



HISTORICAL

highlights

Fall 2020

Newsletter of the Cohasset Historical Society

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From the President

Dear Members and Friends,

First and foremost I want to let you know that I am thinking of you, and hoping that you are safe and well during these challenging times.

How we all looked forward to 2020. Celebrating Cohasset's 250th was everyone's goal. Things certainly have changed. At the Society we have gone from active to remote. Although the Pratt is not yet open to the public, as volunteers we are answering requests and Zooming quite frequently. So many new words and phrases in our vocabularies.

Rebecca Bates-McArthur has been doing research on other Cohasset towns in the USA. Seven of them thus far. Enjoy finding out about Cohasset, California on page 3. Have you ever been there?

With no events planned, our calendar is almost bare. Page 4 has details about the 2020 Annual Meeting to be held, via Zoom, on Sunday, October 25th at 1:00 p.m. No need to decide between chicken or fish, or to rush home to see the Patriots.

As you are aware, fundraising events and increasing the membership are more than a challenge. Donations are always welcome and greatly appreciated. Please check the website CohassetHistoricalSociety.org for updated information.

Gift Shop items continue to be available.

Wishing each and every one of you my warmest regards,


Kathy O'Malley
President



Cohasset 250 Update

During the planning for the Cohasset 250th celebration, we focused on three themes, to commemorate our rich history, celebrate life here today, and dedicate something meaningful to future generations of residents. Commemorate, Celebrate and Dedicate became our mantra. The result was a year-long calendar of events and programs designed to mark this milestone.

The year began with a terrific New Year's Day kick-off on the Common, complete with a giant ice sculpture. Soon after, everything changed. COVID-19 arrived and gatherings were no longer possible.

Although it was a disappointment to not be able to deliver on our plans, we found that the spirit of Cohasset 250 was still strong, and our community came together in many ways to get through the pandemic ... together.

Thankfully, a few great projects have survived. The most special and ambitious of which is our collaboration with the Historical Society on a coffee table book focused on the 250 oldest buildings in town. The First 250 is a reimagining of the Heritage Trail pamphlet created in

continued on the back page



DIARY SERIES - FRANCE 1918

by Margaret Hall (1876-1963)



This is the fourth installment of Margaret Hall's "diary," a compilation of letters, diary entries and extraordinary photographs that document her year on the western front in France in 1918. (Punctuation, capitalization, and spelling are as they appear in the diary.)

In this installment Hall continues to describe her fellow passengers and what daily life is like on board the USS Chicago en route to France.

The evenings have been rather dismal after the boys finished singing. Lights in the Salle de Conversation are so dim that we can neither read nor play cards there. Finally, Mrs. Earle induced the Captain to open the dining saloon, where the light is better, between nine and eleven. He needed a good deal of persuasion, as on other trips people had insisted upon sleeping on the dining tables.

We have a daily dance. One of the lieutenants is a trombone player and he has collected all the men with instruments. For about an hour they play for dancing, which gives us a gay appearance. The music is delicious, it is so out of tune and queer, but it has a swing and I enjoy it a lot. A quartette

from below sometimes sings between the dances, and one day two other boys came up. One played the piano and the other, a violin, which had only one string left. He held it like a cello and could play anything provided his accompanist started in a low enough key.

The nuns have furnished me with a little excitement by trying to catch a glimpse of them unveiled and unrobed. Once I succeeded. Their curtain blew out just as one was climbing up into her berth, in a striped flannel nightgown and hair pugged tight in the back.

All the Y.M.C.A. literature and library was put by mistake into the hold, so the days drag for some on board, and I've been tempted to send Leslie's magazines down to the boys. On Sunday the Y.M.C.A. and Salvation Army had a fifteen minute service. Songs – popular ones – were sung. "The Lord is My Shepherd" was read and explained; the Lord's Prayer, and we ended with "Onward Christian Soldiers." Not many boys took part.

We have had the usual concert and entertainment, which took about two hours – everything of interest could have been done in fifteen minutes. Also a lecture on France, a mock trial, etc., nothing very sprightly. Some spicy gossip, but I suppose that is to be expected, conditions are so inviting.

We have to save electricity, water and ice. The water only runs in our basins at certain times, and ice water is next to impossible to get. At each meal we have only one piece of sour black bread and one lump of sugar, but everything else has the good French flavor.

There has been a rumor of possible quarantine – fourteen days – because of mumps on board. Rumors, too, that the other boats are annoyed with us because we go so slowly, and have signaled if we don't hurry up, they will leave us. We answered we didn't care if they did. They zigzag more than we and go back and forth across our bow in rather an impudent way. The officer in charge of our troops wonders why we were put in such a fast convoy. I hear that one of our boilers is broken.

Finally, on the fifth day, all the boats except the Lorraine did leave us for England.

Mrs. Earle has a pass which takes her all over the ship, as she teaches the soldiers French every day. There are both French and Italian lessons going at all hours in all parts of the boat.

