

Summer 2025 GHS Museum Newsletter

As the summer is flying by, we wanted to share with you a few amazing 2025 museum moments...

Foothiller Rosie the Riveters?

During WWII, our maternal grandparents lived in San Diego. While both of them were raised on farms in Nebraska, during the Great Depression, they lost their farm and relocated west.

During the war, our grandmother Edna Day Ellison worked for the Army Air Force first as a General Mechanics Helper then as an Aircraft Worker, first in Sacramento and later in San Diego. She worked in assembly and repair and engine overhaul. Yes, she was definitely a “Rosie the Riveter”. We found this information from our grandparents’ income tax records, which yes, we have.

We realize that there must be many Foothiller women who worked in airplane or other war effort factories in San Diego or elsewhere. If you know of a Foothiller who was a “Rosie”, please share the information with us.

We have purchased a replica Congressional Gold Medal, which in 2024 honored these women more than 80 years after their contributions. Now we are honoring them in our War Memorial showcase.

Please email us at ghsmuseum@guhsd.net with any information that you have about “Foothiller Rosie the Riveters”. We want to add them to the display!



Museum Visitors

In 2012, members of the Class of 1942 visited the campus to celebrate their 70th Anniversary and to tour the first museum. 13 years later, one of those same class members visited a much larger and newer museum.

In April 2025, Jean Close Shaw visited, thanks to the efforts of GUHSD District employee Steve Melendez and Joy Parasio, Class of 1984. Joy is one of Jean's caregivers and shared with Steve how often Jean talked about her years at GHS. Steve contacted us to arrange a visit, and as they say, "the rest is history!"

At 100, Jean is our oldest alumnus visitor, so far. Joy shared a timeless memory of Jean's with us: "One day, she was eyeing Robert Shaw, Class of 1942, who was in the GHS band. So, Jean decided to learn to play the trombone and joined the band. There you have it....she got her man. They were happily married for many decades. Jean described Robert as 'Funny and the most wonderful man.'"

What an amazing Museum Moment, right?



Wonderful volunteer Jerry Botts, Class of 1970, with Connie, Lynn, Steve, Joy, and Jean

Class of 1955's 70th Reunion

After their July 21st luncheon in El Cajon, three class members visited the museum with their families to relive and share their Foothiller memories, especially enjoying the displays, the *El Recuerdos*, the yearbooks, and the *Foothiller Echoes*, the student newspapers. As Lynn told them, this is the favorite part of our volunteering in the museum.



July 2025 Barbara Donahoo McCauley,
Alice Webb Johnson, and Earlene Pratt Bartling

2025 Sponsorship Opportunities

We continue to welcome your support of our efforts to preserve, display, and celebrate our Foothiller history

Mural Donors: **We again thank these generous mural donors:** Jean Landis, Class of 1936, Trust, 2 donations; Barbara and John Buckton, Class of 1962, Dottie Emerson, Class of 1971; Shelby Miller, retired Principal Assistant, 2 donations; Jim Spackman, Class of 1958; Bill Ashman, retired GHS Principal; Tom Bloomer, Class of 1967; Bill Woolman, Class of 1962; Sharon Galvin Davis, retired English teacher; Jim Stieringer, Class of 1959; Barbara Smith McCluskey, Class of 1953; Suzanne Geba Hawes, retired English teacher; Tom Bloomer, Class of 1967

2025 Museum General Fund Donors: **Tom Bloomer, Class of 1967; Carolyn Watson Beckie, Class of 1957; Janet Churchill Glaze, Class of 1954; Shelby Miller, retired GHS Principal's Assistant.**

We Welcome Your Support

WASP Mural

We continue to welcome donations to fully fund the cost of the WASP mural, which will honor our two historic Women's Air Force Service Pilots: Jean Landis, Class of 1936, and Frances Coughlin, Class of 1938. Both women received the Congressional Gold Medal in 2009. Their mural will be on the wall adjacent to the Astronaut mural, facing the east side of the pool and visible from the museum as well. \$9000

More Campus Bronze Plaques

As you know, we have many bronze plaques celebrating our history throughout the campus. We would like to add these:

Eddie De Coito Old Gym Floor Plaque. During the summer of 2024, the original 1937 Old Gym floor was replaced and with it a painted remembrance of the court being named the "Edward DeCoito Court". We'd like to honor Eddie, a longtime classified employee and volunteer, with a small bronze plaque on one of the walls: \$500

Astronaut Mural Plaque below the mural will give more detail about our 3 historic alumni: Cost \$1500

WASP Mural Plaque below the mural give more detail about our 2 historic women: \$1500

1959 Rose Garden Sign: Our thanks to Custodian Groundsworker Sal Samaniego for all his efforts transplanting the roses and caring for the roses and the two planters for many years. A small sign will commemorate Sal's efforts to preserve these 66 year old roses: \$500

GHS Museum General Fund

We welcome donations as we try to "empty" our storage room and file cabinets and create displays that include items that capture our history. We now have portfolios of the 16x20 athletic photos that were previously framed and in storage. We plan to purchase more portfolios or notebooks for the smaller photographs in our file cabinets to make them more accessible to visitors. \$500

Also, we have purchased 2 lockable noticeboard cases, one for each entrance door for museum notices, such as our visiting hours. \$150

General Fund: miscellaneous office supplies and digital support. \$1000

To make a financial donation online, visit our website at foothillermuseum.com and use the gold donate button. (Please email us at ghsmuseum@guhsd.net to share the cause you are supporting.)

