

SERVICES PROVIDED TO THE COMMUNITY

by the Martinez Historical Society

The Martinez Historical Society is managed by a 15-member Board of Directors. The Society operates these facilities:

- The Martinez Museum
- The Local History Library
- The Martinez Archive of Historic Photographs & Other Source Documents.

The Society's all-volunteer staff provides the following services to the community:

Museum Facilities

- Operation of the Martinez Museum (in the 1890 Borland House). No charge for admission.
- Permanent Exhibits that display the history of the community.
- New rotating exhibits. These are displays kicked off with an Open House to attract visitors to the Museum. These visitors also contribute to the revitalization of our historic downtown business district.
- Special tours of the Museum for out-of-town visitors, groups, clubs, school children and VIP's.
- Museum gift shop featuring items with Martinez themes:
 - Local history books,
 - Historic post cards
 - Note cards.
- Special events held in the 1890 building: nonprofit/club meetings, presentations, ceremonies & weddings.

Research & Library Facilities

- Maintain a Local History Library – a collection of published materials relating to Martinez history.
- Maintain an Archive for the preservation of Martinez historic photos & other source documents – of unpublished materials.
- Provide assistance to visitors as follows:
 - Utilizing the collections in the Library and Museum archives to research Martinez history.
 - Researching one's house, business, school, church, or service organization.
 - Unearthing new discoveries about family histories, family trees or family plots in local cemeteries.
 - Researching the Museum's impressive collection of thousands of historic photographs.
 - Helping new business owners research and discover the history of a commercial building, its prior uses and the fees to which a new tenant and his/her business will be subject.
- Intensive research by volunteers at the Society to reconstruct burial records lost by the County, City and cemetery managers over the last 180 years to enable families to find the graves of their loved ones.
- An ongoing digitization program to scan thousands of historic photographs of community members, family gatherings, school children, sporting events, parades, civic ceremonies and more.
- An Oral History Program. Video and audio tape is used to capture and preserve first-hand accounts of local history by the City's old timers with the help of volunteers from five groups: Alhambra Creek Restoration & Environmental Educational Collaborative (ACREEC), Alhambra Valley Creek Coalition, Friends of Alhambra Creek (FOACO), Muir Heritage Land Trust and Environmental Studies Academy (ESA).

Education in the Community

- Place historic markers (bronze plaques) on notable buildings and historic sites for informational purposes. Plaque ceremonies are coordinated with property owners, the City or E Clampus Vitus.
- A new initiative to create storyboards or interpretation panels in Martinez to inform the public of important historical events and locations in the community.
- Quarterly lectures or multi-media presentations for the public (in addition to those listed above) on a variety of subjects. Examples: Martinez Postcards, Hands-on Workshop with Historic Kaleidoscopes and more.

- Providing volunteers to speak about our fascinating history at public events. Examples: the Homecoming Parade, the Youth Baseball Parade and the Nancy Boyd Park re-dedication ceremony.
- A bi-monthly newsletter. The newsletter publicizes current programs, exhibits and special events. It also features well-researched and professionally written articles on Martinez history in each issue.
- Creating educational brochures and pamphlets:
 - Brochure about the Museum, its exhibits and its collections. Brochures are placed in locations such as the Juror Assembly Room, the Martinez Tourist Bureau, City Hall and the Amtrak Station.
 - A brochure about the Society, the importance of supporting it, and information for new members.
 - A self-guided walking tour of downtown Martinez.
 - A Martinez Cemetery brochure of the town's pioneer cemetery dating back to the 1830s.
- Major publishing projects involving extensive original research. Among these are the following books:
 - *Images of America: Martinez* -- a pictorial history of the City
 - *The Borland Home: a History of the House & Guide to the Museum*
 - *Martinez: A Handbook of Houses & History*
 - *To All Enquiring Friends: Nantucketers in Martinez and San Francisco*
 - *Martinez: a California Town* (newly republished)
 - *A Little of This and a Little of That Cookbook*
 - *Mailed from Martinez* – a post card book now underway (to be published in the future)

Education in the Community via the World Wide Web

- Operates three websites. The main site receives 200 visitors per day and is used as a resource by local schools prior to field trips by school children to the Museum, the Cemetery and our historic downtown.
 - Main Website: www.martinezhistory.org
 - Historic Home Tour: www.MartinezHomeTour.com
 - Oral Histories: www.MartinezOralHistory.org (undergoing revision & expansion)
- Operates three Facebook pages:
 - Historical Society: www.facebook.com/MartinezHistoricalSociety (10,000+ fans)
 - Martinez Museum: www.facebook.com/MartinezMuseum
 - Historic Home Tour: <https://www.facebook.com/MartinezHomeTour>
- A YouTube channel:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jshfeq2_Zbw&ab_channel=MartinezOralHistoryProject
- A recently instituted an Instagram page to reach a younger demographic in Martinez:
<https://www.instagram.com/martinezhistoricalsociety/>

Schools & Academia

- Sponsorship of the Teacher of the Year award issued each year by the Chamber of Commerce.
- Age-appropriate tours of the Museum for 3rd graders in the Martinez School District.
- Placement of materials on the website for school children to access when writing reports.
- Scholarship program for high school seniors.

Events to Foster Community Engagement

- Ceremonies to unveil historic markers in the community.
- Annual Crab Feed -- with prizes designed to raise awareness of local merchants in our historic downtown.
- Holiday Open House to enable the public to view the Christmas decorations at the Martinez Museum.
- Holiday Frolic. The Museum becomes a “gingerbread house” where children do crafts and learn history.
- Afternoon Teas. These are formalized or ritual gatherings for the traditional small meal called afternoon tea.
- Historic Home Tour. The tour showcases notable historic homes in Martinez and provides the public with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to enjoy the interior of these privately-owned homes. The John Muir Association, the National Park Services and sponsors such as the Martinez Refinery all participate.
- Conducted group tours of the historic downtown business district with buildings dating back to the 1860s.

Capital Projects

- Planning & fund-raising for the restoration of the 1878 Old Train Station, the attachment of the 1901 train car to the building, and the establishment of a regional museum and exposition center at that location.

- Working with the Contra Costa Community College District to enlarge the fire-proof vault which is needed to ensure that there is safe, secure storage facilities to preserve irreplaceable unpublished papers & small artifacts donated to the Society by the community.