On the second Sunday, the only service I heard was the little vesper singing from the nun's cabin. It was very pretty and calming in the midst of the turmoil. No one is sensational, but the feeling of not knowing what's doing makes an undercurrent of suppressed excitement. Of course none of the boat's employees are allowed to say a word. If all the reports flying around were true, we should have been at the bottom of the Atlantic long ago. We always get daily war bulletins.

One night we were told that the Captain ordered the soldiers to keep their life preservers with them every instant. We had received an S.O.S from a boat that was fighting a submarine not far from us, someone said; we could not find out where. We were all advised but not ordered to sleep out. For some reason I could not get excited, but I put Mother's little green bag under my pillow, with my brandy, malted milk tablets and flashlight in it, which added one more hump to my bed.

That night, just as I reached my chair, three most awful flashes came from my bundle. Two or three exclaimed, "What was that!" Luckily no officer was near. I dropped everything in hopes the light would go out on the way down. Evidently a bottle had pushed the connection and lighted the bulb of my flashlight.

From the time of the S.O.S. scare we were in the danger zone again. The Lorraine was lost and we were alone at the mercy of any old thing in a terribly slow tub.

In the next installment, Hall recounts the completion of the Atlantic crossing and landing in France.

COHASSET, CALIFORNIA - Established 1888

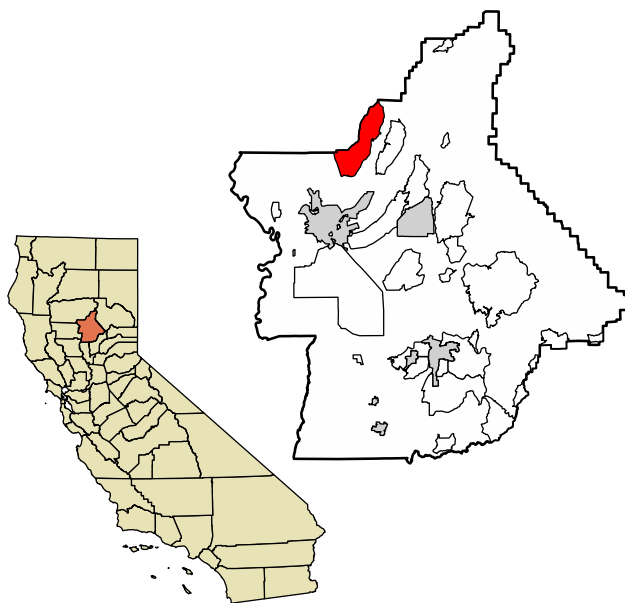
by Rebecca Bates-McArthur, Cohasset (MA) Historical Society

Cohasset, California is located 15 miles NE of Chico, California, and about 30 miles (by car) from Paradise, CA (site of the Camp Fire of 2018). It is part of Butte County, north of Sacramento, in the foothills of the Cascade Mountain Range along what is now known as Cohasset Ridge.

A census-designated community of 25.3 square miles, it has a population of fewer than 1000 souls. It was originally home to the Yahi/Yana and Maidu Indian tribes for thousands of years before the Euro-Americans moved into the area at the time of the Gold Rush. They lived along the long ridges and cliff walled canyons of the Sacramento River and Mt. Lassen. For the most part, they were hunter-gatherers, living on wild game, salmon, fruit, acorns and roots.

White settlers started moving into the territory in the 1840s. They took over the land, which led to conflict with the local tribes. By 1865, many of the tribes were moved to reservations, yet conflicts and massacres continued until 1871. In 1911, the last known Yahi was found. He had spent most of his life in hiding in the wilderness with his family. Named Ishi, he worked with the scientists of the University of California-Berkeley, learned English and was able to provide invaluable information about the history of his tribe. He died of Tuberculosis in 1916.

Cohasset was originally called North Ridge. Land was made available under the Homestead Act and the Pacific Railroad Acts in 1862. A school district was formed in 1878 by the pioneers to provide a place of learning for their children. It was given the name of North Point District. When the residents requested that a post office be established, the Post Office Department requested that another name be selected as there were too many post offices named North or Ridge. A naming committee was appointed and they chose the name Cohasset, meaning "City of Pines" in the Algonquin language, citing a precedent based on the naming of Cohasset, MA. The first Cohasset, CA post office was established on February 20, 1888. We translate the name as "long rocky place."



Many of the early settlers were farmers, raising cattle, sheep and hogs. For cash income, they worked at lumber mills in the area during the warm months and trapped fox, skunk, wildcat and martin for their pelts in the winter. Lumber mills had been built to cut the tall virgin timber stands from the hills into lumber for the construction of housing in Chico and other nearby areas. Lumbering was a main industry for many years, but over successive harvests, the trees harvested were smaller in size and the lumber industry slowed. Some of the farmers experimented with raising fruit trees. Samples of Cohasset apples won prizes at the 1904 St Louis Universal Exposition. In 1911, in Watsonville, CA, Cohasset apples earned for Butte County the best record for high-quality apples for any county in the state.

