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SUMMER 2019 VOLUME LVIII, NO. 2

Welcome  
Summer!





## FROM THE DIRECTOR

Summer is almost upon us! We are actually seeing the sun more than raindrops. Soon the heat will come and we'll miss those cooler rainy days. But being out and doing things is the best. I'll ask that you always remember we have interesting exhibitions, good food, and, of course, air conditioning down here at the museum when you need a break from the heat and the outdoors!

We are continuing to do what we do best – serving our community. Schools tours in particular are ramping up again just before the end of the school year. We'll serve hundreds of kids here at the museum in the Your Story and Children's galleries, on walking tours of downtown, and give them the immersive experience of McConaghy House. Watching butter being made and seeing an old phone that you do not put in your pocket, really makes the kid's year we hear! Don't be surprised if you pop in during May and early June to see the lobby filled with school backpacks. Check the calendar listings on page 4 to see other programs and happenings too.

We are also taking time now to do an evaluation of our offerings. To that end, we have included a short survey for our members at the end of this issue. It would be a tremendous help if you would give us your feedback on these questions. As we are looking forward to a different future than what we planned for five years ago, we want to make sure what we offer to our members and community as a whole are in line with expectations and needs. In fact, we'll be asking for your feedback a lot more in the coming months. I promise it won't be annoying though.

If you have questions, comments or concerns, please feel free to reach out to any staff member. And as always, thank you all for your continued support and encouragement!

—Diane Curry, *Interim Executive Director*

Cover image:  
"Haywards, Cal '98" by  
Otto Emerson. HAHS  
Collection



HAYWARD AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

# [Venues]

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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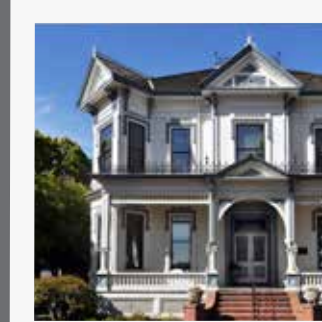
**Marcuss Owings**  
Advancement Manager



## HAHS MUSEUM OF HISTORY & CULTURE

Historical and cultural exhibits and events plus a children's gallery, museum store, and cafe! Open Wed - Sun, 10AM - 4PM.

22380 FOOTHILL BOULEVARD, HAYWARD



## McCONAGHY HOUSE

A lovingly preserved 1888 Eastlake style Victorian. School tours available. Open the first weekend of the month, 11AM-4PM.

Tours at the top of the hour, last tour at 3PM.

18701 HESPERIAN BOULEVARD, HAYWARD



## MEEK MANSION

Built in 1869 by William Meek. Located on nearly 10 acres.

17365 BOSTON ROAD, HAYWARD



## SAN LORENZO PIONEER CEMETERY

Final resting place of over 2000 residents from politicians to paupers and Hayward area pioneers.

HESPERIAN BLVD. & COLLEGE STREET  
SAN LORENZO

# SUMMER PROGRAMS & FAMILY FUN



22380 FOOTHILL BOULEVARD, HAYWARD

## A History of Carnegie Libraries with Annalee Allen

THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 1:00 – 2:00 PM

\$5 Program Fee, Free for HAHS Members

Between 1883 and 1929, Andrew Carnegie funded the building of over 2,000 public libraries. Some of those historic structures stood in San Leandro and Hayward. Join Annalee Allen, noted local historian, Oakland Tribune columnist, and former board member of the Oakland Heritage Alliance, as she shares the lasting legacy of the local Carnegie libraries.



**Toddler Time** is a family program geared towards children ages 1-5 and their caregivers. Together, we share songs, games, crafts and stories. Older siblings are always welcome.

Second Thursday of each month from 10:30 AM -11:30 AM. \$5 program fee per adult.

## Community Helpers

THURSDAY, MAY 9

Help sort the mail, try on a firefighter's hat, or build a tall building with blocks, as we celebrate all the people in our neighborhood!

