The Mill Valley Historical Society invites members and friends to the 36th Annual meeting and Potluck Dinner, Thursday, October 17th, at the Mill Valley Community Center. Make your reservations by October 10th.

Dinner will be followed by a short meeting and a program with our guest speaker. The guest speaker will be local political pundit, writer, and former Mill Valley Mayor, Dick Spotswood. Mr. Spotswood will provide an engaging 45-minute talk on how the history of trains has impacted Mill Valley. Dozens of rare photos will be shown in the presentation, and there is no better public speaker than Dick Spotswood to provide the narration. The evening should wrap up around 8:45pm.

The 36th Annual Meeting & Potluck Dinner
Thursday, October 17, 2013
Mill Valley Community Center
Social Time - 6:30 pm
Dinner & Meeting - 7:00 pm
Guest Speaker - 7:45 pm
Dick Spotswood presents:

“Trains in and around Mill Valley”
Three railroads that impacted the growth of Mill Valley

We ask that you bring a dish (to serve at least 12-14 people) that falls into the first letter of your family’s last name. All dishes and serving utensils need to be clearly marked and picked up at the end of the evening.

A-J Salad  K-M Dessert  N-Y Main Dish / Entrée

Tableware and beverages will be provided
RSVP by October 10th for a memorable evening.
Email Vivian Broadway-Firmage at drvbroadway@sbcglobal.net to hold a spot or call her at 383-5285
MVHS Welcomes New Officers

Clifford Waldeck once again headed the nomination committee for the 2014 MVHS board of directors. His committee sends our way FOUR new members, as well as confirming the four officers, including a new president. Members are invited to vote on the slate at the Annual Meeting at the Mill Valley Community Center on October 17, 2013.

Tim Amyx will step down after 4 years as the president, and pass the reins to Stella Perone. Betty Goerke continues the same in her position of Vice President. Bob McCully will again manage the accounts as the treasurer, and Cullyn Vaeth will continue her duties as the secretary.

The four departing board members are: Vivian Broadway-Firmage, Donna Carrillo, Barbara Chambers and Peter Richmond. Vivian has spent each of her four years on the board coordinating the walk guides which is no small task. Recruiting 20+ guides each year, and making sure they are properly trained is a big job. Vivian has also annually been the coordinator of the fall annual dinner. A big thanks to Vivian for her contributions and positive demeanor. Donna Carillo will also be stepping out of her board role as the membership chair. Donna has also served as the MVHS and Library board liaison. Like Vivian, she too leaves behind big shoes to fill.

Nominating Committee Report for 2013

-President- Stella Perone
-Vice President- Betty Goerke
-Treasurer- Bob McCully
-Secretary- Cullyn Vaeth Russell
-Directors- Tim Amyx

Barbara Ford
Lissa McKee
Chuck Oldenburg
Lauri Harper
Russ Kiernan
Clifford Waldeck

New directors to be approved in October, 2013

-Pam Keon
-Jill Tardy
-Monica Miller
-Bill Stock

The Mill Valley Historical Society Newsletter is published twice a year. Complaints, kudos, and credit go to the editor and outgoing President, Tim Amyx. Email Tim Amyx at tim@tam.net.
MVHS Welcomes New Board Members

Biographies on the FOUR new MVHS board members who will be officially introduced at the October dinner:

**Monica Miller**
I am originally from northern Ohio and grew up in Chattanooga, Tennessee. I graduated from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in Finance and shortly after that headed to California sight unseen. I landed in San Francisco in May 1999 and never looked back. My husband, Michael Jacobs, and I moved to Mill Valley in 2010 because we love southern Marin and have family here. I also needed more trees after 11 years in the city. Mike volunteers on the Mill Valley Emergency Preparedness Commission. We have a 2 year old son, Moxie, who we take on walks and hikes all over Mill Valley. You have likely seen us on the streets around town and Lytton Square.

My profession spans 15 years in the alternative investments industry, including portfolio management of hedge funds, project management for family offices, marketing and research.

Unfortunately, I have been known to bore family members and friends with my historical knowledge. With the Mill Valley Historical Society members, I don’t have to worry about that! I love Mill Valley, and I love history, so I am looking forward to serving with like-minded people who want to learn about, share and preserve Mill Valley history.

**Bill Stock**
My wife and I met at U.C. San Diego where I majored in chemical engineering. Upon graduation we moved to Los Angeles where I completed law school in 1985. My job with P.G.&E. brought us to the Bay Area. My good friend and roommate in college, who grew up in Tiburon, told us “if you have a commute to San Francisco every day, live in Mill Valley.” It was some of the best advice we have ever gotten. We moved here that summer with our baby daughter.

