



November, 2019

## *President's Report*

The most significant thing we have to report in this issue is the death of Bertha Tyler at 94. Bertha and her husband Dean were important people in Morro Bay for over 50 years, and the Aquarium they ran was one of our prime cultural institutions. Bertha was a long time member of the Historical Society and gave a presentation to us on the occasion of her book, *Life Ashore with Living Parents*. We've reprinted her obit below, so you can get the story here if you've missed it elsewhere.

We finally have a photographer on board, as Garry Johnson is settling into his role on our Board of Directors. He is taking on a liaison role with Roger Castle to begin organizing our fairly chaotic collection using Roger's system, and we will apply that to photographs going forward. We have requests for specific photos or photos of specific subjects all the time, and being able to retrieve those through a steady system will help a lot.

**By the way: do you have old photos mouldering in the closet?** We don't need to take them away and keep them (unless you want us to), but we would like to take photos of your photos and annotate them the way you'd like. This will create a digital archive that will fit into even our little cubby hole.

Which leads me to museums. We are still in search mode for a visible location and/or building for a museum/office for the Historical Society. Do you know of a suitable place for us? We really need to move into a permanent home with sufficient space and visibility to make our history available to everyone.

**The Fight for Women's Right to Vote:** We hope you will join us on November 17 at 4 pm, at the Morro Bay Presbyterian Church lower level Fireplace Room. We will have a fun and timely program to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of women's right to vote. Women were actively working for women's suffrage for over 70 years before they finally won it! And you may not have known, but Morro Bay and San Luis Obispo County were active parts of the effort.

We look forward to seeing you on the 17th, and to hearing from you about anything at all.

*Glenn Silloway*

*President, HSMB*

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## In Memory of Bertha Tyler

We are printing the obituary Bertha Tyler wrote sometime in her last months, as the best possible summary of her "life well lived."



Bertha Alcorn Tyler  
1924-2019  
Morro Bay, CA

Morro Bay is mourning the loss of Bertha Tyler, who completed her journey to join her husband, Dean Tyler, already present with their Lord God in Heaven, on Friday, October 25, 2019 surrounded by her loving family.

Bertha Alcorn Tyler was born in Arizona to immigrant parents from Mexico. She had 2 brothers and 4 sisters. At 16 she married Eldie Alcorn by arrangement. He died in 1968 while living in Morro Bay. They had 2 sons and a daughter. Before living in Morro Bay, she worked her way up at Honeywell in San Pedro to a line supervisor, then with her savings and sale of her Southern California home, she opened the Chat 'n Chew Restaurant on the corner of Main and Harbor Streets, which quickly became a favorite for home-cooked Mexican and American food and 6 choices of Bertha's "baked daily" pies. As a popular community gathering place, the first Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce meetings were held at Bertha's solely owned and operated restaurant. It was there she met "the love of her life" Dean Tyler, who loved her cooking and her company.

They married May 22, 1969, and with his two daughters, they now had 5 grown children to love. She treasured Dean's 45-year tradition when on the 22nd of every month Dean sent flowers or a plant to her, "the love of his life." Dean had purchased the start-up Morro Bay Aquarium to care for endangered sea life before it was fashionable or even required by Federal mandate to do so. When Bertha remarked to her husband that it wasn't profitable, she decided to sell her restaurant. Together they built a successful family-favorite tourism business and rescue facility, always caring as family for the sea life brought to them. The couple would personally take care of the unhealthy sea-mammals either by nursing them back to be released into the ocean or bay, securing and personally delivering them to a new habitat as far away at New York, or if all else failed welcome them to live out their lives with the Tylers at the Morro Bay Aquarium.

In 1995 with the help of her grandson John Alcorn, Bertha prayed the sinner's prayer to receive Christ. Her life was changed forever. Her radiant love for God was evident as she told family, friends and many elderly convalescent patients about God's love.

At age 90 and with grandson John's help to care for day-to-day business at the Aquarium, Bertha retired to care for Dean, who died in 2015. Dedicated to her husband, Bertha at age 92 wrote, published and presented to community groups her book, *Life Ashore With Living Parents*, a pictorial description of her favorite stories about the people who helped them at the Morro Bay Aquarium and the mammals they cared for 24-7. Her book launch at Morro Bay's Coalesce Book Store was reported to generate top sales of any book launch held by the downtown book store.

Bertha was an active member of Quota International of Morro Bay. She began and chaired a successful bowl-a-thon for years which helped handicapped children go to summer camp. She and Dean traveled overseas for Aquarium conferences, and the USA for bowling tournaments. Wherever they went they

always visited aquariums. She was also a founding member of the Morro Bay Maritime Museum, and held active membership with the Estero Bay Republican Women, Order of Eastern Star, Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce and Historical Society of Morro Bay. She offered her home each Sunday for services for the Living Room Church.