## Eric Carle's Very Hungry Caterpillar

THURSDAY, JUNE 13

Celebrate this beloved children's author, the creator of hungry caterpillars, lonely fireflies, and grouchy ladybugs.

## At the Farm

THURSDAY, JULY 11

Sing with us about Old McDonald, count the 5 little piggies, and look for the green sheep.



18701 HESPERIAN BLVD, HAYWARD

## Family Crafts at McConaghy House

Family Crafts at McConaghy House is our new program of family-friendly crafts and activities at McConaghy House. Come explore period crafts and games at this historic Victorian farmhouse, then stay afterwards to tour the house and play upstairs in Archie's Playroom.

First Saturday of each month from 11:00 AM-2:00 PM. Program is included in McConaghy House admission: \$5 per adult, \$3 for students and seniors, free for children 4 and under and HAHS members.

## Giant Bubbles!

SATURDAY, MAY 4

Experience the fun of blowing extra-large bubbles with our old-fashioned bubble wands, made of sticks or dowels and scraps of muslin thread.

## Whirligigs

SATURDAY, JUNE 1

Learn how to use a spare button and a piece of string to make the original fidget spinner!

## Patriotic Crafts

SATURDAY, JULY 6

Make a period-appropriate handkerchief doll and enjoy some simple red, white & blue fun!



17365 BOSTON ROAD, HAYWARD

## Meek Paranormal Investigation

SATURDAY, MAY 18, 7:00 PM – 1:00 AM

\$75 per person

During this investigation, experienced investigators will lead attendees through the property and explore the paranormal. Investigations for ages 18+. Purchase tickets in advance at [haywardareahistory.org/explore-the-paranormal](http://haywardareahistory.org/explore-the-paranormal).

## Fourth of July Open House at Meek Estate

THURSDAY, JULY 4, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Join us as we open up the house for the day and enjoy some family-friendly patriotic crafts. Other activities to be determined.

[ COMMUNITY EXHIBITION ]

## Creating Our Future

MAY 1 THROUGH JUNE 2, 2019  
HAHS Museum of History & Culture  
22380 Foothill Blvd, Hayward

Through a collaboration between Seneca, HAHS, and several East Bay school districts, students from the 2nd through 12th grades will have the opportunity to once again showcase their art at the Community Gallery of the HAHS Museum of History and Culture.

Seneca Family of Agencies is a local nonprofit mental health agency with a mission to provide Unconditional Care to children and families through a continuum of care, including school-based and community based mental health services. The exhibit will feature art from Seneca's MAC SELPA Program, a partnership with Hayward, Castro Valley, San Leandro, and San Lorenzo Unified School Districts. Seneca's MAC SELPA Program brings high quality mental health services to public school campuses by providing counseling enriched classrooms that focus on supporting student's successful return to mainstream education settings.

The art show project seeks to provide young artists the opportunity to develop their creative abilities, connect with community members, and get a taste of the excitement of exhibiting their art. Proceeds from sales of the art will return directly to the artists to support their continued artistic endeavors and education.



