Vol. 2, No. 5

Published by the History Museums of San Jose

September 1998

Vintage Vehicle Hits the Tracks Again!

On Thursday, August 20, at the California Trolley and Railroad Corporation's (CTRC) volunteer and dedication ceremony at the San Jose Historical Museum, Vice Mayor Margie Fernandes smashed a commemorative champagne bottle into



Vice Mayor Margie Fernandes smacks the front bumper of Birney car 143 while Rod Diridon, president of CTRC, and Fred Bennett, trolley barn supervisor at the San Jose Historical Museum, enjoy the occasion.

the front bumper of the newly restored Birney trolley car. If this sounds somewhat violent, it wasn't. To the contrary, Vice Mayor Fernandes was properly dedicating the Birney car-a longstanding ceremonial tradition for these vintage vehicles.

Rod Diridon, president of CTRC, in partnership with HMSJ, spearheaded the four-year restoration project of the 1922 Birney car. The project, completed through the efforts of

thousands of volunteer hours and generous cash and in-kind donations, required the replacement of almost every piece of wood and all the missing electrical and mechanical equipment. Materials and parts came from over 100 companies as far away as Australia, Italy, and Canada, as well as local vendors. Committed volunteers even brought in used wood from their decks and old flooring to recycle in the restoration project.

The Birney car design had many safety features that made it unique for its time. Deadman's controls including automatic doors and brakes, power that would shut off in the case of an emergency, an extended front bumper and a people scoop all made the little Birney a desirable car for many cities, including San Jose.

Originally numbered 68, volunteers renumbered the 30-person car 143 for nostalgic reasons—a similar car with the same number once operated in downtown San Jose. However, this Birney car 143 will only operate at the San Jose

Historical Museum. Staffed by volunteers, the trolley will join two other restored trolleys at the museum in offering rides and delight to our visitors from around the world.

Birney car 143 is on the move again, thanks to CTRC and dedicated volunteers who lovingly restored the old trolley



Schoolhouse Dedication

oin us on Saturday, September 26, as we ring in the new school year by celebrating the dedication of the new exhibit building, the One-Room Schoolhouse, at the San Jose Historical Museum. The day-long celebration commemorates the completion of the three-year collaborative project between the San José State University College of Education Alumni Association and the History Muse-

ums of San Jose.

The family event from 10:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. will include a dedication ceremony with remarks from local dignitaries, live music, food, children's games, and tours of the schoolhouse. Museum tours through the buildings will be offered. There will be no admission fee to the museum on this day.

The restored One-Room Schoolhouse will act as a monument to honor teachers and education. The gallery area will feature name plaques of honored teachers and donors, and artifacts from the museum's collec-



Santa Ana School Student Body, mid 1950s.

tions. The schoolhouse classroom will teem with activity as modern-day students role play what school was like in the 1890s. The 127-year old Santa Ana School was moved from Hollister to the San

Jose Historical Museum in 1996 and restored to reflect the 1890s period. With the leadership of project director and retired San Jose Staté professor Leonard Espinosa, and San Jose Staté professor Franklin Maggi, the College of Education Alumni Association raised over \$250,000 through individual donations, grants, fund-raisers, and in-kind donations.

The donations not only helped with the construction efforts, but offset the cost of purchasing objects for the interior of the schoolhouse. Objects came from all over the country through the sleuthing efforts of volunteers. Espinosa traveled to Birmingham, Alabama, to bring back 35 desks which were to be destroyed as a result of a school closing. The period-appropriate desks found a new home in the classroom of the schoolhouse—a fitting and symbolic tribute to the enduring importance of education in our communities.

Mark your calendars and come out to celebrate our new addition at the museum!

Schedule for September 26:

10:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Museum open

11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. 12 noon

1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Musical entertainment and food booths Dedication of One-Room Schoolhouse official ceremony

Schoolhouse open for tours

Living History Day on the Alameda

ome celebrate San Jose's past at Living History Day on The Alameda! This exciting family event, co-sponsored by HMSJ, will feature food, music, crafts, and much more. Mark your calendars for Sunday, October 4, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., and plan to join us at The Alameda between Hanchett and Hester avenues.

Living History Day highlights the rich and diverse cultural history of The Alameda and San Jose. Attendees may dance to a swing band, take carriage rides, view historic photos and memorabilia, and enjoy neighborhood history walks. Children will have fun making crafts in the children's activity area, while adults can shop at the craft booths.

