



# HISTORICAL SOCIETY *of* MORRO BAY

Spring, 2018

## *About Sacred Places*

On May 20th, Patti Dunton, the Salinan Tribal Administrator, will make a presentation at the HSMB quarterly meeting called “Sacred Places: From Past to Present”. One of the sacred places we will hear about is Eagle Rock, aka Cerrito Peak. Since the MB Open Space Alliance is trying to raise money to keep Eagle Rock in a conservation, it will also be promoting and participating in this event.

To give you some insight on how our local volcanic peaks and domes are sacred, there’s a Salinan fable that involves “the Morro” on the next page.

**Please join us Sunday, May 20, 4 pm, at Vets Hall for coffee, cookies and an educational presentation about sacred places in our town.**

Free for members of the Society and the Open Space Alliance, \$3. for others

### *Also in this edition:*

Great Uncle Frank wasn’t Morro Bay’s Red Light District  
Kent Nagano Presents  
Morro bay was for kids  
Bakersfield bests county girls softball champs

by C.S.M. Schuette  
Glenn Silloway  
Joe Dunlap  
C.S.M. Schuette

*and*

**Harold “Bud” Anderson**, Morro Bay fixture and legend, passed on March 21, 2018 at the age of 93. Bud was known and loved throughout Morro Bay. Bud and Rita Anderson’s three children, Jeff, Mollie and Roger, grew up on Morro Bay’s waterfront, a legacy that continues today at the Anderson Inn. Both Bud and Rita were recipients of Morro Bay’s Living Treasure Award. Honoring Bud’s wishes, there will be no public ceremony.

On Saturday, April 21, the Morro Bay Yacht Club held a memorial service and vessel procession in honor of **Jim Phillips**, who passed on February 18, 2018. Jim was a long-time club member and officer, including Commodore in 2006, and served a very long stint on the Harbor Advisory Board, including many of those years as Chairman. He was deeply involved in the community and harbor and will be greatly missed.

**THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MORRO BAY MISSION STATEMENT: THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MORRO BAY IS A NON-PROFIT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION WHOSE MISSION IS TO PROMOTE AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE HISTORY OF ESTERO BAY BY COLLECTING, PRESERVING, EXHIBITING AND INTERPRETING THAT HISTORY AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE REGION, AND NATION BEYOND, TO AUDIENCES OF ALL AGES AND INTERESTS.**

# Salinan Tribe

of San Luis Obispo & Monterey Counties



## About Sacred Places

### The Serpent

Once there was an animal which ate the Indians and was called the Serpent. The whirlwind was his protector and brought him food. Prairie-Falcon heard of him and said, "what shall we do?"

"How many powers have you?" asked Raven.

"I have one so fast that the snake will not be able to catch me."

"Good. In two or three different mountains, there are my powers."

"Where?" Asked Prairie-Falcon.

"At Asomeneka."

"And the other?"

"At Asumloyam." (Both mountains are near Cholam, where the snake lived.) "And you?"

"Oh, I'll risk my neck anywhere!"

"Good. What is your power?"

"At the Morro; that is the last power."

They went and the snake awoke, and when he awoke he cried out for the whirlwind. "Come along nephew!" cried Prairie-Falcon. Along came the wind, felling everything in its path. "Good! Run!! Come on!!!" shouted Prairie-Falcon and they fled across country with the snake and the wind close behind them.

"Fly up!" yelled one.

"No, down!" shouted the other.

"Summon up your strength or he will catch us!

Good!"

Serpent came yelling.

"Just remember your powers," entreated

Prairie-Falcon. "Good they have passed."

"I am going to cry," said Raven.

"No! Don't cry! Cast your spell! Good!"

"Wait a moment; there in the mountains are my powers!"

"Yes, fly up! Good! I remember mine at the Morro."

"Good!" Said Raven. "Fly ahead, I am tired, uncle!"

"Just summon all your strength or the snake will get us! Fly up! Go!"

