

TRINIDAD MUSEUM SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Summer 2026

400 Janis Court
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trinidadmuseum.org

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New Photography Room Exhibit: MOONSTONE



Moonstone Photography Room Exhibit

Vintage photographs of the Moonstone Beach, Little River, Redwood Highway south Trinidad businesses, Moonstone Heights homes and prospective Moonstone and Westhaven subdivision maps ("lots available for \$100") are featured in the "Moonstone" exhibit. Images of landscapes, seascapes, businesses and homes in the early to mid nineteenth century are featured from the photography collections of Lois Smith, Genia Garibaldi, Howard and Thelma Moore and Gregg Moore. Trinidad School teacher Thelma Moore wrote about her early impressions in her "History of Moonstone Beach Subdivision" in June 1978:

"In 1914, Norman R. Smith bought a tract of land and called it Moonstone Beach. He and his son, Chester, surveyed and plotted the lot maps. The maps were recorded with Humboldt County in Book 11, pages 6 and 7. The tract extended from the Pacific Ocean to a point east of the old railroad, approximately one mile.

Mr. Smith had an interesting life. He was born in 1857 and died in 1954 at the age of 97. As a young boy he served as a page in the U.S. Senate when U.S. Grant was president. At one time he was mayor of Port Angeles, Wash. He surveyed 1,000 miles of railroad in Alaska.

He built his house above the beach on a lot now owned by Glen Berry* (*Metsko & Rayipa Lane areas 2026). He also built a small house near by for his wife Mae and daughter Lois. Since he was quite eccentric, his wife preferred not to live with him. Since their permanent home was in Red Bluff, Mr. Smith sold several lots to

Red Bluff people. One of the first to build at Moonstone Beach was Mr. Gorham King-a Red Bluff merchant-who built on the far north lot above the beach. Mr. Smith built a hotel at the foot of the road to the beach, which he named, "The Mermaid."* (*approximately the location of Moonstone Beach House 2026). Many people from the Sacramento Valley came to camp on the cool beach when the weather was around 100 degrees at home. Howard Moore's parents drove over the mountains from Red Bluff for a week or two, as they were close friends with the Smiths. Chester Smith and Howard were radio "Hams," together in Red Bluff. Chester died in the 1918 influenza epidemic.

In 1917 Howard got permission to leave high school a little early to come to Samoa and work at the Hammond Lumber Co. They were building ships and he got a job on the electrical gana at \$3.50 for a 10-hour day. Many weekends were spent at Moonstone Beach with the Smith family and he fell in love with the area.

Several years later he fell in love with Thelma Railsback in Los Angeles and they were married in August 1924. On their honeymoon they drove to Red Bluff to visit Howard's parents, then over highway 36 to Moonstone Beach.

The summer of 1935 we brought our 2 young sons-Dean, 8 and Jerry-5, to enjoy the coolness of Moonstone Beach. Sam Merryman Sr. let us camp in his meadow where the restaurant* (*Merryman's Restaurant, now Moonstone Grill 2026) is now located. We brought a lug-box of fresh peaches with us, each wrapped in

newspaper. We went shopping in Arcata and when we returned we found Sam's cow had eaten the peaches-newspaper and all.

After living in Mineral, Calif. for several year while Howard was working for Lassen Volcanic National Park, and our sons were growing up, he decided to make his dream come true. We moved to the coast in 1947. He cleared and developed the hillside lots where we built our first home. Three other homes were built nearby. In 1959-60 the Calif. State Highway bought all the homes and land for the new Freeway 101.

During the 50s he bought and developed the lots above the Driver Road. Mr. Theodore Haakonson bought 6 lots along the Driver Road also. After our home was completed Howard tackled the job of clearing Moonstone Heights, with the help of local loggers. Most of the trees were spruce, white fir and Douglas fir. He sold \$500 worth of logs to a small mill but never got his money because they turned out to be crooks. He saved the few redwoods that were there. After the loggers left, the stumps had to be blasted and dug out by a bulldozer. Then they were burned up with lots of big truck tires. Mr. Haakonson wanted the trees left on his lots southeast of Provolt's house* (*Ferncrest Avenue area 2026). Later a windstorm caused a tree to fall on Provolt's house, so he had the remainder taken down.

The next big project was digging the well and putting in the water lines. Mr. Smith told Howard where to dig

the well. A friend helped with the digging. He put down eleven 4-ft. cement casings until he reached bedrock. Each casing weighed 1100 lbs. Several loads of gravel were put around the outside of the casings. Howard erected the water towers single-handed, using pulleys and a windlass. He first put up a 2500 gal. tank on a 20 ft. tower. Later he took it down and erected two 40 ft. towers, each having 3500 gal. tanks. all the ditches for the water lines he dug by hand.

When a buyer purchased a lot or building area, he was given a share in the Moonstone Heights Mutual Water Assn'. Water users were charged \$1.50 per month. In 1973, when there were enough home owners to provide officers for the association, Howard and Thelma turned over the entire water system and property to the property owners. It was agreed that in return, they (the Moores) would receive water free of charge as long as they lived.

