



RIO VISTA MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

www.riovistamuseum.com

October 2025

Message from Museum President Peter Hamilton

One thing I've been enjoying lately is going to Trivia Night at Hap's Taps. The Rio Vista Library organizes the event. And if you'll allow me a not so humble brag, my team has done pretty well. It's a fun event, and I encourage you to check it out. It takes place on the second Thursday of the month, starting at 6 p.m. With this in mind, here is some Rio Vista trivia you may or may not know.

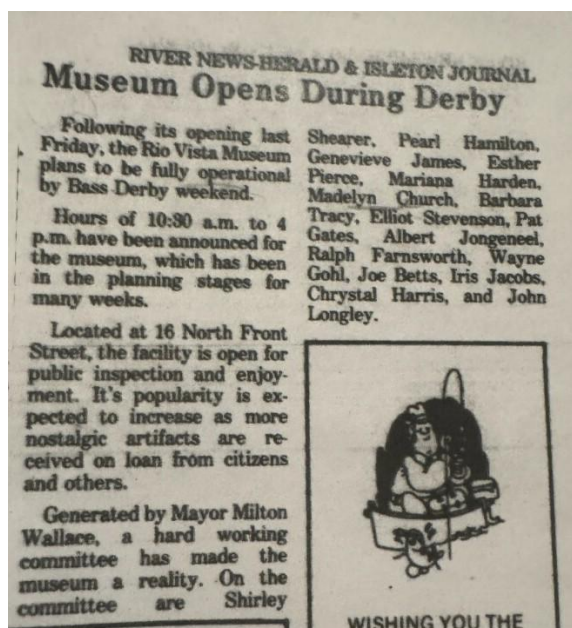
[Answers on p. 3]



Let's start with two easy ones.

- 1) What do the call letters to KRVH stand for?
- 2) Who made national news with a famous visit to Rio Vista in the fall of 1985?
- 3) What George Lucas movie filmed a scene of the main character attempting to fly down Main Street?
- 4) What street is named for the man who gave the land for what is now Rio Vista?
- 5) What unusual thing happened in the winter of 1976?
- 6) In 1914, what was Mabel Kalber the first person to do? (HINT: It was the only time only one person did it.)
- 7) What is the official name of the Rio Vista Bridge?
- 8) When did the Trilogy development begin in Rio Vista?
- 9) What was discovered in the Rio Vista area in 1936?
- 10) What do the names of all the streets in Homecoming have in common?
- 11) At one time, what did both Walt Disney and Howard Hughes express interest in buying?

The Rio Vista Museum Turns 50!



Many of you may know the story of the beginnings of the Rio Vista Museum. But for those who might not, it bears retelling.

It was in 1975 that people across the United States began to think about how their communities could participate in the nation's upcoming 1976 Bicentennial celebration. That year a group of seventeen local citizens gathered together and formed the Rio Vista Museum Association. After much discussion it was the consensus of the group that the purpose of the association would be to collect, safeguard, and publicly display documents, photographs, and objects of historical significance to the city of Rio Vista. It was felt that the time was right to open a local museum, to coincide with the country's 1976 Bicentennial.

Once the news of the association got around town, members of the community began contributing a variety of historical artifacts. Little by little, the walls began to be covered with images of pioneers, houses, businesses, and steamships from Rio Vista's past.

...it's Bass Derby time

We have highlighted stories by Small Town Schmitt in the past. Here is an abridged version of one of his fish stories from "Bass Derby Days."

Schmitt and a pal were working for the Derby by patrolling the river watching for any cheaters when they got a distress call about two bait fishermen who needed help.

They were in a very small boat and were anchored just off the dairy. When we arrived, they were full of beer and having a heated argument...the outboard motor was stuck solid. They wanted a tow to the dock but I had a better suggestion and said, "You guys are in a very good spot so why don't you keep on fishing and we will check on you from time to time. We will tow you in when you are ready to go."

One of the beer-happy guys said, "That is a great idea. I will dump the two gallons of holy water I bought from the priest into the river and the blessed fish will come to us."

