fiesta has a new theme: a luau. A new Hawaiian-inspired menu will be part of the celebration. There will be wine and mai-tais and a raffle with great prizes. Printed invitations will be mailed to CRA members.

Sept. 1, Friday: September/October paper issue of The Voice published.

Sept. 16, Saturday: Beach clean-up, foot of Ocean, 10 a.m.-noon.

Sept. 28, Thursday: CRA meeting and "Moving Forward" speaker TBA, Carpenter Hall, 5 p.m. Open to the public.

Oct. 18, Wednesday: CRA Dines Out, 5:30 p.m. Artemis Turkish Kitchen, south side of Ocean, near Mission. \$40 per person.

Oct. 21, Saturday: Beach clean-up, foot of Ocean, 10 a.m.-noon.

CRA Communications Team

Newsletter: Barbara Livingston, David Armstrong, Richard Flower, Tom Parks (editorial board)

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BY BARBARA LIVINGSTON

"Summertime and the Living Was Easy"



After the heavy rains of winter and winds of spring, Carmelites are looking forward to summer in Carmel.

What will that mean for CRA members? Beach picnics with makings from 5th Avenue Deli or Bruno's; a bottle from Nielsen's wine cellars; cheese and pate from The Cheese Shop? Or perhaps an opportunity to eat al fresco on the second floor terrace of Tree House Café? Certainly cups of tea and glasses of wine in our gardens with friends and family.

I remember one particular great summer when I was a sophomore at Carmel High. I worked at La Playa Hotel, serving breakfast and dinner to families who came for a month or longer to escape the heat of the Central Valley and "the mysterious East Bay," as San Francisco columnist Herb Caen called the land east of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge.

Mid-day was reserved for the beach. And because the hotel guests ate early dinners in those days, I had most of the evening to spend with friends at impromptu dance parties, or at the movies— either at the Golden State Theatre in Monterey, where the boys liked to drop water balloons on us from the second floor balcony, or at the Carmel Theatre on Ocean Avenue.

Summertime for my brother, Frank Timmins, meant braving the icy waters of Carmel Bay to bodysurf (no wetsuits!) with his buddies, and sneaking onto Cypress Point golf course in the early morning hours to play rounds of golf with the few motley clubs they had managed to somehow acquire.



The Carmel Theatre, present site of Carmel Plaza, 1939

Pat Hathaway / California Views

Here is what other CRA members have to say about their summers growing up in Carmel-by-the-Sea:

Merv Sutton remembers that he and his friends would go to the 14-cent Saturday matinees with money raised from selling the Carmel Pine Cone. As he grew older, Merv liked to swim in the high school pool and went to dances at the Carmel Youth Center, where the boys also liked to pitch horseshoes outside in the garden.

Summertime for Lucinda Lloyd meant mucking out stalls, grooming horses, tacking them up and taking "dudes" out on trail rides up the dry bed of the Carmel River and ending the day pitching hay under the cypress tree where the Mission Ranch tennis courts are now. "I was what Lyn Hodges, the owner of the stables, called 'horse-crazy.'" Lucinda reminisces.

Lacy Buck remembers that her gang of four would trek up the pine-covered hill in Carmel Woods and build intricate forts from found wood and branches. "These little houses, with swept floors and spotty sunlight coming through the branches of the roof, would serve as our meeting place and would be the focus of our endless games and plays and stories we'd act out. With only the huge water tower,

and no houses at all, we'd rule the whole wonderfully wild hill."

Sue McCloud's grammar school summers were carefree, going to the beach, making kites with Mr. Calley for the Kite Festival, the 4th of July fireworks on the beach, riding from Betty Green's stable on Junipero, maybe a part in a Forest Theatre play or going away to summer camp. "In high school, we tried to get a summer job for that clearly defined period from the time school was out to Labor Day," she recalls. "It was also a time to renew friendships, those who summered here annually, particularly from Berkeley, Piedmont and the Central Valley."