And they flew toward Morro with the snake in pursuit. He wrapped himself around the Morro from beneath and the allies seated themselves at the top. He had almost caught them, when up jumped Prairie-Falcon and seized his charm. With it he cut the snake into four pieces and killed him.



From these four pieces were formed the snakes of today. On this account there are rattlesnakes and others; therefore their flesh is poison. Many snakes got their poison thus. Coyote also came and secured poison. There are many little rattlesnakes at the coast near Morro. The old snake said, "They shall live forever; I have died but they shall live."

-Told by Maria Ocarpia  
as told to J. Alden Mason in 1912

Be sure to join us Sunday, April 20,  
4 pm, at Vets Hall.

Free for members of the Society, \$3. for others

## MORRO BAY WAS FOR KIDS

Morro Bay seemed so big when I was 8 or 9 years old. The blocks were longer, the hills steeper, the eucalyptus trees taller and more numerous. We, my parents and I, lived near the southeast corner off Morro and Sixth streets in an old 2 bedroom house that dated from the 1930's. It was the third place we had lived in since moving to Morro Bay, just four years previous.

At that age I was just beginning to extend my boundaries in the town, as I had just received my first bicycle a couple of years prior. After finally losing the training wheels and surviving several falls into the weeds along our dirt driveway, along with the embarrassment and uncontrolled laughter of my parents, I finally mastered the art of balance and two-wheel transportation so now I was off on my one-speed, balloon tired, J.C. Higgins.

After walking around my little three block radius world, the bike opened up entire new vistas. Where previously my boundaries had been the Bay Theatre, the elementary school and the Four Crabs restaurant on the Embarcadero where my mother worked. I now was able to travel to exotic places I had only heard about from my friends at school. Places like the golf course, Eagle Rock, the boat basin, and if I dared, a trip to the end of the road and the lookout point on Black Mountain. Those trips were special, though rare. Usually, I just took off to visit my best friend, Mike Teixeira, and if we weren't riding our bikes around the neighborhood, we were probably playing army among the cars in his back yard.

A trip anywhere usually included a baseball glove hanging from the handlebars of our bikes and a ball stuffed in the pocket of our coat, just in case we encountered a game somewhere, or just decided to play catch in the park or the elementary school.

At that age, I did not realize how unique and special a place like Morro Bay really was. In 1957, it was just a blue-collar working village. The fishing industry was in full bloom, having blossomed following the end of World War II and the construction of the Embarcadero. The PG&E power plant had brought prosperity to the town and tourism was growing as well.

But for young children, like me, it was just home. Home, a place to live and play and explore. Vacant lots were everywhere and were far more than met the eye of an adult. Our eyes could see through the weed and tall, brown grass, the forts, the mazes, the hideouts; if the lot was big enough, we could see home plate near the corner and the foul lines extending along the edge of the streets.

After a few hours of pretending to be Mickey Mantle, Willie Mays, or Henry Aaron, (The Giants and Dodgers had not moved to California yet), it was time for a break and to find something else to do. Hopping on our bikes, with our gloves on the handlebars, we might pedal across town and head to the Service Center News Stand across the street and a block up for the Bay Theatre. Where, we could get a soda from the machine on the front porch, go inside and look at the plastic models of cars, ships and airplanes or just hang out in the back and read the comic books. The only thing we regularly spent our allowances or paper route money on was packages of baseball cards. (It was many years into my adulthood before I understood why there were so few Mantle, Mays and Aaron cards and why every package seemed to contain at least one Pumpsie Green or Virgil Trucks.) Oh well, at least there was that slab of sugar-dusted chewing gum to gnaw on for an hour or two. Having made nuisances of ourselves long enough, we might say goodbye to the long-suffering fellow behind the counter and head out for another adventure.

Note: If you enjoyed this story, you can find the rest of the story on The Historical Society of Morro Bay's web-site or the next newsletter.