HESPERIAN BLVD. & COLLEGE STREET, SAN LORENZO

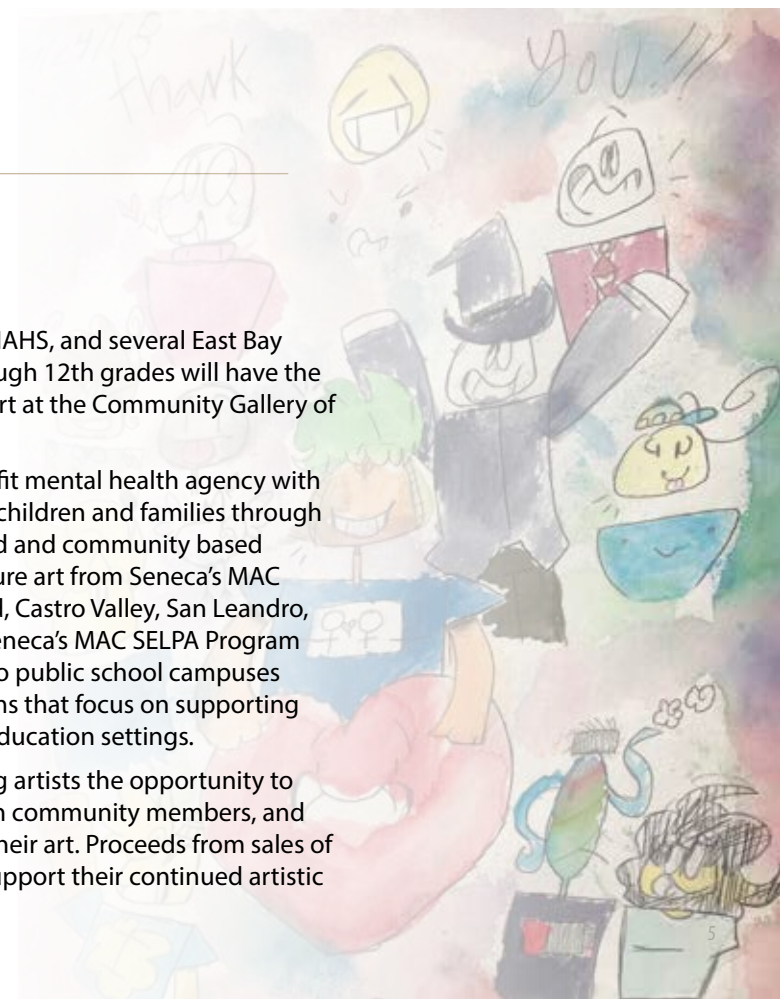
## Cemetery Clean Up & Open Day

SATURDAY, MAY 18, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

SATURDAY, JULY 20, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Drop by to help preserve our local historic cemetery! Bring gloves, rakes and water. The cemetery will also be open during this time for the public to visit the grounds and ask questions.



# The Story of the Plaza

by Diane Curry, Interim Executive Director & Curator

In 1856 Guillermo Castro had a map laid out for his town of “San Lorenzo.” He was not referring to the community we know today as San Lorenzo but what is now downtown Hayward. He called his town “San Lorenzo” because that was the name of his rancho. As a reminder, Castro’s “Rancho San Lorenzo,” granted to him by the Mexican government in 1841, covered what is today the majority of Hayward, Castro Valley, and part of San Lorenzo. As a land surveyor as well as a soldier in the Mexican Army, Castro understood the importance of a good map.

Why did he commission the map you might ask? Castro may not have been a great businessman but he was pretty savvy in his way. He saw that California was no longer a backwater of the Mexican Republic. It was a new American state with a growing, diverse population. Failed gold miners, like William Hayward, were abandoning mining but noticing the lush and plentiful land and deciding to stay. Castro was already having problems with people squatting on his land claiming it as their own. At the same time, he was seeing town and county governments beginning to form in the region.

Castro seized the opportunity to control what was going on around him by creating the town map in his vision in the hope of making it the county seat and giving him

recognition and prestige. A key part of that vision, a legacy from Castro himself, is the Plaza (now the former home of the Hayward Public Library and often referred to as the Heritage Plaza.)

Castro’s map clearly shows a large parcel in the downtown grid marked “Plaza”. The location was not-so coincidentally across the street from his own home, which was located about where old city hall is now on Mission Boulevard. There are some fanciful stories that Castro had a corral in that spot where he held rodeos and other celebrations for his vaqueros.

There is no particular evidence that those stories are true. The only “map” we have of Castro’s property only shows a corral to the south of his house, not to the west. However Castro actually used that piece of land remains a mystery but clearly he saw

the importance of having a community space in his town.