About an hour later they got a terrific strike. "It works! It works! The holy water works and I got the winner on the hook," shouted one of the fishermen, and they both proceeded to fight the fish for more than an hour to get it in the boat where it continued to fight, beating them to a pulp. One of the men took a gaff hook to the fish's head and got his partner in the arm. The other guy attacked the fish with an ice pick and did a good job of punching holes in his partner and the boat.

We towed them back to the dock and then the fun began. Looking like two survivors from a bomb blast they carried the big fish to the judges stand.

"We got the biggest fish and we want first prize."

"That is a salmon, not a bass."

"The rules say for the biggest fish, wanna read them?"

"I know what the rules say and this is a bass derby. A salmon will not qualify."

The fishermen stood their ground and would not leave the platform. The argument got more heated and the crowd began to take sides, and the judges held a quick conference. "We rule the salmon out of the bass derby but will give you a consolation prize for the biggest fish." The fishermen refused the offer but the crowd thought it was fair and booed their disapproval of the fishermen. The fishermen got the message and asked, "What is the consolation prize?"

"A gallon of Rio Vista's very own Special Portagee port wine."

"Make it two gallons and you got a deal."

The crowd roared with laughter and settled down to wait for the weigh-in of the biggest bass.

What Buildings Should We Honor?

Rio Vista is rich with history. Although the Museum houses many interesting relics from the past, much of Rio Vista's history lies outside the museum walls. In fact, you probably travel daily past many places that played a significant role in our town's history.

To honor the 50th anniversary of our museum, the board has established a program and process to honor significant buildings and properties in our town by marking them with memorial plaques. The first building to be honored was our own museum building which was originally the town blacksmith shop. The next several buildings to be honored have been selected and are awaiting property owner approval.

Specific criteria have been established by the board. Businesses and places of worship shall be prioritized. Private homes may be selected by exception. Buildings should be associated with the lives of persons important to the Rio Vista area, California, or national history, and should be at least 100 years old. Exceptions may be made by the museum board of directors if deemed to be of appropriate significance.

It is hoped that many plaques will be revealed in the near future, but for now, you can see an example mounted on the front wall of the Rio Vista Museum building.



Do You Have a Collection to Share?

If you have visited the Museum in the past couple years, you have probably noticed and perhaps admired the collections displayed in the glass case near the front door. The current display is a small part of Dana Lapp's cobalt blue glass collection.

If you would like to share your collection, please call Mary Anne Peterson at (707) 374-2102.

**Cookies and treats
needed for the
Christmas Faire Bake
Sale!**



OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

Peter Hamilton	President
Janet Blegen	Vice President
Carlos Zepeda	Treasurer
Judith Stinson	Recording Secretary
Melissa France	Membership Secretary
Mary Anne Peterson	Corresponding Secretary
Renee Tingey	Past President
Suzanne Goldberg	Newsletter Editor
Dana Lapp	Jeanette Williams
Jo Martin	Ed Woodruff
Josiah Tingey	

Trivia Answers: 1) Rio Vista High School; 2) Humphrey the Whale; 3) Howard the Duck; 4) Bruning (after James Bruning); 5) 1 1/2 inches of snow fell; 6) Graduate Rio Vista High School; 7) Helen Mader Bridge; 8) 1996, with the opening of the first nine holes of the golf club; 9) The Rio Vista Natural Gas Field - the largest natural gas field in California; 10) They are the last names of Rio Vista City Council members or mayors; 11) Foster's animal collection

Upcoming Events



Come join us for **Trick or Treat at the Museum**

Friday, October 31st

4:00 to 7:00 p.m.

All are welcome!

Come celebrate our
50th Anniversary!
Special displays at the
Museum
Cake and goodies at our
January meeting!



**OLDE TYME
CHRISTMAS FAIRE**
Saturday and Sunday
December 6 & 7

Rio Vista Museum
16 N. Front Street
Rio Vista, CA 94571