

# Kentfield Greenbrae Historical Society Historian

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[www.kghs.org](http://www.kghs.org)

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## President's Message

It's fall... you can feel the chill in the air in the evenings and early morning and then the warmth of sunny days... a beautiful time to call Marin your home! Even the first rainfall feels good! We are very excited about what this "school year" has in store for us. We have been busy with projects small and large. Without a home base, we have been fortunate to establish a partnership with the College of Marin. Our Joseph Lee painting has a place of honor in the lobby of the Administration building on the Kentfield campus. (See below) We will be hosting our Annual Meeting on their campus and bring you up to date on the activities planned. You are free to stop by and see the painting whenever the offices are open. We are so excited to work with them on their 2026 Centennial activities. After all, the College is in the heart of Kentfield and an important part of Marin history.

We have also had several generous donations that we are currently archiving and preparing for display in the future. Our new partnership with College of Marin Our goal is very exciting, knowing that we have their support and collaboration. We look forward to sharing our plans with you at the Annual Meeting.

Marilee Rogers  
Co-president, 2025-2026



Our Joseph Lee Painting of *Ross Landing 1871* has found a home! Visit the College of Marin Administration Office Lobby just off the main square!

## ANNUAL MEETING NOVEMBER 19

**SAVE WEDNESDAY EVENING**  
**NOVEMBER 19, 2025**  
for our Annual Meeting at  
College of Marin

Dewey Livingston and  
Richard Torney  
will discuss the story of this  
amazing painting,  
including an opportunity for  
all to see it "up close and  
personal."

**7 pm in room AC 255**  
Dewey & Richard  
Presentation  
Refreshments  
A visit to the Lee Painting  
in Administration Center  
Lobby

## COM Centennial Plans for 2026

February 4... Dr. David Wain  
Coon Center for Student  
Success Ribbon Cutting  
Ceremony and Installation of  
Landscape Study (see article)  
April 6... Founder's Day  
Celebration  
May 4-8... Kentfield Campus  
Showcase  
September 6... Home Coming  
inviting all alumni and  
community members to the  
Kentfield Campus

## JEFF CRAEMER... THE MAN WHO SAVES MARIN HISTORY!

*Marilee Rogers*

One of the “unsung” heroes of Marin County History is Jeff Craemer, a graduate of Redwood High School '66. He was born and raised in Marin County, his grandfather and then father owned the Marin IJ for many years. Jeff Craemer is a long-time resident of San Rafael who is well known for his community and civic involvement.

As a San Rafael Fire Foundation Board Member and a Marin History Museum advocate, Jeff has dedicated a tremendous amount of time, energy and money into making Marin a great place to live and work. He started volunteering by delivering meals for Whistlestop (now Vivalon), a job he loved. Over the years, he’s been a major donor and hands-on participant in many Marin-based organizations, including the Marin History Museum, Marin Public Library (contributing to the historic newspaper archives), the museum at San Quentin State Prison, San Rafael Fire Foundation, Mount Tamalpais State Park, and China Camp. These are the contributions that are well known to the public. He is also responsible for many behind the scene donations of art work and historical artifacts to the Anne T. Kent California Room and the Kentfield Greenbrae Historical Society. His generous donation helped KGHS purchase the Joseph Lee painting *Ross Landing 1971*. Another recent donation of a 1930 Architectural Watercolor Landscape rendering for the then newly established Marin Junior College (College of Marin) will be hung in the new Student Success Building on the Kentfield Campus.



*Jeff Craemer with former Ann T. Kent California Room Librarian Laurie Thompson*

Jeff likes to buy big things—really big things like fireboats, printing presses, and locomotives. His printing press collection was on loan for many years to the Smithsonian and now resides in the Printing Museum in Southern California. He also likes to write big checks, and Friends of China Camp is the beneficiary of a stack of them. Jeff is curator of San Quentin prison’s museum, and steeped in history. He started regularly coming into the prison in 1984, when then Associate Warden Richard Nelson worked with him to collect photographs and materials for a museum. He began curating the museum 43 years ago, working with Nelson and others to create a picture for visitors of the historical San

Quentin experience. With historical documents and other museum pieces, Craemer documented how San Quentin prisoners contributed to the war effort during World War II. He currently opens the San Quentin Museum on Tuesdays and Thursdays to the public, leading tours and answering questions.

