

January • Volume 24 • Issue 1

WHAT TO LOOK FORWARD TO AT SHHS

January 29 @ 4pm: Is My House Historic?

Join architectural historian Christine Madrid French, Executive Director of Napa County Landmarks, for an engaging discussion on how to determine whether your home or building is designated historic under regulations governing preservation of significant structures. Participants will learn how to research the history of their homes using maps, archives, and other local resources.



Christine directed the Modern + Recent Past Program at the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and served as the Director of Advocacy & Programs at San Francisco Heritage. At the University of Florida, she taught courses at the College of Design, Construction and Planning and co-directed the first statewide survey "Mid-Century Modern Architecture in Florida (1945-75)," which was awarded a Documentation Award for Excellence by Docomomo-US. [More about Christine.](#)

February: Our Indigenous People, The Wappos



As part of the ongoing celebration of St. Helena's incorporation, various civic groups and churches were invited to install a month-long exhibit in the St. Helena Library's display cabinets. For February, the Historical Society is using this space to focus on the area's indigenous people, the Wappos.

The Wappo tribe lived a peaceful life, in harmony with the environment. The rich bounty of the land provided for all of their needs for thousands of years. They lived in villages that reached from the Napa Valley to Lake County into Alexander Valley. They were known for their beautiful, tightly woven baskets, for a deep respect for nature and their elders. That all began to corrode with the arrival of the Spaniards. Converting the native people to Christianity, along with the building of the missions, brought about the tragic end of the Wappo culture. **Look for this display at the St. Helena Library in February.**

April: New Exhibit—Wellness

On loan from Napa County Historical Society is their exhibit on Wellness. Even before it was a wine destination, people traveled to the Napa Valley to relax and rejuvenate in the hot springs resorts. They ranged from rustic to luxurious, from Napa to Calistoga. Bottled mineral water and geothermal wells—these were natural resources found throughout Napa Valley. Along with world-class hospitality and bucolic scenery they drew city dwellers to the Valley.



At the Heritage Center Museum | 1255 Oak Avenue

The History of Brewing Beer in St. Helena

Research Director Mariam Hansen



The Making of Beer Barrels circa 1891, by Jon Neidert

Anyone who's made wine knows that beer is an essential ingredient. Long days combine with harvest season's soaring temperatures to create optimal conditions for an icy-cold brew.

In the 1900s, not only were Napa Valley's immigrants growing wine grapes, they were also growing hops to make beer. Beer culture arrived largely with German and Central European immigrants who knew that beer was a daily food staple, not a vice. For a time, Napa Valley was the home to a thriving beer culture!

There was also an important social component associated with beer gardens and communal drinking. The German and European beer lovers opened saloons and social halls. Beer gardens were community anchors; they hosted musical events, festivals, and family gatherings. The German immigrant population had their own social club and activity center, Turn Verein Hall.

Founded in 1854, Turn Verein chapters still exist today for those interested in German culture and activities. A chapter in Sacramento still celebrates with a robust Octoberfest celebration every year. Beer created public social space, especially for working men. This contrasted with the private, elite spaces later associated with wine culture. Barrel-making was a special craft.

In 1857 Fred Bender and Henry Schwartz were selling lager beer in bottles in Napa City

Napa City Brewery was selling cream ale in Napa in 1862. German Gotthelp Barth's 1867 ad notified the public that he was selling Gundlock's Bavarian Brewery bock beer at the Napa German Hall. He built a new brewery in 1880, making 1,000 gallons a day. The beer industry was on the move!

The 1881 History of Napa and Lake Counties states that 63,500 gallons of beer were made in Napa County in 1880.

St. Helena Brewery was built in 1870

By 1874, 500 gallons of beer/day were produced by German Edward Fautz. The brewery was located on Spring Mountain Road just past the York Creek Bridge. At that time the road was called Brewery Lane.

Louisa Fautz was known as a “stirring business woman”

After Fautz died, his widow, Luisa, kept the brewery going by leasing it to Emil Wackerling. She bought 20 acres in Yountville near the entrance to the Veteran's Home and built a saloon, restaurant and summer garden. This caused a conflict with the home manager in 1894, when the home residents boycotted their canteen over a decision to withhold residents' pensions. St. Helena Brewery beer was not allowed at the canteen, so Mrs. Fautz retaliated by luring home residents to her saloon nearby. The Veterans home said they were protecting veterans from “designing creatures”. On Sept 11, 1895 the St. Helena Brewery burned to the ground. No beer was made there again. On Nov 7, 1895 Louise Fautz died at the age of 50 after a long illness.

