

THE CARMEL VALLEY HISTORIAN

CARMEL VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Carmel Valley Photographer George Seideneck

By Elizabeth Barratt, CVHS Historian

Well-known locally for his portrait and landscape paintings, Carmel Valley artist-photographer George Seideneck first came to California in 1918. He was on a sketching tour and only planned to stay for three months. His plans changed while in Carmel, where he met and fell in love with artist Catherine Comstock, sister of Hugh Comstock, the famous designer of the distinctive Carmel Cottage style.



Decorated over the years by both George and Catherine, the Seideneck home on Miramonte Road boasted artifacts from their world and local travels.

Photo: Carmel Valley Historical Society Archives

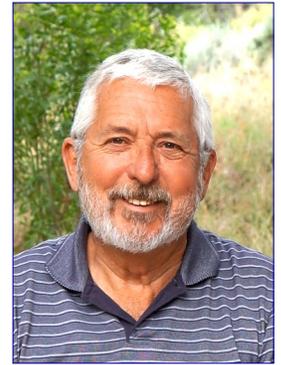
Although they didn't meet in Illinois, both were natives of the state. George was born on February 4, 1885 in Chicago. He received early art training at the Smith Art Academy and later attended night school at the Art Institute of Chicago while working days as a fashion illustrator. Following several years in Europe, he first returned to Chicago and then landed in Carmel, where he lived on Junipero Avenue and worked as a portrait artist.

Catherine Comstock was born in the same year as George, but 14 miles to the north of Chicago in Evanston, Illinois on November 1, 1885. As a teen, she studied decorative art at the Roycroft Community in New York and, like George, at the Art Institute of Chicago. In 1908 the Comstock family moved west, settling in Santa Rosa. With her sister Cornelia and brother John, Catherine started an Arts and Crafts Guild known as the Compañeros. Until 1913, the siblings **(See Seideneck, page 6)**

A Message from CVHS President Kim Williams

Our Annual Membership Meeting is coming up on April 4th. We sure hope you will be able to attend. We will be reviewing the accomplishments of last year and projecting what's up for this coming year. At the meeting we will confirm continuing Board members Dave Terdy and Cherie Ohlson. We'll also review the financial reports for 2019.

We are especially excited about our newest exhibit, "Signs of the Times Past," which includes 21 vintage signs from the Valley. These are being installed on the upper part of the exterior of the History Center by Jeff Ohlson, who is curating the exhibit. Jeff has researched the stories behind the signs and will post a brief explanation for each sign. The exhibit will open on April 4th at the Annual meeting.



Kim Williams



Volunteers in Action

CVHS President Kim Williams recognized Charter Member **Maxine Callinan** at the annual Christmas Party. Maxine, who has served on the Board for many years, will be moving to Oregon in April. Maxine has also served as our Docent Coordinator, chaired the Collections Committee, served on the Exhibits Committees, co-curated several exhibits and acted as official party planner. Maxine also coordinated the annual rummage sales which helped fund our building. We will so miss you, Maxine, but wish you the best in your new home.

Docent Training

New and current volunteer docents participated in a recent training meeting held at the History Center. All aspects of being a docent were reviewed: procedures for opening and closing, greeting visitors, safety, making sales, as well as general administrative and housekeeping activities. An overview of changes to the exhibits in the museum was also included.



Back row, left to right: Reggie Jones, Tom Augustitus, Sandy Schachter, Maxine Callinan, Lorraine Surprenant, Elizabeth Barratt, Dick Barratt; Front row: Cherie Ohlson, Kim Williams, Cynthia Lott, Anna Williams; Not pictured Jeff Ohlson

Photos by Jeff Ohlson

Remembering the Airway Village

By Jeff Ohlson, CVHS Historian



Just before WWII, Byington Ford developed an Airpark based on a village of "hangar houses" as an example of a community of the future. This Airpark eventually became what is now known as the historic Carmel Valley Vintage Airfield.

In developing his Airpark, Ford also graded and oiled several roads adjacent to it and in 1946 developed Airway Village shown in this mid-1950s George T. C. Smith photo with a brand new 1955 Pontiac 4-door sedan parked in front. Airway Village was located just north of Carmel Valley Road and included businesses such as Airway Market, Patty Cake Bakery, Carmel Valley Cleaners, and later the Weekly SUN newspaper offices.