During that first summer, I spent many nights studying for the California Bar exam in the History Room of the Mill Valley Library. It was during this time, surrounded by the pictures and archives, that I became so intrigued by the history and story of this beautiful place I had chosen to live in. As a runner, the trails and mountain led me to many of the places I had read and learned about.

My second daughter and son were born at Marin General Hospital. All of my children have attended our wonderful schools. My son is now a sophomore at Tam High. I look forward to being a part of the Mill Valley Historical Society, to continue my learning the story of our special town, and to be able to share that story with others.

**Jill Benton-Tardy**
I was born in San Francisco. My family moved to Mill Valley when I was a child and I attended Park School. My family moved up to San Rafael, and I graduated from San Rafael High School. I graduated from UC Berkeley with a degree in Architecture, and moved back to Mill Valley as an young adult.

My children have grown up in Mill Valley and Tiburon and attend Redwood High School. My son is now a sophomore at Tam High. I look forward to being a part of the Mill Valley Historical Society, to continue my learning the story of our special town, and to be able to share that story with others.

**Pam Keon**
I’ve been fortunate to call Mill Valley my home since 1980. As a member of the Mill Valley Historical Society I’ve enjoyed volunteering as a Walk into History guide since 2004. Since 2011 I’ve volunteered in the Mill Valley Public Library’s History Room, where I primarily manage the digital database for Mill Valley residences and commercial buildings; evaluate and process donations and acquisitions; and assist patrons to learn more about Mill Valley’s rich history and resources.

I earned my B.A. in English, with a concentration in Educational Studies, from Wesleyan University, and my M.S. in Counseling Psychology, with concentrations in Marriage, Family and Child Counseling, Pupil Personnel Services, and Community College Counseling, from Dominican University.

My nonprofit experience includes leadership on many boards of trustees, primarily those concerned with education and/or youth-at-risk. I am a CASA volunteer, and have volunteered as a 4-H instructor, C.P.R. instructor, Sunday School teacher, Special Olympics Family Festival “Friend for a Day”, doing voter registration, and participating in Coastal Cleanup Day.

I’m the proud parent of two children, ages 22 and 24, and am the lucky owner of an Australian Shepherd, and two felines of dubious lineage.

I’m honored to be asked to join the MVHS Board and appreciate the opportunity to further its goals to educate others about local history, to deepen our understanding of our roles as stewards of our community’s historical resources and to expand on the efforts of all those who have already done so much to make our history and resources accessible to the rest of our community.
Promoting and Protecting Our Historic Treasures

by Lauri Harper, MVHS Historic Preservation Chair

Do you own a Mill Valley home that was built fifty or more years ago and is still in its original condition? Do you consider it to be filled with vintage charm, or do you view it as hopelessly out-dated? Would you be surprised to learn that the State of California mandates an evaluation process for alterations on older (aged 50+) homes that have been identified as historic resources? Are you curious about which homes, businesses and other Mill Valley sites meet those governmental criteria for historic significance?

For the last four decades, MVHS members have been working on the identification and preservation of Mill Valley’s important historic resources. In the mid-1970s, in response to the National Preservation Act of 1966, a group of volunteers under the direction of Lucretia Little, Mill Valley Historian, researched and compiled the official State of California Historic Resources Survey for Mill Valley. On that list are sixty-six properties, residential and non-residential. In 1975 the first Mill Valley General Plan (GP) proposed a Heritage Ordinance, and after the plan’s adoption the City created an Historic Overlay (H-O) zoning designation to protect buildings of historic importance. Buildings in the H-O zone require design review before exterior remodeling, and any proposed demolition requires that alternative means of preservation are first explored.

By the time of the second General Plan in 1989, other more comprehensive lists of potential historic properties had been generated by the MVHS, while the properties on earlier lists had been considered by the City Council for H-O classification. GP Policy HR-1 stated, “The City shall seek to protect, enhance and restore the natural and man-made heritage resources of the community.”

Fast forward to 2012, when work began on the city’s third General Plan, MV2040. Although the “partial” list maintained by the MVHS now numbers well over one hundred fifty properties, the H-O district includes only about twenty-five. Concerned about the lack of protection of the remainder of the properties on the list, many of which you may have seen on our annual history walks, the MVHS formed an Historic Preservation Committee to discuss with City staff what the latest GP might include to “integrate preservation into planning.” In early 2013 we were very fortunate to be able to meet with Mike Moore, Mill Valley’s Director of Planning & Building, who collaborated with us to incorporate our ideas into the Land Use section of the Plan as well as the separate Housing Element. Included is the need for an updated research-based Resources Inventory that would allow the City to implement “an historic and cultural resources preservation ordinance.” (LU 6-1) Such an ordinance “would provide incentives for the preservation and reuse of historic or cultural resources” while complying with applicable provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

GREAT News! The Planning Commission approved the current General Plan at its Aug. 26 meeting after adding more specificity in several areas, including LAN. 4 Historic and Archaeological Resources, and the City Council is holding public hearings on the GP in September as we go to print.

