



## Germania Verein Photographs

*Germania Verein*, or German Club, founded in 1856, donated two historic photographs to the History Museums of San Jose in July 1998. These photographs were found in 1987 underneath Germania Hall located at 261 North Second Street in San Jose. The top photograph, dated 1892, features musicians of the San Jose Orchestral Society, the forerunner of the city's symphony. In it a group of 27 men wearing tuxedos are posed with their instruments. Apparently, the members of the orchestra took turns being photographed in the only two tuxedos available. As the story goes, one man was pulled from his sick bed, dressed in a tuxedo, propped up at the edge of his bed and posed with his instrument for the photographer. Later, the individual photographs were pieced together to form a group shot and a background was painted in.



The San Jose Orchestral Society grew out of the Germania Verein Amateur Orchestra. The society presented its first annual concert in 1881, and by 1887 boasted a 17-piece orchestra. Mr. Schemmel, born in Hamburg, Germany, was the society's first musical director.

The photograph below, dated 1894, is of the graduates of the King Conservatory of Musik from 1884 to 1893. Originally, the conservatory consisted of two buildings built by teacher and composer F. Loui King. This later became Germania Hall, a gathering place for local German-Americans.

Maria Brand, a member of *Germania Verein* and a museum volunteer, is spearheading a fundraising drive to conserve these important photographs. Mrs. Brand has raised over \$3,500 toward the total goal of \$5,000 to conserve and frame the pieces. Tax-deductible contributions toward the conservation of these photographs can be made to the History Museums of San Jose.



**It's a Holiday Party!**  
**Members and Volunteers**  
**are invited to join us on**  
**Thursday, December 10**  
**from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.**  
**at the San Jose Historical Museum**

Take a break from all the hustle and bustle of shopping, decorating, addressing holiday cards, and baking, to relax and enjoy the company of friends.

Share in the Yuletide spirit with harpist music, carolers, tasty holiday food and libations, and much more. You'll delight in an entertaining theater production by the museum's very own volunteer group, *Portraits of the Past*. The group will perform an amusing 20-minute vignette, portraying local characters of historical significance.

You'll receive an invitation in November. But mark your calendars now and plan to join us for an evening of relaxing fun, warmth and good company.

## Founding of the Pueblo Celebration

On Saturday, November 14, the History Museums of San José will join with the City of San José and the San José Redevelopment Agency in sponsoring the 221st anniversary celebration of the founding of the Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe, which occurred on November 29, 1777.

The Founding of the Pueblo Celebration, from 12 noon until 5:30 p.m., will be held on the grounds of the Peralta Adobe and on St. John Street in front of the Adobe. The Peralta Adobe is the oldest building remaining from the Spanish and Mexican period of our city's history.

The celebration is designed to honor the historical significance of the founding of San José; educate the community about our rich and diverse history; instill civic pride in the residents; and above all, celebrate our local heritage with a free, fun-filled family event.

The afternoon will feature live music from the Spanish, Mexican and Alta California periods, folklorico and flamenco dancing, and Ohlone and African-American storytellers. There will be many hands-on activities, such as cornhusk doll making, grinding corn and cooking tortillas, throwing an old-time lariat, cat-tail rope making, adobe brick constructing, and many more exciting happenings. There also will be food and beverages, *plus* dancing to the salsa band, *Orquesta Gitano*.

In addition to all the hands-on activities, there will be a civic ceremony with brief remarks from Mayor Susan Hammer, the Consuls of Mexico and Spain, and HMSJ President and CEO David Crosson.

Join us for an exciting and meaningful afternoon honoring the historical significance of the founding of San José. Bring your family and help us celebrate San José's 221st birthday party!

**Saturday, November 14, 1998**  
**Peralta Adobe and Fallon House**  
**12 noon to 5:30 p.m.**

### On-Stage

**12 noon - 12:30 p.m.** *Los Cantantes Lupeños del Valle*  
 songs from Mexico: boleras, huaptangos, polkas, and others

**12:30 p.m. - 12:50 p.m.** *El Conjunto California*  
 100 years of music from the Spanish, Mexican & Alta California periods

**1:00 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.** *Overfelt High School Ballet Folklorico*  
*Quetzalcoatl* Aztec dances

**1:45 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.** *Civic ceremony*

- Dignitaries escorted by the *De Anza Lancers*
- Remarks from Mayor Susan Hammer, the Consuls of Mexico and Spain, and HMSJ President and CEO David Crosson
- Dance performance by *Folklorico Nacional Juvenil*

**3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.** *Arte Flamenco*  
 Spanish flamenco dances

**3:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.** *Aztlán Academy*  
 learn Mexican folklorico dance steps (in front of the Adobe)

**4:00 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.** *Orquesta Gitano*  
 salsa dance music

**5:15 p.m.** Closing remarks

Hands-on activities and storytelling will be on-going throughout the afternoon on the Peralta Adobe grounds.