She is survived by daughters, Judy (Sylvester) Riehm, Jeanne Owen, Joanie (Loyd) O'Neal; her Morro Bay family and loving helpers John (Stacy) Alcorn; Niece Debi (John) Hesch and great-granddaughter Dana Bernardo (Tristain). Her Arizona Families include: Brother Joe (Ruthie) Franco, Sister Felicia Lynch; and Bertha's & Dean's 55 grandchildren and extended family. Bertha is predeceased by brother Paul Franco and sisters Lupe (Ed) Sylvester, Irene Munoz, and Ruth Hernandez.

Bertha and Dean were honored as Living Treasures of Morro Bay by the Chamber of Commerce and were constant community and children's advocates.

Bertha requested instead of flowers, donations be sent to Quota International of Morro Bay, Morro Bay Maritime Museum or a favorite charity of choice in Bertha's name.

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## Joe Dunlap.

Some of you may remember my friend, Joe Dunlap.

He gave a presentation to the Historical Society about the Naval Base; it's building and purpose.

I am happy to be able to tell you that he has written a manuscript about the Naval Base and is now looking for a publisher.

It is going to take some time but when it's ready the Historical Society hopes to have a book signing and support Joe on this endeavor.

Cathy Ryan



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# GOLFING CIRCA 1953

## EARLY HISTORY OF MORRO BAY GOLF

**By Elaine Taylor, Morro Bay Women's Golf Club Historian for 2008**

The Morro Bay Golf Course (originally called Cabrillo Country Club) was built in 1923 on a hillside overlooking Morro Bay and had nine holes that were designed by Quintin Miller and E. W. Murphy. Today these nine holes are the backside of the course. A company named J. T. Lawrence Company built the course. The backside was developed in 1925 as a nine hole course with the club house, an old Spanish style building, located in what is now the parking lot of the Morro Bay Museum. Originally the fairways were just wild grass, but in 1926 Bill Roy installed the first irrigation system and grass was planted on the nine hole course. In 1934 The State of California State Parks division purchased the property.

Russell Noyes was the first Warden of the park, and came to take charge of it in February 1934. The family occupied the upper two rooms of the clubhouse, and the one large room downstairs was their living room as well as the lounge for the players. Mr. Noyes' wife was put in charge of the clubhouse and Russell had the responsibility of taking care of the course, as well as the park. The WPA and the CC together planted the beautiful trees in the present campground as well as the park.

Since that time the golf course has been managed by various entities, including the current manager, the County of San Luis Obispo. In 1934, after the course was purchased by the state, Mr. Noyes designed (on paper only) another nine holes where the front nine is now. He envisioned an eighteen hole course to be built at a later date. Abe Espinoza was the golf pro in the mid 1940's. His wife was the cook for the snack bar. Audrey Johns tells about Abe being a real trick artist with a golf club. He once played the whole course with a putter. Audrey had a golf lesson from him in 1947. In 1948, Albert Lape, using Mr. Noyes plans with a few changes, began building the new nine holes, which is now the front nine.

In 1951 the front nine holes were completed. The new clubhouse was built using barracks from Camp San Luis Obispo. In 1957 the course name was changed to Morro Bay Golf Course. The only redesign on the course was done in 1987 on hole fifteen by Robert Muir Graves to make it a dogleg. Robert Muir Graves also designed Chalk Mountain Golf Course in Atascadero, California.

putts break an additional two inches towards the water no matter how they are sloped. The course has 18

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holes with Bent/Poa grass and kikuyu grass fairways. ([www.golfslo.com](http://www.golfslo.com))



Morro Bay Golf Course has tree-lined fairways and greens that are hard to read.

The number one “must play” golf course on the central coast, Morro Bay is a favorite among seniors, juniors and anyone who want to feel they are playing a Pebble Beach-like track at a fraction of the cost. On a clear day the tree lined fairways and ocean views are stunning. This beautiful facility offers hilly terrain, placing a premium on club selection,

but the real test comes in the putting. Crowned by Black Hill above and the sweeping Pacific Ocean below, Morro Bay Golf Course has a straightforward, traditional feel and a refreshing lack of manmade trickery. As you play, notice the many species of birds that call Morro Bay home, where Audubon International has bestowed Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary status on the course. ([www.slocountyparks.com](http://www.slocountyparks.com)).



In the 1940's the women played as a division of the Cabrillo Golf Couples Club. For several years there had been discussions about the women starting their own club and in 1955 the Morro Bay Golf Club Women's Division was founded as part of the Morro Bay Golf Club. In 1979 there was a dramatic change in the by-laws as a result of crowded tee times. The Grand Jury of the County of San Luis Obispo, a group of private citizens who monitored county issues, claimed there were too many tournaments taking

place and the tournaments were being controlled by one club: The Morro Bay Golf Club. Another issue was that all the prime starting times were being controlled by one club and not leaving any prime starting times for visitors or locals who were not members of the club. It was decided that the Women's Division of the Morro Bay Golf Club be separated into their own entity. The proposed change in the bylaws was posted for 30 days and voted upon by all members. The new bylaws were accepted and the name was changed to the Morro Bay Women's Golf Club. In August of 1980 the club was incorporated.

