

The Acorn



Newsletter of the Miwok Archeological Preserve of Marin

MAPOM Co-founder Sylvia Thalman (1927-2012)

by Ralph Shanks, MAPOM president

MAPOM members will be saddened to learn of the passing of Sylvia Thalman due to a stroke. Sylvia was the beloved co-founder of MAPOM and a person of admiral ability.

A long time San Rafael resident, Sylvia was the daughter of a cardiovascular doctor at the Mayo Clinic. Sylvia grew up in Rochester, Minnesota and graduated from the University of Wisconsin, class of 1949. At the university she met the love of her life, Robert N. Thalman. She and Bob celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in 2011.

After moving to Marin County, Sylvia developed a deep, life-long interest in studying genealogy and developed an interest in archeology, which became her life-long passion. Starting with a community effort to preserve the Coast Miwok village archeological site at Miller Creek Middle School in 1970, Sylvia, with fellow academic Don Thieler, went on to co-found the Miwok Archeological Preserve of Marin (MAPOM) to teach Native American skills and educate the public about tribal culture. Along with Don Thieler, she was the driving force behind the creation of the Coast Miwok village at Kule Loklo in the National Seashore.

For over 20 years Sylvia spent her weekends
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Sylvia at 2008 Kule Loklo Big Time

Betty Goerke recalls Sylvia

"I first met Sylvia in 1969 when she, Don Thieler, Jill Gregoire and I worked on a San Francisco State University archeological dig behind Miller Creek School in San Rafael. The work was under the direction of archeologist Charlie Slaymaker, who worked us hard. In the glare of the sun we each tried to find a shady corner in our own 2 meter square. Chief among the volunteers and students were Sylvia and Don, who were having the times of their lives: laughing, questioning, learning, and most of all trying to help preserve what was left of the Indian village."

"I was out of the country for a year. When I returned in 1970 Sylvia, Don, Jill and I met to discuss what we could do to help Charlie with his publication about the site, promote responsible archaeology, and protect the site behind Miller School. It was decided we would call ourselves the Miwok Archaeological Preserve of Marin. I am still on the Board 42 years later, testimony to the power of Sylvia and Don to see it through to the end."

Sylvia Thalman

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at Kule Loklo, teaching as a part of a curriculum of Indian skills classes. Sylvia is remembered by many for teaching countless visitors how to make beads out of sea-shells, how to start cooking fires using traditional Miwok hand tools and showing visitors the reconstructed Coast Miwok village.

Sylvia worked closely with California Indian experts and scholars researching the genealogy of the remaining Coast Miwok Indian people in a body of work that led to federal recognition of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, an independent tribe. For her efforts, the tribe designated her an Honorary Elder of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria. Sylvia co-authored Interviews with Tom Smith and Maria Copa with Mary E.T. Collier, The Coast Miwok Indians of the Point Reyes Area, as well as several scholarly papers on Miwok traditional skills, genealogies and records of internments.

In 2005, Sylvia received the Bay Area Jefferson Award from the American Institute for Public Service for her work to increase awareness of the Coast Miwok Indians and for making a difference in her community.

Sylvia is survived by her husband, Robert N. Thalman, her children, Mark C. Thalman (Danielle), Heidi T. Myron (Wayne), Leslie Thalman and David B. Thalman (Ann), her brothers David Barker and Robert Barker, her six grandchildren and her six great grandchildren.

A celebration of Sylvia's life will be held at the Corinthian Yacht Club, 43 Main Street, Tiburon on March 4 from 2 to 4 pm. MAPOM members are urged to attend.

In lieu of flowers, Sylvia's family requests that donations should be sent to:
Miwok Archeological Preserve of Marin (MAPOM)
Box 481, Novato CA 94948, or to your favorite charity.

In memory of Gae Canfield (1931-2011)

Gae was a valued Board member of MAPOM for many years. We appreciated her thoughtful ways, her sweet disposition and kindness to all. Best known as an artist, her pictures were exhibited in numerous shows.