## From the President

In his novel, *The Orange Tree*, the great Mexican author and intellect, Carlos Fuentes, noted that "time presses and history suppresses." This may be an especially Mexican point of view, but particularly it is true of the Spanish and Mexican periods of California history.

As far as you would know from our current histories, classrooms, and museums, California history began with the gold rush and American statehood. Only recently, in books such as *Contested Eden: California Before the Gold Rush*, are we being re-introduced to the rich, complex, multi-layered cultures that comprised California before American conquest.

We in San Jose have especially strong reasons to want to correct this picture, because our history is 50% older than statehood. We may have been the first state capital, but nearly 75 years earlier we were the first civil settlement in Alta California. The Peralta Adobe pre-dates statehood by 53 years.

HMSJ is fortunate to preserve approximately 5,000 official documents from the Spanish-Mexican governance of Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe. Santa Clara University published the first translation of one year of those records (1809) last year.

In early October, I was fortunate to join Mayor Susan Hammer and a delegation of San Jose business and cultural leaders to Mexico City in search of our oldest cultural roots. Fernando Zazueta, President of the Board of Directors of the Mexican Heritage Corporation, was on a personal mission to identify some of San Jose's oldest historical documents and bring them back to California.

Together, we were searching for the original Royal Charter creating the Pueblo in 1776, the orders directing settlement, the colonization act, and similar documentation of Spanish and Mexican authority. Along with Mayor Hammer and the director of the Archivo Nacional de Mexico, I signed an agreement to work together to identify those documents and (hopefully) to loan them to San Jose for exhibition.

In addition to marking a new historical awareness and a major international initiative, we also are beginning a new partnership with another cultural institution in San Jose. The partnership between HMSJ and the Mexican Heritage Corporation can only result in exciting new programs that will benefit not only the two organizations, but the entire community of San Jose.

As we move towards the millennial year, we will build upon the Mexican initiative and the partnerships that it nourishes to bring an expanded perspective and enriched meaning to the Sesquicentennial celebration.

## The Museums Are Getting Dressed Up



Both the San Jose Historical Museum and the Peralta Adobe and Fallon House site will be decorated for the holidays from December 6 – January 4, 1999. Bring your out-of-town guests to each site and marvel at the beautifully decorated buildings.

## Aztlán Academy Supports Museums

In its 26th year, Aztlán Academy will present *Nuestra Navidad*, a traditional, family-oriented Christmas program. This artistic production will run three nights from Monday, December 21, through Wednesday, December 23, at the Montgomery Theater in downtown San Jose.

The History Museums of San Jose and Aztlán Academy have joined together to support each other's endeavors. The museums are helping to sell tickets to the performances. And, for every ticket that the History Museums of San Jose sells, Aztlán Academy will generously donate 75% of the revenue back to HMSJ to support on-going programs and services. The museums thank the Academy for extending this offer to partner with them on this worthwhile holiday performance. To purchase tickets, or for more information, please call (408) 998-8274 and mention that you read about the performance in *The News*.

Aztlán Academy-San Jose, Inc. is a non-profit cultural entity dedicated to the advancement of Mexican and Chicano folk arts including art, music, dance, literature and drama.

## Welcome New Staff

### Archivist

Paula Jabloner joined HMSJ in October as the new archivist. Her responsibilities include managing physical and intellectual access to the research collections, processing, research, and supervising volunteers and interns. Specifically, Ms. Jabloner will be helping the museum incorporate the use of new technologies to improve access to the research collections. The past three years Ms. Jabloner has been the archivist for the Gay and Lesbian Historical Society (GLHS) in San Francisco where she helped to secure and process the collection of Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin, the founders of the first U.S. lesbian organization in 1955. Previously, she worked three years as an archivist at Princeton University's Seeley G. Mudd Library, where she coordinated the processing of 1,400 linear feet of American Civil Liberties Union records.

Ms. Jabloner holds a bachelor of arts degree in history, which she received with honors, from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst; and a master of information and library studies degree from the University of Michigan, where she specialized in archives and reference services. She will start by working three days a week while she completes the Lyon/Martin project at the GLHS, and will begin full-time mid December.

