



Reconstruction Planning Has Begun

John Marsh Historic Trust News Update

**John Marsh Historic Trust, P.O. Box 272 Concord, CA 94522
Phone: [925] 459-2541 www.johnmarshhouse.com**

JMHT Receives 2nd Round Grant

September 15, 2007

William Mero, Editor

During August the John Marsh Historic Trust represented by Gene Metz, President of the JMHT, signed an important grant agreement with the California Cultural and Historical Endowment. Funded by the California Clean Water, Clean Air, Safe Neighborhood Parks, and Coastal; Protection Act of 2002, the CCHE awarded the Marsh Trust \$200,000 to prepare detailed construction documents for the first phase of the rehabilitation of the John Marsh Stone House.

The construction plans will detail a historically accurate, stable, weather-tight exterior for the Stone House. The Trust has selected Siegel & Strain Architects to prepare the plans. Gene Metz has devoted an enormous amount of his personal time working closely with the architectural firm and CCHE preparing for this study. All planning will be done in conjunction with the California State Parks and the City of Brentwood. The work by Siegel & Strain will include code analysis, final architectural/engineering drawing, specifications and cost estimates.

These construction documents will prepare the Stone House for new masonry work, reconstruction of the South Wall, seismic retrofitting and rehabilitation of the windows and doors. Rehabilitation planning such as mechanical, electrical, plumbing and interior finishes will not be covered in this first stabilization phase.

The JMHT initially applied to the CCHE for \$300,000 grant to prepare the exterior rehabilitation construction plans. Although a bare-bones request, the CCHE cut the request by \$100,000. This left the grant woefully underfunded to make the required plans and drawings. The board of the JMHT voted unanimously to take up to an additional \$120,000 from the Trust in order to supplement the state



The south wall is the greatest emergency.

grant. Although seriously depleting the resources of the JMHT, the board felt that it is exactly for these critical moments that the Friends of John Marsh have so generously donated their time and money.

State Parks To Manage 1st Round Grant

For legal and technical reasons Brentwood declined to administer the 1.6 million dollar construction stabilization project. California State Parks has taken over and has put out the initial call for qualified bidders. Work may begin as early as spring 2008. The CCHE made a grant of \$819,000 with matching funds from Brentwood using developer's fees (mainly from Shea Homes). The immediate goal is to stabilize the Stone House until new funding from both public and private sources can be obtained for its restoration.

- Special points of interest:**
- 1st & 2nd Round Grant progress
 - JMHT loses 3rd Round Grant
 - Spring Gala Success
 - Rededication of Marsh monument
 - Historical Snapshots

It's Official!

Some good news, State Parks Commission officially designated the park property as a State Historic Park. They did not take up the issue of naming of the park. But this is a major step on the long road to achieving the John Marsh Historic State Park!

Some sad news. Walter Gray, head of State Parks, Office of Cultural and Archeological Resources passed away. He was a strong supporter of the John Marsh House and park and was a member of the California Cultural and Historical Endowment Commission (CCHE)

The JMHT submitted to the California Cultural and Historic Endowment a \$670,000 proposal to restore the south wall. The CCHE rejected the JMHT application. The Trust is making a fund raising feasibility study and is asking the Friends if they have any personal contacts with companies or foundations who we could approach for restoration help.



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Marsh House Gala A Success

On the afternoon of April 14, 2007, the John Marsh Historic Trust held its Spring-time Gala in a large tent on the meadow beside the John Marsh House in Brentwood. A huge thank you goes to the Monterey Bay Culinary Institute under the direction of celebrity chef, Rick Edge for preparing the varied gourmet food. Thanks also go to our local area vintners, brew masters and olive growers for providing the wonderful tasting experiences.

Doug McConnell, well-known host of KRON-Channel 4 "Bay Area Back Roads" was the Master of Ceremonies. Russ Christoff, long-time John Marsh house supporter, TV producer and actor, also gave an eloquent talk on the importance of the new John Marsh State Historic Park to Brentwood. Both talks can be viewed on the John Marsh website.

Thanks to efforts of Patty Bristow, Daphne Swisher, Becky Bloomfield and Kathy Leighton and many, many others the event raised over \$30,000 for Marsh.

Rededication Of The John And Abby Marsh Pioneer Monument, Brentwood, CA

On Sunday, September 23, 2007 at 11:00 AM, the public is invited to join the Grand Officers of the Order of the Native Daughters of the Golden West as they rededicate the Pioneer Monument honoring John and Abby Marsh. Marsh was the first Anglo-American Settler of the San Joaquin/Sacramento Valley establishing Rancho Los Meganos. Marsh played a key role in attracting settlers to California prior to the Gold Rush.

The Marsh monument and plaque were placed by the Order of the Native Daughters of the Golden West, Donner Parlor #193 - Byron, and the Cowell Portland Cement Company near the site of the historic Stone House on June 26, 1932. This rededication of the John and Abby Marsh, Pioneers, plaque brings the Grand Officers, local parlor members, and the public together for this 75th anniversary of the plaque placement. The Native Daughters is dedicated to preserving

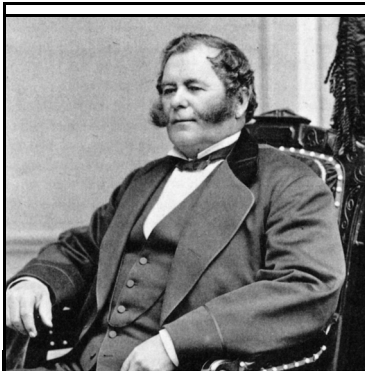
and honoring California's history and heritage with commemorative plaques at historic locations throughout the State. The John Marsh Historic Trust urges the community, history enthusiasts, and all those who seek to "Save the Marsh Stone House" to attend.

Pioneers will arrive in a covered wagon in reenactment of settlers coming to California. Bailey's Rental, Brentwood, generously donates this wagon to the John Marsh Historic Trust for future use at the proposed John Marsh Historic Park. A Color Guard, music, government representatives, ritual dedication, and equestrian participation are anticipated.

For more information, please go to the John Marsh Historic Trust website:

www.johnmarshhouse.com

(Please check your TV listing in October. The John Marsh House and story will be featured on "Eye on the Bay," Channel Five)



General Vallejo

**Historical Snapshots,
General Vallejo remembers
Dr. John Marsh**

"...would that all the Americans citizens, to whom, when they were a minority in this country, I lent some service,

had been endowed with the noble sentiments of gratitude which were characteristic of Doctor Marsh. Who, during a long residence on our soil knew how to conciliate the good will of all persons, who, in the course of their business, had to come in contact with the first disciple of Esculapius to settle in the beautiful valley of San Joaquin. When Doctor Marsh established himself on the ranch of the "Umpines" alias "Los Medanos"(sic), no one lived

in its environs but heathen Indians. But they did not molest the doctor because he, on several occasions, had cured some Indian women who were suffering from illnesses, which the Indian doctors did not know how to cure. Doctor Marsh has gone to a better life but the recollection of his fine qualities will remain eternally in the memory of all of us who were personal witnesses of his philanthropy and other good qualities."

Vallejo, Historia De California, Vol. IV, 1839-1845, p. 29.

("The Marsh Family Papers" Bancroft Library/JMHT.)