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## Council updated on Historical Society year in review

By Sora O'Doherty

Orinda Historical Society (OHS) president Alison Burns presented the annual review of the year from May 2023 to May 2024 to the City Council on July 2. Burns reviewed social and educational events that the Society has hosted or participated in, beginning with the group's first Open Evening held Dec. 1, 2023. Burns noted that the outreach event was a great success, mentioning the non-stop guitar music and songs by Patrick and Luke Burns, her husband and son.

During the reorganization of OHS, school programs were halted, but are now gradually coming back. Schools coordinator Laurie Smith was unavailable for several months, but Burns reported that there was a very successful Sleepy Hollow Kindergarten session last May, and this May Burns and Smith went to Glorietta Elementary to give a presentation to 89 third-graders.

"Laurie also made around 100 cookies, all in the shape of an O for Orinda," Burns added, and "our two student

volunteers, Miramonte juniors Ethan and Ryan Lee, produced 90 workbooks which were distributed to all the students."

Downtown walking tours, led by Kay Norman, former OHS President and longtime board member, have also resumed. Burns and Norman took a group of ten people from the P.E.O. Sisterhood, a philanthropic educational women's organization, on a tour in early June. The tour began at the Community Center, formerly the 1924 2-room school, and ended at the de Laveaga 19th century train station on Bryant Avenue.

Burns also reported on the progress of a historical marker for Orinda Motors. "Two years ago, Bill Waterman, leader of the Orinda Historic Landmarks Committee, asked the OHS to produce a plaque for the exterior of Orinda Motors," she stated in her report. "We managed to get a \$1000 grant from the Orinda Community Foundation" Burns stated.

OHS found Orinda

resident, Scott Cuyler, Creative Principal and Co-Founder of Square Peg, who was, Burns added, "kind enough to design this for us, pro bono." Burns informed the council that the OHS has recently taken possession of the plaque and will be organizing a small ceremony when it will be installed on the exterior of Orinda Motors in the fall in celebration of the garage's centenary.

Burns was also pleased to say that the OHS has been changing their display window more often than the twice-a-year required. The window has been changed frequently to reflect current seasons and events. OHS plans to celebrate the opening of the Cal Shakes season in September with another window display.

The OHS also received funds from the Orinda Woman's Club, which has enabled them to buy two new signs to put outside the Museum during opening hours, as well as a grant for software and grants from Sacramento-based company, California Re-

vealed, to preserve Orinda's history as part of their Digitization and Preservation Assistance program.

Under the grant, old issues of the Orinda Sun newspaper are being scanned, in addition to 41 historic audio video tapes. Once the digitization is completed, the originals will be returned to the OHS and the materials we be available to the public through California Revealed and links on the OHS website.

During the past year the OHS initiated a project to purchase a suitable museum collection management system to improve record-keeping and tracking of museum objects and research items. "After extensive research we selected Catalogit and were able to purchase it thanks to a grant received from the Orinda Woman's Club. We are currently in the process of implementing the product, which will also allow us to expand our web presence and make more of our collection easily accessible to the public," Burns concluded.

## New Orinda business focuses on sunglasses for children

By Sora O'Doherty



Photo provided

Megan Miyamoto's life plan was not to create sunglasses for children, but after she had a daughter and her optician aunt in Los Angeles educated her about the damage done to children's eyes by sun exposure at early ages, she wound up doing just that. She learned that 80% of UV exposure occurs before the age of 18, and can lead to serious eye health concerns such as cataracts and eyelid cancer.

The management consultant went out to purchase sunglasses for her daughter, but found that styles suitable for Asian children, who tend to have shallow nose bridges, were rare. "Ray Ban made a low-bridge fit, but only offered it in limited styles and colors," Miyamoto noted.

She also looked for private labels, but couldn't find what she wanted; so, she found a great designer to work with to produce sunglasses in styles and colors that both kids and parents would like. She now produces and sells sunglasses in two sizes and four colors: deep matcha, lychee cream, mochi crumble, and yuzu. Her daughter got the first pair. Miyamoto held a launch event in June at the Quarry House in Wilder.

Miyamoto's glasses are designed in Europe and are being manufactured in Asia. She has conducted most of her meetings with designers and manufacturers via the Zoom meeting platform. Her marketing plan includes the use of influencers and grass

roots word of mouth.

Her brand, Miko, is available online and in limited retail shops, including Min'Na in Berkeley. The Pacifica frame comes in one size for littles and another that fits bigger children and smaller adults. Although they are designed for people with low nose bridges, they are comfortable on almost everyone, Miyamoto says.

The design includes enhanced built-in support and high quality polarized lenses that reduce glare. The sunnies, as Miyamoto calls them, are also hypoallergenic for sensitive skin, and her company is a local Asian American and Pacific Islander woman-owned small business.

The sustainable acetate frames can also be used by opticians for prescription lenses. Each pair comes with a hard case and a microfiber cleaning cloth. She also offers accessories, such as straps and wet/dry bags. She is also exploring the use of recycled materials.

While continuing to work in technology full time, Miyamoto describes her sunglass business as a "passion project." "I am passionate about kids products and education," she says.

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