### Registrar

Linda Poe will begin as registrar in November. As registrar she will be responsible for the care, documentation, and management of the permanent collections, and for supervising volunteers and interns. Ms. Poe will help to coordinate the Conservation Assessment Project and the move to the renovated Beechnut facility. Most recently, Ms. Poe designed a collections management database and organized artist William Wegman's collection of paintings, photographs, and works on paper. She was the associate registrar at San Francisco International Airport's Bureau of Exhibitions; was the project registrar for the Society of California Pioneers move to their new site; was registrar at the Mexican Museum; and she developed a system to track object deaccessioning at the Asian Art Museum.

Ms. Poe earned a bachelor of arts degree in art history from the University of California at Santa Barbara, and a master of arts degree in museum studies at John F. Kennedy University, where she specialized in collections management.

### Program Clerk

Debi von Linsowe has accepted the position of program clerk. Ms. von Linsowe currently is coordinating and processing membership applications and renewals, maintaining the membership database, preparing cash deposits and reports, and providing staff with other clerical program support. She has extensive computer knowledge, making her invaluable as our internal computer resource.

Her accounting experience and detail to accuracy makes her qualified to work on financial documents and reports.

### Receptionist

When you enter the museum offices of HMSJ, you are greeted by a lady with a happy, smiling face. When you call the museum offices during normal business hours, you will hear a pleasant voice at the other end of the line. This special lady is Nivia Ayala, HMSJ's receptionist. Her experience in customer service, client relations, and office management gives her the necessary qualifications for her position.

Ms. Ayala's responsibilities include greeting volunteers, staff, museum members, and visitors at the business offices, and providing assistance and directions to all. She is an asset to the organization.

Welcome to Ms. Ayala, Ms. von Linsowe, Ms. Poe, and Ms. Jabloner—new staff at the History Museums of San Jose!

## Museum Information

### Sites

San Jose Historical Museum Kelley Park 1650 Senter Road San Jose, CA 95112 (408) 287-2290	Peralta Adobe/Fallon House 175 W. St. John St. San Jose, CA 95111 (408) 993-8182 FAX (408) 993-8184
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Administrative Offices  
1650 Senter Road  
San Jose, CA 95112  
(408) 287-2290  
FAX (408) 287-2291

### Hours

Public tours at both sites 12 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Tuesday-Sunday
Museum grounds at Kelley Park 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Monday-Friday
Office hours at both sites 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Monday-Friday

Public tours without reservations are available Tuesday through Sunday from 12 noon to 5:00 p.m. Call sites for specific times.

All school and outreach programs and group tours must be reserved. School programs and group tours are offered Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Group tours are also offered Saturday and Sunday from 12 noon to 5:00 p.m. by reservation only.

### Fees

General Admission Fees	One site	Both sites
Adult	\$6.00	\$10.00
Senior (age 65+)	\$5.00	\$8.00
Youth (age 6-17)	\$4.00	\$6.00
Child (5 and under)	Free	Free

A combined ticket for both sites is valid for two weeks from date of purchase.

### Group Tour Fees

Adult	\$5.00	\$8.00
Senior (age 65+)	\$4.00	\$6.00
Youth (age 6-17)	\$3.00	\$4.00
Child (5 and under)	Free	Free

\* A group being defined as 10 or more individuals who have pre-scheduled a tour.

### Waived Admission Fees

Members of HMSJ at every level of giving receive free admission to the museums. Members of American Association of Museums (AAM) and American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) receive free general admission as professional courtesy. Teachers and chaperones are admitted free of charge during reserved school visits.

### Programs

#### Public Programs

Downtown Walking Tour • Experience Peralta Fallon • Experience San Jose's Past

#### School Programs

Experience Adobe Days • Experience Victorian Days • Explore Peralta/Fallon • Explore San Jose's Past • History Hike • Historic Transportation Experience • Ohlone Indian Schoolkit • School Days in the 1890s • Victorian Schoolkit • Westward Ho! • Women Who Made A Difference

#### Outreach Programs

Decades of Change • Portraits of the Past

Please call (408) 918-1040 for reservations and current program prices.

Watch for new offerings in 1999, including special events, guest speakers and performances.

## Historical Highlights of Santa Clara Valley

### JOHN AND CAROL STEINBECK

by Jack Douglas

Fifth in the Series of  
Santa Cruz Mountain Writers

The future Nobel laureate John Steinbeck sought seclusion in the Santa Cruz Mountains during the years (1936-42) when he was a relatively unknown writer. During his stay there he wrote the epic novel: *The Grapes of Wrath*. The success of this novel would bring an end to poverty, his privacy and his marriage to Carol Henning.

