

Volck Museum exhibits WHS memorabilia



Jane Borg with a graduation dress from 1903.



Alzora Snyder and Jack Schoellhamer reminisce with Watsonville High memorabilia.

Photos by Kurt Ellison

WATSONVILLE HIGH School's Centennial celebration Friday and Saturday will be all the more meaningful, thanks to five volunteers at the Pajaro Valley Historical Association who have worked for months organizing a coordinating exhibit for next weekend's festivities. The display, now open, will run through June 30. Museum hours are Tuesday through Thursday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., with special hours Saturday from noon to 4:30 p.m. The museum is located at 261 E. Beach St., Watsonville, across from the high school.

Jane Borg credits association chairperson Marilyn McLaughlin with the exhibit idea. Others who have worked with the two are Alzora Snyder, Karen Lopez, who is also the museum secretary, and Al Schaedel.

Borg said there are hundreds of items on display representing WHS from the 1890s to the present. It was more difficult, she said, to find memorabilia from recent years than from the past.

"That was where we had a hard time," she said. "Nobody thinks the things are historical,

at least not today. And we don't go out and actively solicit."

But they had a heyday with vintage clothing, books, certificates, diplomas, class pins, athletic equipment and spirit memorabilia, she said. All it took, she added, was an announcement in the PVHA newsletter requesting old items associated with the high school and word of mouth to generate a landslide of memories.

Included in the display is a WHS megaphone Alzora Snyder's brother Robert Pavey used as a cheerleader at Watsonville High School in 1934 and a graduation dress from 1903 worn by Myrtle Rowe Chapman. Borg added that graduates at the turn of the century didn't receive cars and trips to Hawaii for completing their high school education — flowers were the accepted form of congratulations.

Borg said the most surprising things a recent class from WHS found on display were the old dance cards.

"Kids were shocked at the dance cards," Borg said. "They couldn't believe you had to sign up to dance with someone. They thought it was weird."



The tradition of athletic excellence at Watsonville High is long and colorful.