



Robert Louis Stevenson Club of Monterey



Celebrating the life and works of RLS since 1994

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Calendar of Coming Events

Dates and Time subject to change-
updates will be emailed

December 13 & 14 5-9 pm

Christmas in the Adobes,
Monterey State Historic Park.
Featuring the Stevenson House
and 22 other locations

**February 16, 2025 2 pm Salon at
home of Maureen Bianchini.**

Book Discussion of "A Wilder
Shore: A Romantic Odyssey of
Fanny and Robert Louis Stevenson"

March 29, 2025 4 pm Viewing of
works of Jo Mora at Trotter Gallery

May 18, 2025 2 pm Anniversary
Tea at Monica Hudson's garden

August 2025 TBA Club Visit to Pt.
Pinos lighthouse or San Carlos
cemetery

President's Message by Monica Hudson

Every six months we connect with all of you in our newsletter and I am always impressed and amazed how decades after RLS' death there is still worldwide interest. He still touches lives and his actions on behalf of humanity are still held up as an example. Through our friends from the Robert Louis Stevenson Club in Edinburgh, we were made aware of a couple of articles published to coincide with his November birthday. How Robert Louis Stevenson fought for freedom in the South Seas, and Plans are now in place to make a 2.4-metre-tall sculpture of the face of a writer (links on p. 3).

Enjoy, and celebrate our connectedness with fans and followers of RLS all over the world.

How to communicate with the RLS Club?

Please send an email message to
rlsclubmonterey@outlook.com

The RLS Club website
<https://rlsclubmonterey.org/>



Members gather
at the picnic area
at Carmel Valley,
August 31, 2024

Event Highlights to date- May-November 2024

Carmel Valley History Museum Visit- August 31, 2024

Carmel Valley, 1879

What was the Valley like in 1879, the time RLS was visiting? On August 31, 2024 RLS Club members set out to get a glimpse into the past and hear of the Valley as it was. We gathered at the museum of the Carmel Valley Historical Society in the village. There Jane Cheney, a volunteer at the museum, gave us a real feeling of how sparsely inhabited the area was. Backed up by photos and documents she talked about the remnants of the indigenous people and the very few ranchers, among them Anson Smith and Jonathan Wright who took RLS in when he was sick. One in particular stood out, Bradley Sargent, who came west during the gold rush from New Hampshire. Eventually he settled here and "bought as much land as he could see". His holdings grew to 24,000 acres. Today most of that land is contained in the Rancho San Carlos which is a private, exclusive development and preserve. This is also the ranch where Fanny, her children Belle and Sam (Lloyd) and sister Nellie, along with Joe Strong and his sisters Elizabeth and Ninole were invited to attend the rodeo in the spring of 1879. Afterwards, Fanny described this adventure in vivid detail and Joe created the illustrations. The article was published in Lippincott's Magazine of Popular Literature and Science in January 1880.

Then it was time for our group of 13 members to retire under the welcome shade of the giant California Live Oak trees in the park just outside the museum to enjoy our pot luck picnic!



Left- Monica Hudson and Bob Fisher conferring over lunch;

Right- Maureen Biachini and Ruth Ann Krotzer, with Amy Krupski in background

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Annual meeting at the Black Bear Diner October 20, 2024

A dozen members gathered on October 20, 2024, to hold the club's annual general meeting, as specified in the club rules. The meeting was held at the Black Bear Diner on North Fremont Street in Monterey. First on the agenda, of course, was election of board members and officers. Most current members stood for re-election. Amy Krupski, chose to retire from the board, leaving an open seat. Club member Carolyn Sharp was nominated to fill this seat; no other nominations were offered. The current board members, elected by acclamation, are:

Monica Hudson	President
Mimi Sheridan	Vice President
Bob Fisher	Secretary
Harish Joshi	Treasurer
Carolyn Sharp	Member at Large

We offer our sincere thanks to Amy for her notable contributions to the club during her term. We look forward to seeing her at future events.

Following the business portion of the meeting, everyone enjoyed the tasty (and large!) treats from the diner menu. Conversation soon turned to the afternoon's entertainment--answering challenging questions from the works of RLS. Careful readers with good memories were rewarded! Topics ranged from the travails of David Balfour to Stevenson's companions on his trek in the Cevennes and minor characters in *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. The meeting concluded with an informal discussion about books and other resources on Stevenson's life and works.