Ahhh ... summertime, and the living was easy in those years of the 1930s and '40s, when we were growing up in this wondrous village!

In Memoriam
Shirley Humann

Crumbling Carmel Resort Inn Site Casts a Long Shadow

Rats chewing electrical wires in abandoned wooden cabins, raising risk of fire. Unlocked cabins with working electrical devices, a prime attraction for vagrants and vandals. Straw-dry weeds up to five feet high, perfect tinder in the dry season.

Those are among the dangers to public safety and health posed by the neglected site of the comically misnamed Carmel Resort Inn, an abandoned motel of detached wooden cabins dating to the 1920s on Carpenter and Guadalupe streets between First and Second avenues.

The motel closed unannounced in February, taking city officials and neighbors by surprise. Occupying nearly a whole city block, the site is unfenced and minimally maintained. Meanwhile, a potential sale of the property, which the city has zoned for up to 16 new houses, is stalled due to squabbles between an interested buyer and the property owner, Tong Pyong Kim of Pebble Beach.

Sources inside and outside city hall say that the dilapidated property, one of the first things people see when entering

Carmel-by-the-Sea from the north, could mold for years.

Planning commissioner Michael Le Page, a building contractor and CRA member, told *The Voice* the planning commission rejected in 2014 an informal concept for building housing there. Carmel officials, he said, “didn’t want it to look like a tract.” The city wants “individual residences that are representative and respectful. We don’t want to see all wood, all stucco, all stone.”

Le Page added that the building and planning department must approve a formal design plan. “An environmental impact report also may be required. It’s likely to be built-out over a period of time.”

Jonathan Sapp, a Carmel real estate developer who represents a group of “local and San Jose investors,” told *The Voice* he is hopeful the property will finally close in the coming weeks. It went into escrow in 2013, but legal jousting has held things up. Sapp said he had another interested buyer 10 years ago, but that plan fell through.

The expansive property, tucked inside the northeast corner of the village, was shut down for three months before it drew media coverage in a page one Pine Cone story on May 19.

The motel had a troubled recent history. “They were digging to work on a sewer line without a permit,” Marc Wiener, community planning and building director, said, referring to the hotel when it was still operating. “There were units with doors open. We red-tagged parts of the property.” Since then, Wiener told *The Voice*, “We have spoken to four or five investors, but now it’s down to one.”

There has been a cascade of problems at the 20-cabin



David Armstrong

property. According to media reports:

- 2008: Kim Family Charitable Trust principal Tong Pyong Kim sells the lodging and land for \$8.7 million to Intrapec Investments, of Campbell.
- 2011: Kim is sued by Intrapec for alleged breach of contract. Intrapec claims undisclosed mold, dry rot, non-functioning door keys, termites and leaky roofs marred its operation. Kim denies charges, says Intrapec is not making payments on the sale or paying property taxes.
- Kim rescinds the sale and resumes control.
- 2016: A fire on Sept. 29 leaves an unoccupied cabin charred and roofless. Anxious neighbors observe hotel guests, sipping coffee and nibbling breakfast, watching nearby as Monterey Fire battles the blaze. The motel keeps operating while the fire is being fought.

Code compliance officer Al Fasulo told *The Voice* the city decided not to erect a perimeter fence around the empty buildings, and that most maintenance problems have been resolved. Even so, at this writing a broken garage door, partly blocked off with a leaning sheet of wood, remains open enough for small animals to enter, as it has since last year. The burnt cabin remains roofless, a gathering place for rats. Rat sightings in the neighborhood have recently multiplied.

CRA President Barbara Livingston said Carmel should demolish the buildings and install “a nice park” while awaiting redevelopment with attractive, individualized houses, priced for city employees and others of modest means to buy and live in.

Meanwhile, city officials and neighboring residents suspect the crumbling motel could cast a long shadow in Carmel for years to come.



Cabin that burned in September still roofless in June.