As one of the sponsors of the event,

HMSJ will have a strong presence. The 1916 Detroit Electric Car will be on display, and Portraits of the Past will entertain attendees with a vintage fashion show. In the activity area, HMSJ volunteers will help children craft corn-husk dolls, make old-fashioned button toys, and weave their own designs on cardboard looms. The City Store will have two booths; one will feature book signings by local history authors, and the other will sell a selection of quality gift items.

The Alameda, as part of El Camino Real, was the original route traveled between the Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe and Mission Santa Clara. Over the years, mansions were built along the route. Many of these buildings are now offices, including San Jose's only surviving Julia Morgan building.

Mexican Celebration

he Consulate of Mexico and the History Museums of San Jose invite HMSJ members to celebrate 188 years of Mexican Independence, El Grito de la Independencia. Join us on September 15, 1998 from 6:00 p.m. -9:00 p.m. at the Peralta Adobe for a civil ceremony, mariachi music and refreshments. Please RSVP to the Mexican Consulate at 408-297-1942.

The actual grito lasts about three minutes and will be given by Consul Titular Sergio Casanueva at exactly 9:00 p.m. to correspond with the 11:00 p.m. grito given by the President of Mexico Ernesto Cedillo Ponce de Leon.

President's Report

t is now twelve months since I first entered the world of history museums in San Jose. Forgive me if I take the opportunity to look both backwards and forward.

Often I have felt like there was an anchor tied around my leg, but in fact, the organization has accomplished much in the last 365 days. First, and most important, we have entered into an equitable agreement with the city of San Jose to manage the history museums here for the next 30 years. The city council's unanimous approval indicates the community support for the museums and the level of commitment by our elected civic leaders.

Second, we have established a new corporate vision of public service. When the Board of Directors adopted new mission and vision statements in January, they committed the museums to recognize, welcome, and represent the multiple cultures and multiplicity of stories that continue to define our collective history. This is a profound change that immediately altered one program already in progress—Local Women of Distinction/ Women Who Made a Difference—and will direct our programmatic initiatives for years to come.

Third, from financial and personnel systems to office equipment and communications technology, we have established the infrastructure necessary to move forward. This is very much like re-plumbing your home. You can't see it, and no one knows it is there until it is missing. But it is absolutely essential to all daily activities.

Fourth, we have recruited a wonderful new staff that possesses the vision, professional training, practical experience, and personal vigor to lead us into the future. We now have the human resources to begin making the board's vision of creating "a national model of a regional history museum" a reality.

Where now? When will all of this investment bring forth fruit? Soon. And you will be part of the process. As you will read elsewhere in this newsletter, you will receive a membership survey in September that will solicit your input into the strategic plan.

O.K., you say. Planning is wonderful, but what about programs? Without being specific, this is what I can promise you:

- You will see a new exhibition and program initiative in spring 1999.
- We will host a summer full of programs, activities, and special events in 1999.
- We will introduce our first programmatic theme year in September 1999.
- You will witness a rehabilitation of the structures at both Kelley Park and the Peralta-Fallon site over the next year.
- The Markham House will be completed and open in 1999.
- We will enter into programmatic partnerships with other cultural institutions and community organizations to produce new programs and serve new audiences both on and off-site.
- You will be able to access programs on-line.
- We will reinvest in the collections.
- The Peralta Square building next to the Peralta-Fallon site will be acquired as an exhibit incubator and future archives center.

Through all of this, we will redefine who we are, what subjects, and what years are included within San Jose history.

Perhaps most importantly, as a member, you will be recipients of a renewed commitment to membership services and programming, beginning in December this year. So, stick around. Even better, come join us. It's going to be a great year.

Welcome New Staff

Peralta Adobe/Fallon House Site Administrator

Wells Twombly, an employee of the History Museums of San Jose at the Peralta Adobe and Fallon House for two years, was promoted into the position of historic site administrator on August 3, 1998. He manages the Peralta/Fallon site on a daily basis, overseeing operations and educational programs and tours. This position is part of the education department.

At the Peralta/Fallon site, Wells helped develop and presented the highly successful *Experience Adobe Days* 4th grade school program and is currently developing a similar *Experience Victorian Days* 3rd grade school program.

