

# Cotati Historical Society Newsletter

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Preserving Cotati's Past  
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Prue Draper, Editor

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## HISTORY NIGHT SET FOR NOV. 20

What was Cotati like in the 1920's? And the '30's? 40's? How about more recent years?

**"Growing Up In Cotati"** will be the theme of a History Night program sponsored by the Cotati Historical Society on **Thursday, Nov. 20 at 7 p.m.** in the Cotati Room behind the Ray Miller Memorial Community Center. The public is welcome and refreshments will be served. Admission is free but donations are appreciated.

Cotati has changed tremendously over the years, growing from a tiny rural farming community to a college town and bedroom community, and now a vigorous city. The speakers will reflect how those changes have affected local families.

Appearing on the program *Lena Braden*, who was born in Cotati 92 years ago and has lived here all her life. Others on the program are *Jennie Falletti, Harold Griffith, Connie Revard Martin, Gary Santero, Pat Rippin, Archie Stewart and the sons of Vito Paulekas: BB, Phreekis and Sky Paulekas.*

Audience members will have an opportunity to ask questions, so if there are things you've always wondered about Cotati, this is a chance to get answers.

## SOCIETY OFFICERS

President  
Prue Draper

Vice President  
Lloyd Draper

Treasurer  
Terry Dutra

Secretary  
Suzanne Whipple

Outreach Chair  
Lisa Moore

Newsletter  
Connie Martin

## COTATI'S FIRST POST OFFICE?



(Photo courtesy of Dorothy Arnold and Ray Miller)

This wonderful old photo was sent to us by two different relatives of George Antone Miller, who was Cotati's second Postmaster, serving from July 2, 1895 until Dec. 30, 1902. Mr. Miller is the man standing in front of the door. Location of this building is not known, but it was probably on the west side of LaPlaza. Anyone with knowledge of this is invited to contact the Cotati Historical Society.

Please pass this newsletter along to others who are interested in Cotati and its history.

## IT'S A MYSTERY



Jennie Falletti, left, and her cousins, Bobbie Veronda, center, and Martha Gustafson, right, found this unusual farm implement while sorting items in one of the outbuildings on the Falletti Ranch. It has a long wooden handle, heavy metal blade shaped like a big S, with sharp cutting edges on the bottom. None of the Veronda-Falletti family know what its use might have been, but someday, it may be in the Cotati Museum. A **free year's membership** in the Cotati Historical Society will be given to the person or persons who can identify this relic and explain its use.

### ***DONATIONS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME***

We always welcome interesting artifacts from Cotati's past; years of collecting these have resulted in a collection that will be placed in the new Cotati Museum being established in the southwest corner of Cotati City Hall. Anyone with relics, large or small, or photos, old postcards etc. is invited to donate them to the Cotati Historical Society. Call Lloyd or Prue Draper, 795-5510 to arrange this.

And with remodeling and equipping of the museum room about to begin, there's a need for monetary donations too. They may be sent to Cotati Historical Society, P.O. Box 7013, Cotati, 94931. The society is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit California corporation, and donations are tax-deductible. All donors will receive receipts for tax purposes – as well as sincere gratitude from the society.

### **E-MAIL ADDRESSES**

If you have received this newsletter in the mail and you have e-mail, please send your e-mail address to: [chsinfo@sonic.net](mailto:chsinfo@sonic.net). The Society saves lots of money by distributing newsletters electronically!

## VERONDA-FALLETTI RANCH PRESERVED

Final papers were signed last week transferring to the City of Cotati ownership of the Veronda-Falletti Ranch, the picturesque acreage across East School Street from Cotati City Hall,

The sale was arranged through the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District; approved by the Cotati City Council on August 27 and by the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors on September 2. At that meeting, a video of the property was shown by Andrea Mackenzie of the Open Space District, indicating that the property could become a museum of local farming. Supervisor Mike Kerns stated that he had felt for years that Central Sonoma County needed such a museum, and he was delighted with the project.

Jennie Falletti's parents, Pete and Elizabeth Veronda, bought the property in 1938, and it has remained in family ownership since then. The Verondas raised chickens there in a typical Cotati ranch setting. In recent years, Jennie Falletti and her husband Al have raised sheep on the property. The sheep remain, and are now being cared for by city staff.