When the Marin History Museum ran into trouble a few years back, it was Jeff who came to the rescue. Jeff made it his top priority to resurrect and restore public trust in the Marin History Museum. When he discovered a dumpster located outside of the Marin History Museum, he rifled through its contents in an effort to salvage historical artifacts, contributed \$50,000, and encouraged a new beginning for the Marin History Museum and for the best interest of our community.

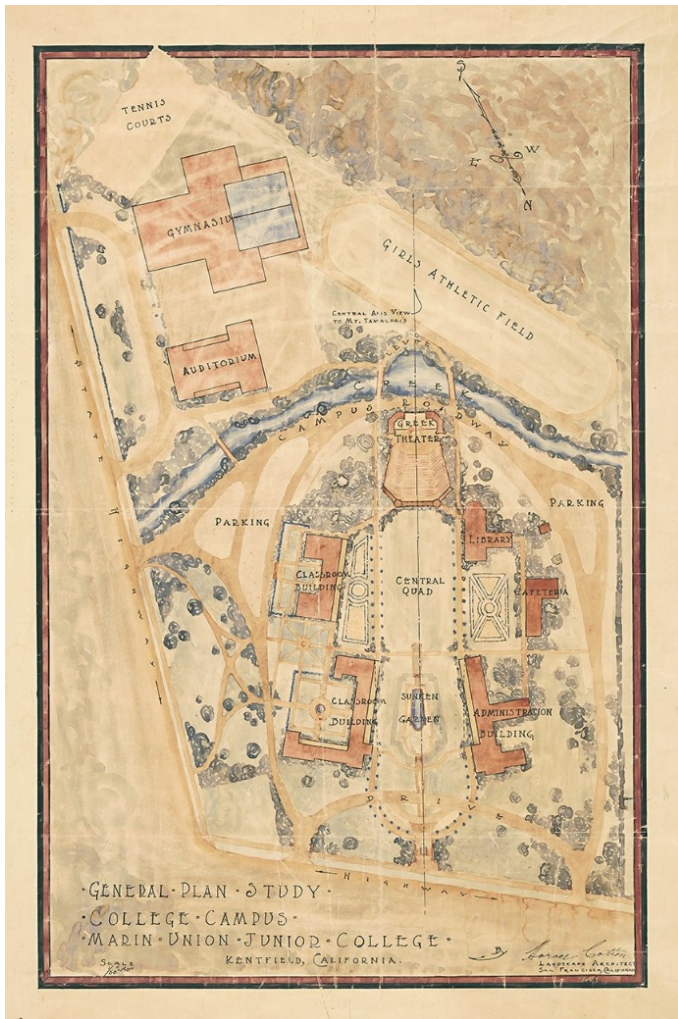


*Jeff Craemer, on left at China Camp*

### San Quentin Museum

San Quentin Museum doesn’t have a website but it’s listed under the county museums. It is open on **Tuesday and Thursday from 10 - 3**. The San Quentin News published a wonderful article about Jeff and the museum. It’s worth a visit!  
<https://sanquentinnews.com/jeff-craemer-curator-extraordinaire/>  
**98 Dolores St. San Rafael**  
<https://countyinfo.hoursguide.com/san-rafael-ca-museum-227799/>

## RECENT DONATIONS TO KGHS: 1-Landscape Study of COM 1930



1930 Architectural Landscape Study of Marin Junior College

One of the recent donations to the Kentfield Greenbrae Historical Society is a beautifully rendered watercolor on linen landscape study for the Marin Junior College Campus, dated 1930 just four years after the founding of the college. Thank you Jeff Craemer! It is currently being framed and plans are being made to loan it to the College of Marin and have it installed in the main lobby of the new Student Success Building as part of the 2026 Centennial activities. Notice the plan for the Greek Theater at the creek with a large central quad and sunken garden. The only remaining building on the campus is the Fusselman library on the upper right next to the planned theater. Horace Cotton was the Landscape architect, signed in the lower right hand corner. Horace Cotton was a prominent American landscape architect active in the early to mid-20th century. He is best known for his work on public parks and urban landscapes, emphasizing ecological design. He was a proponent of integrating natural elements into urban environments to enhance community well-being.

