



President's Report

Very brief here today!

Franklin Riley Park continues to evolve but we are really close. The final two interpretive panels are in process, one of which goes soon to design. The City did a nice job on the path, and we are looking forward to being done with this project.

In this issue, you will find a timely story about an old building; an unlikely story about a piece of our Hidden History; and an on-going forum where we can display our history for the world to see every other week.

You'll learn something about Greening/Carp Lake in this edition, but get the whole story first hand, in-person, in a room with others on Sunday, April 13 at 3 pm. Our favorite historian Dick Miller will reprise his presentation with all the funny and amazing stories it holds. We will meet once again at the Calvary Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall in Morro Bay at 3 pm, Sunday, April 13 (corner Anchor and Monterey in south Morro Bay).

I am sad to report that our stalwart Board member Mary Sproul suffered a heart attack recently; I am happy to report that she is rapidly improving and is her chipper self through the ordeal. Jeff is keeping her energy contained for now, but I'm pretty sure she'll be back on the Collections beat pretty soon.

Please keep us in mind. We need you, your help, your creativity, your experience. Please help us build our photo collection, put our collection in order, improve our outreach and our digital world, keep the flame burning. Contact us.

Sincerely,

Glenn Silloway
President

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Please support your
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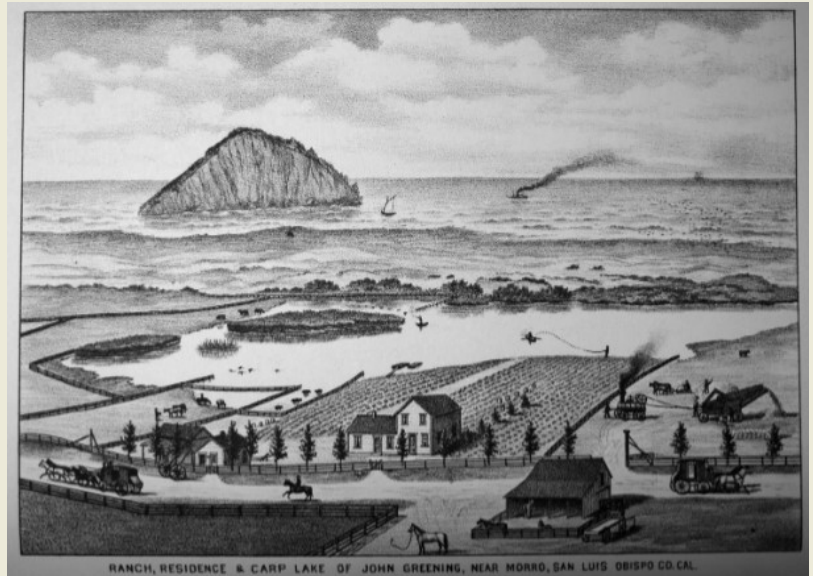
Greening Lake— Or is it Carp Lake?

By Glenn Silloway

Join us at 3 pm on April 13 to hear Dick Miller tell the tale of Carp Lake. Dick reprises the presentation he made for the Society years ago and it is a crackerjack show. This is a fun and surprising trip into our Hidden History.

The backstory:

A long time ago, fresh-water lakes were common behind the dunes adjacent to the ocean. Creeks and runoff would collect behind the dune-barrier. Oso Flaco lake south of Oceano is one of surviving ones, and they are quite rare.



At the turn of the 19th century there was such a lake in Morro Bay, located about where the current high school is. If you could see an aerial view of the school you would notice a striking stand of trees between it and the beach located where there was once water.

Carp Lake is the story of the odd commercial ambition of a person obsessed with his own history and beliefs. You will learn and enjoy. Join us:

What: The Story of Morro Bay's Carp Lake

Where: Calvary Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, corner Monterey and Anchor

When: 3 pm, Sunday, April 13

Morro Bay Elementary School Back in Play

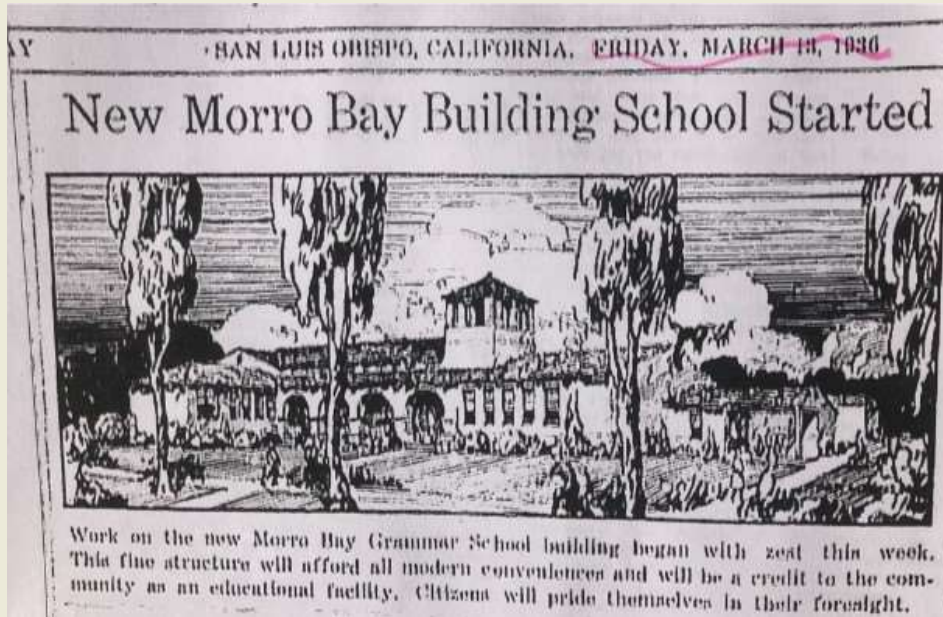
By Glenn Silloway

Many of you have already heard about the old Morro Elementary School being on the market. The San Luis Coastal Unified School District is seeking a buyer for the buildings and the campus for something in the range of \$10 million (we have seen many numbers on the price, but the most common appraised value reported is \$10 million).

