



Daisy MacCallum's library, photo by Nikolas Zvolensky.



GETTING TO KNOW THE KELLEYS

by Marguerite O'Brien

I recently completed my time as the collections intern at the Kelley House Museum as part of my MA in Museum Studies coursework at the University of San Francisco. The project I was assigned was to help

catalog a collection left to the museum by a descendant of the Kelley family, Rosemary Maulbetsch, the great-granddaughter of William and Eliza Kelley, who passed away in 2017. The portion of the Kelley-

Maulbetsch collection I was working with comprised five boxes of family letters, documents, photographs, and a few personal items. I began with an inventory of all the boxes. Inventorying is an important first step, not only so we know what there is, but so the museum can determine what will best suit its mission and be most beneficial to future researchers.

Going through these artifacts helped me get to know the Kelley family better. I discovered Daisy MacCallum had an adopted daughter, Gwenlian, the orphaned niece of Alexander MacCallum. Gwenlian had a fierce court battle with Daisy and Alexander's children, Jean and Donald MacCallum, over her share of the inheritance. Through the reading of letters and court documents, I witnessed the disintegration of Gwenlian and Jean's relationship as Jean disputed Daisy's willing one-third of her estate to Gwenlian. The break between them was all the more heartbreaking given Gwenlian's letters to Jean sharing her struggles as a single parent after a divorce. [Read more](#)



NEW EXHIBIT

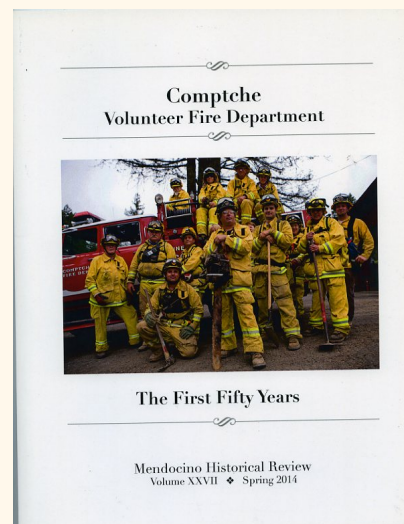
Good Mourning

Mendocino: Funeral Rites and Customs

Exhibit runs through Nov. 27
Members-only reception Friday,
October 21, 5 PM - 6 PM

"In this world, nothing can be said to be certain except death and taxes."

The Kelley House Museum invites you to explore one of life's certainties—death—through a new exhibit on



BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Comptche Volunteer Fire Department

by Katy Tahja

Comptche, a small rural community in a mountainous area of Mendocino County did not have a fire department until 1964. After several devastating fires and a strong sense of self-sufficiency this group of volunteers is now a centerpiece of the town, strongly supported

funeral customs observed throughout the Mendocino's history. Far from an exploration of the macabre, the exhibit reveals the artistry of headstone carvings and mourning parlor décor. Marvel at the business side of burial, as shown on undertaker's ledgers and plot invoices. Historic photos reveal the funeral practices observed amongst Mendocino's diverse cultures, including one of a Taoist altar and another of Pomo baskets used for the deceased. This photo is of James Milliken's casket in the mourning parlor, 1909.

**LEARN
MORE**

by the residents. \$15

***The Volunteers: History
of the Mendocino
Volunteer Fire
Department***

by Walt McKeown and Linda Wilson

Recounts the great fires since 1870, countless heroic rescues and the camaraderie and struggles involved in keeping an all volunteer force intact from 1887 to the present day. \$15

**BUY
BOOKS**

A PEEK INTO THE PAST



**First Mendocino High
School Gym**

August 28, 1937 – The high school's new gymnasium was dedicated with a dance that was open to the public. *The Mendocino Beacon* reported that

almost 550 people attended the dance, which was sponsored by the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). The PTA President was Mamie Mendosa.

Dancing started about 9 o'clock, and "the floor is in excellent shape

and will accommodate a larger crowd than any hall on the coast." Music was provided by the popular Coast Harmonizers who played the latest dance melodies "till the wee hours of the early morning." The ladies of the PTA prepared a chicken supper which was served at midnight on the lower floor of the building.

