



Tales of Glen Ellen

The Glen Ellen Historical Society, Glen Ellen, California

Fall Issue 2013



Bill Flynn built the Londonside Park Plunge on Warm Springs Road before World War II.

Those Were the Daze, My Friend...

"...we thought they'd never end" is how the old song goes, and it never fails to remind the older folks of their youth in poignant ways. It's worth a close listen, and can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2KODZtjOIPg>. The song became the anthem of the Sixties everywhere, topping the charts in England and America, but it seems especially descriptive of life in Glen Ellen back then. Here's the third installment of Gregg Montgomery's recollections.

THE AREA THAT IN TIME became known as Hippie Hollow was essentially a tenth of a mile stretch along Warm Springs Road, beginning at the first sharp bend a half mile out of town and ending at the next sharp bend turning west, where the flashing red light is today. At that time none of the locals called this area Hippie Hollow. It was simply referred to as Cardini's or Londonside.

The aging old Londonside Resort had become a community of young hipsters. Musicians, artists, anti-war activists, the employed and unemployed were all evident here. Inexpensive rent and a music venue with a restaurant certainly played into its existence. Many hipsters were leaving the cities looking to find a more rural environment and a progressive community. Glen Ellen could not have fit the bill any better. It was the perfect place to be at that time. The Hip Scene at Londonside was not limited to just the property of the old resort itself, but stretched in several directions surrounding Londonside and Warm Springs Road. There were many people who lived either on the hillside opposite the old resort or directly across the creek on Wake Robin Road. In the summer it was not a problem to simply wade back and forth across Sonoma Creek to the tavern.

By early '71 I was able to upgrade from my precarious cabin on the creek to a larger four room cabin closer to the road. Still, very rustic in nature, but no more worries of being washed down the creek during a downpour. I won't speak of my fury little rodent friends that also inhabited my new digs. Even after Londonside Tavern closed its doors for good, the community of the Hollow remained intact. The cabins were still being rented, and the residents were still primarily young folks in their 20's and 30's.

Right next door to me was a very interesting fellow named Clover. If I had ever known his real name, I

[Continued on the other side.]

MAYFLOWER HALL RERUNS ARE NOW AVAILABLE

OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS we've put together all sorts of special conversations at Mayflower Hall, our century-old community center next door to the community church. Each time the knowledge and wisdom of local expert elders opened deep discussions in a frequently stirring town hall setting.

The conversations are now becoming available on DVD, so they may be viewed in the comfort of your home and easily shared with friends and families across the country. Nine presentations are now available, and others are in the works

Historic topics explored include the worlds of the Pomo, Miwok and Californio people, the Bear Flag, the Gold Rush, and Statehood, Jack London and his Beauty Ranch, how the railroads shaped the Valley of the Moon, how the early maps of Sonoma Valley were drawn and by whom, and how winemaking evolved into a major industry.

The DVDs can be ordered from our website, where they are each described at length, or by sending your check to us at PO Box 35, Glen Ellen CA 95442.

The Renewal of Jack London Village

WE'RE HAPPY TO SEE the ongoing work to rehabilitate Jack London Village under the new ownership, and we look forward to seeing the progress continue.

The damage caused over many years by deferred maintenance is finally being addressed, while the historic character of the Village is being retained.

The footbridge and decks have been thoroughly rebuilt, and the south parking lot has been paved. A new ramp is leading up to the street level from the clearly designated spaces reserved for disabled parking.

The grant that we received from the Sonoma County Landmarks Commission earlier this year for developing the historic displays is now funded. The existing photograph display in the hallway of the main building is being redesigned, with more effective narratives.

Meanwhile, the display of historic artifacts found at various locations will be improved. Equipment used for making wine over the past centuries will be explained. Signs bearing QR codes to be scanned by mobile devices such as smart phones will provide more complete audiovisual narratives.

Take a walk along the creekside pathway, and rediscover this very oldest district of Glen Ellen.

Yes, we know— we're late again. Another issue will be out before the end of the year, making a complete set of four issues for 2013. There's so much to tell you about, and not much time to tell it— but as they say, history is patient.

Those Were the Daze

have since forgotten it. Everyone knew him only as "Clover". I believe he was a refugee from the Top of the World Ranch off Cavedale Road. He was a very reclusive and sedentary man who rarely ventured from his home. When you did see Clover he was always clad in tie-dye, and at any given moment ready to break into a monologue about Richard Nixon or the Vietnam War. He was very outspoken when it came to government and politics, and he was never reluctant to tell you exactly how he felt, whether you wanted to hear it or not.

Still, I loved to visit Clover.

He would often greet you at his door with his 4 foot bamboo bong in hand and KPFA on the radio. When you left his place you couldn't help but feel a little beat up. He was a pretty intense guy, but we all loved him. He was kinda like your grumpy ol' uncle or something.

