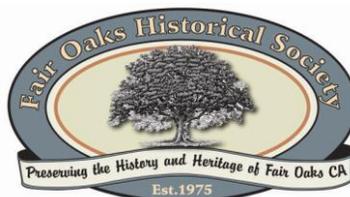


Fair Oaks Historical Society

Newsletter – January 2018

Issue Number 124

Ralph Carhart, Editor



www.fairoakshistory.org

QUARTERLY POTLUCK & GENERAL MEETING

6 p.m., Tuesday, January 23, 2018

Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse

7997 California Avenue

Please bring a main dish, casserole, salad, or dessert to share.

“California State Library History Room”

Elena Smith, Reference Librarian

President’s Message

Frank Wolfe

I can't believe two years have gone by. It seems like just yesterday that Claudia treated me to coffee at Starbucks and asked me to consider running for President. Thank you, Claudia.

It's been an interesting two years. I knew I was following Joe Dobrowolski, a dynamic hands-on president. No way was I going to duplicate that. Instead, I decided to step back and let the dedicated board members, committee chairs and volunteers do their thing. It worked so well that I continued that practice in the second year. I didn't even attend the last board meeting on December 27— not by choice, though— I caught a bad cold when we spent Christmas in Corvallis, Oregon, with Val's daughter and grandkids. (Otherwise it was a wonderful visit.)

In this, my final “President’s Message”, I again want to thank all the board members, committee chairs and many volunteers who did so much these past two years. I haven’t the room here to name you all, but you are truly appreciated by me and by our membership.

Ron Lingren came up with really great programs and stepped up whenever I was absent. He obviously enjoyed his role, as he agreed to two terms as vice president.

Claudia Thorn and her Soup Night committee put in many hours and did a terrific job with this important event that funds the Fair Oaks History Center.

Thanks to Ralph Carhart for a super job with these newsletters.

Special thanks are due to Jim Pearce for his steady hand on the History Center. He has put in countless hours making the History Center come alive. Needless to say, he happily welcomed Bob Sours as the new docent. Bob stepped in and hit the ground running with new ideas and efforts.

A special thank you to my lovely wife, Valerie. While we have been married only since July, she has been my helper for my entire term. And, she stepped up to make the Soup Night raffle a great success.

Now its time to turn leadership over to our president elect, Jim Pearce. Please give him all the support you have given me. Again, thank you. It’s been fun.

January 23rd Program

Ron Lingren, Vice-President

Our guest speaker for the first meeting of 2018 will be Elena Smith. Elena is a reference librarian in the California History Room at the California State Library. She will explain the types of information you can find at the History Room, including Fair Oaks-specific material, and give us some research tips, in this fast-paced, fun presentation.

Are you familiar with the archives, museums and repositories that contain pieces of Fair Oaks history? Would you like to explore and share more about Fair Oaks history? Learn about the California History Room at the California State Library, its collections, and more at the January 23rd meeting.

Membership Renewal Time

It’s membership renewal time. Join or renew either by mail, in person at the next meeting, or at the History Center. (Use the form on the cover sheet or from the website).

There are three new contribution levels to give extra support to the History Center: Contributor (\$100), Supporter (\$250) and Patron (\$500). These are particularly appropriate for life members and others who want to support the History Center. We will recognize your support in the newsletter and online.

Photos from our October General Meeting:



Photos from Soup Night 2017:



What's happening...

Jim Pearce, History Center Ops & Membership Chair

What's new at the History Center...

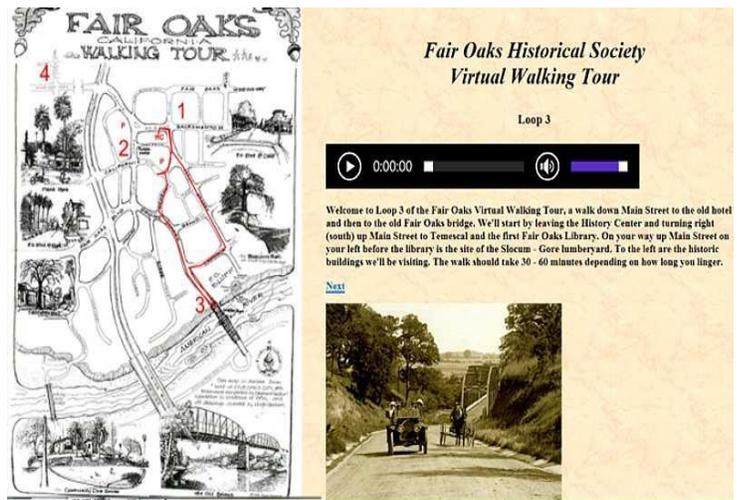
We had a great Christmas with the History Center decorated by Barbara Roper, and family. Attendance was good, with any number of people stopping by to ask about the estate sale at Bob Smith's home. We also served hot mulled cider and Jim's famous oatmeal cookies. We're getting more and more people who have been around Fair Oaks for years and want to share.



What's new On-line...

We are getting more involved with the FOHS Facebook page, answering questions and submitting articles. While we haven't been active there, Merina West (of Straith fame) has been maintaining control of the site from Seattle and has welcomed us back. Jim has resurrected his Fair Oaks History Quiz which he did for several years on the *Fair Oaks Patch* and it is receiving good reviews. A link to the Facebook page is on our website. Log on and test your knowledge.

Much of the staff work down at the History Center has been centered on the Fair Oaks Virtual Walking Tour. We had been considering updating the printed walking tour, and decided that we needed to bring it into the 21st century. It has four walking loops with something for everyone. We have the Bridge Loop and the History Center Loop and expect to have the Cemetery Tour and the Village Loop done soon. Many thanks to Hugh Gorman for his graphic contributions.