In 1948, golf pro Al Lape was hired. He was the golf pro for many years and was extremely popular with the local golfers. In 1970, a newspaper article said that Al Lape was the veteran pro at “Little Pebble,” having managed the course and pro shop for the past 21 years. In 1975 he was in a bidding competition to stay at the course for the five year operating concession. He was not the lowest bidder and the Morro Bay Women's Golf Club came to his aid. The county agreed to re-open the bid procedures with a set of specifications tailor made for Lape. The fight to keep Lape at the course against four other bidders was led by Mrs. Richard Miller, president of the MBWGC. Mrs. Miller formed a group called the Friends of Al Lape, which hired a Morro Bay attorney Ray Gallo to represent the group before the board. This group of lady

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golfers showed up at the supervisors' chambers in force, in numbers estimated at up to 200 with a standing room only crowd spilling into the courthouse lobby. Al Lape was awarded the concession for a few more years.

In the late 1970's the golf pro was Manuel Quezada followed by Tom Waters in 1986. Tom Waters had also been an actor for the previous thirty years but "Golf is my first love," he said. "Acting is something I do because it feeds the ego," he added laughing. Waters was a Class A member of the PGA . In 1989 Wendy Hudler was the head professional for the course and she was well liked by both men and women golfers. There was a series of golf pros during the 1990's and the current PGA Class A Head Pro is Sean Shick. Fairway Management currently operates the Morro Bay and Dairy Creek Golf Courses for the county.

Fairway management is a California based company involved in the recreation (golf) and hospitality (restaurant and catering) industries.

***For many years, if you wanted to play a round of golf at Morro Bay when it was the only golf course nearby this was the procedure: To get a tee time you had to go to the golf course at 4:00 a.m. and register with a volunteer who waited in a car in the parking lot. The volunteer was given the number one spot and everyone else put their name on a list. After signing up you could go home and return at 6:00 a.m. to the starter's shack for your tee time. To get a tee time by phone you would begin calling at 6:00 a.m. for that day. All the golfers in the foursome would call until a tee time was made and then that person had to try and reach the other three who were still calling trying to get through for a tee time. (Jim and Marlene Gal-***

***loway) After the opening of Dairy Creek Golf Course more tee times were available and the chances of getting a tee time at Morro Bay improved.***

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## Memories of Morro Bay

by Cathy Ryan

I never thought I'd be writing my memories. Memories are one of the things the Historical Society is based on and I have some.

I grew up in the 50's and 60's. I remember a quiet peaceful town, full of friends and their families. Most stores in Morro Bay were owned by my classmate's family and in one case, my teacher.

I can remember going to the theater and having drawings for free movie admission during the intermission. On Thanksgiving you might get a turkey drawing. I have warm feelings of the Creamery, which seem to be huge but in retrospect, was very, very small. I remember going to the library, now the Social Service Department, behind the courthouse, the brick building across from the City Park, now the health department. And then there was Siebert's Jewelry, where I imagine everyone had their watch fixed. There were many other stores, Haeberle's Clothing, Payne's Variety, Jim's Bakery. Mor-Mac's, Rexall Drug, City Hardware, The Jug, Baty's Liquor, Mill's Stationary, and the Post Office in the middle of Morro Bay Blvd. and too many to name.

For most of the students of Morro Union Elementary, the Bank of America became a place for our first saving accounts. We would bring our money to school on "banking day" and then go to the bank and deposit it, this was part of class.

Of course, The Galley can't be left out. That was the moment before or after every special occasion. You were greeted by Bud or

Rita and treated like the” royal” couple for that evening. It was made special because everyone in Morro Bay High School worked there.

My memories are so important to me and I am so thankful to all the folks that helped me grow up and have a wonderful time doing it.

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## November Program: It’s a Woman’s Duty to Vote

In 1895, “Sarah the Sarcastic” aka Sarah M. Severance, said that it is women’s “duty to get the power to do our duty, and then to use it.” Sarah was called “sarcastic” because she had a biting wit, and she used it in speaking engagements all over California in the cause of women’s suffrage. Her point was crystal clear: the power women needed to do their duty was the right to vote, and once they had it, they needed to use it.

The Historical Society program on November 17 will entertain you with the stories of how women organized, including in San Luis Obispo and Morro Bay, to convince men to vote for women’s suffrage. We are putting on this program together with the League of Women Voters of San Luis Obispo County as part of a year long centennial celebration of the enactment of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution affirming women’s right to vote nationwide.

Please join us! As always, coffee, cookies and company are free, and the program will be fun and interesting.



**What: It’s a Woman’s Duty to Vote:**

**Women’s Suffrage Came to SLO**

**When: Sunday, November 17, 4 pm**

**Where: Presbyterian Church of Morro Bay, lower level Fireside Room**

*Please join us in preserving the history of this town . Members received discounts on books, free admission to presentations, and the pride of knowing we have contributed to this towns' heritage.*

info@historicalmorrobay.org [please print]

Name(s) or Company \_\_\_\_\_

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