The North Point school combined in 1888 with another district and they operated schools at different times during the year. In 1921, the two schools were united to form the Cohasset School District. There was one teacher for grades 1-4 and a second for the upper grades. In 1965, a new school building opened that served grades 1-6. The district was unified with the Chico School system and the grades 7-12 students were bussed into Chico daily. Several years ago, the elementary school closed and all students now attend school in Chico. A church was built in the town in 1896 based on the old New England and Eastern

States pattern of the cemetery in the churchyard. In 1908, a community hall was built and was used for various community activities.

Cohasset is represented by a county supervisor who holds monthly hours in town. There is a television transmitting station and tower in town and a California Forest Service fire station which is staffed during the summer fire season. Most of the residents who work commute to Chico. The main local community activities are organized through the Cohasset Community Association and include a 4-H group, bingo, yoga, a kids playgroup and a brew club. A commodities program (for supplemental food) is also in place.

A road-clean up is organized early in the spring along the main road to town, Cohasset Road. They also sponsor a chili cook-off in the spring. The big fundraiser is the Annual Bazaar and Music Festival, normally held in August. The bazaar includes arts and crafts, children activities, a parade, food, music, and a raffle. It is held in the Pine Grove at the Community Association Building. This year, they are also offering free high-speed internet service at their building. They are working with the County Fire Safe Council and National Fire Protection Association to educate and fund programs to help reduce the risk of forest fires.

Cohasset, California has been described as a spot for peaceful country living with an outstanding sense of community. The Cohasset 250 committee received a letter from them that included "Please keep in touch and perhaps sometime in the future we can meet and greet at your Cohasset or ours!"

Sources

Cohasset, California, Yahi and Yana people and language, in *www.Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*.

Cohasset Community Association Newsletter, 2019, 2020.

Elroy Nathan, *A Historical Geography of Cohasset Ridge*. 1966, reprint Cohasset Historical Society, 1998.



Cohasset Historical Society
106 South Main Street
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Fall 2020

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Cohasset 250 Update - continued

Joseph Bates House, 47 North Main Street, 1772
The earliest extant house in the Common district, this Georgian features an original enclosed vestibule. The right side addition and wing includes a pedimented and columned portico, which was removed. It is said, from the Jonathan Small House at 49 Brattle Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts. There, the British used Redford Jolly had commandeered the Hercules. The Bateses were confined as prisoners of war. An 18th-century stone at the back, and, like the house, is painted yellow.

Bates bought from his uncle Samuel half of lot 68 in Cohasset's first division in 1682, as his father's death in 1701, he received the other half. Bates died by drowning before the house was finished. His son Joseph, by agreement with his brother Jonathan, inherited the "Marion" house that the father possessed at his death and where the said Joseph Bates shared new death, together with the said Barn and housing and Edliffers, fences, orchards." (Cohasset 1810, 1811, 1812, 1813, 1814, 1815, 1816, 1817, 1818, 1819, 1820, 1821, 1822, 1823, 1824, 1825, 1826, 1827, 1828, 1829, 1830, 1831, 1832, 1833, 1834, 1835, 1836, 1837, 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842, 1843, 1844, 1845, 1846, 1847, 1848, 1849, 1850, 1851, 1852, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856, 1857, 1858, 1859, 1860, 1861, 1862, 1863, 1864, 1865, 1866, 1867, 1868, 1869, 1870, 1871, 1872, 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1878, 1879, 1880, 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1889, 1890, 1891, 1892, 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, 1903, 1904, 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1914, 1915, 1916, 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920, 1921, 1922, 1923, 1924, 1925, 1926, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930, 1931, 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1938, 1939, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1944, 1945, 1946, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1958, 1959, 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963, 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020)

1846, Boston lawyer William Davies Solter, who had been renting the house during the summers so that he could pursue his hobby, the surprisingly popular pastime of shooting coots, which evidently lured early purchasers to death. All the articles of household furniture, and articles in the dining house, - now occupied by said father-

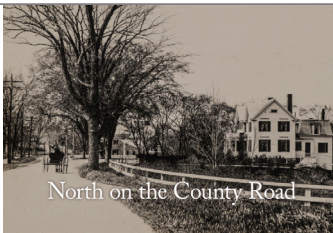
1970. With 160 large full-color pages, the book contains new and vintage shots of the homes and buildings and painstaking researched and well-crafted narratives of the people and events unique to each one.

The book will be available for pre-orders this fall, and a presentation of the research and design process of it will be the main event on Sunday, October 25 at the Historical Society's Annual Meeting.



Due to Covid-19, the Cohasset Historical Society is closed to the public.

Please contact us at info@cohassethistoricalsociety.org and we will be happy to get back to you.



We have the information about the Travel Channel episode that was filmed in Cohasset, highlighting our Maritime Museum.

The Travel Channel, The Holzer Files
Title: "Devil in the Rock"
Airs on December 10, 2020 at 10:00 p.m.