

Friends Only-Update June 2005

JOHN MARSH HISTORIC TRUST, P.O. BOX 272 CONCORD, CA 94522
www.johnmarshhouse.com Phone: [925] 459-2541

Remember—Renew your “Friends” support—Check your mailing label

Emergency Work Completed

Through the generosity of the Friends of John Marsh, the Trust, in partnership with the State of California, was able to complete the emergency repairs on the Stone House during June. The Trust functioned as the prime contractor with the state matching your contributions. The Trust spent over \$85,000 repairing and reinforcing the tower and three of the four walls.

The work went somewhat over budget as Gene Metz, the Trust’s President and architect, discovered that much of the stone work on the tower was being held in place by prayer and one thin, corroded wire. The John Marsh Historic Trust was able to quickly provide additional money to save the tower.

For now the south wall remains unrepaired. While the masonry has collapsed, reinforcing beams are bracing the wall frame so that

there is no immediate danger of its collapse. It does look bad and will be one of the first things taken care of when new grant money becomes available next year.

Rainbow Construction & Restoration Company did an excellent job and given the limited budget available did more than their contract called for. Maryann Hurley, the state parks project manager, made sure that the work was done to the highest standards. The challenging engineering work was successfully completed by the Architectural Resources Group.

The next critical step in stabilizing the old Stone House is reinforcing the stone foundations. 149 years of moisture has seriously weakened the stone. Every reported earthquake in California reminds us of the danger to the John Marsh House.



Basement repairs



A few of the local “sidewalk” superintendents



The old house getting a face lift



Example of the careful restoration

Bill Mero, Editor
June 2005

Special points of interest:

- *Emergency Repair Finished*
- *Grant Approval*
- *Public Hearing Scheduled*

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John Marsh Historic Trust Board Member Honored

Bob Gromm, Vice President of the John Marsh Historic Trust, received the national DAR Historic Preservation medal on May 14, 2005. The letter of recommendation reads in part, “No other individual has contributed more to the preservation of the historic Stone House and promoted public recognition of Dr. John Marsh as a leading California pioneer...Bob Gromm’s contributions span over 40 years.”

“The Stone House is acknowledged as the first American ‘stone manor style’ farmhouse in California. It is the symbol of both early California rancho life and the beginning of our agricultural economy. The John Marsh home exists today thanks in greatest part to Robert (“Bob”) Gromm. Bob was instrumental in creating the original “John Marsh Memorial Association” to facilitate the donation of the John Marsh House from private ownership to the State of California. The John Marsh Historic Trust is a successor organization and carries on the preservation efforts. Bob continues to serve as Vice President.”



Bob Gromm honored by the Annie Loucks Chapter of the DAR

California Cultural and Historic Endowment Grant

Growing recognition of John Marsh's importance in California's history was demonstrated during the second round of public hearings in Southern California where in May the California Cultural and Historic Endowment voted in favor of funding the next phase of work on the Marsh House. The initial approval was for \$820,000.

Unfortunately there is not enough money to allow the CCHE to provide the complete grant. We now believe that eventu-

ally the award will be close to \$800,000.

The grant is not to the John Marsh Historic Trust but will be administered by the California State Parks for the next phase in the stabilization of the Stone House. The City of Brentwood pledged at the meeting of the CCHE, to match any grants to the house made by the endowment committee.

Maryanne Hurley for the state and Karen Wahl, Grant Administrator for the City of



The south wall remains unrepaired today. Rain is a constant threat to the house.

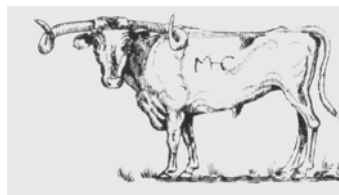
Foundation Repairs Critical to Save the House

Brentwood, described to the committee the partnership of Parks and Brentwood. The Trust provided the historical background for the written report and presentations on the importance of John Marsh to history of California and the settlement of the far West.

Only 13 of the 33 projects were approved and the John Marsh Project was one of the 13. The new grant money is expected to be available in the fall. Work is expected to begin in the early spring. Restoring the south wall and repairing the

disintegrating foundation will be the primary goal of this new money.

