

The Heritage Society of Pacific Grove NEWSLETTER

Dedicated to Maintaining the Beauty and Individuality of Pacific Grove

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The Aroma of Autumn

Looking back at Feast of Lanterns and forward to the Home Tour

The tourists are packing to go home and the winter residents are staking out their territory. Heritage Society volunteers are looking ahead to the 43rd Annual Historic Home Tour, the Heritage Homes for the Birds display and auction, and Artists in Chautauqua, all set for Sunday, October 7.

There's the tiniest hint of autumn in the air, and it's getting darker as we sit down to dinner each evening.

The princesses have gone back to school and most of our neighbors have taken down the festive paper lanterns that bespoke Feast of Lanterns in Pacific Grove.

Let's have a look back at that local tradition, in the words of Elmarie Dyke, the woman who added so many events to the Feast -- including the establishment of the Royal Court itself, back in 1958. Here is the history of the Feast of Lanterns as Elmarie told it in 1964:

Feast of Lanterns July 25 & 26, 1964 By Elmarie H. Dyke

Pacific Grove's traditional "Feast of Lanterns" is widely acclaimed as one of the most colorful, spectacular, and unique festivals in America. Held annually during the last weekend in July the non-commercial celebration has been described as "An all Family Folk Festival heralding Friendship among all Peoples."

Of oriental origin the Feast of Lanterns was first held in Pacific Grove in 1905 and annually through 1917 ended the Methodist sponsored Chautauqua, as it had done for many years at Lake Chautauqua, New York. The Chinese background of the local celebration dates back to



In 1958, the Feast of Lanterns board met at Dyke's Grove Pharmacy to plan the upcoming event. Men in ties -- and men smoking -- help to date the photo.

those years when a large Chinese colony at China Point, Pacific Grove, sent lighted boats to take part in the festival.

The name "Feast of Lanterns" apparently is taken from feasts honor-

ing the gods, when lanterns were lighted to guide home the spirits of departed ancestors who would visit their kinfolk. In all feast of lantern legends lanterned

Please see next page

Calendar

ONGOING

PNY BASEBALL/SOFTBALL

The Heritage Society sponsors a Pony League Baseball team in Pacific Grove each year.

POINT PINOS LIGHTHOUSE

The Heritage Society has recently started to assist the City of Pacific Grove in the restoration and maintenance of the 1855 Point Pinos Lighthouse. Please contact the Heritage society if you wish to volunteer to help.

LECTURES

Lectures are on hiatus for the summer. Watch for news of lectures later in the year. Lectures are free to paid-up members.

OCTOBER

HISTORIC HOME TOUR

ARTISTS IN CHAUTAUQUA

HERITAGE HOMES FOR THE BIRDS

Sunday, October 7, 2012

A wonderful opportunity to view some of our beautiful historic homes and other structures and enjoy a historical walking tour.

See wonderful original arts and crafts, held for sale in historic Chautauqua Hall. Free Admission

Bid on an eclectic assortment of handmade bird houses and bird feeders made by local craftspeople in a variety of styles.

Your purchase goes to support the activities and efforts of the Heritage Society of Pacific Grove all year long.

🌿 Feast of Lanterns, 1964 *From page 1*

boats have been used. Legends tell of fishing communities each year renewing bonds of friendship with neighboring communities. This seacoast festival was adopted in Spain, Mexico, South America and some countries of Europe and Asia, with friendship the underlying theme.

In Pacific Grove the 'doves' of the related Willow Pattern china have been replaced by Monarch butterflies, since Pacific Grove became known as Butterfly Town, U.S.A. because of the annual migration of Monarchs to groves of trees in the city.

Pacific Grove has succeeded in retaining legendary quality of the celebration because of cooperation from the fishing fleet of Monterey Bay and also, more recently, from skippers of recreation boats in the area. Although various events throughout the weekend are provided for entertainment of local citizens and visitors, it is the Saturday night fireworks and parade of lantern boats that continues to highlight the festival.

This spectacular night scene has become a mecca for photographers. A colorfully decorated pier is setting for the golden throne of Festival Queen Topaz and her Royal Court all in rich oriental attire. Here, too, are seen the national costumes of dancers and other entertainers, many from the military. On Pa-



A sedan chair carried Queen Topaz in a downtown parade in 1958. The sedan chair disappeared, but was rebuilt by a volunteer, Roger Brown, in 2011.

cific Grove's municipal beach are thousands of festival celebrants with oriental lanterns on bamboo garden sticks spiked in the sands. In the background are the city lantern decorations outlining the beach and waterfront, the effect enhanced by gleaming lights from homes and hundreds of autos along the shoreline. As the lighted boat parade circles in the harbor beneath a canopy of fireworks the crowds greet with shouts of laughter each overhead burst of pyrotechnic brilliance and color.

