

# MacCALLUM HOUSE INN & RESTAURANT

G R E Y   W H A L E   B A R   ☞   C A F É

## HISTORY OF MENDOCINO AND MACCALLUM HOUSE

The history of Mendocino and the MacCallum House are both tied to its dramatic redwood trees. The story goes back to 1850 when the “Frolic”, a ship bound from China for San Francisco, ran aground just north of Point Cabrillo. Aboard the “Frolic” was an emporium of Chinese goods intended for sale in the inflated economy of a booming San Francisco. Her hold was packed tightly with ornately decorated camphor trunks, fine-colored silks, shiny lacquered ware, tables with inset marble tops, gold filigree jewelry, 21,000 porcelain bowls, candied fruits, silver tinderboxes, a prefabricated two-room house with oyster shell windows, toothbrushes, mother-of-pearl gaming pieces, ivory napkin rings, horn checkers, tortoise shell combs, silk fans, and scores of nested brass weights used by San Francisco merchants to measure their goods. Everything was made in China except 6,109 bottles of Edinburgh ale, brought along to inspire thirsty California gold diggers. Of all the cargo, the ale had come the farthest, nearly two-thirds of the way around the globe. When a group was dispatched from the logging camp at Bodega Bay to recover the cargo, they found virgin redwood forests instead of booty from the Orient.

In 1852 lumberman and entrepreneur Harry Meiggs, founder of San Francisco’s Fisherman’s Wharf, sailed to Mendocino Bay with his sawmill aboard the ship “Ontario”. Thus began the area’s logging industry. From 1852-1882 Mendocino served as the primary supplier of redwood lumber to booming California, continuing as a main lumber source into the 1920s.

William Kelley was in Meiggs’ crew and became one of the original settlers of Mendocino. Although coming to California to pursue gold, he made his fortune through various business ventures, including two sawmills, a general merchandise store, saloons, pool halls and livery stables. He returned to his native Prince Edward Island in 1855 and brought back his bride, Eliza, to join him. Their daughter, Daisy, was born in 1859 and 20 years later she married her father’s bookkeeper, Alexander MacCallum. She was known as spirited and charming and he as shrewd, a winning combination. Daisy went on to become the town belle.

MacCallum House was built by William Kelley as a wedding gift to his daughter and new son-in-law. The house was constructed in what was then called “pointed cottage” style. When first built it was more highly decorated with cresting on the roof ridge and finials at the point of the gables. The architect and builder was John D. Johnson, who did many of Mendocino’s long-lasting redwood, New England-style Victorian homes.



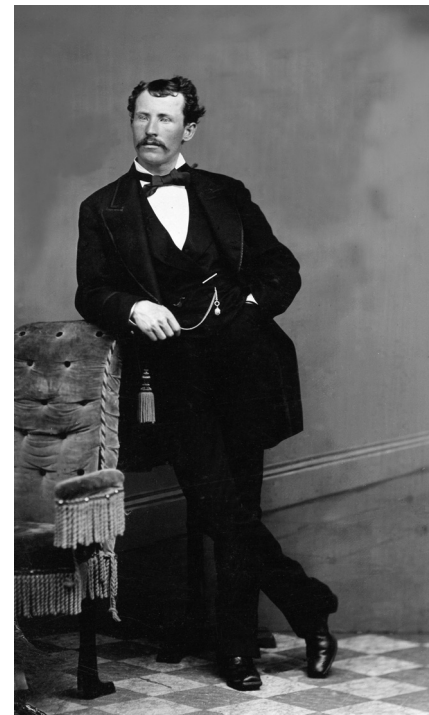
# MacCALLUM HOUSE INN & RESTAURANT

G R E Y   W H A L E   B A R   &   C A F É

Before the house was ready for occupancy, Alex and Daisy lived with her parents. The Kelley House is still right across the street from MacCallum House and is now a museum that contains the Mendocino Historical Research Society. When the Kelley's lived there, water was supplied from a water tower with a wooden-bladed windmill. There was also a unique privy, built in an octagonal shape, that could accommodate five. The 'loo' has been rebuilt and is now used for storage. Kelly House is open to the public and the friendly, knowledgeable guides add colorful information to the display of pioneer artifacts and records.

The Mendocino Beacon of September 30, 1882 states: "Mr. MacCallum has moved into his new house. The house, in its interior arrangement, is handsomely fitted up in every detail. Hot and cold water can be had in three different places, and there is a bathroom with a sprinkler overhead for family use. The house contains five airy bedrooms with lofty ceilings and corresponding breadth, a cheery dining room, a parlor with space for a library and a pantry with wash room. The house commands a fine view on the south, while on the north it is well protected from the storms. It is a beautiful residence."

The parlor where Daisy welcomed passersby with a cup of tea and cookies is now the casual Grey Whale Bar & Café. Guests continue to enjoy fine food and drink while watching the waves from the sunporch or cozily sharing a Victorian sofa and indulging in one of the bar's signature organic fruit margaritas. The restaurant's dining rooms with riverstone fireplaces were once Daisy's library and own formal dining room. The rooms upstairs in the main house and in the surrounding buildings are now the MacCallum House Inn. Outlying buildings, including a playhouse, water tower, gazebo and barn, have been innovatively remodeled to create additional unique accommodations. The family church is now Corner's of the Mouth health food store and the Kelly House is a museum and home of the town's archives.



Alex MacCallum



# MacCALLUM HOUSE INN & RESTAURANT

G R E Y   W H A L E   B A R   &   C A F É

## GARDENS

Daisy MacCallum was an early member of the American Rose Society and many of the roses she planted at the turn of the century still bloom in the gardens. The Kelley House museum, across the street from the MacCallum House, contains original catalogs from which Daisy ordered new varieties. She acquired most in their year of introduction and several well-loved heirloom varieties are still thriving. A generous spirit, she shared starts from her plants and they can be found all over Mendocino, including “Mutabilis” and Harrison’s Yellow (the yellow rose of Texas). Like any good gardener, she had to defend her plants from invaders and during the depression paid five cents per gopher to industrious young folks.



PHOTO: RITA CRANE STUDIO

Today two beautifully landscaped acres with vibrant gardens surround MacCallum House, including a chef’s garden with herbs and flowers used to grace the plates at the restaurant.



PHOTOS: J PERLMAN PHOTOGRAPHY