No doubt Castro felt a town must have a city center—a public gathering space, for the whole community to use. Plazas area an architectural element found in Mexican architecture with roots dating to the famous cities of the Aztec empire. Castro must have called on his family history and experiences visiting other established communities to create his own.

Castro’s vision of the town of “San Lorenzo” did not exactly go as he hoped. The county seat went first to Alvarado then moved to San Leandro before eventually relocating to

Oakland. Over the succeeding years, Castro was forced to sell parcels of land in the downtown corridor, but he never sold his “Plaza”. By 1864, Castro was bankrupt and what was left of his large rancho was seized and auctioned off to pay debts. He packed most of his family up and moved to South America where he died a few years later.

F.D. Atherton bought Castro’s land at that auction and he didn’t have the same attachment to the Plaza as Castro had and he promptly subdivided the block and sold the parcels. From the mid-1860s until around 1880, there were warehouses and other buildings on the site and from the few images we have, not a lot of trees. In fact, one of the most famous images of the destruction caused by the 1868 earthquake shows Edmonson’s Warehouse which was on the corner of what is now C Street and Watkins.

The site of the Plaza would have been just another building-filled city block if the town of Haywards (yes with the “s”) was not incorporated in 1876. The town fathers brought in another land surveyor, Luis Castro who worked for the County and just-so-happened to be Guillermo Castro’s son, to create a survey of downtown. Luis went back to his father’s map and laid out the town almost identically to his fathers, including a block between 22 and 21 marked “Plaza.” Much of the downtown grid had already been developed according to Castro’s plan, so Luis’ plan cemented the overall layout with the addition of the Plaza.

Sometime around 1880, the city began taking back the land of the Plaza from private owners. They argued in court that Castro’s original intention was for the Plaza to be a community space and not owned by individuals. The judge agreed with them and soon, the town of Haywards had its community Plaza.

But what to do with a big open space? That was a debate that took decades to resolve. The newspapers at the time often lament the overgrown condition of the Plaza. Some years it was cleaned up and used as a baseball field but it does not appear to have been consistently well kept. Not until 1902, when the Ladies Improvement Club focused

on the Plaza did it start looking better. Lawn and trees were planted, and sidewalks and walkways installed. There was a moment in the early 1920s when the City looked to that plot of land as the home for the new city hall and jail. Ultimately, a spot across the street was chosen for city hall, funny enough, on the site of Guillermo Castro’s adobe. With the construction of city hall, the city put real effort in to keeping the Plaza in good shape for the community’s use.

The community used the Plaza even more when the Library was on the site over these last six decades. With the removal of the old library and a revitalization of the Plaza underway, it will once again be a fresh and beautiful space for the community to gather. Just as Guillermo Castro intended.



**Left:** Map commissioned by Guillermo Castro in 1856.

**Above, Top:** Damage caused by 1868 earthquake. The collapsed Edmonson’s Warehouse is on the right side of the image. The building was located roughly where C Street and Watkins Street meet on the edge of the Plaza.

**Above:** The Plaza as it appeared in the newspaper in 1908.

# In Defense of Phonebooks

by John Christian, Archives and Properties Manager

When is the last time you used a phone book? For most people it was years ago. For me it was today! In the HAHS reference collection, we have a pretty good selection of phonebooks. But many people inevitably will ask, “Why do you keep those things?”.

Great question! For me (and many researchers) they are an invaluable tool to track down long-lost family, locate a long-closed business, or a fun trip down memory lane. The curator and I have even used them to settle a bar bet or two!