Wells holds a master of science in living history and open-air museum management from Utah State University. He has a bachelor of arts in anthropology from the University of California at Berkeley. He has experience producing special events, exhibitions and programs at various living history museums, including the Yuma Crossing Living History Museum, the Pioneer Arizona Living History Museum and the R.V. Jensen Living Historical Farm.

Education Assistant

Dori Vaught joined the education department as education assistant this August. She is responsible for scheduling docent service, school programs and reserved group tours. Dori is the key contact for schools. She will send pre-visit materials to teachers and maintain the necessary supplies for school programs. In addition, she will maintain the volunteer and school programs computer databases.

Dori worked in the education and community department of the Baltimore Museum of Art where she designed gallery games for children, conducted research, wrote articles for newsletters, helped organize special events and worked with docents. She also has office experience through her work in the anthropology department at Johns Hopkins University. Also at Johns Hopkins, Dori was responsible for scheduling speakers and planning programs for the Phi Mu Fraternity. She has a bachelor of arts in art history and is a native of San Diego, CA.

Members' Survey

As loyal and committed supporters of the museums, you are a valued audience to us. As we embark upon redesigning our membership program, it makes sense that we first look to you for input. Our goal this year is to create an exciting and meaningful membership program that is attractive to you, our current members. We also need to balance this with an enticing package that will draw new members to our institution—thus, helping to ensure the financial viability of the museums as a community resource.

In late September, you will receive a membership survey asking you specific questions about our current program, as well as ideas for the future. We want your opinion, we need your honesty and we look forward to reading your responses. We hope when you receive your survey, that you'll take a few minutes out of your busy schedule to complete the survey and forward it to the museum.

Thank you for your anticipated attention to this request!

Endowment Fund

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

In Memory:

Carl Noack Stella Sullivan

In Honor: volunteers of O'Brien's Ice Cream

& Candy Parlor

Museum Affliates

Chinese Historical & Cultural Project Honored

The American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) proudly announced that the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project (CHCP) has been awarded the Albert B. Corey Award in its 54th Annual Awards Program. This award is a most prestigious recognition for achievement in the preservation and interpretation of local, state and regional history. The Albert B. Corey Award is reserved for very deserving, small, primarily volunteer-operated, historical organizations in America and carries with it a modest financial award. The Corey Award is granted only when an organization meets the high standards of excellence set by Albert B. Corey, a founding member and one- time president of AASLH, thus it is not awarded annually. The 1998 Awards Committee reviewed volumes of supporting material and concurred that the CHCP indeed met those high standards and deserved this recognition.

Other AASLH Awards for 1998 represent 62 organizations and individuals from the United States. Award winners will be celebrated at a special banquet during the 1998 AASLH/California Council for the Promotion of History joint annual meeting in Sacramento, CA, on September 11.

The awards program was initiated in 1945 to establish and encourage standards of excellence in the collection, preservation, and interpretation of state and local history throughout America. The AASLH Awards Program not only honors significant achievement in the field of local history, but also brings public recognition of the opportunities for small and large organizations, institutions, and programs to make contributions in this arena.

The AASLH is a not-for-profit professional organization of individuals and institutions working to preserve and promote history. From its headquarters in Nashville, TN, AASLH works to advance knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of local history in America. AASLH publishes books, technical publications, a bimonthly magazine and monthly newsletter, and sponsors regional and national training workshops and an annual meeting.

Thank You, Donors!

HMSJ Receives Generous In-Kind Donations

he administrative offices of the History Museums of San Jose have a new look thanks to several local donors. The museums received over \$42,000 worth of in-kind donations of office furniture, paint, carpet and labor. David Studley, President of Studley & Associates, specializing in new and used office furniture, took a personal interest in HMSJ and donated \$25,000 worth of furniture toward the refurbishing of the administrative offices.

Kelly Moore Paints on Bascom Avenue donated 200 gallons of paint, valued at \$5,000, and painting contractor Bautista Vieira partially donated his labor. The crowning touch came when Cisco Systems Inc., donated 100 square yards of carpeting, including the installation. This will meet about one third of the museum's needs. DuPont Flooring Systems, who installs carpet at Cisco, will



Thank you, Mr. Studley, for your most generous donation to the History Museums of San Jose.

install the museum's carpet, and also will provide new carpeting at below cost for the balance of the museum's needs. Thank you to Studley & Associates, Kelly Moore, Cisco Systems and DuPont Flooring Systems!