Meanwhile the John Marsh Historic Trust plans on sealing the south wall with a tight plastic covering so that next winter's rains will not further damage the interior of the Stone House.



Representatives from State Parks and the CCHE inspect the emergency repairs.

John Marsh's 206 Birthday Celebration

On June 5, a few dedicated volunteers and history lovers gathered at Cap's Bar and Grill in Brentwood to celebrate John Marsh's 206 birthday. It was a casual, fun, no-host event. We want to assure the Friends of John Marsh that no Trust money was spent. There was some discussion of the latest



A few friends of JM gathered to celebrate

repairs, future work and financing plans for the Stone House. More importantly, new friends were made and informational literature was passed out to the general public. After all the progress that has been made, it was nice to just relax and enjoy the moment.

Public Hearings Scheduled for July

During the latter part of July, public hearings will be held to prepare the general plan for the proposed John Marsh Historic Park. The exact date for the public hearing has not been announced. Without the approval by the state of a general plan, state funding and the formation of an official park will not proceed.

Three or four public meetings will be held in the Brentwood area in order to gain input from the general public. The Trust intends to stress the educational opportunities that a fully restored Stone House/ museum along with a recreated Miwok village will bring. We believe that restor-

ing the adobe, original vineyards and orchards around the house will be important for demonstrating the agricultural development of California.

The cost of the general plan will be about \$150,000. The City of Brentwood is financing the hearings and writing of the general plan.

As we get more information on exact dates of the hearings, it will be passed on the Friends. We encourage all of the Friends of John Marsh to present to the state park representatives their own opinions on what the new park should offer.

We also encourage members of the Friends of John Marsh to write and give the Trust any additional ideas for the park that you may have.



Replica of a Miwok home

Fund Raiser Planned for October

Plans are being made to hold the first fund raiser ever sponsored by the John Marsh Historic Trust. We want to hold a formal, catered dinner on the John Marsh Stone House property.

If we can make the proper arrangement with the state parks, we would like to erect a large dining tent in front of the Stone House for the dinner and entertainment. While safety considerations precludes entry into the house, contributors would be close enough to inspect the house and see the progress that has been made.

The tentative date is set for the evening of October 5, 2005.

If it becomes impractical to hold the dinner at the Marsh house, one of the Trust's board members has a lovely home on Marsh Creek not far from the Stone House. The grounds are often used for wedding receptions and is a very special and beautiful location.

In any case you will be getting more information in August as to the details and a reminder of the date. All the Friends will receive formal invitations to the event. It

has become clear that restricted state funding will prevent a restoration of the Stone House unless the Trust provides additional "seed" money to move the project along. In addition we hope that the dinner will raise public awareness of



Marsh Creek

the proposed park and its importance.

Future Plans and Strategy

It is clear that the state will probably never provide the money to completely restore the Stone House. Several times restoration funds were appropriated by the legislature. In each case either a governor "blue penciled" the item or the state parks refused to spend the money and it was diverted to projects with more powerful political support.

Since approximately \$5,000,000 will be

required for a total restoration, the Trust believes it must now begin seeking large grants from foundations and companies.

The Trust is considering hiring a professional fund raiser to reach our ambitious goals. While we have been able to accomplish much through the generosity of the Friends, the time is approaching when greater efforts may be required for the complete restoration and furnishing of

the Marsh House.

What are your thoughts? Are we choosing the correct course? Do you have any connections to philanthropic organizations that might contribute to the restoration of the Marsh house or help set up ongoing educational programs?

The money would probably be matched by Brentwood so that the entire five mil-

Photos of the Recent Repairs

lion would not fall completely on the shoulders of the Friends and the John Marsh Historic Trust.

If successful, we plan on holding annual fund raising dinners. Hopefully the money raised will help fund more improvements and maintenance. Projects like an archival research library, guest lecturers and "living history" programs could be established.

For the foreseeable future your donations will still be the main source for restoring the Stone House. Barring a major catastrophe, repair of the house's foundation will begin in early Spring 2006.

\$58,000 was reserved by you for stabilization. The Trust has spent \$85,000 on this effort. Hopefully the upcoming fundraiser, membership renewals and donations will recharge the stabilization fund. To date 98 cents of every dollar contributed has been spent on fixing the Stone House.