When the State Highway took our first home for the Freeway, we built in Trinidad so as to have another spectacular view. After 15 years there, we decided to retire to a smaller home at Moonstone Heights where we put in so much hard labor. At 78 years of age Howard is through with anything that looks like hard work."*
*Howard Moore died on September 5, 1978 at age 78, three months after Thelma M.R. Moore wrote this history. Thelma was a teacher at Trinidad School. Gregg Moore, Thelma's son, donated this document to Trinidad Museum Society 2026.



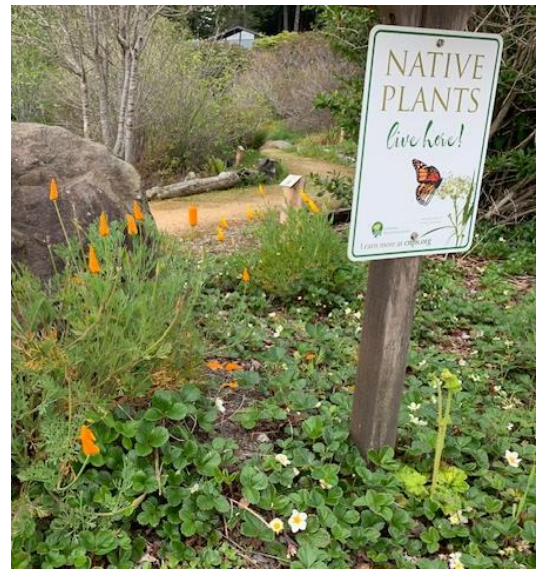
Native Plant Garden's Interpretive Signs

Trinidad Museum Native Plant Garden volunteers Ingrid Bailey, Carl Kalb and Rita and Bob Quade gave freely of time, energy and funds to refresh and expand interpretive information about the flourishing shrubs, trees and flowers. QR codes on the signs direct garden visitors to extensive information about the plants. Carl wrote:

"The wood, which is Incense Cedar from the Willow Creek area was donated by a friend of mine James Crowell. Ingrid and I shaped the post the old school way with drawknives and a shaving horse (a special bench for using spoke shaves and drawknife). It was a lot of fun, at least I believe Ingrid enjoyed herself. The post should last a very long time as this cedar is naturally rot and insect resistant."

In other garden news, the Native Plant Garden received special recognition by the California Native Plant Society in its "Flora" publication for its excellence. This spring, the museum hosted CNPS's Donna Wildearth, introduced by Carol Mone, at a well-attended presentation on "Gardens are for the Birds...and the Bugs."

Hats off to the dedicated garden crew, chaired by Ingrid Bailey and Mary Spinaz Kline, which works every Sunday morning and in between to care for the botanical oasis, open every day to visitors.



Shaped & Woven: Enduring Connections with Stone, Fiber, & Beadwork



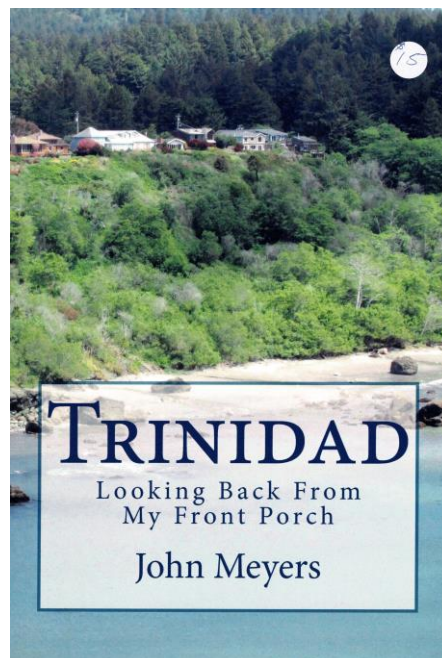
"Shaped & Woven: Enduring Connections with Stone, Fiber & Beadwork" is on view in the Native American Room. The exhibit includes caps, baskets, jewelry, stone implements, regalia, model redwood canoes, photographs from the museum's collections and new acquisitions. Ron and Melanie Johnson, Kirsten K. Trump, Kathy Heil and Janet Eldridge recently added caps and baskets to the museum collections and a selection of these are on display. Two model redwood canoes carved by Dewey George and Lonnie Smith are displayed along with a colorful sash by Brian Tripp. Pestles from the Betty Sweaney Collection are included. Museum Director Carita Dooley, an art teacher at Freshwater School, curated the exhibit with Alexandra Cox. The Clarke Historical Museum loaned pedestals to display some of the larger baskets and Carita painted them to harmonize with the exhibit.