Submitted by Joe Dunlap



## *Great Uncle Frank Wasn't Morro Bay's Red Light district*

by C.S.M.Schuetz (surnames omitted for privacy)

Actually, I'm not really sure what the relationship is, but my mother always called him Uncle, and his last name wasn't the same as her father's. He was a favorite of her childhood, and was the only man Nana ever allowed to smoke his cigar in her parlor. Which is why I think he might have been my maternal grandmother's brother.

See, the story I heard was that when Nana and her brother were teens, their father died and their mother moved them to Morro Bay, where her son had a job with the fishing fleet. Mother and daughter cleaned houses and washed clothes to make ends meet. Later, when their mother (my great grandmother) left town with a man to whom she was not married, it created a scandal!

Mary continued to clean houses, which was how she met Charles, and he married her even though she wasn't really considered a good match. His family were practically Mayflower immigrants (ancestors came to America on the next ship after). A young woman living mostly on her own while her brother was out with the fishing fleet, especially one whose mother was "loose," just wasn't in their class.

Meanwhile, Frank married and built a little house down towards the harbor on what is now Pacific Street. They had no children, but Frank doted on his nieces and nephews. He also loved his cards, and had a weekly poker game with his cronies for many years. His wife loved him, but not the mess and cigar smoke, so Frank built a lean-to room on the side of his little house, with a door to outside only. That way, he could have his cards and cigars, and the house wouldn't smell.

Mary and Frank were acutely aware of how difficult life could be for single women in the late 1880s and early 1900s. Custom considered single women to be prostitutes if they lived alone. So when Frank's beloved wife died, he moved his card games indoors, and rented the extra room

to young single women who needed a safe place to stay. He even added another such room for that purpose. The washhouse, well, and privy were in the yard behind, so there didn't need to be any connection between those rooms and the house proper. People still gossiped, however, and I remember my mother and aunts heatedly denying the rumors about their late Uncle's morals.

This is the story I was told as to why Uncle Frank was rumored to be running a brothel.



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## Wanted: Treasurer for Society

We have a spot to fill on the Board: Treasurer. This office is just one of the many things Roger has done for us, but we need to fill the position to go forward.

We are converting our books to a standard Quickbooks format, so the main job of our Treasurer is to keep track of the income and expenditures, make monthly summary reports to the Board (using built-in Quickbooks reporting), and supply information for our year-end reports. All of this should be quite simple since we have few transactions in most months (even the Quickbooks part is simple, if you want to learn a little).

Perhaps more important, the Treasurer is one of our officers and a Board member. We would expect the Treasurer to attend Board and member meetings, or about 11 meetings a year. Also, the Treasurer would become a regular contributor to the Society as a participating Board member, helping to shape policy and activities.

Can you help us with this important job? Or, do you know someone who fits the bill? Please contact Glenn Silloway at [info@historicalmorrobay.org](mailto:info@historicalmorrobay.org) or 805-748-9475.

# BAKERSFIELD BESTS COUNTY GIRLS SOFTBALL CHAMPS

by C.S.M. Schuette

(from a Sun Bulletin article in the early 1990s)

In 1932 the Morro Rockies were hot. The girls beat everybody in San Luis Obispo County and were headed for the state championships, until the team from Bakersfield destroyed their hopes one sunny, late summer afternoon.

Team members that year included: Billie Frazier, Ruth and Eleanor Hargrave, Katharine Kline, Ellen Malone, Cousins Ernestine and Noma Stocking, Larabelle Whitlock, and three others whose names are unknown. (Anyone who knows, please call Historical Society, 805-399-2772, and leave a message.)

Coach Roswell Dieffenbacher kept a rigorous training schedule, practicing three times a week for the Saturday games. The play field was on the corner of Main and Beach Streets. Home games were on this diamond and away games were played at a rough field in Mitchell Park in San Luis Obispo. There were no bleachers for the girls' games, so folks sat around the sidelines. For Rockies games, they sat way back to keep out of the action!

The 1932 Playoffs started with the Kern County champs from Bakersfield. It was a good game, with some solid hits by the Rockies and some fancy plays, but it wasn't enough. In the end, the Morro fans were bitterly disappointed.