Welcome

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

David & Penny Barcellos • Betty Danielson George & Melinda Dobbs • Cindy Vargas Forrest & Marjorie Horn • Suzanne Layne

Historical Highlights of Santa Clara Valley

o include Gertrude Atherton in this series is, perhaps,

stretching a point. She didn't own a home in the Santa

Cruz Mountains, but she was raised in our Valley, and as

an adult she was often in residence in the household of

Senator Phelan at the Villa Montalvo. Her early struggles

and feminist proclivities had much

in common with the other women

Thomas L. Horn in San Francisco's

exclusive Rincon Hill neighborhood

on October 30, 1857. Her mother,

a Southern belle, had followed her

New Orleans to California. He had

come in 1849 to participate in the

Gold Rush. Her marriage to Horn

was sent to spend her childhood

was short lived, and baby Gertrude

on her grandfather Franklin's ranch

father, Stephen Franklin, from

Gertrude was born to

Gertrude Franklin Horn and

writers of this area.

GERTRUDE ATHERTON

by Jack Douglas

of her novel The Doomswoman for the Examiner.

The rejection of her next novel, Patience Sparhawk, which was based on a sensational contemporary murder case, made Gertrude decide to move to England. The English were anxious to hear tales of early California, and

Gertrude found a receptive audience. As she achieved success the author would live in many locales before returning to her native state.

Fighting Lady

Gertrude, who did not accept criticism amiably, was quick to challenge her literary establishment detractors in the press. She railed against the prevalent trend of "realism" in fiction as exemplified by William Dean Howells. She resented being classified as a "Western writer" and was disdainful of women writers such as Edith Wharton and Willa Cather whom she perceived as rivals. Seeking to prove herself as a serious writer of fiction she set about to write a fictionalized biography of Alexander Hamilton. Traveling to the

West Indies she did extensive research on his birthplace. The novel: The Conqueror: Being the True and Romantic Story of Alexander Hamilton, published by Macmillan in 1902, was an unqualified success and established a new genre of fiction.



Inscribed photo of Gertrude Atherton to Phelan. "For Senator Phelan, the best of friends and the Prince of

Atherton and Phelan

Gertrude Atherton would write numerous, wellresearched novels on historical periods, but the books based upon California themes: Daughter of the Vine (1883); Before the Gringo Came (1894); Las Cerritos (1899); The Californians (1898); The Splendid Idle Forties (1902) and California an Intimate History (1914) endeared her to Western readers ... one in particular ... Senator James Phelan.

She met Phelan as early as 1902 when he was Mayor of San Francisco. Over the years they became great friends. When asked if they were romantically involved Gertrude replied: his true love was California ... an old fashioned type he preferred less independent women. When the Phelan estate, Villa Montalvo, was

built in 1912 Gertrude would have her own suite of rooms where she could pursue her writing.

Established again in the Bay Area, Gertrude became the State's literary Grande Dame. She established the West Coast chapter of the writer's organization PEN which detractors referred to as the friends of Atherton and Phelan. She and Phelan organized a gala benefit to raise funds to rebuild Ina Coolbrith's home after it was destroyed

Inscribed photo of James Phelan to Atherton. to Gertrude Atherton with sincere regard and

admiratio, James D. Phelan, Villa Montalvo, Aug. (2)4, 1923."

in 1906. At Phelan's urging Gertrude campaigned up and down the State for Woodrow Wilson.

Eternal Youth

Gertrude shared one characteristic with her mother: they were both vain about their looks. In her sixties, and worried about aging, Gertrude became an advocate of various experimental practices to regain her youth. The process involved x ray stimulation of the ovarian cells and injections of sheep glands. The author was energized by these treatments which she felt brought new life to her writing. Her novel: A Crystal Cup (1925), told the story of a mannish young woman who became feminine with endocrine treatments. It was made into a movie two years later.

Fourth in the Series of Santa Cruz Mountain Writers

Gertrude lost a great friend with the death of Senator Phelan in 1930. He left her a sum of \$20,000 in his will, but her beautiful refuge at Villa Montalvo and its genial host would be gone forever. She would continue writing until her death in San Francisco in 1948 at the age of 91.

Gertrude Atherton, like most of the authors in this series, is not much read now. Of these women writers she made the greatest impact on the international scene. Though not an ardent feminist she helped the cause by her personal example and the numerous strong women characters in her novels. Many of her books deserve to be read today, especially the stories of early California.

