

HALF MOON BAY
HISTORY
ASSOCIATION

Celebrating Coastside Legacies

326 Main Street
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019
(650) 726-4468

retro-spective

September, 2013

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Next Meeting:
October 3, 2013

Topic:

GHOST TOWN !
The Story of the Lost Town – Purissima

- See story on inside -

Board of Directors:

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Eddie Andreini

A Legendary Stunt Flying Career

By Evan Isenstein-Brand

There are many treasures along our coastside, but one of my favorites is our local aerobatic pilot, Eddie Andreini. What's so unusual is that Eddie is considered one of the nation's top air show performers, who was awarded the highly coveted Sword of Excellence by the International conference of Air shows, yet so many of Coastsiders don't know about him.

So I met Eddie at his Hanger in Half Moon Bay to learn his story. Eddie has been performing in air shows for almost thirty years. And has performed throughout the United States, Canada and Australia. Eddie went for a ride in and airplane that belonged to a friend of his dad in Half Moon Bay when he was about 15 years old, "and that was really neat and I kept wanting to go again and again," he says.

Eddie learned to fly in Half Moon Bay when he was 16 years old, from Frank Silvestri, former World War 2 P-47 fighter pilot. Eddie says, "Frank owned West Coast Aviation and one day I got up enough courage and talked to the flight school to learn how to fly. So Frank said 'okay' and took me up for my first lesson. And that was it!"

"I'd always worked and I'd saved enough money from working on my dad's farm and doing odd jobs like driving a tractor and helping friends fix up cars after schools and weekends. My dad taught me the value of work and how to make money. When I was in high school, I bought my first airplane, an L-2 Taylorcraft, with a couple of friends, but it ended up I was the only one who got a license. My mom was okay with me flying, but not my dad. He thought it was crazy risky. When I bought the airplane, my dad threatened to 'chop the airplane up' if he ever found it. He offered my best friend Jo-Jo \$75 if he'd tell where the plane was, but Jo-Jo never did.

I bought a BT-13 with a partner named Jim Williams and he'd been a crop duster and was quite an aerobatic pilot. He was probably one of the best pilots I'd ever known. So whenever we'd go up, it was strictly Aerobatics!

This was the topic of the June HMBHA meeting. Over one-hundred attended!



Andreini – Inverted, Cuts the Ribbon!
Flying the Stearman

If we went 100 miles away, we did aerobatics the whole way. So I got comfortable with it and learned I really liked it. I was learning from a great pilot. So the next thing I know, he was doing shows with the Stearman before I was, and pretty soon a guy asked me, 'Hey, how would you like to do a show?' And it was really neat." And almost 30 years later of performances and air shows followed. Eddie has had many airplanes over the years, and flown many more, and loved them all. He was really hard-pressed to pick a favorite airplane, but over the years he kept coming back to the Stearman. Currently he flies what is probably the most heavily modified Stearman in the United States. It's a 1944 PT-13D Boeing Stearman, and he can do absolutely amazing twists and turns in the air with it, yet it's a very comfortable cross-country plane. Eddie loves it because it is so challenging to be graceful with it when flying at the edge, yet it's a beautiful machine.

Eddie also has two beautiful Yak-9 fighters. The finest Russian WWII fighter, it was originally produced from 1942 – 1948, but Eddie's were made new in 1966 from original jigs. With its American Allison V-12 engine power, it can actually outperform the famous P-51 Mustang at lower levels. I like Eddie's Stearman and his amazing talent with it very much, but the grace and power of the Yak are for me!

Eddie has developed an impressive reputation as a dedicated aerobatic performer, a consummate professional, and one heck of a great guy. Although Eddie could talk for hours on the wondrous capabilities of his airplanes, he says what he loves most about performing in air shows is coming back to Earth. "There is always some small child who you know just became passionate about flying because of what he saw my plane do. Or even an older person will tell me that my performance really went deep into his or her heart and touched him in an unexpected but so meaningful way. Eddie says, "That, for me, is what keeps me flying."

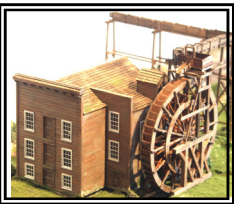
(Editor's Note: News Flash! Last week Eddie Andreini was accepted into the ICAS - International Council of Air Shows – Hall of Fame. A rare, and top honor for his craft.

