



The Albany Historical Society

Volume 5, Number 1

April - June 2015

President's Message

Our annual meeting (January 11, 2015) was a rousing success, with new and old Albanyphiles enjoying a photo presentation. Many thanks to our Board, Clay Larson, and our community for yummy treats, videography, and contributing memories.

More thanks and a welcome to new Board members Jackie Armstrong and Liz Kiely-Roark, and continuing members Marsha Skinner, Kim Denton, Donna Butcher, Peggy McQuaid, and Joan Larson. A fond farewell to Jack Rosano, who served on the Albany Historical Society Board for many years.

We appreciate all who attended, joined and shared their Albany history. Also, we are very grateful to the following folks for their recent donations to our archives:

Bob Hughes Jr.

5 " Trouble Shooting Contest" trophies 1964-1968

Crown, scepter and ring, late 1960s Albany High Homecoming memorabilia.

A memory binder compiled by his father, Bob Hughes Sr., a 35 year teacher at Albany High School.

A 1936 AHS yearbook (1st printing)

World War II fighter plane templates, used to teach pilots how to identify planes.

Gene Hellwig

13 Albany High School yearbooks, (ranging from 1936 to 1958)

Bruce Barrows

Albany High Yearbooks and Albany Chamber of Commerce Directories

Some progress is being made with cataloging and we anticipate having a library intern specializing in collections to be assisting us soon. We value your contributions to our archives and thank you for sharing our Albany history.

Our next event will be a historical walk on June 16, 2015. Special shout outs to Karen Sorensen local author and "Garbage Wars" aficionado and co facilitator Robin Mariona at the Albany Senior Center. Please see upcoming events for details.

Joan Larson, President

SPOTLIGHT

In this issue, we are highlighting two dedicated and influential members of our school community. They were great friends and collaborators and sadly for Albany they are no longer with us.



Mary Watkinson Wallmann

Mary was raised in Albany, graduating from Albany High School in 1945, where she was valedictorian. She continued to contribute to her Albany community throughout her life.

Known primarily as a librarian by profession, Mary was the Albany High School librarian for 27 years. Also known as Mother Goose, Mary was an excellent pianist and often accompanied school musical performances. Mary also served her school community as a member of the Albany School Board and served on the Board of the Albany Education Foundation.



Marilyn Wittwer Chamberlain

Marilyn was a long time elementary school teacher. She served a brief stint as a librarian at Vista School and for many years taught and guided Albany elementary school children with her special gentleness. She included music in her classroom and her students performed in a recorder concert each year. In retirement, she served as a Board member on the Albany

Local Society, 1249 Marin Ave., Albany CA 94706 (<http://albanycahistory.org>)

Education Foundation bringing a unique teacher perspective to the grant award process.

These two wonderful ladies shared a passion for music, which they imbued into the classroom and the community. Many youth, family, and the community benefited from Mary's musical accompaniment and Marilyn's student recorder concerts at schools and at the Albany Education Foundation Scoops for Schools. We are all very grateful to have had these two gracious, dedicated, wonderful ladies be a part of our Albany history.

75 Years Ago

Sadly, we do not have the local papers for 1939. We must depend on the Oakland Tribune and the Berkeley Gazette:

April 2, 1939

Celebrations for the 6th anniversary of the CCC included an opportunity for the public to view the newly constructed bridge, trails, and picnic tables at Jewel Lake.

April 4, 1939

King Ghazi of Irak (no, that's not a typo, that's the way the newspaper spelled it!) Described as "an outstanding motor enthusiast," was killed in an auto accident.

April 29, 1939

35 to 40 California Civil War Union veterans attended a reunion held in Berkeley

Albany Police Officer William Hyde rescued 3 year-old Sharon Bucklin of 1133 Stannage Ave. from the Santa Fe tracks at Marin & Masonic just seconds before a train went through.

May 20, 1939

Kay Kyser's hit "Three Little Fishies" went to #1

May 22, 1939

Germany and Italy signed the "Pact of Steel" promising mutual protection and support

50 Years Ago

March 31, 1965

City staff gathered for a photo op in front of City Hall, as they prepared to move into their new

offices at Buchanan/Marin and San Pablo Av

The new Albany Square shopping center welcomed its first two occupants: the law offices of local attorney Barry Runnion, and Moo's Ice Cream

April 7, 1965

Flora Dorenzo, who moved to Albany in 1908, was honored on her 87th birthday at the home of her son Anthony at 625 Madison.

