



# UNDER THE GABLES

Volume XVIII, Number 4

Fall 2013



## **M.B. Boissevain, Marin's First Farm Advisor**

Historical Photographs of Marin's Agrarian Roots: 1920-1950

**October 1 - December 18**

Jack Mason Museum of West Marin History  
Point Reyes National Seashore Red Barn Classroom

JACK MASON MUSEUM OF WEST MARIN HISTORY

Inverness Way at Park Avenue, Inverness Phone 415-669-1099 [www.jackmasonmuseum.org](http://www.jackmasonmuseum.org)

# New Exhibit at the Museum

From October 1 through December 18 the exhibit will be M.B. Boissevain, Marin's First Farm Advisor – Historical Photographs of Marin's Agricultural Roots: 1920-1950. This is a shared exhibit with some of the photographs at the Jack Mason Museum of West Marin History and many more at the Point Reyes National Seashore Red Barn Classroom. There will be an Open House in both locations on Sunday, October 6, from 1 – 4 p.m.

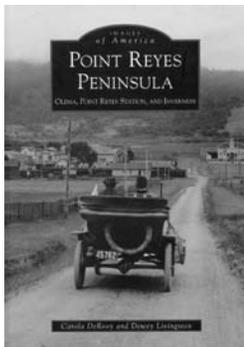
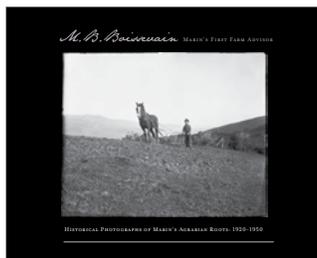
The Museum is located in the Inverness Public Library and is open the same hours as the Library (Mondays 3-6 p.m., Tuesdays and Wednesdays 10 a.m. -1 p.m. and 2-6 p.m., Thursdays closed, Fridays 3-6 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., Sundays closed). The Red Barn Classroom, except during the Open House, is open only by appointment. On weekdays please call 415-464-5125 and on weekends 415-662-1200 x.309.

This exhibit was originally created for the 2012 Marin County Fair in a partnership between the University of California Cooperative Extension, Marin County, the Jack Mason Museum of West Marin History, the Tomales Regional History Center and the Novato History Museum.

**THE JACK MASON MUSEUM  
ALWAYS NEEDS VOLUNTEERS FOR ARCHIVAL,  
ORGANIZATIONAL, OUTREACH, AND  
COMPUTER-RELATED TASKS.  
PLEASE CALL DEWEY AT 669-7706,  
OR THE MUSEUM AT 669-1099.**

## “M. B. BOISSEVAIN, MARIN’S FIRST FARM ADVISOR”

The quality book, companion to the exhibit, is available for purchase at the Jack Mason Museum of West Marin History for \$25.00. Proceeds benefit the Museum.



## “POINT REYES PENINSULA”

Copies signed by the authors, Carola DeRooy and Dewey Livingston are available at Museum Open Houses and from the Archives for only \$20.00. The proceeds benefit the Museum.

**ON THE COVER:**  
*Tomales Joint Union High School Agriculture Club members, with club leader and principal Charles Hampton, at a north Marin pig farm in 1924.*

### JACK MASON MUSEUM COMMITTEE

- Tom Branan, Chair
- Andrew Buckingham
- Carola DeRooy
- Mary Kroninger
- Meg Linden
- Dewey Livingston
- Michael Mery
- Ann Read

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### HONORARY MEMBER Barbara Mason McClellan

THE JACK MASON MUSEUM  
OF WEST MARIN HISTORY  
IS AN AFFILIATE OF THE  
INVERNESS FOUNDATION

Editor:  
Meg Linden

Design:  
Dewey Livingston

# M.B. Boissevain, Marin's First Farm Advisor

## Historical Photographs of Marin's Agrarian Roots: 1920–1950



An exhibit of M. B. Boissevain's insightful photographs is now showing in two parts simultaneously at the Jack Mason Museum and the Red Barn Gallery at Point Reyes National Seashore. These magnificent images provide a unique opportunity to embrace Marin's agrarian roots and present bounty, as well as take an intimate look at what life was like for Marin ranchers and farmers during the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s.

Marett Burr ridge (M. B.) Boissevain was Marin County's first University of California Cooperative Extension Farm Advisor starting in 1920. His job was to reach out to farmers in the area (he covered Sonoma and Napa as well) and spread practical information and new farming methods. He brought with him progressive ideas and technological innovations, while advocating farmer cooperation. He served as an agronomist, community leader and photographer for 30 years. He wrote weekly columns for both the Marin County papers, the *Marin Journal* and the *San Rafael Independent* for 30 years until they merged in 1948. He was also an important member of the *Marvelous Marin* effort and had a daily agricultural program on KTIM, Marin's first radio station when it started in 1947.