Read the Newsletter from

RLS Cottage Museum Club at Saranac Lake

[https://olsent3.wixsite.com/so/53PC9kYCV?](https://olsent3.wixsite.com/so/53PC9kYCV?languageTag=en&cid=93874011-0306-43a7-9cd6-552471e377f8)

[languageTag=en&cid=93874011-0306-43a7-9cd6-552471e377f8](https://olsent3.wixsite.com/so/53PC9kYCV?languageTag=en&cid=93874011-0306-43a7-9cd6-552471e377f8)



Members gather at the Black Bear Diner meeting room



Making our dinner selections

Unbirthday Party Nov. 16 at Monterey Public Library

In 1934 cooking increased when the "J.B. Stetson" ship crashed into the rocks at Cypress Point, Pebble Beach. The cargo of shortening was a welcome gift for local bakers to use in their breads, cookies, pastries, etc!

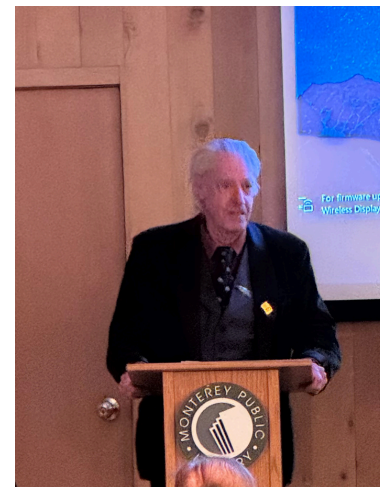
This and other data from the "Monterey Bay Shipwrecks" topic, featured keynote speaker, Stewart Thornton. A guide from the Monterey State Historic Park, Stewart covered shipwrecks from 1800 to a more recent 2021 crash at the Monterey State Beach. The usage of historical photos from the Tuttle Collection at the Pacific Grove Library enhanced Stewart's presentation. He also read from the RLS booklet, "The Old Pacific Capital" capitalizing on lighthouses, as the Stevenson's remain world-renowned Scottish lighthouse builders.

Following Thornton's presentation, Keith Decker (past president of the RLS Club/noted author/playwright/RLS impersonator) captivated the audience with the RLS charming "Un-birthday" story. It dates back to the 1890's in Samoa when RLS and family resided there. Keith read the official sounding "Gift of a Birthday" proclamation in which RLS creatively & compassionately exchanged his November 13th birthday for Annie Ide's on Christmas day. This exchange became a tradition which still exists with Annie's descendants.

RLS Club Founder Maureen Bianchini was highly acknowledged and appreciated for her ongoing dedication to our group since 1994.

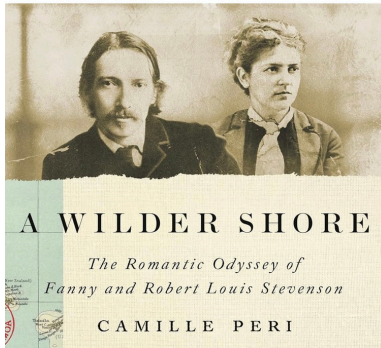
A delicious "Un-birthday" chocolate cake with raspberry filling was served with tea. Guests mixed and mingled while viewing RLS lighthouse books, "The Old Pacific Capital-The New Pacific Capital" etc.

Many thanks to Brian and Sarah from the Monterey Public Library staff for continuing to promote our coveted event! It has been special for over 2 decades!



**Top- Stuart Thornton, keynote speaker;
Middle- left-Annie Ide,
Right-Keith Decker's
presentation; Bottom
unbirthday cake for all**

Here's what the critics are saying about "*A Wilder Shore: The Romantic Odyssey of Fanny and Robert Louis Stevenson*" by Camille Peri- Book discussion at the February 2025 Salon



A NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW EDITORS' CHOICE PICK "Engrossing . . . [A] richly researched and vivid double portrait." —Phyllis Rose, *The Atlantic* "A love story, an adventure story, two literary biographies in one; *A Wilder Shore* is these things and more—and it's very, very good." ... [Google Books](#)

"Engrossing . . . [A] richly researched and vivid double portrait." —Phyllis Rose, *The Atlantic*

"A love story, an adventure story, two literary biographies in one; *A Wilder Shore* is these things and more—and it's very, very good." —Roddy Doyle, Booker Prize-winning author of *Paddy Clarke Ha Ha Ha*

"Engrossing . . . Fanny's writing has received scant attention from previous Stevenson biographers but Peri, co-editor of the essay collection *Mothers Who Think*, accords it respect." —*The New York Times Book Review*

"[Peri's] richly researched and vivid double portrait makes a convincing case that Fanny pulled off a rare feat, enabling Louis's genius to mature while releasing his boyish energies . . . I am grateful to Peri for telling the story of their marriage, in all its complexity, with sympathy and spirit." —Phyllis Rose, *The Atlantic*

"[A book] to lift your spirits . . . [Fanny's] support allowed Stevenson to write without distraction, and their circumvention of Victorian norms allowed for a marriage where love flourished." —*Washington Post*