Gae also wrote articles and poetry for poetry magazines. Gae was a librarian for over 10 years at Richmond Unified School District, the author of "Sarah Winnemucca of the Northern Paiutes," published by the Univ of Oklahoma Press, and more recently "The Tin Cup" a children's story. We will miss her.

Betty Goerke



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The Acorn is produced and distributed semi-annually by the Miwok Archeological Preserve of Marin. MAPOM is a volunteer based, nonprofit 501 (c) (3) organization and welcomes new members and public input. We also encourage members to join our Board of Directors and help our ongoing mission to educate with MAPOM programs such as the California Indian Skills classes, and through our publications.

Annual MAPOM membership fees are \$10 for seniors, full-time students and first-time MAPOM students; \$20 for individuals; and \$25 for families. *The Acorn* is received as a membership benefit. For more information and to join MAPOM, visit our website at www.mapom.org, or call (415) 472-3202.

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What's Happening

by John Littleton, Class Coordinator

In tribute to the founders of MAPOM - our dear Sylvia Thalman not the least - and all those who have contributed so much of their time and energy over the past years, we're partnering with the College of Marin Community Education Department to offer California Indian studies to a wider audience. We've outlined a series of eight classes to begin at the Kule Loklo Big Time on July 21st, 2012 and finish at Big Time a year later in 2013. The program can lead to a College of Marin Certificate of Completion in California Indian Studies for any who complete at least five of the eight classes. While the instructors are committed to the dates, nothing's set in stone as yet and changes may occur as we move along. The proposed program looks like this.

1. **The Introductory Class** Betty Goerke and Ralph Shanks will provide an overview of California Indian culture, history and basket weaving traditions. Big Time follows. Saturday, July 21, 2012 from 9:00-12:00 in the Point Reyes National Seashore.

2. **California Indian Baskets** Ralph Shanks will lead a field trip to the Hearst Museum in Berkeley to learn about their substantial basket collection. Thursday, August 16, 2012 from 9:00-1:00 at the Hearst Museum

3. **Weaving A Pomo Style Coiled Willow and Sedge Basket** Ed Willie will offer a two day basket weaving experience at Kule Loklo. Saturday and Sunday, September 15-16 from 9:00-4:00 at Kule Loklo

4. **Introductory Flintknapping** Ken Peek will guide students as they work with obsidian and learn about stone tools. Saturday, October 20, 2012 from 9:00-4:00 at Kule Loklo.

5. **Indigenous Cultural Practices** John Littleton, will offer a broad overview of California Indian lifeways through the presentation of hands-on artifacts, storytelling, games, tools, foods, environmental ethos and worldview. The option to join in a Native led Round-house Solstice Ceremony that evening will be available. Saturday, December 22, 2012 from 9:00-4:00 at Kule Loklo.

6. **Introduction to Paleo Technology** Tamara Wilder will offer experiences in: making fire; weaving string; practicing with hunting tools; playing games; learning basic stone techniques; and grinding pine nuts. Saturday, March 16, 2013 from 9:00-4:00 at Kule Loklo.

7. **Petroglyphs and Miwok Cultural History** Betty Goerke will guide participants up Ring Mountain to learn about its fascinating petroglyphs. She'll offer an appreciation for the local plants and animals that were utilized with an overview of the Miwok people who lived here. Saturday, May 18, 2013 from 9:00-1:00 in Tiburon.

8. **Present State of Tribal Affairs and the Certificate of Completion Ceremony** This final class will round the year with presentations of California Indian cultures today. The College of Marin Certificate of Completion Ceremony will then be held. Big Time follows. Saturday, July 20, 2013 from 9:00-12:00.

Registration through the Community Education Offices won't be available until after May 14th for the summer classes and August 6th for the fall offerings. You can enroll then at 415-485-9305 or at www.marin.edu/CommunityEducation. Keep posted through our website at www.MAPOM.org for updates. We hope you're as excited about this innovative program as we are.



PO Box 481, Novato CA 94948

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Plans for new series of MAPOM classes
offered jointly with College of Marin

Thank you to these generous donors to MAPOM

The Board of Directors of MAPOM would like to thank the following for their very generous donations in response to our 2011 appeal letter (donations received so far).

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