Barbara Livingston, President

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CHEERS & CHIDES


 **CHIDES** to Council members Carrie Theis, Carolyn Hardy and Mayor Steve Dallas, for approving a third high-profile event in the village during Car Week. They voted 3-2, over Bobby Richards's and Jan Reimers's "no", to OK a four-hour car show by the all-woman car group Prancing Ponies. Car Week, which overruns downtown and residential neighborhoods annually, will present Carmel events on Aug. 15, 16 and 17. CRA firmly opposes expanding this disruptive event.


 **CHEERS** to Council member Carolyn Hardy for figuring out that the city could take a retired police car to use as a fire inspection vehicle rather than spend some \$20,000 on a new car for Monterey Fire.


 **CHIDES** to Council member Carrie Theis for characterizing smoking in downtown public spaces as being about discarded cigarette butts. The larger problem is the public health threat posed by the inhalation of second-hand tobacco smoke. While Carmel lags, another coastal town, Laguna Beach, became the 70th California city to ban smoking in public places.


 **CHEERS** to Monterey County Weekly columnist Mary Duan for calling out Paul Miller, proprietor and publisher of the Pacific Grove-based Pine Cone. As Duan noted, Miller used the word 'stupid' five times in an editorial castigating the actions of local activists who favor public ownership of water. Surely, we would all benefit from a more elevated tone regardless of our opinions.


 **CHEERS** to the city for suing owners of an illegal short-term rental house and issuing a subpoena for all records from the short-term rental web site posting their ads: VRBO.com, of Austin, Texas. At last!


 **CHEERS** to Mayor Steve Dallas for sweating the details of public subsidies for the Carmel Chamber of Commerce – exactly what a public official should do. When council member Bobby Richards protested that chamber members are our friends and should get all the taxpayers' support they ask for, Dallas politely and persistently pushed back.


 **CHEERS** to Carol and Don Hilburn for their indomitable spirit in restoring historic Harmony House after a disastrous fire in June. The Hilburns plan to continue the tradition of the original owners, Dene Denny and Hazel Watrous, in staging fabulous musical performances in their home. Watrous and Denny designed and finished building the house on north Dolores Street in 1926. The dynamic couple co-founded the Carmel Bach Festival in 1935.

 **CHEERS** to former Carmel Mayor Jason Burnett for pro-actively holding Pacific Gas & Electric Co. accountable for the 2014 natural-gas house explosion in the village. Here's a robust cheer, too, for his successor, Mayor Steve Dallas, for staying the course until PG&E agreed this spring to a \$1.6 million settlement. Among other things, the agreement funnels \$25,000 to Friends of Carmel Forest for downtown tree restoration. Well done.

 **CHEERS** to Carmel City Council for moving stand-alone city elections from April to coincide with national elections in November. It saves money, enables council members to attend the League of California Cities conference on council training in January, and allows new members to get up to speed before the June budget deliberations.

 **CHEERS** to Pine Cone owner Paul Miller, for rightly noting in an editorial that the true glory of Carmel, and a key driver of high-quality tourism, is the abundant natural beauty to be found all around us. Now, let's keep it that way.

 **CHIDES** to the Monterey County Weekly. The paper has long cultivated a tone of amused condescension toward Carmel for choosing to be different. In a May 30 blog post, the Seaside paper needled CRA President Barbara Livingston for questioning whether Carmel's payments to the Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau to promote already heavily promoted mass-market tourism are desirable. Then the paper jumped on Mayor Steve Dallas for scrutinizing public subsidies to the Carmel Chamber of Commerce. Lots of people say they love critical thinking. When they encounter some? Not so much.

 **CHEERS** to the sublime Carmel Bach Festival, celebrating its 80th season July 15-29. Bravo! While we're at it, let's have a rousing chorus of "Happy Birthday" for the Carmel Art Association, celebrating its 90th year throughout 2017. Many happy returns to the CAA from the CRA.