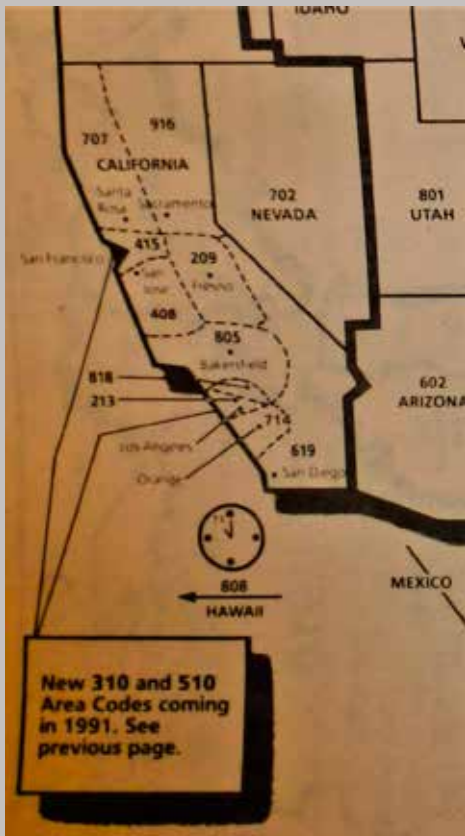
But, phonebooks are so much more than just lists of names and numbers. For example, when there is no image of a particular business in our photo collection, advertisements with images or illustrations in phonebooks can be the only documentary evidence we may be able to uncover.

And while really early phonebooks have no imagery, they give us insight into who was wealthy enough to even own a telephone. In 1934 for example, we know from the phonebook that Hayward had 2,392 telephones in service and a population of about 7,500. Or about one phone for every three people! And many of those phones were used in businesses, not in people’s homes.

Later phonebooks chronicle infrastructural milestones with lasting impact. Many Baby Boomers will recall shared party lines (a single phone line used by many people). This system was phased out in the early 1960s, but many still remember LUCerne, BRowning, JEFFerson, and SUNset. These party line prefixes were known by heart and are fondly remembered by many. Then of course there was the switch of the area code from 415 to 510. The switch took place all at once on September 2, 1991. These two moments of change, some thirty years apart, are chronicled in our collection of phonebooks. It is a fascinating record of a large scale change that would have impacted most everyone.

This is why we continue to keep these distant ancestors of Google and Yelp.

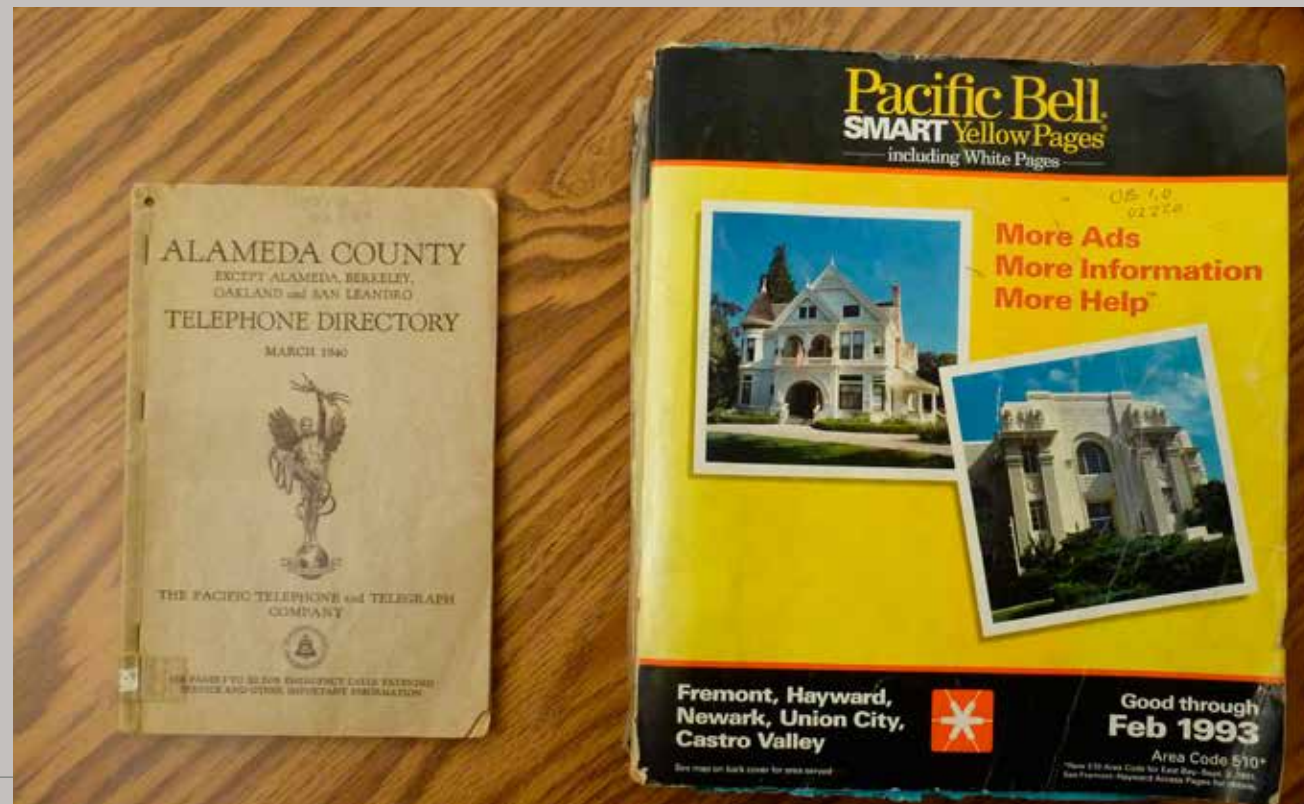
Phonebooks not only contain vast amounts of information (not always on the internet by the way), but they represent something more. Their pages are records of change—change in every sense of the word. For these reasons and more, phonebooks have earned their space on our shelves.