Heritage Room Exhibit: Trinidad Authors, Playwrights, and Illustrators



Living in Trinidad or visiting Trinidad has inspired authors, illustrators and playwrights to publish non-fiction and fictional narratives and to paint or draw fantastic or realistic images. Some of the creative people represented in the exhibit are John and Sheryl Meyers, Ron Johnson, Coleen Kelley Marks & Susie Van Kirk, Ned Simmons, Glory Ralston, Janine Volkmar, Susan Morton, Lincoln Kilian, Peter B. Kyne, Clyde Branscomb, Ann Walance and Vivian Rose Adams, George Mendoza and Robert Quackenbush, Pearl Dagenhart, Kathrin Burleson, Ray Raphael, Larry Ulrich, Naomi Silvertree, Benjamin Green, Sibyl Jamieson, Susan Mayclin Stephenson, Dione Armand, Julie Clark and Tony Platt



Heritage Room Features "Whaling Station 1920-27"

Chief Engineer



Cal Poly 2025-2026 Intern Jonah Gilles designed the "Whaling Station 1920-27" exhibit featuring photographs of the men, ships, whales, and construction of the California Sea Products Company station. The original Log Book, which kept track of whales caught, is on view. Captain Fredrick K. Dedrick ran the company at the harbor on a 12-year lease with Hammond Lumber Company. Cost to build the station was approximately \$300,000. A lengthy ramp/slip jutted into the harbor. The station could handle processing seven whales a day, averaging after processing 350 tons of marketable material including oil, fertilizer, bone meal and chicken feed. Finback, sperm, grey, and one blue whale were among the species harvested. The

whaling station included the plant, a blacksmith shop, machine shop, office and Fishing Vessels "S.S. Hawk" and "Fort Saunders," equipped with harpoon cannon. 50 to 60 men were employed. The early years of operation were the most profitable. By the late 1920s, profits declined and in the 1930s the plant was dismantled. The odor of the processing plant was overwhelming and locals were happy about the plant's closing. The boilers were sold to Western Condensing Company for a milk processing plant at Petaluma and the lumber was reused in the construction of a road around Trinidad Head to the lighthouse. A garage next to a Hector Street home is reputed to include some of the lumber. In 1949, the only remaining part of the station, the tall smoke stack, was torn down. The condemned office building was removed in 1961. One of the last of the Trinidad whalers, David Pierce, wrote in 1979:

"There were many sad and pitiful experiences and many good and humorous ones. For anyone who has not experienced the squalor and filth--unsafe and unhealthy conditions that existed there--there is no just way of telling them. For those times--the pay was good, but the whalers were ostracized from all the other people in Trinidad. No one would take our washing--we were not provided with any washing or bathing facility. We couldn't get a haircut and we weren't even welcome in many of the stores and no eating place--the pool room would let us use one pool table--but as we worked long hours and usually seven days a week we didn't have much time nor energy for anything else."



Pierson History Talk Series with Jerry Rohde

Popular Humboldt history author and Cal Poly Humboldt Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) instructor Jerry Rohde and his drone videographer granddaughter, Erin Scofield, present instructive and amusing talks and slide shows at many historic venues around the county sponsored by the Pierson Building Center in Eureka. Standing room only audiences have enjoyed their programs at Trinidad Museum this year. Sunday, August 30 at 2 p.m. will be the last chance to attend the free presentation, "Driving Around the Block," at Trinidad Museum in 2026.



J.W. Daughaday Model 4 Treadle Job Press

On permanent exhibit in the entry room is this circa late 1800s printing press which belonged to prolific photographer A.W. Ericson (1848 – 1927), who came to Trinidad from Sweden in 1869 and worked hard as a laborer at Hooper Brothers mill, learning English and saving his wages to purchase the press, shipped from Philadelphia. Ericson and his brother, Richard, established a printing business in Arcata on the west side of the Plaza. Burch and Arla Calkins acquired the press in order to publish "Trinidad News & Views" between 1980 and 1985. It had been in the possession of Mr. Busby and David Bullen, son of Reese and Dottie Bullen of Trinidad. David Bullen and his wife, Pamela, of Albany, California, visited the museum recently for the first time and were pleased to see the old J.W. Daughaday Model 4 treadle job press in its permanent place next to A.W. Ericson's photographs from the late 1800s to the early 1900s.



The 1871 Trinidad Head Lighthouse is open for visitors on the first Saturday of each month from 10 a.m. to noon courtesy of the Bureau of Land Management/California Coastal National Monument, Trinidad Rancheria and Trinidad Museum volunteer docents. Pedestrians only. No vehicular access.



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Trinidad Museum Society* Support

If you haven't already joined the Trinidad Museum Society, we encourage you to do so. Our membership year, like our fiscal year, runs from February 1 to January 31.

Memberships

- ☐ \$35 Member ☐ \$50 Sponsor ☐ \$100 Patron ☐ \$250 Benefactor
☐ \$1,000 Lifetime membership

Special Gifts

In addition to becoming a member of the Trinidad Museum Society, we hope you'll consider giving a gift to recognize someone special or to support some aspect of the Museum.

Amount \$ _____ ☐ Native Plant Garden ☐ Exhibits

☐ In memory of _____ ☐ In honor of _____

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Museum Directors: Patti Fleschner, president (baycity@sonic.net or 707-499-9729); Mary Spinass Kline, vice-president; Dennis Koutouzou, treasurer; Virginia Waters, Secretary; Carita Dooley, Scott Baker & Jim Baker

*Trinidad Museum Society is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, tax ID# 68-0042645