Today's Village Shopping Center has now replaced the old Airway Village and its Village Market Grocery Store has replaced the old Airway Market seen in the photo above. The distinctive

painting of a longhorn on the Airway Market is thought to have been painted by Bruce Ariss, a well-known Monterey artist at the time. Many Valleyites may recall another of Mr. Ariss' paintings in the Los Laureles Lodge bar – a large portrait of a nameless lady.

In the 1960s, the Village commercial area expanded into what is now called Center Street Marketplace just west of the old Airway Village. Randy Randazzo operated his memorable market here from 1972 to 2003 and is where Jerome's Carmel Valley Market and several other businesses are now located.

As seen through the unblinking eyes of history, the businesses of the Village and the commercial landscape of our Valley are continually changing.



Annual Christmas Party

December 7, 2019
A great time was had by all!



Photos by Jeff Ohlson

News Around The Barn

By Cherie Ohlson

The Exhibit Committee is always looking for ways to make displays more interesting and readable. As a result of our annual review of the History Center Museum, we've begun a monthly information sheet for docents to keep them apprised of changes since the last time they worked. We thought that you, too, might be interested.



- There's a new **Roads & Transportation Exhibit** that is a wonderful pictorial history of how the Valley developed from dirt paths to today's roads. Look for it next to the Centennial Newspaper.
- The **Victorian Parlor Exhibit** has a fresh look with a recently donated "fainting couch" from the Hatton Family. Note the material on the couch and piano stool match.



- The **CV Rodeo Association Banner** has been professionally cleaned and relocated above the Ranching Exhibit. It pops!
- The **Vintage Airfield** and **Firefighters Exhibits** have been consolidated and moved against the south wall.
- Additional information has been added to the **Cigar Store Indian, California Cowboy Show, Tule Boat** and **Mountain Lion Exhibits**.

In Memorium: Dan Weiss

By Tom Augustitus

Dan Weiss, faithful CVHS member, docent and raconteur passed peacefully at his home in Seaside, California on Dec.15, 2019. He was 79.



Tom Augustitus and Dan Weiss on Docent Duty at the History Center Museum in 2018
Photo by Jeff Ohlson

One of my best memories of Dan was in 1995 when the Carmel river flood took out the low end of Rosie's Bridge. Dan brought his back hoe tractor down to rescue people from Robles del Rio and get us home. He worked for hours in three-foot-deep water giving people rides in his front bucket across the flood waters till he was ordered to stop by Monterey County officials when it was not safe anymore...

...a true community hero.

(Seideneck, from page 1) operated a gift shop where they sold their well-crafted jewelry, items made from leather and one of Catherine's specialties, oil pastels. She won a gold medal at the 1915 Panama-Pacific Exposition in San Francisco and taught at both the California School of Arts and Crafts and the University of California in Berkeley. By 1920 she was living in Carmel on Camino Real Avenue. She continued to produce craft items and taught jewelry making and leather sculpture at the Carmel Arts and Crafts Guild.

When the Carmel Art Association was founded in 1927, the Seidenecks were among its founders and charter members. While living in Carmel, the pair also worked on downtown landscape designs and other civic improvements. Catherine was a member of the garden club and George helped start the Carmel Music Society and directed early productions at the Forest Theater.

By this time George had added photography to his many pursuits, which also included illustrat-



Sweeping and mood-enhancing photos of Carmel Valley's stunning landscape became George Seideneck's specialty. Photo: George Seideneck - Carmel Valley Historical Society archives.

Catherine and George were married in Santa Rosa in January 1920. Following their marriage, they headed to Europe where they spent two and a half years traveling and studying, particularly in England and Italy. After the Seidenecks returned to Carmel, they began to produce landscape paintings at their studio, located in the Seven Arts building. The popular couple worked on numerous local assignments and joined the local arts community along with such luminaries as Armin Hansen, Francis and Gene McComas and William Ritschel.

ing for several architectural magazines. Because he also liked to work with tools and to build structures, it seemed a natural outgrowth of the pair's artistic talents that they adopt Carmel Valley as their new home, purchasing 34 acres near Mid-Valley on Miramonte Road. By 1931 they began to build what at first was intended as a weekend cottage.