Formal dedication ceremonies were held for the Orientation Center for the Blind.

April 14, 1965

Brothers Randy (Army) and Gene Fitch (Air Force), of 609 Kains, sent a photo of themselves in Saigon.

April 28, 1965

All 23 members of the staff of the Albany Police Department gathered for a photo op in front of 805 San Pablo, as they prepared for a move to their new building.

Replacing Joe Vercelli's Mohawk Station, the 12 unit Evelyn Gardens apartment building was completed. Albany residents did not have to go far to purchase gas, however, as the new a Richfield Oil station at Solano and Santa Fe was completed at the same time.

May 5, 1965

Permits for demolition of dwellings at 832 Cerrito and 1063 San Pablo Avenue were issued.

May 12, 1965

A schedule for auction of 20 Albany homes was

released. A total of 580 houses in several cities were to be removed in order to build BART. Six Albany homes on Masonic Av. had already been sold and moved.

May 26, 1965

A pearl necklace from Call Bros. Jewelry was promised to each Maid of Albany contestant with the winner to receive 11 months use of a '65 Plymouth Fury, and a weekly hairdo from the North Berkeley Beauty School, among other goodies. On June 2nd, Sharon Dreyer turned over the tiara to Valerie Hanelt of 810 Pierce St.

June 2, 1965

Laura Bailey of 1459 Portland Avenue was selected as the outstanding student at Albany High

March 1, 1965

Dagna's Market at 1382 Solano, (now CVS) Celebrated its 33rd anniversary with specials: bananas, grapefruit, and carrots @ 10c a pound, with artichokes at 10c each

The Albany Theater announced that all patrons 18 and under must leave at 3:35 PM on Saturday, unless accompanied by a parent. The theater was then going to show *Irma la Douce*, with Shirley Macaine and Jack Lemmon and *Kiss Me, Stupid*, starring Kim Novak and Dean Martin.

A two-bedroom home at 818 San Carlos was listed at \$18,950.

Albany Historical Society Updates and Events

Join us for a Free Walking Tour in Albany!

A joint adventure of the Albany Historical Society and the Albany Senior Center to the site of the infamous Albany "Garbage Wars".

Tuesday, June 16, 1915

9:00am – 11:00am

Approximately 30 minutes (each way) Flat, handicapped accessible.

Brief presentation at the Albany Senior /Youth Annex followed by a walk lead by Karen Sorensen.

Registration: Albany Senior Center, 842 Masonic Avenue, Albany, CA



Board of Directors 2015-2016

Joan Larson	President
Donna Butcher	Vice President
Peggy Mc Quaid	Financial Director
Marsha Skinner	Secretary
Kim Denton	Director at Large
Jackie Armstrong	Director at Large
Liz Kiely-Roark	Director at Large

Board Meetings: the first Friday of each month, 9:30am, basement of the Community Center

Cataloging Meetings: the third Friday of each month, 9:30am, basement of the Community Center

Check with Joan Larson, 510-526-7769 for possible rescheduled times.



Marilyn Wittwer Chamberlain
Sept. 12, 1933 – Nov. 19, 2014
Resident of Albany

Our loving mother and grandmother passed away on Nov 19, 2014 in SLC, UT. She fought a courageous battle against cancer. Marilyn was the youngest of 3 daughters born to Eldon and LaVerne Tullis Wittwer on Sept 12, 1933 in Boston, MA. She grew up in Reno, NV graduating from Reno HS, then completed her degree in Elementary Ed from Brigham Young Univ (1954). She received a Master's degree in Educ from the Univ of Nevada. She moved to Berkeley, CA (1956) to teach school. In 1957 Marilyn married Grant Chamberlain and together they raised 5 children in Berkeley, CA. After 20 years raising children, Marilyn returned to teaching elementary school in Albany, CA. A life-long member of the LDS church, Marilyn served in many music and leadership capacities.

Marilyn loved living in the Cal Bay Area and for 57 years enjoyed the unique cultures, places, activities and her wonderful friends there. Her constant example of optimism, encouragement and selfless service are proof of her testimony of Christ. She lived life with an intensity that was admired and brought blessings to all those around her.

Her husband, Grant and son, David preceded her in death. She is survived by 4

children: Alyce, Marilee, Cathy and Brian; 21 grandchildren; and sisters LeNore Knudsen and Donna Tanner.

