

# Pacifica Tribune



Jean Bartlett photo

One of the treasures at Manning's Prints Old & Rare, is this turn-of-the-last-century advertisement for the Ocean Shore Railroad.

## Volunteers keep train on track

By Jean Bartlett

Tribune Writer

Businessman Vivek Naik – author of the nonfiction work, "Get More Done Easily: Time Management Mindsets and Simple Exercise to Organize Your Day and be More Productive in 5 Days" – states: "That the secret to productivity is single tasking. Focus only on one task at hand and don't start another till that one is completely done."

"The secret to productivity is single tasking. Focus only on one task at hand and don't start another till that one is completely done."

This advice has been the mantra of the all-volunteer Pacifica Historical Society, certainly since the turn of this century when they agreed to dedicate their time and energy to "preserve and restore" the 1910-built Little Brown Church. That volunteerism saw to it that the more than \$500,000 needed to renovate the building became a reality and on August 22, 2015, the members of the PHS held the Gala Opening for the Pacifica Coastside Museum at the Little Brown Church. Their 15 years of dedicated work, with all eyes on the prize of Pacifica having its very own museum in a building of Coastside historic significance, was divided up into

numerous committees, each with a focus on a specific task. These PHS tasks included bringing the "saving" of the Little Brown Church to Pacifica voters in a ballot measure and history won the day. Residents voted that their church cannot be

torn down, moved or encumbered. Tasks also included not only massive fundraising events and all the work needed before, during and after to successfully present those fundraisers – but ideas for those fundraisers.

There were rummage sales, concerts, PHS costumed and characted Sam Mazza Castle tours, and partnering events which included the 2011 Winters Tavern Throws a Prom for the Little Brown Church.

Pacifican and PHS member Kathleen Manning, a former history teacher and the owner of Manning's Prints Old & Rare, served as the President of the PHS from 2004 to 2015. In between dedicating hours of volunteerism towards Little Brown Church projects, she also kept her ear to the ground for other endeavors of historic significance. In 2004, when railcar restoration expert Jeff Millerick and railroad historian John Schmale discovered an abandoned, nearly destroyed, 1909-built Holman passenger car in a backyard in Sebastopol, they called Kathleen. They knew this car was a final remnant of the Ocean Shore Railroad – a once dream railroad that travelled coastside from San Francisco, through today's Pacifica and on towards Santa Cruz. (It ran from 1907 to 1920.) Kathleen took the news to the PHS and the members of the Society agreed that the last passenger car of the Ocean Shore RR needed to come home. In 2004, money was raised to do intense stabilization repairs on the 20-ton car so that she could then be placed on an 18-wheeler and driven the 65 miles to Pacifica.

In 2012, PHS Board members – who included Clorinda Campagna, Shirlee Gibbs, Helen James, Rick Della Santina, Mary Dougherty, Shirley Drye, President Kathleen Manning, Vice President Erika Rigling, Secretary Pat Kremer and Treasurer Jerry Crow – voted that once the restoration work on the Little Brown Church was completed, all rummage sale money would be dedicated to restoring Car 1409. By golly they have stuck to their guns and because of it, when restored, Car 1409 will once again welcome folks to "Scenic Pacifica." ("Scenic Pacifica" was coined by late Pacifican and PHS Board member Carl McCarthy. Carl is also known for giving Pacifica its National Historic Landmark site at Sweeney Ridge.)

Kathleen Manning and Shirlee Gibbs chair the Car 1409 rummage sales. The rummage sales take place the second Friday and Saturday of each month at the Museum, bring an average of 300 shoppers and raise approximately \$2,000 monthly. With the close-to \$75,000 the rummage sales have raised to date, along with the \$25,000 donated by Pacifica's first city manager, Karl Baldwin and his wife Eileen, bids are now being sent out to contractors.

"Pacifican Scott Lindner is the project director and he has been there from the start," Gibbs said. "We could not have gotten this far on the restoration without him. We have a summary of exactly what has to be done and we have specific areas for contractors to bid on. By the time this story runs, those 'contract' letters will have been mailed."

The rummage sales are a lot of work and both Manning and Gibbs do the hauling of items to be sold that come their way through donations, estate sales and personal sleuthing. They also clear it all out at rummage sale end.

"Thankfully we've got a couple of wonderful guys who do the heavy lifting," Gibbs noted.

Included among the constant "rummage sale" volunteers are Mary Dougherty and Kathy McGuire, as well as Marv Morganti and Jean Brink. The latter two cashier the 8 hours needed both rummage sale days every month.

The stick-to-itiveness of the Pacifica Historical Society to save, present and celebrate our history is a constant inspiration.

"Whatever is needed," Gibbs said, "we'll get it done."

*Tribune writer Jean Bartlett can be reached at [jean.bartlett.writer@gmail.com](mailto:jean.bartlett.writer@gmail.com).*



Jean Bartlett is a longtime Bay Area features writer: Pacifica Tribune, Oakland Tribune, San Jose Mercury, San Mateo Times, Portraits & Roots, Marin Independent Journal, Twin City Times, Ross Valley Reporter, Peninsula Progress, Coastal Connections, Contra Costa County Times, Bay Area Business Woman and Catholic San Francisco. Contact her through her website, [www.bartlettbiographies.com](http://www.bartlettbiographies.com).