A Brief History:

The school has been a signature source of pride and community since the early 1930's. Very briefly, the property it is on totals about 9 or 10 acres and most of it was donated during a citizen-led effort to build a new school at the beginning of the New Deal. When the Works Progress Administration stepped up with about 2/3 of the funds needed, citizens found the rest at a very tough time. The new school was built in 1935-1936 for

about \$65,000, a princely sum at the time. It served as a school until the early 2000's leaving academic—students and teachers--descendants all over the Estero Bay region.



The school and campus have been used by various organizations since it closed. For several years it was home to a church that used the wonderful auditorium as its sanctuary (the auditorium will remind you of the well-known Monday Club in SLO). To this very day, the newest building on the campus (built 2001) has served as home to a Montessori School cherished by local families. All of this is now at risk of going away as the SLCUSD seeks a buyer.

In 2020 the District was looking for another way to monetize the property. It commissioned Deloitte to study the possibility of building up to 150 leased housing units on the property. (see the RRM image of the concept) after tearing down all the old buildings except the original 1935 structure. Though this would have generated about \$400 k annual revenue, the project did not proceed.

Fast Forward to Today

A lot of people and organizations in town want the City to own this classic Morro Bay property and HSMB is one of them. The location and potential of this parcel is incredibly good: almost in the downtown area; next to commercial development; close to transit and the harbor; right next to the community center. The options for continued use are legion.

The issue of course is money. The City is broke. There is a lot of talk about creative financing; one person even volunteered to donate the funds during a public comment, though the follow up with him is unknown to the public (there's reason to be skeptical). Yet the City has made acquiring the property part of its goals.



We do not know yet how the City will hold a discussion about whether and how to get the money it needs, nor how that money might be spent. Some people want a civic campus built on the property, keeping much of the open space for sports fields. Others propose a mixed development with some old buildings used, housing, and some open space. There are more variations than we have room to report.

Watch this space, and lots of public announcements no doubt, about the process to buy and re- use this iconic piece of Morro Bay. Contact your Council member to learn more up to the minute news about the current status.

HSMB in Estero Bay News

By Glenn Silloway

Do you read the Estero Bay News every other Thursday? Of course you do; we all do. Now you will see a small article from the Society that offers an interesting photograph about a historical event, person, or building coupled with a short story about it. Below we share the first installment based on a Pat Nagano photograph taken shortly after WWI.

You can see the most recent installments in display case in the hallway of the Legends building downtown. We'll be working on this regularly!

Do you have a photo/story you'd like to share? This is your chance for fame (we will credit the source) and support for history in Estero Bay. Contact us!



Here's the first installment:

And.....we're off!

At the invitation of Estero Bay News, the Historical Society of Morro Bay is setting off on its latest adventure. We intend to publish brief stories in EBN to highlight a past event from our own backyard including all the communities adjacent to the Morro Bay estuary. We'll provide a photo and description of a fun or notable fact, event, person or story about our neighborhoods and environs. We would love to hear from you if you have a good short story (and photo) we can share.

In this photo by Pat Nagano we have a simple image that is evocative of an earlier era. An expert friend suggests the plane is probably a Curtiss JN-4 'Jenny' that was used as a trainer by the US Army during World War I. Lots of these ended up in private hands after the war and were used to attract attention (and money) to the exciting new age of flight. This suggests the photo date is sometime in the 1920's, probably at the earlier end of that range because the Jennys wore out quickly and were out of service.

The photo shows the airplane on a relatively flat parcel somewhere north and east of Morro Rock and before significant development in north Morro Bay. The "landing field" is just a farmer's field as these old airplanes

were designed to be able to land almost anywhere. Who are the people? Notice in the lower left the blurred images of runners leaving the site who appear to be wearing dresses. Maybe they were sight seers who were attracted to the barnstorming plane that was bringing a little taste of the developing wider world to Morro Bay.

In future issues HSMB will bring more snapshots of events large and small that describe living on Estero Bay.

Please support your Historical Society

HSMB is a 501 c 3 non-profit, volunteer organization that has existed for over 30 years because of your support. Thank you. We hope you will keep it up! You can use the form below and mail it in with a check to:

HSMB, P.O. Box 921, Morro Bay, CA 93443. Or you can go to our website and pay with PayPal.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | I am a new member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I am a renewing member |

Please check your desired type of membership:

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Individual Membership \$30.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Business Membership \$50.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Family Membership \$40.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Student Membership \$15.00 |

I would like to make an additional donation (enclosed) of \$

I would like to make an additional donation for Franklin Riley Park
(enclosed) of \$

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*Please provide as it saves postage and allows us to keep you up to date on new developments.