John and Carol were married in 1930 and she and her husband shared some very lean but happy years while he struggled to make a living with his writing. Carol, who was born and raised in San Jose's Naglee Park neighborhood, was just the sort of spunky, creative helpmate that the aspiring writer needed to keep him focused on his art. She typed and edited his manuscripts, kept up his spirits and worked at odd jobs when the money ran out. She also served as a buffer between the author and the outside world.

During these early years John Steinbeck had a mania for privacy. He felt that his writing should stand on its own, and he refused to have the publishers add pictures of himself or biographical material to the book jackets. There may have been justification for these feelings. After he had written a series of newspaper articles critical of the working conditions of dust bowl migrants in California he was warned that the grower's organizations might try to set him up in a compromising position should he return to his home town of Salinas. And, in fact, a ludicrous paternity suit was lodged against him during this period.

Steinbeck's early serious fiction found few readers, but it was with the comic novel *Tortilla Flat*, published in 1935, that the author finally started to receive royalties adequate enough to allow the couple to consider buying their own place. (John was offered \$4,000 for the film rights alone.) It was Carol's idea to move out of Monterey and settle in the area near Los Gatos. Some thought that Carol's motive was to get John away from Ed Ricketts and the Cannery Row crowd.

With the help of Los Gatos realtor Effie Walton, Carol began a search for a quiet secluded location where they could build a modest cabin. At this time the old Bowdich ranch was being subdivided, and Mrs. Walton was sure it would suit their needs. The Steinbecks did indeed fall in love with the area and purchased almost two acres on May 11, 1936.

Shortly after the purchase, the *Los Gatos Mail News* proclaimed:  
*Noted author to join colony here of literary folk ... Steinbeck, who entered the ranks of the best sellers with his Tortilla Flat and In Dubious Battle, will join the Los Gatos literary solon and that under the supervision of Miss Oneda Stapp. An interesting California farm house type of dwelling will be erected for the Steinbecks.*

If Miss Oneda Stapp expected John and Carol to join her literary tea parties she was to be disappointed. John wanted isolation from the world, and he soon set about building a grape stake fence around the property to keep out the curious. He named the new estate "Arroyo del Ajo" (Garlic Gulch) to discourage uninvited guests. The search for a peaceful place was soon thwarted, however, when builders on neighboring lots began putting up houses to the accompaniment of hammers, saws and blaring radios. John wrote his editor: *This place is getting built up ... I can hear the neighbors' stomachs growling.* John's novella/play *Of Mice and Men* appeared in

late 1937 to great critical acclaim. The new royalties had the couple dreaming of more spacious and isolated digs elsewhere.

#### *The Grapes of Wrath*

John would need all the solitude he could find, for in May 1938 he began the task of writing the work for which he would be best known: *The Grapes of Wrath*. He hoped to complete the work in five months of uninterrupted labor.

The couple could not, however, fend off visiting friends. In a journal that John kept during the composition of the novel he often writes of time off to party with old pals from his Stanford days and, of course, Ed Ricketts and his Cannery Row cronies. The Steinbecks made friends with the local winemaker Martin Ray and his wife Elsie. Both John and Carol could consume a lot of alcohol, so morning-after hangovers were frequent. In August a black limousine pulled up in front of the house and a dapper little man stepped out. John instantly recognized Charlie Chaplin coming up his walk. Chaplin admired John's writing, and he decided to drive over from his place at Pebble Beach to meet the author. Chaplin was currently working on the film *The Great Dictator*, and he was interested in getting Steinbeck's opinion of the script. This would be the beginning of a lasting friendship and also the beginning of relationships with other Hollywood figures who would turn the author from a recluse into a very public man.

In spite of interruptions and illnesses due to strain, John continued the rapid pace on his novel. He did not have a detailed outline for the plot, but he had always known how it would end. Getting there took a great deal of effort. On July 7, 1938 he wrote in his journal: *Strange how I am fighting this book now. I think it is about to change now though because I am feeling more and more like work. The despair came on me for awhile but although I'm still nervous from it, I think I am recovering ... Carol says stay with the detail. Let the damn book go for 300,000 words if it wants to.* In the entry of August 18th John expressed further doubts: *Sorry but I'm losing time and so much company and excitement.* Later he wrote: *This is probably the high period of my life, if only I knew it.*

Besides local interruptions, John had other concerns. He worried about the political events that were drawing the world into war. In addition his friend and editor Pat Covici was facing bankruptcy, and Carol's plans for acquiring the Biddle Ranch above Los Gatos was causing him considerable mental stress.

