

**Marin Conservation League
Walk Into (Conservation) History #13
Saturday, March 23, 2013
*Olompali State Historic Park***



Marin Conservation League

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Marin Conservation League was founded in 1934 to preserve, protect and enhance the natural assets of Marin County.

Marin Conservation League Walk Into (Conservation) History # 13

OLOMPALI STATE HISTORIC PARK

MARCH 23, 2013 – 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.



Walk Leaders

Gail Wilhelm, Former Novato City Councilmember, former Marin Supervisor, helped protect the adobe by covering it with plastic in 1970, applied for designation of Olompali for listing in the National Registry of Historic Places

Diane Einstein, President of The Olompali People, vice chair of the Marin State Parks Association and a Master Gardener

Nick Tipton, Native American and member of Graton Rancheria

Clint Kellner, Biologist and Vice-Chair of The Olompali People

Susan Stompe, President of Marin Conservation League and a founding board member of The Olompali People

Today's walk

provides an opportunity to view physical evidence of human residency of the site for some 500 years and hear of even earlier human use. Olompali State Historic Park is a site that spans the history of California right here in Marin.

We will see remnants of formal gardens with exotic imported plants and native woodlands with native grasses and vibrant wildflowers.

Other walks MCL has sponsored have focused on the efforts it took by ordinary citizens to save special lands of Marin from development and to conserve them for the public. In some cases Marin Conservation League has played a lead role; in some cases it supported the efforts of others. In any case, no piece of land or shore has come into public hands without a huge cooperative citizen effort to advocate for preservation and, where necessary, raise funds for acquisition.

The critical period for Olompali was during the 1970s. The University of San Francisco owned

the property, but was ready to divest it. A fire in the 1911 mansion, which exposed the Miwok adobe, created hazards that prevented continued leasing of the site. A developer offered to acquire the whole site for a trailer park and condominiums running far up the valley. That spurred citizen activity. An archeological dig went on from 1972 to 1976 and revealed information about the Miwok village of the mid-1500s. Gail Wilhelm applied for and got the site listed on the National Registry of Historic Places. The county recognized the importance of the site and offered to acquire half the site if the state put up the other half of the funds. The intent was to deed over the county half to the state. It took Pierre Joske, then Director of Marin County Parks and Open Space, many months to convince the State Parks and Recreation Commission that the site was worthy of state preservation. Acquisition was completed in 1977. In 1981 it was designated a State Historic Park.

The support group, The Olompali

This **Walk Into (Conservation) History** has been made possible by these sponsors of Marin Conservation League's "75th Anniversary Celebration"

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