Facelift for the "Old Lady"



Ready for repair



Keeping out the rain



Interior bracing



Details of the repairs



Proud of their work



Inspecting the basement



Repaired and braced



Unveiling the new arches



Money to repair the interior needs to be raised.

Historical Snapshots—Claudio Feliz's Bloody Raid



The midnight attack on the Marsh Rancho, December 5, 1850

Danger and death were constant companions to John Marsh on the wild frontier of eastern Contra Costa. The sacking of the Marsh Rancho by Claudio Feliz, Joaquin Murrieta's brother-in-law, on December 5, 1850 was just one example of the prevailing lawlessness.

Posing as an Argentinean cattle buyer, Claudio was entertained by Dr. Marsh during the day. At midnight Claudio and twelve bandits armed with lances and guns swept down on the sleeping rancho. William Harrington, camping near the Marsh adobe was speared and shot to death, apparently just for sport.

Marsh and his two Indian bodyguards were bound. Three hundred dollars and Marsh's Harvard diploma were stolen. Later Claudio made the fatal mistake of robbing a native Californio in Monterey County. He was quickly tracked down and killed. Joaquin Murrieta then became the new leader of this band of killers.

THE JOHN MARSH HISTORIC TRUST, INC.

2005

FRIENDS APPLICATION

P O BOX 272
CONCORD, CA 94522
(925) 459-2541 FAX and PHONE
A Non-Profit Corp 501[3][c] Founded 1994
Gifts are Tax Deductible

___	\$15 Vaquero
___	\$25 Dos Vaqueros
___	\$35 Non Profit Group
___	\$50 Pioneer[s]
___	\$100 Padrone[s]
___	\$250 Alcalde[s]
___	\$251-\$1000 Campanario[s]

Fund Allocation [Optional]	
\$ _____	Stabilization Fund
\$ _____	Matching Funds
\$ _____	James Rolph Moore Grand Piano Fund
\$ _____	TOTAL enclosed

Today's date _____

Name _____ Phone [] _____

Address _____ FAX [] _____

City _____ State _____ Zip+ _____

E-mail _____

The John Marsh Historic Trust is a 501[3][c] non-profit organization. Gifts are tax deductible.

*NOTE – We have no paid staff, our Board of Directors receive no compensation and pay their own expenses. If you would like a copy of our Financial Report please check _____

Please print this page out if you wish to renew your FRIENDS SUPPORT, or wish to become a new FRIEND OF JOHN MARSH. FRIENDS are asked to renew their support annually. All of our operating expenses are dependent on gifts from the FRIENDS. However the amount used for operations is very small. The majority of funds are held for use in preservation and restoration of the JOHN MARSH STONE HOUSE in Brentwood, Contra Costa County, CA.

We also welcome gifts of stocks and bonds and will provide information and transfer forms for such gifts on request. Gifts to the John Marsh Trust, Inc. are tax deductible. Please consult your tax advisor for additional help with charitable gift giving.

Please accept our warmest thanks for your support! The Board of Directors work very hard on behalf of the restoration of the Marsh House. They accept no compensation for their service and pay their own expenses related to conducting Board business. Our recent Financial report is available on request. THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR TRUST IN US!

THE JOHN MARSH HISTORIC TRUST 2005

FRIENDS Renewal

P O BOX 272
CONCORD, CA 94522
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A Non-Profit Corp 501[3][c]
Founded 1994
Gifts are Tax Deductible

___	\$15 Vaquero	*See Note
___	\$25 Dos Vaqueros	below
___	\$35 Non Profit Group	
___	\$50 Pioneer[s]	
___	\$100 Padrone[s]	
___	\$250 Alcalde[s]	
___	\$251-\$1000 Campanario[s]	

Fund Allocation [Optional]	
\$ _____	Stabilization Fund
\$ _____	Matching Funds
\$ _____	James Rolph Moore Grand Piano Fund
\$ _____	TOTAL Enclosed

Name _____ Phone [] _____ Date _____

Address _____ FAX [] _____

City _____ State _____ Zip+ _____

E-mail _____

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*NOTE – We have no paid staff, our Board of Directors receive no compensation and pay their own expenses. If you would like a copy of our Financial Report please check _____