## Life in LAMORINDA

### Local Silk Artist at Orchard Nursery

As part of the Harvest Festival

By Cathy Tyson



afayette artist/designer Anna ✓ George will be painting in public view, presenting her work, and fielding a few questions at Orchard Nursery's Lazy K Boutique on October 11 from 1:00 to 3:00, and again Oct 19 from 11:00 until 2:00.

Shoppers will get a rare view of how she builds her richly colored, one-of-a-kind painted designs.

She creates wraps, scarves, shawls, lovely silk shawl-jackets, also couture silks for elegant wear. Ms. George donates one scarf for every ten purchased for women losing their hair due to cancer treatments.

"Sometimes it takes several days to produce one. There are layers of color which dry, are rendered fast, and then receive more paint. Like with fine art painting, I apply color until I have something satisfying. I use French paints made for silk, and fine Chinese silks. I'm self taught in silk painting, though I studied the fine arts in college and later sold my paintings and original décor for the home," said Ms.

"I want to be happy and productive, and I'm happy when I'm painting. It's been gratifying - the scarves have been very well received. And it's quite a pleasure when I'm able to witness the excitement," she continued.

She also offers a men's line of silk artwear, many of which are stone-washed. Ms George tumbles a heavier crepe with stones two times to produce an extreme softness, which has a matte look. She works in Charmeuse, China Silk,

the California Nevada railroad

and a fire that destroyed the

main house. Except for the land

that Theodore Wagner had

given to Orinda as a school site,

the property became part of the

holdings of the East Bay Water

leave California, but moved to

Berkeley and later to Glen

Ellen. Pat Adams, who was

raised in Berkeley, never knew

her grand-father George Wag-

ner, who died young, but col-

lected stories from her

George's wife, and still pos-

and documents for her visit to

Wagner Ranch and proposed to

give some of them to the

Orinda Historical Society. The

Society's President, Lucy Hupp

Williams, took the pictures to

make copies and plan to return

the originals to Adams, "That's

where they belong," she said.

Adams brought pictures

sesses most of her archives.

Josephine,

The Wagners did not

Company.

grand-mother

Habotai, and Silk Satin. She is also currently working on lingerie and Alpaca. For more information see her website, www.californiapaintedsilk.com.

Ms. George notes she's "all for expanding the arts" and hopes her demonstration will inspire when she appears twice as a part of Orchard Nursery's Harvest Festival.

The Festival which features music and garden themed activities has something fun for every weekend from October 5th through Halloween. On the schedule are musical groups from classical guitar to smooth jazz to a steel drum band, a rose expert, pie contest, home composting seminar and, of course, "primp your pumpkin" decorating class. Check out these events and many others every Saturday and Sunday throughout the month. Be sure not to miss arguably the largest collection of unique pumpkins around, scarecrows and farm animals. For a complete schedule go to www.orchardnursery.com.

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## Pat Adams at Wagner Ranch

By Sophie Braccini



house Photo courtesy og the Adams'

Por the first time in her life Pat Adams, the great granddaughter of Wagner Ranch founders Ida and Theodore Wagner, set foot on the remaining sixteen acres of preserved lands that once belonged to her family.

The "Friends of Wagner Ranch," the Orinda Union School District, which now owns the land, and the Orinda Historical Society were there on September 16th to greet her. It was a perfect opportunity to recall the history of Orinda and highlight the importance of preserving landmarks for future generations.

Theodore Wagner was a Surveyor General for the State of California. The couple bought the original 241-acre property in the 1880s and built first a small ranch, then an elegant two-story mansion that was the center of Orinda social life at the turn of the century.

Wagner wanted the property he called Oak View Farm to be a show farm and self-sufficient ranch. The property included a forge, a dairy barn, a brick kiln, a carbide gas plant and a winery.

The family lost most of its assets in different business ventures, capped by the failure of

Toris Jaeger has been a naturalist with the Orinda School District for thirty years. Wagner Ranch has been the property of the Orinda school district since Theodore Wagner gifted it more than 100 years ago. It is the stage on which Jaeger and Wagner Ranch teachers have taught generations of children about the wonders of natures and living history.

> "This place is a unique opportunity for us to teach our children about living history," says Jaeger, "the children can explore native plants and reflect on the life of Native Americans; they study early California and pioneers and imagine their lives on their property; they study biology in the ponds and creek and botany in the garden."

The Friends of Wagner Ranch say the property contains about 2000 different plants, many of which are natives like the Santa Barbara sedge, the long, fibrous roots of which were used in basket weaving by Native Americans, and some quite rare species like the original black walnut that are hard to find nowadays. The group hopes to transform the property into a non-profit entity in its own right, which would allow them to raise money to preserve it and make sure that the landmark is preserved for the future generations of Orinda children.



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Pat Adams (pointing) discovers the foundation of the ranch that her great grand-father established in Orinda in 1884, with husband Rich, Toris Jaeger (left) and a member of the Orinda Historical Society Photo Sophie Braccini

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### **Orinda City Business**

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"I think this was the biggest July 4th parade held in Orinda's history," stated Mayor Victoria Smith as she presented certificates of appreciate to Kate Wiley and Jim Luini of the Orinda Association, which organized the many event before and on the 4th; Harriet Ainsworth, a longtime Orinda volunteer who served as the Grand Marshal of the parade; and Mark Maxson, who has provided vintage car transportation for the Council members during the parade for many

Then it was down to business as usual, as the five-member Council and staff discussed a variety of policy matters. The

group agreed unanimously to name changes for the thoroughfares leading to the Wilder housing development and the California Shakespeare Theater. One will soon no longer see a large green sign for Gateway Boulevard after emerging from the Caldecott Tunnel and heading toward Orinda. Both Gateway Boulevard, which traverses Highway 24, and Upton Road, which leads into the housing project, will be renamed Wilder Road. The road leading to the Cal Shakes theater grounds has been modified from Shakespeare Festival Way to California Shakespeare Theater Way.

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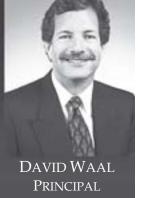
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