A camaraderie of festival fun marks the evening, from the folk dances that begin with the street program, the procession to the beach, with costumed revelers escorting Queen Topaz and her Royal Court to their places of honor

or on the pier where the program continues – to the final exchange of salutes from shore to boats as skippers move close in with horns blowing and some boats firing flares. There is no charge for this program.

World wars interrupted annual Feast of Lanterns celebrations, although the festival continued sporadically through the years, adding an atmosphere of "homecoming" to welcome visitors taking refuge in Pacific Grove from extreme summer heat elsewhere. In 1958 the City Council of Pacific Grove sponsored revival of the festival as an annual event. It is, however, not financed by the City, but is a community undertaking directed by a Feast of Lanterns committee, with financing by donations, various projects of local

organizations and labor for the street and boat decorations furnished by the City of Pacific Grove.

Plans are already under way to make the coming celebration bigger and better than ever on July 25 and 26, 1964. On the 25th a tour of homes that feature art objects from various foreign countries will be a new attraction this year. There will be a display of floral arrangements and old photos. A special dinner will be served. The municipal golf course will feature an event.

The following week on July 31st a concert will be given by the Klamehameha Boys Glee Club from Honolulu, Hawaii. Proceeds from this concert, which is open to the public, will be added to the Feast of Lanterns fund which pays for lanterns on the waterfront and on the boat parade. Concert will be held at 8:15, July 31st in Pacific Grove Junior High School.

We no longer light lanterns on sticks, stuck in the sand on the beach, nor can the Feast Board afford to decorate the entire town. There are no golf tournaments, tennis games or fashion shows and teas anymore. But thousands still gather on the beach at Lovers Point to watch the age-old story, celebrate the homemade dragon haunting the lovers' escape route, and marvel at the fireworks show. We're looking forward to many Feasts of Lanterns to come.

*The Heritage Society of Pacific Grove
& Pacific Grove Chamber of Commerce present*

PACIFIC GROVE'S 43rd ANNUAL HISTORIC HOME TOUR

SUNDAY,
OCT. 7
2012



10 AM
to
4 PM

Annual Tour of Historic Homes & Properties

INCLUDES

Artists in Chautauqua • Heritage Houses for the Birds • Historic Walking Tour

TICKETS \$20 Available at Pacific Grove Chamber of Commerce

www.PacificGrove.org • www.PacificGroveHeritage.org

Important notice: Historic properties that retain original architectural features may not be accessible to all. If you have special access needs, please call 831-373-3304. Shoe coverings are provided. No high heels, please.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: 831-373-3304

Chautauqua Days Are Getting Closer

One of the favorite events of the year for all of those who participate is the Chautauqua Days weekend in Pacific Grove. The events sponsored and co-sponsored by your Heritage Society are the Artists in Chautauqua event and sale, the Historic Home Tour and last but certainly not least is the Houses for the Birds Contest and Auction. October 7 is the date for these three events. As in the past we will reach out to

those who have made these events so popular.

This is our largest fundraiser of the year. Most of the proceeds support your Heritage Society throughout the year and some funds go toward our ongoing restoration of our precious Lighthouse. The Artists event will take place in Chautauqua Hall and the Houses for the Birds event will be next door at Elmarie Dyke Park.

There are added categories

for the Birdhouse event. We are adding most patriotic, local historic, humorous, architect's choice and several others. You can also build a bird feeder instead or build both! We had over 35 entries in 2011. Our goal is to exceed that number this year. We can with your participation.

Reserve Sunday October 7, awaken your creative genes, grab your tools and begin building your 2012 Birdhouse or Bird Feeder.

Send your submissions to:

Marge Ann Jameson
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of Pacific Grove
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Pacific Grove, CA 93950
www.pacificgroveheritage.org
info@pacificgroveheritage.org



Call for Docent Volunteers

What: 43rd Home Tour Docents Needed

Date of Home Tour: Oct. 7 Sunday

Time: 10 - 4p.m.

Docents work either a.m. shift or p.m. shift

Receive: A ticket to go on Home tour

*Further Information call: The Heritage Society of Pacific Grove
831.372.2898 or email info@pacificgroveheritagesociety.com*

UPCOMING LECTURES AND EVENTS

Keith Decker's slide-illustrated talk *Robert Louis Stevenson in Monterey*, followed by a dramatic reading of excerpts from Stevenson's essay *The Old Pacific Capitol* – a rich, eyewitness testimony to a specific time and place. Contact Keith at 920-4562 or email actordecker@yahoo.com.

Winter resident Howard Burnham will once again present a series of dramatic readings and portrayals of famous people, which may include such personae as Count Dracula and Charles Dickens. He has promised new characters this year, but we don't know which it will be: Sir Walter Raleigh or Joachim von Ribbentrop. Watch for publicity. Howard, a native of England with American roots, is always a treat to watch.

Return Service Requested