About the author: Your editor planned to write an article about Eddie Andreini. While doing online research, this marvelous article surfaced. Thinking that it caught the information and the spirit better than we could, we contacted the author, hoping that he would give permission to print his work - already superiorly written. And, indeed we did get permission.

The surprise is that the author, Evan Isenstein-Brand, is now a high school student and was ten years old when he wrote this piece. We can look for this young man to make some mark as a writer in the future! See his remarkable on-going series on aviators on www.evanflys.com)

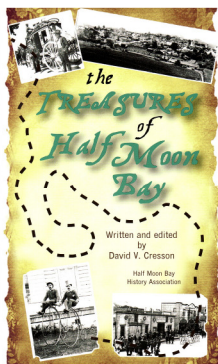
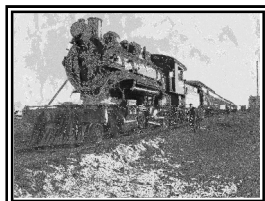
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Next Program...

GHOST TOWN !

The Story of the Lost Town – Purissima

Topic: Ghost Town! Purissima

Presenter: Jo Chamberlain

Place: 300 Main Street, HMB – Suite #5

Date: Thursday, October 3

Time: 5:30 Doors open – finger snacks and refreshments

Meeting begins: 6:00



The story of Purissima. The little town just four miles south of Half Moon Bay is the topic of the next History Association meeting.

This remarkable town rose dramatically and beautifully out of its surrounding nearby fertile valley. It prospered, and then it disappeared. How and why all this happened is one of the most interesting of the stories of our Coastside. Today there is nothing left but its history and its graveyard.

NOTE: We are meeting in the small History Meeting Room – Maximum seating – 35.
Please come early to avoid SRO or crowding.

Jo Chamberlain is a well known and respected part of our community. She is the Executive Director of the Coastside Land Trust, located in Half Moon Bay. Jo is a native Californian who has lived most of her life on the Peninsula. She has lived in both the San Gregorio Valley and in Lobitos Canyon.

The Coastside Land Trust acquired the Purissima (sic) Old Town site from the State Coastal Conservancy earlier this year. It is a seven acre parcel adjacent to the Purissima Cemetery. Jo, a trained biologist, will discuss the history, and will touch on the plans of the Coastside Land Trust for the property, as well as the mission and goals of her organization.

REFLECTION ON A BRIDGE

It is with real sadness that we watched as City Council members voted our historic bridge into destruction last week. Remarkably, over a hundred people took their evening hours to personally go to that City Council meeting. They endorsed a plan to fix the bridge - rather than build a new one.

Many History Association members and interested citizens wrote notes with their opinions about replacing the bridge. All of them favored testing the bridge or saving the bridge. Those notes were all forwarded to the City Council members, just before last week's meeting.



This all started when the City Engineer (a civil engineer) reported that the bridge was old and weak and in danger of collapse – mentioning tsunamis, dam breaks, and earthquakes. The paper also said that millions of federal dollars were available to pay for a new, big bridge. The report mentioned the accompanying inconvenience of years of heavy construction, traffic closures, and detours around downtown Half Moon Bay.

The community was astonished and alarmed. They pleaded for independent opinions and for structural tests to see if the danger was real. They wondered why the Council was not particularly concerned about the economic losses to businesses and to the community.

Structural engineers didn't agree with the City Engineer. They offered professional opinions that the bridge is most likely safe right now. Repairs could be done to assure future safety. Even Caltrans Bridge Inspectors said that the bridge is not a likely risk of collapse.

Then the community submitted a formal plan to fix the bridge (Referred to as "Option 5a). It was written by professionals. That work was donated to help the City--- Design. Costs. Timing. The plan to fix the bridge was dismissed. by the City staff, City Engineers, and then by the City Council.

After a huge audience had spoken to save the bridge, City Council voted (4 to 1) to demolish it.

They had just heard again that ...:

- Replacing the bridge will cost at least \$7 Million taxpayer dollars. Millions more lost to the business community.
(Fix it would cost about \$1.5 Million.)
- Replacement requires heavy construction and closing the bridge - detouring traffic for at least one summer.
(Fixing it might not close it at all. Or it might close two or three weeks in the winter.)
- Building a new bridge means the historic bridge will be lost.
(Once gone, this century-old reminder of our past will be gone forever.)