"Peri soars . . . [A] compassionate but clear-eyed work." —*The American Scholar*

"Ambitious . . . Speaking for myself, after reading *A Wilder Shore*, I'm inspired to do two things: I want to reread Robert Louis Stevenson's three great works of fiction: *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped* and *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. And, I want to schedule a séance with Fanny to get some one-on-one instruction on how to live more fearlessly as a woman." —*Fresh Air*, NPR

"An engaging account of an unconventional, turbulent, loving relationship." —*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

"[*A Wilder Shore*] celebrates commitment and the enduring power of human imagination." —*Alta Journal*

"Peri writes with passion and enthusiasm about these two remarkable artists, and most readers will share her affection. She is adamant about defending Fanny against a century of critics who have treated her as little more than a jealous failed novelist or obsessive care-giver . . . With this fine book, *A Wilder Shore*, Peri convincingly argues that there was nothing remotely ordinary about either of these people — who went to the well so often that there was no water left when they were finished." —*The Spectator*

"Riveting . . . Peri convincingly argues that without Fanny, who was 10 years Stevenson's senior and married with children when they met, there would have been no Robert Louis Stevenson as we know him." —*Air Mail*

A Thanksgiving Poem by Robert Louis Stevenson

Lord, behold our family here assembled.
 We thank Thee for this place in which we dwell;
 for the love that unites us;
 for the peace accorded us this day;
 for the hope with which we expect the morrow;
 for the health, the work, the food, and the bright
 skies,
 that make our lives delightful;
 and for our friends in all parts of the earth.
 Let peace abound in our small company.
 Purge out of every heart the lurking grudge.
 Give us grace and strength to forbear and to
 persevere.
 Give us the grace to accept and to forgive
 offenders.
 Forgetful ourselves, help us to bear cheerfully
 the forgetfulness of others.
 Give us courage and gaiety and the quiet mind.
 Spare to us our friends, soften to us our enemies.
 Bless us, if it may be, in all our innocent
 endeavors.
 If it may not, give us the strength to encounter
 that which is to come,
 that we be brave in peril, constant in tribulation,
 temperate in wrath,
 and in all changes of fortune, and, down to the
 gates of death,
 loyal and loving one to another.
 Robert Louis Stevenson

Christmas at Sea by Robert Louis Stevenson

The sheets were frozen hard, and they cut the naked hand; The decks were like a slide,
 where a seaman scarce could stand; The wind was a nor'wester, blowing squally off the sea;
 And cliffs and spouting breakers were the only things a-lee.

They heard the surf a-roaring before the break of day; But 'twas only with the peep of light
 we saw how ill we lay. We tumbled every hand on deck instanter, with a shout, And we gave
 her the maintops'l, and stood by to go about.

All day we tacked and tacked between the South Head and the North; All day we hauled the
 frozen sheets, and got no further forth; All day as cold as charity, in bitter pain and dread,
 For very life and nature we tacked from head to head.

We gave the South a wider berth, for there the tide-race roared; But every tack we made we
 brought the North Head close aboard: lo's we saw the cliffs and houses, and the breakers
 running high, And the coastguard in his garden, with his glass against his eye.

The frost was on the village roofs as white as ocean foam; The good red fires were burning
 bright in every 'long-shore home; The windows sparkled clear, and the chimneys volleyed
 out; And I vow we sniffed the victuals as the vessel went about.

The bells upon the church were rung with a mighty jovial cheer; For it's just that I should tell
 you how (of all days in the year) This day of our adversity was blessed Christmas morn, And
 the house above the coastguard's was the house where I was born.

O well I saw the pleasant room, the pleasant faces there, My mother's silver spectacles, my
 father's silver hair;
 And well I saw the firelight, like a flight of homely elves, Go dancing round the china-plates
 that stand upon the shelves.

And well I knew the talk they had, the talk that was of me, Of the shadow on the household
 and the son that went to sea; And O the wicked fool I seemed, in every kind of way, To be
 here and hauling frozen ropes on blessed Christmas Day.

They lit the high sea-light, and the dark began to fall. "All hands to loose topgallant sails," I
 heard the captain call. "By the Lord, she'll never stand it," our first mate Jackson, cried... "It's
 the one way or the other, Mr. Jackson," he replied.

She staggered to her bearings, but the sails were new and good, And the ship smelt up to
 windward just as though she understood. As the winter's day was ending, in the entry of the
 night, We cleared the weary headland, and passed below the light.

And they heaved a mighty breath, every soul on board but me, As they saw her nose again
 pointing handsome out to sea; But all that I could think of, in the darkness and the cold,
 Was just that I was leaving home and my folks were growing old.