He was active in organizing 4-H clubs in rural communities where young people and their families could practice new techniques with hands-on agricultural projects. These activities produced a new generation of farmers interested in education and enhanced the productivity of Marin agriculture for decades. When he started there was one 4-H club with 33 members. When he retired there were 648 members countywide in 18 clubs.

As part of his role and duties, Mr. Boissevain kept records and took hundreds of photographic images of Marin and Sonoma agriculture, including its people and farmscapes. These photos, along with his detailed farm reports, document the development of new animal breeding practices, forage crop and soil improvements, water quality and erosion control improvements. He was a talented and prolific photographer and his images provide us a glimpse of people, farms, ranches, and working landscapes of Marin during the progressive era of the early 20th century. The 4 x 5 negatives are archived at the Jack Mason Museum of West Marin History in Inverness and the Tomales Regional History Center.

# MARIN'S CHANGING LANDSCAPES



*Boissevain 1926: Marin County Fair and Harvest Festival, Novato, August 22, 1926.*



*Boissevain 1923: Black Mountain, Burdell Ranch, Point Reyes Station, June 1923*

REPHOTOGRAPHY BY DEWEY LIVINGSTON



*Livingston 2012: Pinheiro Ranch subdivision, Novato, February 2012.*



*Livingston 2012: Black Mountain, Nobmann Ranch, Point Reyes Station, March 2012*



*Above, Tomales High School project and club trip, April 1927. Left, Joe Mattos and M. J. Pedrotti pose with their experimental Golden Glow corn crop, Ignacio, 1925.*



When a local business changed hands in the 1980s the new owners threw a lot of stuff out. Gayanne Enquist peeked in the dumpster and found a small old box. Taking it home, she opened it and found hundreds of wonderful old negatives. These were later donated to the museum and were soon found to be a major portion of M. B. Boissevain's body of work. Gayanne is now one of our treasured museum volunteers.

# CORNERS

*Number 3 in a new series of articles by Meg Linden  
about local corners that have been used for business purposes*

THE LOT AT THE CORNER of Sir Francis Drake Blvd and Inverness Way South was purchased in 1909 by Atillio Martinelli and his wife Jennie from Julia Shafter Hamilton. They built a two-story wooden building there which became a candy store. Various folks ran the store for the Martinellis or leased it from them, including Al Bianchi and Gene Wickersheimer (1919-1921). The Bianchis (his wife was



*Atillio Martinelli built this in 1909 – the ground floor was a candy store.*

the former Lydia Grandi, daughter of the owners of the Grandi Company) lived upstairs and the Wickersheimers lived in what was called the “honeymoon cottage” (now Martha Howard’s office) next door. George Ludy, nephew of the Martinelli’s says in an interview with Fredric Graeser of The Press of Inverness that the first floor had candy and ice cream as well as a barber shop and that the upstairs (when not occupied by a family) was used as a community center, with dances on Saturday and church services on Sunday.

In 1924 Hamilton and Mary Smith Martins (Ham was the brother of Zena Martins Mendoza and Mary the daughter of Anton Smilcich who moved to Inverness and changed his name to John Smith) took over the place. The Martins married in 1919 and in early 1920 bought the D Ranch along with T.L. Machado. However, he wasn’t cut out for ranching. By 1924 the Martins sold D Ranch and moved into town. They rented the candy store building from the Martinellis, and moved into the upstairs unit. Mary’s sisters Lizzy and Katy moved

in with them and helped in the candy store. Business was great during the summer but when fall came business fell off and the Martins turned the candy store back to the Martinellis. They bought the dairy business at M Ranch. However, they did no better there than they had at D Ranch and in 1933 they sold the business and returned to Inverness. He again rented the candy store, but also operated an express service to haul cattle, hogs and produce to San Francisco. They changed the name of the candy store to Martin’s Rendezvous and added beer and wine. The original sales contract from Mrs. Hamilton to Martinelli forbade the sale of liquor, but at some point over the years this clause was dropped. Inverness, however, still did not approve of strong drink and the Inverness Improvement Association saw to it that beer and wine were the only things allowed. Jack Mason mentions that a new Fourth of July tradition was born when the Grandfather’s Race on the main street ended up at Ham Martins’ bar.