The tour caters to the younger members (those under 80) who use technology as part of their life and tote around their smart phones, tablets and laptops. You can actually walk around town with the app going. The walking tour can be accessed with any Internet connectivity and has audio narrative. It can also be accessed from home or on our touchscreen computer at the History Center. The link is at the top of our home page.

Old Homes of Fair Oaks

Jim Pearce

Leland – Robert “Bob” Smith Residence, 11064 Fair Oaks Blvd.

Much interest was generated by the estate sale on the southeast corner of Fair Oaks Blvd. and Sunset Avenue over the holiday weekends. Many people had wondered about the bamboo forest and structures that were visible from Fair Oaks Blvd. to the east and took advantage of the sale to wander the property. It was the home of Robert “Bob” Smith, renowned geologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, and expert on volcanic geology. I’ve included part of a tribute to Bob from the American Geologic Society bulletin. (See next page.)



The home was not the original one built on the corner. The little house shown in the attached photo was torn down when Bob sold the corner of his four-acre plot to the convenience store that needed the property the house stood on. He built his new home farther back on the property.

The house in the photo was originally built by prominent real estate agent George Robinson and later sold to Bob’s father, W. Leland Smith, who made a business of buying and selling exotic plants and birds, while his wife ran a nursery. I had the opportunity to talk to Bob several times a number of years ago, and his descendants donated several valuable items to the Historical Society when they were going through his possessions. Bob was active in the Historical Society in the 1990’s and gave his insights on growing up in Fair Oaks, as well as participating in the original “Old Homes of Fair Oaks” survey and identification. He, Steve Abbott, Farmer Bob Massey and Lois Frazier would drive around Fair Oaks with an old map trying to see if the homes still existed, and recalling who built and occupied them. We have the old map and identified structures at the History Center.

Bob passed away in 2016 and his wife followed in 2017. A 2016 Memorial follows:

Memorial to Robert Leland Smith

1920-2016

CHARLES R. BACON

U.S. Geological Survey, Menlo Park, California 94025, USA

Robert L. Smith, renowned volcanologist and distinguished scientist with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), was a world authority on ash-flow tuffs, silicic volcanism, and caldera structures. Bob died peacefully in Sacramento, California, on 17 June 2016, a few days short of his ninety-sixth birthday. His publications on ash flows and their deposits brought about an international revolution in understanding explosive silicic volcanism and, in his fifty-year career, he profoundly influenced USGS programs and countless scientists.



Bob Smith was born in Sacramento, California, on 30 June 1920 and grew up on the family property nearby in rural Fair Oaks. His father, W. Leland Smith, raised exotic pheasants and other rare game birds and his mother, Elma A. Smith, was a florist. Young Bob acquired a keen interest in ornithology, botany, and nature in general, becoming a serious collector of natural objects, including insects, reptiles, wildflowers, native plant specimens, bird eggs, rocks and minerals, and artifacts. Boyhood exploits along the American River and family expeditions to Nevada deserts instilled in him an acute sensitivity to the beauties of nature and a love of outdoor life. Later in life, this true naturalist became a superb birder and horticulturalist who cultivated ferns, dwarf conifers, and other primitive species, including a large collection of cycads that he nurtured and raised primarily from seed.

Bob excelled at science in high school, then attended Sacramento Junior College where his interest in mineralogy grew, and subsequently transferred to the University of Nevada, Reno, to pursue geology, graduating in 1942. After a year at Columbia University, Bob joined the Mineralogy and Petrology Section of the USGS in Washington, D.C., in 1943 under the direction of Clarence S. Ross. Bob's USGS career was interrupted in 1944, when he began three years with the U.S. Navy, serving aboard the destroyer USS Nelson. Duty as a gunnery officer resulted in serious hearing impairment, a disability that Bob steadfastly shouldered and largely overcame one-on-one and in small groups through lip reading and a hearing aid, but that severely limited his ability to attain the personal visibility that could result from service on committees and participation in scientific meetings, particularly large forums such as the Geological Society of America and American Geophysical Union annual meetings.

Bob was promoted to senior scientist, one of a small number of "supergrade" USGS positions, in 1983. Subsequently, his office was moved from Reston, Virginia, to Sacramento, California, and the Smiths took up residence on the family property in Fair Oaks. Bob retired from the USGS in 1993, and continued working with geochemical data and interacting with colleagues by correspondence and with academic geologists in the Sacramento area until his health declined twenty years later. Over this time, honors and recognition continued, including Honorary Fellow of the Geological Society of London (1996) and the Martin A. Baumhoff Special Achievement Award of the Society for California Archaeology (2005). Bob Smith was predeceased by son Michael and is survived by Barbara M. Smith, his wife of 64 years, sons Leland and David, and three grandsons.

FAIR OAKS HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 2044
FAIR OAKS CA 95628

TO:

Dues are for the Calendar Year, Jan. 1 to Dec. 31. Dues are payable on Jan. 1, and become delinquent Feb. 1.
New members joining after Oct. 1 shall be considered paid for the following year.

Please check one: NEW MEMBER APPLICATION DUES PAYMENT

Name _____ Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Email _____

Membership level requested:

Individual \$20 Family (2 Persons) \$25 Supporting (Business) \$50
 Single Life Member \$150 Family Life Member \$225

I am adding \$5 and request a printed newsletter by USPS \$ _____

I am including the following donation to support the History Center:

Contributor \$100 Supporter \$250 Patron \$500

Amount enclosed \$ _____ Check number _____ Date of check ___/___/___

Please mail this form and check payable to:

“Fair Oaks Historical Society, Inc.” P.O. BOX 2044, Fair Oaks, CA 95628.

For more information, please call Jim Pearce, 961-8415 (jpearce4104@gmail.com)