Living directly across the street from me in a cabin that was possibly smaller than my ol' creekside cabin was Timothy Dixon, responsible for many of the concert posters of that time as well as a fine jeweler and painter. I'm still in possession of a beautiful ring he created for me back then in trade for a bag of, well, green leafy matter. He had built a small shelter for his firewood outside his cabin constructed from scrap pieces of wood, a piece of artwork in itself; it was simply awesome. Timothy always had a few good stories to tell as well.

On the south side of the Tavern, where most of the cabins were situated, lived a fellow whose name totally escapes me, who lived there with his wife (or girl friend) and was one of the most incredible musicians I'd ever had the pleasure to meet. He claimed to have had close relations with the Allman Brothers and knew Duane Allman personally. I didn't doubt it for a minute; his skills as a guitarist and pianist were superb. One day he wandered over to my neck of the woods and heard Ry Cooder playing on my stereo. I was sitting on the front porch kinda jamming along with the record when he walked up. "Oh, so you're a Cooder fan, huh?," he said. I acknowledged that I was indeed. He joined me on the porch and asked if I'd mind him playing my guitar. I handed it over gladly. Reaching into his pocket he pulled out a glass tube and immediately jumped into some amazing slide guitar work.

Occasionally we would jam together on our guitars but he was far more advanced and skilled than I, but was never critical of my playing. He seemed particularly interested in my old Fender amp, and showed me how to get an awesome tone out of it. Being that he lived on the other side of the tavern we never connected all that often. I'm not really sure what happened to this guy; he was just gone one day.



The Rustic Inn, "Jack London's Favorite Bar", at the end of its reign over downtown Glen Ellen.

There were so many interesting people that floated in n'out of the Hollow, I could write a small book. The great guitarist Bill Kirchen who played with Commander Cody for years lived only a few doors down from me— I never knew! Dan Hicks from the Charlatans, Country Joe McDonald (when he was with the Cleanliness and Godliness Skiffle Band), and of course, our own Tommy Thomsen and Hugh Shacklett were all regulars at the Hollow.

Several months after Londonside Tavern closed its doors, it became obvious that little was being done to secure the old Lodge. It just sat vacant and unattended. Some of the renters began salvaging lumber from the tavern to shore up their own cabins. The old swimming pool began filling with debris and garbage. The old pool house behind the tavern was completely empty. It was basically just a shed with no amenities, but a friend of mine decided to turn it into a living space. With some salvaged materials from the tavern he made it somewhat comfortable, and lived there during the summer of '72 with his pet goat until he found a house to rent. The Chef never found out— nor would he have cared.

There was something very special about Glen Ellen and Hippy Hollow in the late 60's. It was one of those moments in time of innocence and excitement, with few boundaries and a community based in camaraderie and goodwill— and of course, good times! In my opinion no one person exemplifies those feelings more than the Chef, Jack Cardini. His kind mannerism, flexibility and willingness to go with the flow was the matrix that enabled The Hollow to exist. Jack's memory will always remain close to my heart.

In early 1973 (as I recall) I walked home from a friend's house one evening only to find that the old Londonside Lodge had burned to the ground. I can't say I was totally surprised, as I could feel the end was near; but I will admit that it was a very sad moment for me, like losing an old friend. Still, I will always hold my memories tight. RIP Hippy Hollow.

Book Review: Californios— the Saga of the Hard-riding Vaqueros, America's First Cowboys

*Written and illustrated by Jo Mora,
reviewed by GEHS member Diana L.
Freeland.*

JOSEPH JACINTO MORA WAS BORN in Uruguay in 1876, coming to the United States with his family as a child. His book *Californios* was completed shortly before his death in 1947. According to the final chapter, this book had its beginnings in the early years of the 20th century when he came west and traveled *El Camino Real*

Reading this book was like sitting on the veranda, listening to those same grandsons. It tells the tale of the padres learning a new language and culture as they taught Spanish at the missions. The change to the rancho era with work, the hide and tallow trade; play, a horseback version of our own Duck, Duck, Goose; fandangos and bear hunts; and shopping on the Yankee Trader's floating store.

If you like the history of the ordinary, this is the book for you. Out of print but available, used, through Amazon.Com or check with the Jo Mora Trust at jomoratrust.com.

DON'T MISS OUR NEXT PRESENTATION:

Those Were the Daze, My Friend!

*(from Londonside Lodge to the Rustic Inn)
featuring*

Those Who Were There & Their Music

2:00 pm Saturday, November 2nd
at the Old Grist Mill in Jack London Village

Admission is free,
though there is a no host beer and wine bar,
and donations and membership in
our organization are encouraged.

THE GLEN ELLEN
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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