The Coastal Commission and others will likely get involved and entangled in legal issues about historic preservation and environmental impacts. Time and money are being wasted on all sides. It would have been so simple to easily test and presumably save it.

We keep wondering why.

Dave Cresson, President

PEOPLE AT WORK

One of our most active committees is the Education Committee, headed up by Mary Ruddy.

Committee members and participants include... Maria Grigorieff, Gael Erickson, Judy Matienzo, Patricia Keefe, Pauline Shue, Sheila Cresson, Sue Hatfield, Katherine Webber.

They are planning and inventing activities to interest our younger students in our local and California history - - right in the center of one of the association's main goals... "To Educate."

They are assembling a "History Box." It will contain – as in a Show and Tell - things that typify our communities' growth and of the times we were in. Artifacts, Photos documents, tools and appliances. Things about transportation, farming, fishing, art and invention. Each with a story and a message of the moments – Ohlone, Spanish, Mexican, American.



They are communicating with the schools to try to encourage an official welcome.

And they are doing research for the most relevant subjects from public libraries, and the HMBHA Library and History Room. There is an annual children's theatre show in Brentwood, where the whole school acts out the moments of Brentwood history. That program is being reviewed for possible adaptation to our Coastside.

Adding make-it-yourself models of the Miramontes Adobe to the projects is being studied - - as is using local history as a means of earning a Boy Scouts History Merit Badge.

Creative thinkers with an interest in education are welcome to join Mary Ruddy and her team.

Other HMBHA Works in Progress...

- HMBHA Museum and Visitor Center: Steve Brown
- 1861 Diorama: Tom and Julie Anderson
- Quarterly public programs that focus upon a particular part of our local history: Erika Pardo and Robin Jeffs (speaker selection and venues) and Sheila Cresson (hospitality)
- Quarterly newsletters that report on Association activities and provide perspectives and anecdotes from our past (HMB Review and emailed): Dan Bodman
- Walking tours and history talks: Mary Ruddy, Gael Erickson, and Christopher O'Donnell
- Historic markers project/application: Roy Salume
- HMBHA website: (Dave Cresson)
- Oral histories: Dave Olson and Mary Vargas
- Documenting Service Club Histories: Barbara Kelly, Sheila Cresson, and Ruth Rafello
- Archiving documents, photographs and artifacts: Pat Keefe
- Library of local history books maintenance

President's Message

Community Service



The long range success of this organization – and all organizations, really – depends on a few goodhearted people who will regularly step forward to offer help. To share a little of the work. It is surprising how little time it takes to make some of the association's best activities succeed.

As we look towards the future, we continue to put out that repeated request:
“Give us a call. Let us try to persuade you to spend a few hours a month on one of the parts of the association!”

We are pleased to report that we receive compliments from our community.

We offer articles in our newsletter about the Coastside's history or achievement. Four times a year, we present a knowledgeable expert to come talk for an hour or so about some aspect of our history. The idea is that these are a bit entertaining, while being educational. Every part of a community's history seems to be a little treasure. By mentioning such bits and pieces, we keep a little polish on these wonderful pieces that produced what our Coastside is today.

A less conspicuous activity is the collection and preservation of the records and artifacts from the past. Maps, documents, pictures, oral histories from old-times, and earlier writings describing our history. This collection activity makes materials available for serious researchers and casual questions from the public of today and tomorrow.

Also, the association has tried to be an active voice advocating the preservation of the large number of old structures – and for keeping some of the “old look and feel” of parts of the communities along the Coastside. We hope our efforts there have found a nice place between “polite and “strident” in (still) trying to persuade City Council not to demolish that 113 year old bridge.

This history association has been particularly active for about six years now. We were incorporated and became an “official” non-profit - 501 (c) 3 non-profit in 2007.

It takes some work to stage these various efforts. And of course, the active members doing it are happy to do so. But it IS work

Looking forward to looking back,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dave". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial 'D'.

Dave Cresson

President

Contact: (650)726-4468

www.HalfMoonBayHistory.org