**Left:** A 1990 phone book notes the coming 510 area code change.

**Right:** A 1960 phonebook lists the Hayward area’s shared party lines.

**Below:** A 1940 Phonebook next to a 1993 phonebook. The 1940 book has about 100 pages. In 1993 there are about 1350 pages.



# Why I Volunteer with HAHS

by Debbie Fitzgerald, HAHS Volunteer

I have always been passionate about history, and especially sharing history with young people. I remember taking my kids to visit McConaghy House years ago. In 2004 I moved up to Tuolumne. Eventually, I started working as a Park Aide in Visitor Services at Columbia State Historic Park, a Gold Rush-era historic town in the Sierras. For 5 years I led school tours, public tours, paranormal tours, and played the role of School Marm, teaching 1861 lessons in the historic school house.

I am passionate about bringing history alive for children. I love showing them how people really lived in the past. It's the day-to-day things that really bring history to life. Reenacting everyday tasks, like how they would do the laundry, scrubbing with the washboards in barrels. How hard a miner's life really was, working from sunrise to sunset only to find \$5 to \$8 a day worth of gold. How the real gold mine of the town was the merchants' stores, that would mine the miners' pockets of gold for basic living supplies. Kids today have no idea how people really lived back then. They only learn so much from a textbook. Being able to really see and relive these things gets kids excited about history, and brings that history to life. They learn that it was a simple life, and it was a lot of work, but it was very satisfying.

Kids these days spend all their time in front of screens. They forget what it is like to just play. I love to get them playing with toys of long ago, such as rolling hoops, graces, tug of war, parlor and outdoor games. They get so excited over the simplest things. I love teaching period crafts, like making sachets, rag dolls, leather stamping, and old-fashioned bubble wands. The wands were made out of a tree branches and scraps of muslin or yarn, and they would have used the old laundry wash-water at the end of the day to blow the bubbles with. Back then, nothing was wasted.

I moved back to the area within the last year, and I am so glad I found HAHS. I have been helping with the Family Crafts program at McConaghy, and leading school tours at the houses and the museum. I helped volunteer at the Meek Open House in April, and it was wonderful to see so many families come through the house and be captivated by the history of the place. I am so glad to have found this community that supports the amazing estates of Meek and McConaghy, as well as the incredible programming at the museum. I am so thankful I found this Historical Society where I feel at home.