Cotati City Manager Dianne Thompson notes that the next step will be producing a plan for developing a city park-museum. This won't happen overnight, and will be done with lots of community participation.

As the property is now owned by the City of Cotati, anyone who wants to enter the ranch must have signed a waiver with the city. City Engineer Damien O'Bid is the person to contact about entering the property. The waivers must be obtained from Jone Hayes, Cotati Finance Director.

In answer to your question, yes, even Jennie Falletti had to sign a waiver.

### **Memorial Fund**

At this time of year it's appropriate to remember that the Cotati Historical Society has a Memorial Fund – a wonderful idea suggested at this time last year by the family of Elaine Thomas. Many friends and relatives memorialized Elaine in this way, and the Society plans to use this fund for future educational projects in our future museum. Donations to the Memorial Fund are always welcome, and may be sent to CHS, P.O. Box 7013, Cotati, CA 94931. The Memorial Fund received a donation last month from Lloyd and Prue Draper in memory of Hans and Irmgard Albertson.



## WOULDN'T OLAF PAGE BE SURPRISED?!

When Dr. Thomas Stokes Page bought the Rancho Cotate and moved his family here, his eldest son, Olaf, stayed behind in Valparaiso, Chile. The Page family reunion held here last spring introduced Patricia Diaz Page to the community her ancestors had established, and also to the Cotati Historical Society. This contact has resulted in a flurry of e-mails between Cotati and Santiago, Chile, where Patricia lives with her large, prominent family. She has sent us many photos of Page descendants, many with illustrious careers. This one, of Patricia with her aunt, Lucy Page Guervera, age 91, proves that Olaf's descendants are a handsome and long-lived clan.

A special thank you for their printing courtesy to:

***Copy, Mail and More***

***8252 Old Redwood Hwy., Cotati***

## STATE OF THE SOCIETY REPORT

We've had a wonderful response to our August newsletter, which encouraged everyone to pay their dues for 2008-2009 and invited new members to join us. Naturally, we're still accepting new and renewing memberships.

As of October 1, **new members** were:

Marion and Mark Ackerman  
Mary Bartlett  
Harold Griffith  
Paul and Susan Harvey  
Ed Patterson  
Joan Simon  
Barbara Jean Veronda.

**Renewing** their memberships are:

Harold and Julie Berkemeier  
Lena Braden  
Katherine Bramkamp  
Sean Bressie  
Fred and Annie Carrasca  
Diane Dorfman  
Lloyd and Prue Draper  
Tony Fardella  
Jane Ferina  
Henry and Mary Fuhs  
Martha Gustafson  
Andrew Hutchins  
Nancy M. Justis  
Bill and Lucy Kortum  
Don and Lorraine Leivas  
Bruce and Connie Martin  
Gary and Kim Martin  
Mary Nell McCann  
Jerry and Eleanor Miller  
Bob and Mabel Nelson  
Janice Nelson  
Janet Orchard  
John R. Page  
Maria Page Tracy  
Dayle Reilly  
Louise Steacy  
Dave Thomas

Several members sent extra amounts as donations which are certainly welcome as we work toward opening our museum at Cotati City Hall.

Our only expenditures have been \$58.00 for the next year for our post office box at Cotati Post Office and \$895.00 to State Farm Insurance for the liability insurance required by the City of Cotati as we executed our lease for the City Hall room that will become our museum. Our treasury totals \$2421.36.

We have a busy year ahead as work begins on remodeling the museum room and preparing it for display of our historic photos and artifacts. Cotati General Contractor Bruce Hammond has volunteered to manage the remodeling on a pro bono basis and we're delighted to have his help with executing the plan designed by Architect Robert Leys.

Remember dues are only \$10 per person per year and they should be sent to Cotati Historical Society P.O. Box 7013 Cotati CA 94931. Everyone interested in preserving Cotati's past is invited to join us. You will find a membership form elsewhere in this newsletter.

# Attention present and future members

If you are already a member of the Cotati Historical Society, it's time to pay your dues for the coming year. **\$10 per person per year.** If you are not already a member but would like to join us in preserving Cotati's history, we welcome you. Please complete this form and send with your check to:

Cotati Historical Society  
P.O. Box 7013  
Cotati, CA 94931

Name/s \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

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