



## **NEW EXHIBIT: DOIN' A LITTLE DOODLIN': NAPKIN ART FROM THE SEA GULL CELLAR BAR**

by Marguerite O'Brien

Chuckle at the humor and admire the creativity of the napkin art on display at the Kelley House Museum's newest exhibit. During the 1970s-1980s, the Sea Gull Bar & Restaurant was a community hub and the birthplace of Sunday Afternoon Napkin Art gatherings. These sessions brought together local illustrators and sketchers, creating a true artists' colony and producing wonderfully unique pieces centered on different themes.

Although the Napkin Art gatherings had a core of local artists, everyone was welcome and encouraged to participate. The exhibit reflects this with its wide array of pieces of all skill levels by a variety of artists and restaurant goers of all ages. Thanks to the generous donation of David and Cathy Jones, you'll find hundreds of different creations by dozens of artists who utilized pen, ink, paint, collage, quilting, and even rusty nails! Among the most interesting media were a photo negative inserted into the napkin and a plastic straw protruding from a nostril drawn on the napkin.

My favorite napkin in the exhibit is a simple design with a quote in black ink, "We don't want cake, we want the whole fucking bakery!" This civil rights protest slogan has continued political relevance today. (And of

course, who doesn't love a good pastry reference?) The wide variety of napkins in the exhibit ranges from trenchant social commentary to simple and fun doodles. The exhibit takes a brief look at the history of napkin art from its first wave during the Italian Renaissance to its role as a form of protest art in contemporary times.

These singular creations are complemented by prints of James Maxwell's storybook characters paintings, originally created for the Sea Gull Cellar Bar. Blank napkins and markers will be supplied so visitors can create their own art to add to the exhibit.

*Exhibit runs through May 28, 2023*

*Museum hours: Thursday - Monday, 11am - 3pm*



### **EVENT: NAPKIN ART NOSTALGIA**

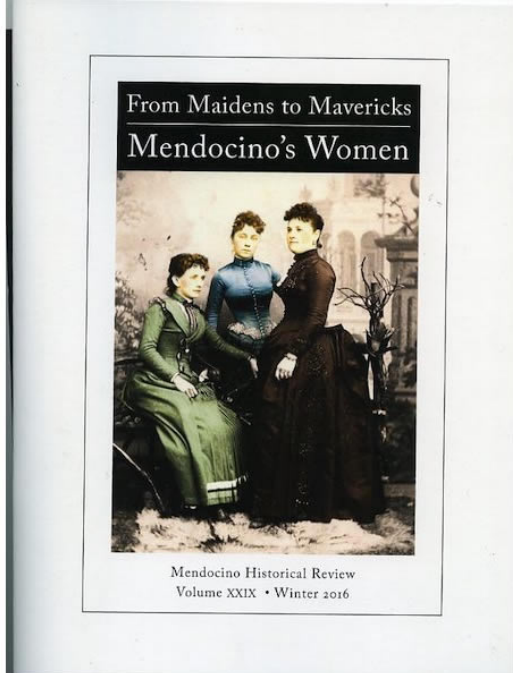
Saturday, April 15, 4pm – 5:30pm

\$5 members, \$7 non-members, pay at the door

Recall the golden age of Napkin Art in Mendocino with David Jones, former owner of the Sea Gull Restaurant and Cellar Bar, and some of the most prolific napkin artists. Hear from artists such as James Maxwell, who also created the Sea Gull Fairy Tale Paintings, and be regaled with reminiscences

and stories while they take us on a tour of their favorite pieces. At the end of the event, the audience is welcome to draw their own napkin art to include in the current exhibition at the Kelley House Museum.

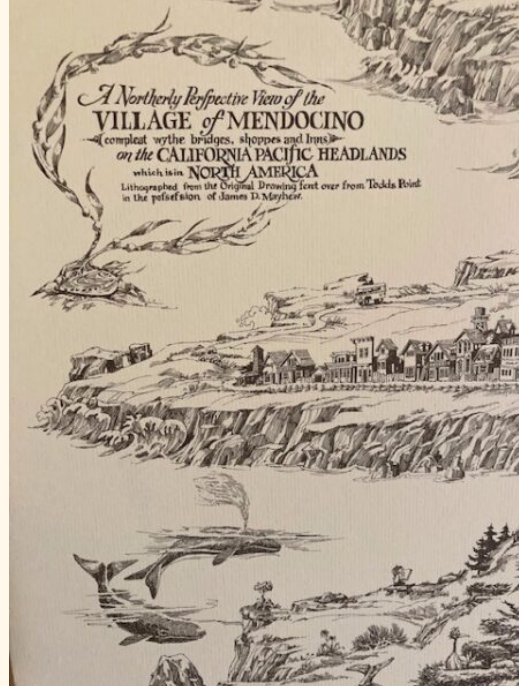
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**BOOK OF THE MONTH  
FROM MAIDENS TO  
MAVERICKS: MENDOCINO'S  
WOMEN**

by Molly Dwyer, \$25  
Celebrate Women's History Month by learning about the many strong and remarkable women from Mendocino's past. The author uses diary entries, letters, and newspaper articles to reveal their lives and accomplishments. Chapters cover everyone from indigenous women to 20th century heroines, and 50 photographs show the women in action and repose.