Next up in the St. Helena Brewery story: George G. Daeweritz

Born in Germany, George G. Daeweritz came to this country in 1881, located in San Francisco, and worked at Wieland's Brewery. He planned a stone building next to his saloon on Hunt Street that would be 30 feet by 30 feet in size. The apartment in back of the saloon was to be converted too. The first brew from the new St. Helena Brewery was poured on July 1, and George delivered it in his custom-built wagon. A few months later he was fined \$25 in Calistoga for peddling beer without a license.



Coopers were skilled craftsmen

Competition came from Rainier Beer Company in Seattle



St. Helena Bottling & Cold Storage was founded by Ewer, Anderson, Cook and Sink in 1905. Shipped from Rainier in Seattle to St. Helena by rail in carload lots, each barrel contained 31 gallons. It was bottled at the facility on Madrona at Spring Mountain Road.

George Daeweritz died on July 10, 1913. The following year his wife Emelie sold St. Helena Brewery to

Dominic Tillmann, the agent for Golden West Brewery of Oakland. Tillmann added a large delivery truck to the brewery equipment. Tillmann began to advertise St. Helena Brewery's "Diamond Edge Steam Beer". The city council granted a liquor license to the brewery saloon on July 3, 1914.

Prohibition and industry decline

At midnight November 30, 1918, all breweries in the US closed down by order of the president. Making beer required wheat and barley, which was in short supply and must be used to feed the people—that was the argument. There were 53 breweries in California affected by the order, including St. Helena Brewery.



Prohibition ended in December 1933.

In May 1933 Mr. Tillmann brought an investor to town with interest in reopening the brewery that had been shuttered since 1918. Later in that year Mr. Tillman died and in 1935 Mary Tillman sold the property to Helene Paetsch.

Dano and Shirley Mattiuzzi bought the property from Paetsch in 1957

They demolished the brewery and Gee Gee's Saloon in 1958. A caterpillar pulled the soft stone walls down. Amid a cloud of crumbling stone, old square nails were found inside. Frank Creasey bought the stones. The Mattiuzzis built a new cocktail lounge, naming it Dano's. The St. Helena Brewery story comes to an end.

Gone but not without lasting impact

By the early 20th century, the beer industry was suffering. Farmers were experiencing hop blight and competition from other regions. Prohibition was an important contributor. Beer had become associated with the working class, while wine, as the more elitist beverage, had begun to take over its market share.

Beer's lasting sociological impact

- Helped establish Napa as an agricultural economy
- Created jobs
- Created early immigrant communities
- Shaped labor systems still visible in later vineyard work
- Defined public social life that paved the way for elite tourism boom



Craft beer zealots have come a long way from a can of Bud

We've come full circle

Beer is in vogue once again, and we still need beer to make wine. The number of craft breweries has grown dramatically, with hundreds opening annually, reaching more than 9,000 by the late 2010s. Craft beer's share of the total beer market was driven by demand for unique flavors, local flavors and the emergence of tap rooms.

2024 was the first year since 2005 with more brewery closures than openings



Overall craft beer production has declined. It's a market that's matured, going from rapid expansion to one that's more stable. Beer, along with its wine, whiskey and spirits cousins, is experiencing declines. The boomers are drinking less and younger generations are often not drinking at all. Brewers need to be innovating, looking for new product categories, like non-alcoholic beers and cocktails. A recent perusal at Fieldworks Brewery in Berkeley confirms that they've gotten the message—they've got a wide range of near beers, shrubs, fruit-flavored drinks and creative mocktails with exotic names.

Like those immigrant beer makers in the mid-1850s, today's brewers know it still comes down to supply, demand and meeting the tastes of the sophisticated beer drinker.

VOLUNTEER/VISIT THE HERITAGE CENTER

Open the first Saturday of the month from noon-4pm. We're looking for volunteers to help staff the Heritage Center on the first Saturday of the month. Noon-4pm shifts. Contact shstory@shstory.org, 1255 Oak Avenue, St. Helena, CA 94574



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