On September 3rd John wrote in his journal: *Carol is typing now and the book is beginning to seem real to me ... also Carol got the title last night, The Grapes of Wrath, I think it is a wonderful title.* As the book reached its conclusion John began to feel some of the symptoms of giving birth: *I don't know whether it was just plain terror of the ending or not ... my stomach went to pieces yesterday ... maybe I'm afraid I can't do it. But then I was afraid I couldn't do any of it. And just day by day I did it.* The final entry on October 26th ended: *Finished this day — and I hope to God it's good.*

#### *Biddle Ranch*

Carol enlisted her father, Wilbur Henning, a San Jose realtor, to locate a more remote place for them

to live. The site he selected was the old Biddle Ranch about five miles out of Los Gatos, a 47 acre property overlooking the Santa Clara Valley. John and Carol were thrilled to acquire the ranch, but John, still identifying with their years of poverty and the many poor people he depicted in his novels, wrote in his diary: *And I grew frightened of this property. It is too much. One person or two have not the right to have so much.*

John and Carol moved onto their new property in October, camping out in the old farm house while their house was being built. It was here that the author put the finishing touches on the novel and argued with his editors who wanted him to delete some of the strong language.

Their new house was similar to the old one — simple board siding and unfinished knotty pine interiors. The fireplace in both houses had polished copper hoods that helped maintain the heat (one of John's inventions). Each dwelling had a small writing alcove where Steinbeck could concentrate on his work. He had a swimming pool installed as a surprise gift to Carol.

With *The Grapes of Wrath* on the way to the printers the Steinbecks could start having company again. Soon they were entertaining large groups of friends and associates from Hollywood where John's novels were being translated into film. Visitors included: Colonel Wood and his wife Sara Bard Field,

Burgess Meredith, Carl Sandburg, Charlie Chaplin, Spencer Tracy, Robert Benchley and Aldous Huxley.

This new prominence, economic and social, gave the couple very little time together, and their marriage eventually unraveled. They were

divorced on March 18,

1943, and the Los Gatos property was sold.

Steinbeck's days in Los Gatos were some of the most creative in his life. One wonders if he ever thought back to that day in August 1938 when he wrote in his journal: *this is probably the high period of my life, if I only knew it.*

Note: Jack Douglas was formerly Curator of the John Steinbeck Research Center, San Jose State University. Quotations are from: Steinbeck, John. *Working Days: the Journal of The Grapes of Wrath, 1938-1941.* New York: Viking, 1989.

Photos courtesy of Steinbeck Research Center, San José State University.



John Steinbeck



Steinbeck home on Biddle Ranch property



Steinbeck House on Greenwood Lane

## Welcome

to the newest members of the History Museums of San Jose:

Charles & Lucille Sigala

## Endowment Fund

The History Museums of San Jose gratefully acknowledges the receipt of the following donations:

In Honor: Nancy Valby  
Leslie Masunaga

### Volunteer Opportunities

The History Museums of San Jose (HMSJ) invites volunteers to work with us in serving our communities. Volunteers help us fulfill our mission by participating in a variety of ways:

- ❖ **City Stores** provide retail and customer service in HMSJ gift shops
- ❖ **Exhibit Interpreters** interact with museum visitors inside historic buildings
- ❖ **O'Brien's Candy & Ice Cream Parlor** provide retail and customer service and simple food preparation

If you are interested in joining the HMSJ team or would like more information about volunteer opportunities, please call Jennifer Warner, education specialist, at (408) 918-1050. HMSJ is committed to a multicultural community and workplace, and volunteers who will contribute to that diversity are encouraged to participate.

### Specials in City Stores

#### Holiday Shopping at the City Stores

From stocking stuffers to books to great toys—you can find that perfect holiday gift at the museum gift stores.



#### Art of California

Visit the museum store and see the new section we are developing on California art. We have beautiful gift books that reflect art from the Gold Rush to the early 1900s.



#### Hand Carved Toys

All pieces are created by a local craftsman from hand-rubbed pine and finished with non-toxic dyes. Custom orders for children's name puzzles are available.

#### Design a Mug

What a fun and easy way to bring out the creativity in your child! All that is needed is an imagination to create an original work of art.



#### Mexicolor

Check out the latest section in the museum store—arts and crafts of Mexico. Books, Oaxacan hand-made figures, nichos, pottery and an ever growing selection of fun, colorful items await the museum store shopper.

Visit the City Stores during the Member and Volunteer Holiday Celebration on December 10. Many holiday items will be 50-75% off the regular price and other selected gift items will be discounted 15%—just in time for your holiday shopping.

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- Western States Oil Company
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- Sun Microsystems
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- Trusts & Foundations
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- Santa Clara County Community Foundation
- Stella B. Gross Trust Fund
- Sourisseau Academy, SJSU
- The Valley Foundation

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