Funeral services: Nov 26, 2 pm. Visiting 1-1:45 pm. Wasatch Lawn Mortuary, 3401 Highland Dr., SLC, UT For the complete obituary see - See more at:

<http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/isidebayarea/obituary.aspx?pid=173268931#sthash.xgTfr83k.dpuf>



Mary W. Wallmann – a native of Albany who was the **Albany High School** librarian for 27 years, a member of the **Albany school board** and a co-founder of the **Albany Education Foundation** – died Thursday at age 86.

She died "of causes incident to dementia in Flower Mound, Texas, where she had lived the past two years at a memory care facility," according to a family-prepared obituary notice.

Wallmann spent almost her entire life in Albany, where she graduated valedictorian in 1945. Her parents, John Watkinson and Kathleen Bass, immigrated from England, and her mother is featured at a young age in the cover photo on the book about Albany history, *Images of America: Albany*, by Karen Sorensen and the **Albany Historical Society**.

- *Anyone wishing to share remembrances or condolences is invited to do so in the comments section below this article.*

"She was a wonderful woman and had a great influence on the Albany community," said David Ritzman, Bishop of the Berkeley Ward of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Wallmann was a lifelong member of the church and played the organ at the historic Berkeley Ward meetinghouse at Walnut and Vine streets for decades.

"Mary Wallmann has touched many people in Albany, as the high school librarian, accompanist for limitless numbers of musical performances at all of the schools, Albany School Board member, and member of the Albany Education Foundation Board," said Dianne McNenny, President of the Albany Education Foundation.

"Mary had a passion for helping children and for playing music," McNenny said. "Always willing to volunteer, Mary played a positive and encouraging role in the many efforts she supported in Albany. I remember her most as a warm, insightful, caring woman busy with new tasks to do and folks to help. She leaves a long and memorable legacy in Albany."

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 12, at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at 1501 Walnut St. in Berkeley.

More information about Wallman, her family and where contributions can be sent are in the following obituary notice provided by her family:

Mary W. Wallmann
(1927–2013)

Mary W. Wallmann died on September 26 of causes incident to dementia in Flower Mound, Texas, where she had lived the past two years at a memory care facility. She was 86. A memorial service will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 12, at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1501 Walnut Street, Berkeley, CA 94709.

Mary Kathleen Watkinson was born April 21, 1927, in Albany, California, to John Watkinson and Kathleen Bass, immigrants from England. She was educated at Marin School and Albany High School, where she was valedictorian in 1945. A Phi Beta Kappa student at the University of California, Berkeley, degrees in French and Library Science from that institution were granted in 1949 and 1950, respectively. She was librarian at Albany High School from 1966 until she retired in 1993. After retirement, she was a founding member of the Albany Education Foundation and served as a member of the Albany Unified School District Board of Education from 1998 to 2002.

Music was an important part of Mary's life. She was six years old when she started piano lessons with a neighbor who herself had only had six piano lessons in her life, but Mary progressed rapidly. As a teenager, she earned money for college by playing the piano at fifty cents an hour for dancers and singers, even playing "Song of India" for a sword swallower's act. For about twenty years she accompanied the annual musical put on at Albany High School. As an adult, she learned to play the organ.

Except for short periods living in Chicago, Paris, Oxford, and Texas, Mary spent almost her entire life in Albany. She was a life-long member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and played the organ at the historic Berkeley Ward meetinghouse for decades. In addition to her volunteer and charitable service with the Mormon community, Mary played the piano at elementary schools in Albany and Richmond following her retirement.

Mary married James C. Wallmann in 1950; he was a research chemist at the Radiation Laboratory in Berkeley (now Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory) from 1952 until his death in 1965. They had three sons: John, James, and Peter. Mary is survived by her son Jim of Flower Mound, Texas, a corporate attorney with Lehigh Hanson; her granddaughter Christina, daughter of Jim and Ria van Elburg, also of Flower Mound; the two surviving children of Peter and Denise Jenkins, her granddaughter Elizabeth of Tempe, Arizona, a dentist, and her grandson Andrew, also of Tempe, a medical student; and her twin brother James S. Watkinson of Richmond, Virginia, and three of his children and their families. She was preceded in death by sons John and Peter and her grandson Matthew, son of Peter and Denise.

The family may be reached at 5121 Mystic Hollow Court, Flower Mound, TX 75028. In lieu of flowers, friends of Mary who so desire may wish to contribute to the Albany Education Foundation, Friends of the Brigham Young University Library, or a favorite charity.