In 1940 they sold their Rendezvous to Jess

(known by many as Pat) and Alice Gabriel who renamed it Hunter's Lodge. The war broke out soon afterwards and Hunter's Lodge became a moneymaker, popular with the soldiers stationed at the RCA station and Coast Guard installations on the Point. Maidee Moore tells of the well-chaperoned dances that were held for the soldiers. The women were bused away from the dance and the soldiers locked in for at least half an hour after the women left. She said that the women who wanted to fraternize with the soldiers went to the Hunter's Lodge instead. The lodge had another claim to fame. Jess's father Antonio Jose Gabriel lived with them – one of the oldest men in the United States. [See below.]

In the early days of 1948 the building burned to the ground. It was replaced by a one-story building. The new Hunter's Lodge opened on May 22, 1948. The Baywood Press of May 15 describes the beautiful new modern kitchen and says that the entire place, both the main room with the bar across one side and the dining room, as well as the kitchen are all paneled in knotty pine. The Gabriels continued to operate Hunter's Lodge until 1957. In June of that year they sold it to Gladys Z. Oko (wife of Capt. Adolph Oko, who owned the rest of the west



*Hunter's Lodge (bar and restaurant) as of 1940, probably during the Fourth of July races.*

side of downtown Inverness) and George Ludy. It was renamed Drake's Arms and remodeled into a proper English type pub. The Inverness Bagpiper of July 1958 says, "There will be no juke boxes, pin-ball machines or other vulgar entertainments, but

Antonio Jose Gabriel, who died in February 1945 at the ripe old age of 108, lived with his son, Jess Gabriel and daughter-in-law Alice, who owned what was then known as Hunter's Lodge, in Inverness. There were stories each year in the Independent-Journal as he grew older, sometimes with contradictory facts. It was clear that he loved to cook, and that he was a chef at a prominent San Francisco Hotel, although one year it was the Palace and another year it was the St. Francis. When the war started he registered for the draft in order to volunteer as an Army cook. They did not take him up on the offer. He was born on the Isle of Flores in the Azores and arrived in the United States around 1854. He was able enjoy a snort of liquor, roll his own cigarettes and read his beloved Bible without glasses up to the day he died and had rarely been ill. He just "stopped" two months and two days short of his 109th birthday.



*Vladimir Nevl in front of his restaurant.*

darts, checkers and chess will be played as in all English pubs. It will have an Elizabethan motif and will be decorated with old weapons and armor. In English pubs, unlike American ones, meals and tea are served in a family room. The Drake Arms will be arranged similarly, with a fireplace in each room." A new sign hand-carved and painted by Olema artist Warren Chase Merritt representing the coat of arms of Sir Francis Drake was installed with the words "Goode Foode – Fine Companie". In October about 700 people attended the "christening" of the new pub.

In 1963 Capt. Oko died and three years later his wife sold everything to Charles Mel and moved away. We then come to Vladimir's. Vladimir Vincent Nevl was known to most everybody in town as "Vlad". In Vlad's obituary, Cecil Asman says that Vladimir came to Inverness in 1960 and ran a restaurant on the other side of Inverness Way (see Corners #2 in the Spring 2013 issue) for several years and then moved to the current

location. The Christmas issue of the Baywood Press from 1962 – 1966 has an ad from Drake's Arms and Vladimir's Moravian Restaurant wishing everyone a Merry Christmas. In one issue it was embellished to "Ye Olde Drake's Armes." It is not clear when Vladimir Nevl actually bought the restaurant. By April 1967 Jack Mason was commenting in the newspaper that Vlad had erected a redwood fence in front of the Inverness pub and changed the name from Drake's Arms to Vladimir's Moravian Restaurant and that he now owns the restaurant. At some point he put up a sign saying "Vladimir's Czech Restaurant since 1960." In 1984 Michael McLean expanded the outdoor dining facilities and added redwood fence and gingerbread trim on the doors and windows. Although Vladimir himself died in 2008, Vladimir's it is still going under the management of his daughter Vladia.

INVERNESS FOUNDATION, MUSEUM COMMITTEE  
ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13

**Mission:**

The Jack Mason Museum of West Marin History is a small archive and museum created to build upon local historian Jack Mason's extensive history collection. The Museum collects and preserves materials pertaining to the history of the Point Reyes and Tomales Bay region. Our mission is to enrich the community through exhibits, publications, outreach programs and research opportunities. We seek to inspire public interest in West Marin history and to highlight its connection to contemporary life.

**Membership:**

The Museum has a separate membership from the Inverness Association, and anyone who is interested in the history of West Marin is welcome to be a member of the organization. Our membership list is about 220.

**Museum Committee:**

The Museum Committee, a part of the Inverness Foundation, is responsible for maintaining the Archives and Museum. Tom Branen is Chair, Mary Kroninger is Secretary and Meg Linden is Treasurer. Michael Mery is the Inverness Foundation representative and we appreciate both his historical knowledge and his practical knowledge. Other committee members at present are Andrew Buckingham, Carola DeRooy, archivist at the Point Reyes National Seashore, Dewey Livingston, local historian, and Ann Read. There are several active volunteers and more would be welcome.