George by then had all but abandoned landscape painting in **(See Seideneck, next page)**

Financial Contributions (Nov, Dec, Jan)

General Fund: Maxine Callinan, Jane Chaney, Steven & Leslie Dorrance, Ellsworth Gregory, Chris Harrold, Nick & Kathy Nicholson, Jeff & Cherie Ohlson, Sue Pius, Martin Rosin, Robb Talbott, Gary & Sheri Tate, Michael Taylor, Kim & Christine Williams

Tiles: Thomas Augustitus

Donations: Documents, Photos, Artifacts, Library Materials (Nov, Dec, Jan)

Tom & Alayna Gray: Book: "History of Rancho San Carlos – 1834-1990"

George Currie and Robin Ornellas: Miscellaneous CV ephemera: brochures, menus, newspaper articles; 1991 CV Fiesta photos, 2 vintage matchbooks from Wills Fargo restaurant

Jeff & Cherie Ohlson: Vintage olive green rotary dial telephone, circa 1970s with phone # label Area Code 408 Olive 9-2958

Charlene Randazzo: 1929 subdivision map of Carmel & Carmel Valley, 1989 CV Centennial Banner and miscellaneous CV articles & brochures

Robb Talbott: Vintage sign: "Talbott, Inc. Neckwear", bright yellow with gold raised lettering, from their Center St. location, circa 1960s; Sign: "TALBOTT'S", hand-carved by Robb Talbott, from the facade of their Center St. location (old vet bldg.)

Gary Tate: Organized files (20) from Hatton Canyon Coalition "Battle to Save Hatton Canyon"

Thank you for your generous support!

(Seideneck, from page 6) favor of photography. He was a member of the Carmel Camera Club, among whose members were Ansel Adams and Edward Weston. He was especially known for his sweeping Carmel Valley pastoral photographs. Catherine's distinctive pastels, for which she became well-known, were a type of oil wash resembling watercolor. In 1948 her award-winning works, largely featuring coastal scenes of the Monterey Peninsula and Carmel Valley, were featured in a one-person show at the Carmel Art Association. Over the years, both Seidenecks presented exhibits at the Monterey Peninsula Museum of Art.

Their Carmel Valley cottage had long since grown into a real home, as George kept expanding the rooms and Catherine added to the interior decor. Every window was installed with a Valley view in mind and the home was filled with their own artwork, metal crafts and ceramics. According to the 1940 United States Census, their few neighbors included descendants of Valley pioneer

families with surnames such as Berta, Feliz and Mathiot.

The Seidenecks were widely traveled and their Carmel Valley home was decorated with antiques and artifacts gathered from their many extended trips. From Mexico and parts of California, they gathered pieces from old barns, mills and even shipwrecks to add to their decor. Their European travels added tapestries, Italian furniture and pottery to the home. Besides designing and building the house, George did all of the cabinetry, brickwork and wood carving. Catherine added her artistic touches in wrought silver and copper, tiles and paintings. Over the years, their unique home was a gathering place for many friends and fellow artists.

The Seidenecks lived in Carmel Valley for the rest of their lives. Catherine died on February 13, 1967 and George on March 7, 1972. Today, the Carmel Valley Historical Society is honored to count a number of their works among its archival collection.

Carmel Valley Historical Society

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History Center Museum Hours:

Saturdays: 1-4

Sundays: 11-2

Library: By Appointment

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Cherie Ohlson	Secretary
Elizabeth Barratt	Recording Secretary
Dick Barratt	Member
Maxine Callinan	Member
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Newsletter Production: Kim Williams

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Upcoming Events

Saturday, April 4 4:00-6:00 PM at the History Center
Annual Membership Meeting and Exhibit Opening *"Signs of the Times Past"*

Saturday, May 9 10:30-Noon at the Carmel Valley Library
Talk by Jeff Ohlson: *Carmel Valley and Cachagua Fire Protection Districts and Their Volunteer Firefighters*

Saturday, June 27 4:30-5:30 at the MPRPD Discovery Center
Talk by Anna Williams: *Carmel Valley and Cachagua Fire Protection Districts and Their Volunteer Firefighters*



Annual Membership Meeting...

Saturday, April 4

4-6 pm

Come hear about what's been happening, how your financial support is benefiting the Society, what's coming up and much more...like refreshments.

We will also be affirming the new class of board members. **Cherie Ohlson** and **Dave Terdy** are re-enlisting for another three-year term.



Photo by Jeff Ohlson

...and the Grand Opening of Our Newest Exhibit "Signs of the Times Past"