Never-the-less, everyone rushed home to get ready for the Saturday night dance. Opposing teams often stayed in town after the game to attend. The Bakersfield girls went for dinner to Mary Stocking's boarding house on C Street (Monterey) in what is now Mounier's Upholstery shop. Noma Stocking remembers helping to cook and serve, rushing to get dressed up, and dashing out to spend the night dancing. It was not unusual, she says, for the dance to go till 2 or 3 in the morning, after which she would come home, sleep, and be up at 6 to cook and serve the Union Oil workers Sunday breakfast!

At least she didn't have far to go. Dances were held at that time in the building on Morro Bay Boulevard which now houses a music store, and was for many years Payne's Music Store. The building was also used as a movie theater, complete with piano player to keep up with all the breath taking action afforded by silent films.

Nobody, at least none of the young people, ever wanted to miss a movie or a dance, and there was a packed house that Saturday night in 1932. Unfortunately, Morro's boys were still miffed over the loss, and weren't inclined to be nice to the winning team. They were soon put straight by the Rockies, who were known as much for their sportsmanship as their slugging abilities.



# Kent Nagano Presents

By Glenn Silloway

The Nagano family has been prominent in Morro Bay for a hundred years or more. On June 8th, one of their famous sons, Kent Nagano, will return to present a unique benefit concert at Saint Timothy's Catholic Church to support the Morro Bay Open Space Alliance (MBOSA) Cerrito Peak campaign. This special event weaves together some of the important threads of the city's history while helping us preserve part of that history for the future.

The story began in the 1920's and 1930's when the Nagano family ran a successful farm in Morro Creek Valley — you will still find Nagano Street off Little Morro Creek Road. After President Roosevelt signed Order 9066 in February 1942, the Naganos were sent to an internment camp along with most other Japanese-Americans. Oldsters report that during the remainder of the war, the family's neighbors maintained their property, so the family could return.



The Nagano family ran a successful farm in Morro Creek Valley.

Following the war, as the Naganos re-established themselves in the community, Wachtang 'Botso' Korisheli moved to Morro Bay in 1957. As most people here know, Botso was a much loved music teacher and sculptor who shaped and influenced young lives until his death in 2015. And one of his prized pupils was young Kent Nagano.

Kent grew up living in a house at the foot of Cerrito Peak/Eagle Rock, just a few blocks from the Korisheli house.

We imagine that he was like a lot of his contemporaries, and spent many hours climbing on the Peak.

The Maestro's talent and dedication took him far from Morro Bay, through Berkeley to Boston, and then all over the world. Today he is the much-recorded, Grammy-award winning music director of the Montreal Symphonic Orchestra and the Hamburg (Germany) State Opera. He's in high demand as a guest conductor and as a recording artist.

Mr. Nagano's life is full of music: his wife Mari Kodama Nagano is a famous concert pianist in her own right, and his daughter Karin Kei Nagano is already an experienced pianist and recording artist at only 22.



Today Kent Nagano is the much-recorded, Grammy-award winning music director of the Montreal Symphonic Orchestra and the Hamburg (Germany) State Opera.

The concert Mr. Nagano will present will be a highlight of the year in Morro Bay. It will feature Karin Kei Nagano on piano. The program includes pieces by Olivier Messiaen, Claude Debussy and Franz Schubert. You can buy tickets online at [www.mbopenspace.org](http://www.mbopenspace.org).

We are grateful that Mr. Nagano remembers Cerrito Peak/Eagle Rock, and is helping MBOSA preserve it for those that will follow.



**DATE AND TIME**

Fri, June 8, 2018

7:00 PM – 10:00 PM PDT

For tickets, go to  
[www.mbopenspace.org](http://www.mbopenspace.org)

**LOCATION:**

St Timothy Roman Catholic Church  
962 Piney Way

The concert will feature Nagano's daughter, Karin Kei Nagano, a recording artist in her own right, on the piano.

*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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Memberships are due on March 1st of each year

Individual Membership (\$20.00)

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Business Membership (\$30.00)

Student Membership (\$15.00)

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