OR write a check payable to GHS Educational Foundation, including the purpose of your donation, and mail to

**Connie and Lynn Baer
5990 Avenorra Dr.
La Mesa, CA 91942**

Frank Zappa Research

In January we received an email from Steve Apple, who after visiting our website, wanted to visit in person: "I'm primarily interested in orchestra and/or band related photos, musical recordings and documentation from the Fall of 1954 through the summer of 1955."

During his first Saturday visit, we realized he was interested in researching Frank Zappa, who attended GHS his freshman year. During his Saturday visits, Steve found documentation of Zappa's freshman year at GHS that we had not known. The most dramatic one is a 1955 yearbook photo of Frank at the drums in the Blue and Gold Band on the stage of the 1937 Old Gym.



Before Steve's second Saturday visit, he emailed us, "Thank you very much for all the help last month in your wonderful museum as I researched Frank Zappa - much appreciated! I'd love to visit you again this Saturday to see the 1950s era music records you mentioned you have/had in storage."

More treasures awaited as he found a March 30, 1955 program "The Concert Band and the Red Robe Choir in Combined Concert" in the vocal music showcase. Under "Band Personnel", Frank Zappa is listed as one of the 5 "Percussion" members.

After his visits, Steve said, "Thank you so much for your tremendous labor of love in maintaining such a wonderful museum! Many, many dozens, if not hundreds, of serious Frank Zappa fans concentrated primarily throughout Europe and North America have now seen photos of Mr. Zappa in the Grossmont 1955 yearbook as well as his name in the March 1955 concert program I encountered in your fine museum that I subsequently photographically shared on the internet this year - all thanks to you!"

Visitors on a "personal quest" enrich our knowledge of our amazing Foothiller history. (We have 1955 El Recuerdos available for sale for \$40, plus \$20 mailing cost.) For those wanting more information about GHS and its history, visit our website at foothillermuseum.com and be sure to visit the GHS History page or visit our Footsteps pages with our monthly columns and newsletters and a few programs.

GHS Museum Student Visitors

This year, 2400 GHS Foothillers visited the museum in their English classes. Many of them returned again and again during lunch on Fridays to see more of our amazing history. There are too many moments to share, but we will share two.

When visiting with his English class, Freshman Kayden Padilla shared with us that his great-great grandfather had a trophy in the museum; well, after some searching, we discovered that Bert Kohnhorst, 1951-52 Track Runner, was honored on the amazing 1950s Perpetual Athletic Trophy, which celebrates one athlete from each year from 1951 to 1959 in each boys sport: Tennis, Cross Country, Basketball, Football, Track, Wrestling.



Freshman Kayden Padilla in front of 1950s Athletic Trophy

Later looking at the 1921-1983 Track Records assembled by alumnus Mel Gapen, in 1983, Bert held the 220 yard track record of 21.5 recorded at the CIF Southern Section in May 1952. The fastest GHS time ever in the 100 yard was run by Gary Guglielmetti with a time of 9.8 in 1964. Bert had two meets with times of 9.9 both in March and April of 1952, one at Hoover, one at GHS.

This year, the students' excitement and enjoyment of the museum and its displays was evident every Friday. At the end of May, on the last day we were open to student visitors, several stopped by to say goodbye and to have us sign their yearbooks...remember that?



May 30, 2025 Lynn, Senior Adem Beta, Junior Noor Uldeen Alsaed, Connie

Closing Comments

As the summer days whirl by, we wanted to again thank our wonderful district carpenter Tony Patton for his help, guidance, and artistry in the creation of the GHS Museum, starting with our first museum, which opened seventeen years ago.

Tony will be retiring this year. As Lynn said, "We will really miss him! What will we do without him?"

Whenever we ask, what or how or can we do this or that, Tony has an answer. The free standing original school 1922 French doors exist because Tony first had the vision and then "made it happen!" Tony's footprints are everywhere in the museum!



June 2025 Connie, Tony, Lynn
in front of the original Castle doors which Tony installed!

We hope to see you soon at the Museum!
10-1 Saturdays, August 23rd, September 13th, October 4th
Campus Tours at 11:30

Contact: ghsmuseum@guhsd.net or 619-668-6140

Upcoming Reunions

Class of 1965 60th Reunion: **October 3rd and 4th, 2025** Contact pungopalace@aol.com

Class of 1970 55th Reunion: **August 23, 2025** Contact richard@ward-thorn.com or
619-251-8364

Class of 1975 50th Reunion: **September 12th-14th** GHS1975@cox.net or **Grossmont High**
School Class of 1975 <https://www.grossmont1975.com>