**BUY**



**POSTER OF MENDOCINO  
1975**

by J.D. Mayhew, \$23

Artist and cartographer J.D. Mayhew created this whimsical map of the coast from Mendocino to Fort Bragg. You'll enjoy discovering all the hidden details, including whales, hippie buses, and even his own house on Todd's Point. Mayhew loved cartooning and we love this delightful rendering of our coastline. (If you purchase in the museum, save \$3!)

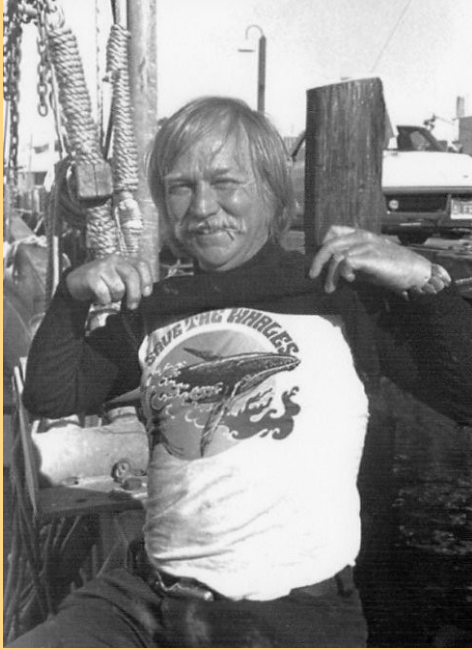
**BUY**

**A PEEK INTO THE PAST**

**THE CALL OF THE SEA**

Every March the annual Mendocino Coast Whale Festival celebrates the migration of the Pacific Gray Whales with their newborn calves from





western Baja to the Bering Sea. But this celebration would not be possible without the 1976 Mendocino Whale Wars that helped to save the then-endangered species. The following excerpt spotlights J.D. Mayhew, an artist (shown here in the T-shirt he designed) who used his work to help save the whales. The Kelley House Museum thanks his granddaughter, Shana, for supplying us with prints of the 1975 Mendocino Coast **map** created by J.D. Mayhew.

"With the sea as his backyard, J.D.'s deep affection for these great whales grew as he amassed an important body of work, primarily etchings masterfully printed on handmade papers using copper and zinc plates, until recent years when he's included watercolors and other mediums.

J.D. became profoundly concerned for the plight of the then-threatened Gray and Humpback whales. Early on he began taking on an active role in the defense of the whales from Russian and Japanese whale hunters along the Mendocino coast. He forged strong friendships with other likeminded artists concerned for the whales and was greatly instrumental in the public recognition of the dangers to whales and the subsequent recovery of these great marine mammals.

For over 20 years he operated the Mendocino Wildlife Gallery he'd founded in which he showcased emerging wildlife artists and championed many environmental groups. These artists today speak of J.D. with reverence, warmth and love." [Read more.](#)  
(Written by Connie M. Korbelt and originally printed in the Mendocino Art Center's Fall 2003 *Arts & Entertainment* magazine.)

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## **LES DAMES DE LA NUIT**

By Molly Dwyer

Mostly lost are the histories of single women who came to Mendocino, likely from the streets of San Francisco. They

did not come to settle, but rather to work and support themselves. "No fewer than twenty-eight saloons have been documented between 1855 and 1907 in the town of Mendocino," writes researcher Margi Gomez, and "drink was not the only attraction. In addition were the *fast houses*" with women "imported by the big lumber companies..." These popular places were marked on local maps as "FBH," which is to say, "fashionable boarding houses."



"In most cases, the saloon would operate on the bottom floor...with 'lodging' upstairs," according to local historian Katy Tahja. "What were your options?" Katy asks. "You could be a seamstress going blind over your work..." or "a laundress up to your elbows in soapsuds." But if you worked as a prostitute, "you had your own money, which you were encouraged to spend on clothes, jewelry, perfume, fun stuff. Plus you were taken care of, if you worked for a good madam...." [Read more.](#)

Pictured is Catherine Coyle, owner of a boarding house at Kasten and Ukiah. Excerpted from ***From Maidens to Mavericks: Mendocino's Women.***

[READ THE BLOG](#)

## SPRING RENEWAL

Spring is a great time for membership renewal! If you have any questions about your membership, are interested in legacy estate planning, or want to figure out how to give a membership as a gift, we are here to help.

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