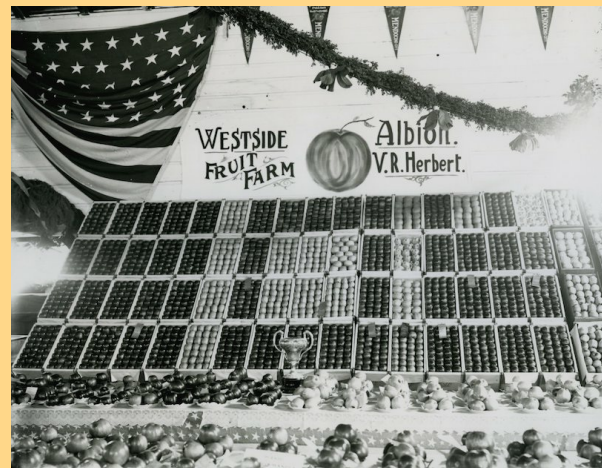
"Door prizes have been donated by various business houses in Mendocino and Fort Bragg. Electrical pieces such as a percolator, hot point iron, Silex coffee maker, a toaster, and other appliances will be awarded to the holder of the lucky numbers, other prizes include ten gallons of gas, a large box of candy; and merchandising orders complete the list."

Admission was "the usual price of 75 cents for men and 25 cents for ladies. Figured at the rate of six hours of dancing, that is a cost of only 17 cents per hour per couple. Cheap enough for the value received." **Read more.**

Albert Brown Promotes the Apple Fair

September 6, 1914 – Albert Brown, secretary of the Farmers & Apple Growers Association, began a trip across Mendocino County to promote the upcoming Mendocino Apple Fair. Albert was the founder of the apple show and the driving

force behind the construction of Apple Hall, which was built in 1912 for produce exhibits including the fair.



Albert's first stop was the south coast where he met with farmers and orchardists about their exhibits for the late October fair. From there, Albert took the Merchants Cup, the trophy that was awarded each year for the best apple display at the fair, to Ukiah to be exhibited for a few weeks. The trophy would then be taken to other Mendocino County towns to promote the fair.

V. R. Herbert of Westside Fruit Farm on Albion Ridge had won the Merchants Cup during the previous two fairs. In addition to the trophy, cash prizes were awarded, ranging from \$1 to \$40, for the produce exhibits, which included pumpkins, nuts, rhubarb, and many more fruits and vegetables. The first prize for pear displays was 20

pear trees. There were also contests for the best homemade apple products, including Apple Jelly, Marmalade, Cider, Vinegar, Pickled Apples, and Apple Pie.

The Apple Fairs continued in Mendocino for several years, but by the mid-1920s, Boonville had become the host of the Apple Fair.

**READ THE
BLOG**



HAVE AN EXHIBIT IDEA?

We are planning our featured exhibits for next year and would love to hear from you if you have ideas or suggestions for what you'd like us to display. If you are interested in helping curate or set up exhibits we'd also love your help.

**EMAIL
US**



SEEKING BOARD MEMBERS

The Kelley House Museum is always seeking new board members. If you are committed to the Kelley House's mission to preserve, protect, and share the rich history of the Mendocino coast, we'd love to meet you.

Board Duties & Responsibilities

- Uphold the mission of the organization.
- Attend monthly KHM board meetings.
- Volunteer at events.
- Maintain a Kelley House membership.
- Talk about the Kelley House with your friends, family, and co-workers!

**TELL ME
MORE!**

MEMBERSHIP HAS ITS PERKS

Keep enjoying the perks of membership by renewing today. If you have already renewed, consider giving a gift of a membership to a loved one or friend. Choose a membership level that suits your pocketbook. As our thank you, you will receive your choice of a beautiful digital photo from our archives.

**JOIN OR
RENEW**

**Kelley House Museum &
Research Center**
(707) 937-5791

**EMAIL
US**