MVHS plans to continue to partner with the City and to involve the community to help bring MV2040’s historic preservation goals and policies to fruition. In the near future, we will be focusing on two major tasks: training volunteers to do an historic resources survey on properties and structures going back to the 1960s, and educating our residents about the value of historic preservation, through publications, walks and talks during National Preservation Month (May) culminating with our annual Walk into History on Memorial Day weekend. If either or both of these activities appeal to you and you would like to join us, please contact MVHS on its website: mvhistory.org. These projects will indeed “take a village,” our beloved village of Mill Valley.
For many years, Edna Maguire has been known as one of the top elementary schools in Mill Valley. It has been a K-5 school since 1990, however, when you look a little deeper, you’ll see a school, and “name” that has served generations of kids in many ways. And now, in 2013, Edna Maguire is on the verge of becoming something new and special for another generation of students.

Edna Maguire was a teacher and principal who taught for over 30 years in the Mill Valley school district. She was born in 1888 in Lowell, California, where her father worked in the mines. She eventually was a graduate of Berkeley High School.

She first taught at the old Homestead Valley Elementary School from 1920 to 1927. Later she moved to Park School (known for many years as Tamalpais Park School) where she taught and was principal for 20 years. In all, she taught in Mill Valley for 34 years. While she was there, Park school was where local kids went through 8th grade. There was also a period in the early 1950’s when 7th and 8th graders went to Alto, which was somewhat of a middle school. There was no true “Middle School” in Mill Valley until 1956.

It was in 1956 when a new school was built on an old dairy ranch, in the lower end of Scott Valley, and the edge of the “Alto” district. It was build next to the railroad tracks, AND a trailer park. This new school would be the home of, 7th & 8th graders of Mill Valley. This new Middle school was christened as, “Edna Maguire Junior High school”. (Ms. Maguire retired in 1954, and lived to 91 years old, passing away in 1980).

Mill Valley quickly grew in the late 50’s and through the 1960’s. By 1972 Edna Maguire Junior High School was bursting at the seams. Within the main school, the students were divided into FOUR sub schools. Those sub schools went by the names of SUN, WIND, WOOD, and SEA. During the 2-3 years students were at Edna Maguire, they took 80% of their classes within their own sub school. Only in Art and PE would they “mix” with the other schools.

In the Fall of 1972, the new “Mill Valley Middle School” opened, and abandoned the old campus of Edna Maguire. Edna became offices, and rented out space to private schools. Next-door, Alto school remained the elementary school for Scott Valley and Alto area kids. This was in effect until 1990. That’s when Alto closed as an elementary school, and Edna Maguire re-opened, now as an elementary school for K-5 kids. It remained as such until it closed its doors and was demolished in 2011.

Today, the NEW Edna Maguire is months away from opening its doors. Not doubt all will be top of the line, cutting edge technology. Now, 33 years after her passing, the legendary Edna Maguire once again lends her name to one of the finest schools in Mill Valley.
The 2013 History Walk Recap – “Cascade Canyon”

As is the norm, our biggest event of the year is the Annual Walk into History, given on the Sunday of Memorial Day in May. On May 26th of 2013 we had one of our most well attended and popular walks ever. This was the 36th walk hosted by the Mill Valley Historical Society. We often host walks that draw 150 guests. If we break the 200 mark it's considered a success. Only on rare occasions have we drawn more that 300 for a day. 2013 was one of those rare days. 321 walkers took the engaging and historical walk around Cascade Canyon. We began the tour by gathering at the Outdoor Art Club, and were shuttled up to the old Joseph Eastland estate, known as Burlwood. From there our walk guides lead us down Cornwall, then Cascade as far as Laurel, up to Throckmorton and back to Burlwood. The charm, history and tranquil beauty of Cascade Canyon were surely key aspects to the great turnout. We are indebted to Scott and Cara Douglass for their support in the touring of Burlwood.

The event was a collaborative one as are most of our endeavors. Special thanks do however go out to our guidebook researcher and editor Chuck Oldenburg.

Thanks also go out to Barbara Ford and Chuck for training the guides, and to Vivian Broadway-Firmage for being the guide organizer. Clifford Waldeck served as the chair, and Stella Perone was the leader of publicity.

We are in great debt to the following MVHS members who served as guides: Christina Waldeck, Greg Werner, Curt Oldenburg, Jim Derich, Nona Dennis, Russ Kiernan, Pam Keon, Monica Miller, Trubee Schock, John Cutler, Sue Steele, Tim Amyx, Erika Bradbury, Don Seitas, Lauri Harper, Jill Tardy, Suzy Bettinger, Abby Wasserman, Clifford Waldeck, Betty Goerke, and Claudia Chittenden, who led TWO walks.

