



Little River Improvement Club & Museum, built in 1885, is the last building in Little River with its full historic integrity intact. It was the home of the Good Templars, our school, library, first telephone and post office, voting place, WWI and II homeland security, and now, our community center and museum.

Dear Friends and Neighbors;

A little jiggle this morning reminded me of the contents of one of the pioneer journals I recently read. We've all heard about the famous 1906 San Francisco earthquake and seen pictures of the damage to San Francisco, but there were some equally impressive quakes here along the Mendocino coast as our first settlers struggled to build homes and raise enough food to get them through north coast winters. They didn't get any publicity, but the pioneers record them in their journals along with their reactions and impacts.

From Etta Stevens Pullen's journal:

November 11, 1882: *The heaviest Earthquake ever known on this part of the coast, it broke our chimneys and cracked the plastering all up. Makes us sick, lighter shocks during the day. [Nov 12th] Shocks of earthquake through the night and also today.*

But the **April 14, 1898** earthquake, unreported elsewhere, had a bigger impact: *Last night terrible with earthquakes. One about eleven, the hardest we ever felt and quite sharp ones from then until morning. [Apr 15th] Our Chimneys shook off the top, vases, etc. broken. The milk room a sight. Cream and milk throwed (sic) out of pans, jars of fruit and berries smashed. At light*

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Wilder got off to his work, and I to town with the regular butter. Hardly a whole chimney on the road. People greatly excited and frightened, many camping out. [Apr 16th] We don't feel very settled. Slight shocks frequently. [Apr 17th] Sun. We went to Mark's (Mark Dana Gray). The earthquake made more destruction with them than us, I think. [Apr 19th] Earthquakes more or less all night. Tried to write Gene in p.m. but my head so dizzy. Did not finish. We still have slight shocks.

Of course, the famous quake of 1906 had a big impact on Little River and all the north coast:

April 18, 1906: *We were aroused shortly after five a.m. by being terribly shaken by an earthquake. Such has never struck this coast since white man. Broke and destroyed things, cracked plastering, top of chimneys off, take much to cover the loss. Cleaning up all day from spilled milk, cream, broken jars of fruit, etc., etc., etc. [Apr 19th] The fearful report that San Francisco is burning after the Earthquake (that nearly demolished the City). Wilder's back very lame, but Bob Kerr came for him to go look at Bridge in Gulch that gave way in Quake. We went horseback to town to see how things were there.... We served no worse than the rest. We are so anxious to hear from May, her Mother and Phenia's folk. [Apr 20th] We went to Mendocino, had to cross Big River by Ferry again. Quake took out a span of Bridge. All kinds of reports but nothing definite. The City report still terrible, still burning. [Apr 22nd] Too true that San Francisco is burning or is burnt up. Oh! The horror. [Apr 23rd] A trembling and a Quake in night.*

While in Fort Bragg, an entire city block burned:

The fire in Fort Bragg which wrought so much havoc was started at the time of the earthquake by the overturning of a coal oil stove on McPherson Street. Mr. Fouchee rushed into the room and did his best to smother the fire but his efforts were futile and he only succeeded in scorching and burning his hands in a frightful manner, and came very near being caught and burned to death. From there the flames spread rapidly and soon the entire block was a seething mass of flames. The fire then leaped across the alley way between that and Franklin street and was encroaching on the property fronting Main St when the fire company succeeded in getting a hose to the National City steam schooner, lying at the wharf, and with the water and liberal use of powder the fire was conquered. (From the Fort Bragg Mendocino Coast Historical Society web site)

Bill Owens and his wife Isabelle were our neighbors in LR. Bill was the last lighthouse keeper on the coast. His life and contributions to our community are the subject of a new book, "The Last Lighthouse Keeper, The Seasons, Storms, and Shipwrecks of California's Bill Owens" written by Stuart McDowell. An interesting read available locally at Pt. Cabrillo Lighthouse, Gallery Books in Mendocino and Amazon. History happening.

We'll continue to keep the historic building and its unique contents and community genealogy safe and growing. Admission is free, we serve the schools, local community, and out-of-town visitors. Please support our efforts to keep the museum alive and healthy.

Please make donations out to :

LITTLE RIVER IMPROVEMENT CLUB.

The Museum is open on summer weekends, and we decided to try something new this winter. We've rented space to New York style **Balabaya Bakery**. Watch for her sign outside as you go into town. The **scones and biscotti** are excellent, and the **bagels and babka** are definitely a treat. All organic and locally sourced ingredients. E-mail Hello@Balabayabakingcompany for monthly menu and shop hours.

The building, with its unique domed ceiling was built to the Golden Mean as a meeting hall for the International Order of Good Templars. We hope you'll visit when you see our sign out again next summer. The exhibits and genealogy files are also open by appointment all winter.

707-937-2009 LRIC@mcn.org
www.littlerivermuseum.org
www.facebook.com/littlerivermuseum



The Good Templars building was left to the organization's women who purchased it for \$1 in the 1930s and renamed it the Little River Improvement Club. The citizens of Little River cast their ballots here for 100 years. it's important that every one of us cast our ballot.

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