

2023 Santa Cruz County History Fair Report

By Commissioner Lynda Phillips

Overview: There were 26 tables representing a wide diversity of organizations. A small sample of organizations included Santa Cruz Public Library, Daughters of the American Revolution, Friends of Santa Cruz Parks, Santa Cruz Genealogy Society, several museums, and publishers of history books. The History Fair ran from 1 – 5 pm and tables were placed in 2 different rooms in the Felton Community Hall. Both rooms were packed with tables and the representatives manning the information tables were kept busy the entire four hours. There were four historical talks, which were held at the Felton Library.

Historical Talks: I believe this is the first time that historical talks were included as part of the History Fair.

The topics were:

- 1. '50 – 70 Years of Historic Preservation in Santa Cruz County' by Don Lauritson, intro by Lynda Phillips**
- 2. 'The London Nelson Legacy Initiative' by Luna Bey, introduced by Laura DeAngelis**
- 3. 'From Timber to Tourists – The Conversion of Boulder Creek from a Lumber Town to a Summer Resort' by Scott Tucker, intro by Lucia MacLean**
- 4. 'Introduction to the Use of DNA for Family History Research' by Gail Burk, intro by Dancy Girot**

The HRC table: The most common question I received was, 'How old does a building need to be to be included in the inventory?' This opening gave me the opportunity to explain what the HRC was, what its responsibilities were, that there was an Inventory of Santa Cruz County resources of local historic significance, and the HR Commission was working on adding resources to it. Some people owned older homes and were interested if their building would qualify to be added to the inventory. I had the SLV Inventory DPR binder opened to various Felton properties for explaining the information required to list a property and the steps to do so. Interestingly, a couple people had land that had been used by early settlers and wondered if it would be considered historical significant for inclusion on the Inventory.

Materials I brought were: 1) SLV Inventory binder containing SLV DPRs, 2) HRC bylaws, 3) County of Santa Cruz Survey of Historic Resources Update and Context Statement, 4) How to Research the History of Your Santa Cruz House, 5) Sheet on Santa Cruz County Code History Resource Designation, and handouts 6) Santa Cruz County Inventory list, 7) Incentives for Historic Properties, and 8) Our Rich Historical Heritage – Answers to Questions for Owners of Historic Properties.

Some of the people I talked with: 1) Alverda and her daughter, 2) Lucia MacLean who is involved with the Alba School and will send me a progress report, 3) Roger Wapner who owns land from one of the

earliest Boulder Creek settlers, which did have a building at one time, 4) Cynthia Mathews, 5) Jessica Kusz who is on the Santa Cruz City Preservation Council, and 5) Darcy Ginot who is with the Santa Cruz Genealogy Society

After the History Fair ended, there was a memorial tribute to local historian and author Randall Brown. The tribute was organized by Ronnie Trubek. There were about 30 people who stayed after the History Fair and shared stories and memories of Randall. There was food and drink served afterward.

I felt it was a very successful SCC History Fair, especially since it was in Felton. The addition of the history talks was a valuable and well attended addition and I hope that the talks will be a part of future history talks. I also feel that having the History Fair hosted in a different County location each year can add valuable opportunities to be introduced to other local histories. I realize that volunteering to be the host and organize the History Fair is a big commitment, but this could open up opportunities to include various history activities before or after the Fair, such as a walking tour, talks, etc.

My recommendation is that the HRC continue to participate in the History Fair and to support that endeavor a 'trunk' should be created containing display materials for community events.