As we go to press, the 2014 walk is in the planning stages. Although the final route has not yet been confirmed, chances are it will either be a re-visit to Blithedale Canyon, or a new walk around the Locust district, with historic visits to the birthplace of Chief Marin, and the first home in Mill Valley by a non-native American. (Known as the old Adobe of John Reed)
“Russ the Barber”

On occasion Mill Valley has been compared to the fictional town of Mayberry, from the Andy Griffith show. The comparison drawn is that of a small town, where life goes a little slower, and everybody knows everybody. It’s an exaggeration to be sure, but there is a charm both towns share that can draw parallels. If that’s the case, there must be an equivalent of “Floyd The Barber”. In the old TV show, Floyd the barber had been an icon of Mayberry for decades. Everybody had their hair cut by Floyd, and when they grew up they had their kids get their hair cut by Floyd. And of course, all the retired men, and men on their lunch breaks would stop by and say hello. Floyd knew all the gossip, and was everybody’s best friend. Of course, those who have lived in Mill Valley for the past 30 years know who our “Floyd the Barber” is. Our Floyd, was “Russ” The barber, and our beloved Russ passed away this past summer at the age of 82.

It seemed like Russ Kerr had been here forever. He opened his Mill Valley shop in 1970, yet he had already lived a full life, cutting hair at another location. For the previous ten years, Russ managed a barbershop in the financial district while he and his wife, Louise, were living in El Cerrito. Around the same time Russ purchased the Mill Valley shop from Bill Bowen, he, Louise, and their young daughter, Andrea (Shaw) moved to their home new home in Novato. There they would remain and make Novato their residence until Russ’s passing in July.

Novato may have been his home where his mail arrived, but his heart was in the sleepy town of Mill Valley. Hundreds and thousands of people, young, old, and occasionally female, would stop into Russ’s for a haircut. Russ did not require an appointment, but he appreciated a call (“Barber Shop” he would answer the phone) in the morning if you were coming down so he might juggle his schedule and not have you waiting long. Nevertheless, when we did on occasion have to wait a person or two, it was probably the most relaxing 20-30 minute wait one could imagine. It was almost therapeutic to wait. Listening to Russ converse with clients and passers by would take you back to a different era. It would take you into the make believe world of Mayberry.

The Barber shop where Russ once cut hair lives on. Russ was actually working part time (semi-retirement) at the time of his passing. Yianni Spiros Markatos purchased the business from Russ in 2012 and it’s in his hands to carry the torch that Russ has left behind. Russ may be gone, but his sprit and memory will live forever in that corner barbershop, across the street from the 7-11.

Two videos this past year were made about Russ and his barbershop. Both are available on-line for viewing at no charge. One video is a documentary style made by local filmmaker, Gary Yost. Very stylistic and creative, this is a great look into Russ, and the people who knew him. The link for this video is: https://vimeo.com/57814454 MVHS President Tim Amyx also produced a video about Russ. This was a simple 20-minute chat with Russ, while Tim was having his hair cut. To view this video, Google: Russ the Barber icon.
Volunteers needed for History Room in MV Library

The History Room is seeking volunteers to organize files, clip newspaper articles, assist visitors find information about Mill Valley and work on a variety of other interesting projects. No experience necessary. All training provided. Work mornings, afternoons, evenings, weekdays or weekends.

Contact David Grossman at (415) 389-4292, ext. 4738 or dgrossman@cityofmillvalley.org

MVHS Welcome new 2013 Members

Linda Aguilar & Peter Moody
Eileen Alexander
Mari Allen
Deb Babe
Suzanne Bettinger
Ellen Blonder
Shawn Connell-Clarkson
Jock Corsello
Sack & Thais Derich
Chris & Lindsly Donnelly
Duncan Drechsel
Karen Drucker
Mark & Tracy Ferron
Shannon Flego
Kirk Foster
Ann Fricker
Ruth Garrish
Annette Golterman

Maria Hilakos Hanke & Michael Watts
Margaret Harding
Catherine Heenan
John & Dolores Hiskes
Kate & Reed Kellman
Stephanie & Larry Kramer
Clementina Moya Kun
Carolyn & Bruce Lowenthal
Leslie Lundgren
Jeffery M. Marshall
Pauline Nacamuli
Eileen & Phil Perkins
Robert Phillips & Family
Meg Rose
Roger Rose
Cary Rosen
Grant Rudolph

Jane Singer
Hap Smith
William Stock
Charlie & Chris Vogelheim
Karen Whitaker