## Time to Renew Join a new or make a donation to KGHS

We hope that you will continue to support us. It is important to note that membership fees and, especially, donations are the sole source of support for the KGHS. Unlike other historical societies throughout Marin, there is no governmental support as neither Kentfield nor Greenbrae are incorporated entities. Our current plans...

- Archiving materials & data access system
- Historical markers
- History displays for COM
- Community Day

\$25 - Students & Seniors, Non-Profit organizations

\$35 - Individuals & Families

\$50 - Sponsor

\$100 - Patron

Donations of any amount are always welcome!

**Thank you** for you previous support ... we have more to do!

### MEMBERSHIPS

Online:

[www.kghs.org/membership](http://www.kghs.org/membership)

Or you can send a check:

KGHS

Box 236, Kentfield, CA 94914.

Please include your name, level of membership, address, email, and phone number. If you use a credit card number, please include your CVV code and zip code.

## 2-Geister Estate Documents of the Kent Family by Paul Smith

Earlier this year one of our board members was contacted out of the blue asking if the Kentfield Greenbrae Historical Society was interested in obtaining a folder of documents relating to Kentfield around 1908 until the early 1920's. The documents include copies of founding papers for the Tamalpais Centre.



*Tamalpais Centre in the 1909 (courtesy of the Ann T.Kent California Room MCFL)*

The Tamalpais Centre was established on November 25, 1908 and celebrated "Marin County's First Great May Day Celebration" the next year. This free event included a band concert, games, amusements and of course, a May Pole dance. William Kent, J.W. Dolliver, Wade Thomas were among those who served as trustees. This organization was established to provide Civic, Educational, Social, Religious and Athletic activities to all residents of Marin County. The land to build the Centre was donated by the Kent Family and built for a cost of \$12,000.

Additional documents include a Western Union telegram from Senator William Kent; a 1910 agreement allowing land use by the Kentfield Driving Association to establish a horse racing track; correspondence from the Tamalpais Woman's Club regarding a meeting to be held instructing "as many people as possible" to attend a demonstration on preserving fruits and vegetables through dehydration during the Great War.

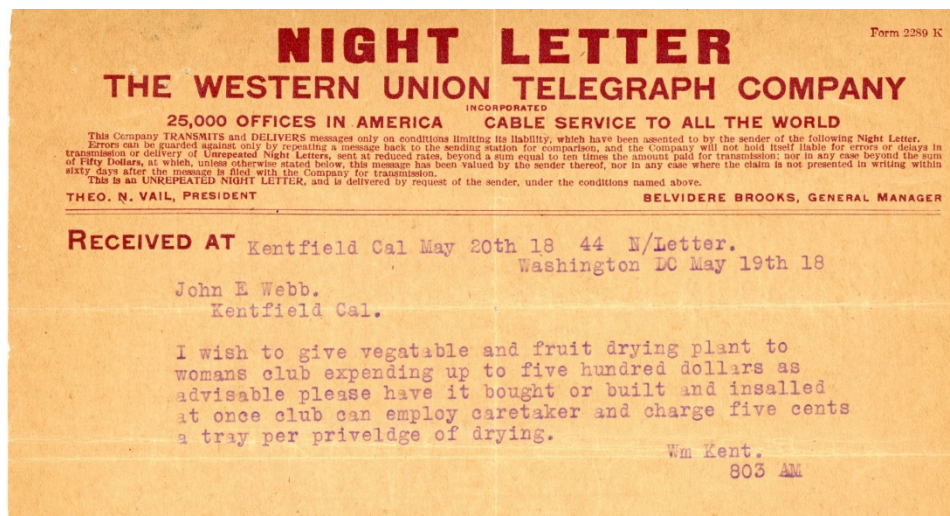
While the details of the provenance of the documents is still under investigation, we presume these were kept by Mrs Henry (Dorothy) Geister. She was a member of the Tamalpais Centre Woman's Club and reputed to be the last surviving member of that organization.



**Kentfield Greenbrae**  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**KGHS Board 2025-2026**  
Co-Presidents Marilee Rogers & Heather McPhail Sridharan,  
Tamara Hull Arnold,  
Mary Gilardi, Ross McKenna,  
Lisa Sandberg, Paul Smith,  
Rebecca Sylla, Richard Torney.

Amy Gallen... Archivist  
Dewey Livingston... Historian



*Western Union telegram from Senator William Kent; a 1910*