**Exhibits and publications:**

We have had four exhibits at the Museum during the last fiscal year:

- **Inverness Park: An Historical View:** This exhibit featured photographs of Inverness Park and White House Pool. Meg Linden coordinated the exhibit and acquired scans of old photographs from many people from Inverness Park. This exhibit, initially intended for March – June 2012, remained up through the end of July.
- **Inverness Yacht Club: Celebrating 100 Years:** This exhibit included early photos of the yacht club and its founders, the time between 1942 and 1949 when it was owned by Del Bender and used for other things, and the reestablishment of the yacht club and its rededication in 1950 as well as some more recent photos. Meg Linden prepared this exhibit with assistance from Ken Emanuels, Commodore of the Inverness Yacht Club
- **Hometown: Growing Up in Point Reyes Station:** This was an expansion of a small exhibit of Codoni Family Photographs prepared by Dewey Livingston for the West Marin Commons building for Western Weekend 2012. Photos of the family at D Ranch and at their beach cottage were added as well as additional Point Reyes Station photos.
- **Thank Goodness It Didn't Happen:** This exhibit prepared by Louise Landreth and Meg Linden features what might have happened had development plans of the 1960s actually materialized and includes material on the West Marin General Plan of 1964-1971 and maps and diagrams of plans for development of the National Seashore for active recreational use.

There was an Open House for each exhibit. The Museum produced three issues of *Under the Gables*, our newsletter, with background stories on the subjects included in the latter three exhibits as well as some general articles about Museum operation and other topics.

**Website:**

The website has been expanded with additional features. The website is [jackmasonmuseum.org](http://jackmasonmuseum.org)

**Upgrading the Museum and Archives:**

We are participating in the American Association of State and Local History's STEPS program in

order to examine our policies and procedures and bring them closer in alignment with recommended museum practices. As a result of this examination we have:

- Replaced the old rug in the Museum/Library reading room and replaced the old dehumidifier in the Archives room
- Added data-loggers to track the temperature and humidity both in the Archives room and in the attic of the Gables where some Museum materials are stored. This information will be useful to determine if we need to take additional measures to preserve the materials in the Archives
- Established priorities for new equipment and supplies to preserve the Archival material more effectively.

**Research and inquiries:**

We get a number of inquiries and reference questions each year. For example, we received an old album with photographs of the Boy Scout camp in Inverness. Several months later a researcher came to us looking for such photographs and Dewey has been working with him to share our materials and for him to share his research with us.

A number of people have asked for background information on the home that they own.

**Historians' work:**

We are fortunate to have Dewey Livingston, the West Marin historian involved with our Museum and on the committee. During this year he completed the work at the National Park Service to be sure that their records accurately reflect items originally owned by the Museum and copied for their files. He has also given many talks based on the M.B. Boissevain photographs. Some of these will be at the Museum in October through December in conjunction with an exhibit at the Red Barn in the Park. He has created a brief history exhibit on Point Reyes Station which is posted on the Grandi Building next to the tourist information center.

**Collecting and preserving the Archives:**

During this fiscal year we received about 25 donations this fiscal year and the cataloging on these is complete. We are also trying to catch up on cataloging gifts from previous years. Currently there are 6,420 records in our database, with 471 added this year.

**Jack Mason's publications:**

Last year we reported that we had purchased the rights to Jack Mason's publications from his daughter Barbara McClellan. We intend to create print and electronic versions. Meanwhile use of one of the articles has generated a \$100 use fee.

**Finances:**

We ended the year with \$6,190.11 in the checking and savings account and \$21,276.00 in the joint account with the IF, for a total of \$27,462.11.

Income was \$14,105.11 (including a transfer of \$5180 from joint account to cover the repair and maintenance work on the archives building). It included \$6,150 in membership dues and \$1,068 in various other contributions, \$1,000 from the fundraiser given for the museum by Saltwater and Point Reyes Books as well as other miscellaneous sources.

Expenditure was \$16,023.33 (including the \$5,180 mentioned above), \$3,150.38 for the new rug for the Museum, and \$2,025 for Dewey Livingston to complete important research work at the Point Reyes National Seashore Archives identifying which photographs originally came from the Museum. Use of these photographs through the Seashore will result in royalties to the Museum. Other expenses were normal.

Respectfully submitted, Meg Linden

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Jack Mason Museum of West Marin History  
P. O. Box 94  
Inverness, CA 94937

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

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