## 2019 Membership Survey

As we envision a new future for the Historical Society, we are seeking your feedback regarding our current membership structure in order to make sure that what we offer to our members and community are in line with expectations and needs. Please answer the questionnaire below and return to: Hayward Area Historical Society, 22380 Foothill Blvd, Hayward, CA 94541, Attn: Advancement. Please visit [bit.ly/2019HAHSMember](http://bit.ly/2019HAHSMember) if you would prefer to respond to this survey online. We would greatly appreciate your response by June 1, 2019. Thank you for your time!

1) How many times have you visited the HAHS Museum of History & Culture in the last 12 months? Circle one.

None 1-2 times 3-4 times  
5-6 times 7 or more times

2) What brings you back to the Museum? Check all that apply.

- Rotating exhibits
- Adult programs
- Family programs
- Children's Gallery
- History Gallery / Your Story exhibit
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3) What would you like to see more of at the Museum? Check all that apply.

- Temporary exhibits
- Adult programs
- Family programs
- Wider variety of topics
- Member only programs and events
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

4) What motivated you to become a HAHS Member? Check all that apply.

- Lived in the area all my life
- Went to local schools
- My family is from here
- I love history!
- The programs and exhibitions
- The play space for my kids
- I want to support the museum

5) Why kind of membership benefits do you enjoy most? Check all that apply.

- Reciprocal benefits to other museums
- Easy annual support of HAHS
- Recognition and acknowledgements
- Adobe Trails newsletter subscription
- VIP Tours
- Discounted and free admission and programs
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

6) Do you feel less motivated to renew your membership when admission to the museum is free? Circle one.

Yes No

7) What would member-specific programs look like to you? Check all that apply.

- Special lectures
- Early exhibit previews
- Special off-site tours
- Early or late Museum hours
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

8) How do you find out about HAHS programs? Circle all that apply.

Adobe Trails eNews/email Facebook  
Twitter Instagram Free Newspaper  
Paid Newspaper HAHS web site  
At the Museum or Historic Properties  
Other: \_\_\_\_\_

9) What time and day of the week do you think is best for **adult** programs? Circle all that apply.

Weekday Mornings	Weekday Afternoons	Weekday Evenings
Saturday Mornings	Saturday Afternoons	Saturday Evenings
Sunday Mornings	Sunday Afternoons	Sunday Evenings

10) What time and day of the week do you think is best for **family** programs? Circle all that apply.

Weekday Mornings	Weekday Afternoons	Weekday Evenings
Saturday Mornings	Saturday Afternoons	Saturday Evenings
Sunday Mornings	Sunday Afternoons	Sunday Evenings

11) What content would you like to see in Adobe Trails? Check all that apply.

- Local history articles
- Information about artifacts and collections items
- Program and event information
- Articles from guest writers, such as scholars, researchers, and volunteers
- New items in the Museum store
- Funding opportunities and how to support HAHS

12) What is your preferred method of contact to hear from HAHS?

- Email
- Phone
- Mail
- Text message



HAYWARD  
AREA  
HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY

22380 FOOTHILL BLVD., HAYWARD, CA 94541  
510.581.0223 WWW.HAYWARDAREAHISTORY.ORG

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# Show your LOVE for HAHS

## SMALL BUT EFFECTIVE WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR HISTORICAL SOCIETY



- Visit the Museum, attend programs, and give us feedback
- Host a Facebook fundraiser on your social media
- Shop at the Museum store and round up your purchase with a donation
- Increase your membership or ask us about sustaining membership
- Tell your friends and family about who we are and what we do
- Make an annual donation to support our programs

For more information regarding other ways to help, please call (510) 581-0223 or visit [www.haywardareahistory.org](http://www.haywardareahistory.org).