Note: For more detailed information on this fascinating personality I would recommend: California's Daughter: Gertrude Atherton and Her Times by Emily Wortis Leider, Stanford University Press, 1991.

Museum Information

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) 993-81-82 FAX (408) 993-8184

Administrative Offices 1650 Senter Road San Jose, CA 95112 (408) 287-2290 FAX (408) 287-2291

Hours Public tours at both sites Tuesday-Sunday 12 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. Museum grounds at Kelley Pa 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. 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

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 moder)	Erne	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 whom have pre-scheduled a tour.

Walved Admission Fees Members of HMSI at every level of giving receive free 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 pre-scheduled

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 Transportaion Experience • Ohione Indian Schoolleit • School Days in the 1890s • Victorian Schoolkit • Westard Hol • 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.

near San Jose. Gertrude's mother's second marriage to John F. Uhlhorn provided Gertrude with two half Hosts." sisters, but that marriage also was doomed to failure. This complicated and stressful family situation may have been the reason that Gertrude became an obstreperous and independent child. She was dismissed

from a succession of schools. Grandfather Franklin, in desperation, required her to read aloud to him some of the great classics from his library. The young girl, who admired her grandfather greatly, acquiesced willingly in this routine and soon became a voracious reader. At the age of seventeen she was sent East to attend a finishing school in Lexington, Kentucky, but her relatives there found Gertrude too unconventional and unladylike, and she was sent home.

Upon her return Gertrude found that her mother was angling for a third husband. The object of her affection was the much younger George Henry Bowen Atherton, son of the wealthy peninsula landowner, Faxon Dean Atherton. George Atherton's affections soon turned to the eighteen year old Gertrude, and the two were married in 1876. With the death of George's father soon after the wedding the control of family affairs was assumed by Gertrude's domineering Chilean-born mother-in-law, Dominga.

George Atherton proved to be as hapless as Gertrude's father and stepfather. He drank and gambled and failed at every project his mother provided. The couple had two children: George Jr. and Muriel Florence, but family life under such conditions drove the tempestuous Gertrude to explore ways to become independent.

She chose writing, and her first effort, entitled: Randolph of the Redwoods, was serialized in San Francisco's The Argonaut. This was a fictionalized account of the life of San Francisco financier George Gordon and his alcoholic wife Nelly. Gordon, who founded California's first sugar refinery, owned the huge ranch which was later acquired by Leland Stanford. The novel found a ready audience and was later reprinted as Daughter of the Vine.

Gertrude, whose husband had gone on a long sea voyage, was surprised (and perhaps elated) when, in March 1887, a brandy barrel was delivered to her door. Inside it was the pickled body of George who had died aboard ship. Taking this opportunity to free herself from the Athertons, Gertrude left her daughter with Dominga (George Jr. had succumbed to a childhood disease) and departed for New York where she would pursue a career

Popular Novelist

Upon arrival in New York in 1887 Gertrude began making a modest living writing articles for California newspapers such as The Argonaut and Hearst's Examiner. Her novels were being published, but they weren't well received by the Eastern critics. In 1891 she met Ambrose Bierce, the crusty writer and critic who daily vented his spleen in the San Francisco Examiner. Perhaps recognizing another social outsider, Bierce befriended the budding novelist, made suggestions on how she could improve her writing and wrote a highly positive review

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:

* Behind the Scenes

work on projects in archives and collections

. City Stores

provide retail and customer service in HMSJ gift shops

* Docents

give tours of the San Jose Historical Museum and of the Peralta Adobe & Fallon House

Exhibit Interpreters

interact with museum visitors inside historic buildings

Garden Club

work on landscape projects on museum grounds

O'Brien's Candy & Ice Cream Parlor provide retail and customer service and

simple food preparation

Portraits of the Past

participate in historic fashion shows at scheduled venues throughout Santa Clara Valley

* Print Shop

learn how to print on vintage equipment and interact with museum visitors

School Programs

present thematic programs to elementary school students at the San Jose Historical Museum and the Peralta Adobe & Fallon House

* Trolley Barn

be a part of vehicle restoration projects and trolley service at the San Jose Historical Museum

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. Volunteers do not need previous experience for most positions and specialized training is provided. HMSJ is committed to a multicultural community and workplace, and volunteers who will contribute to that diversity are encouraged to participate.

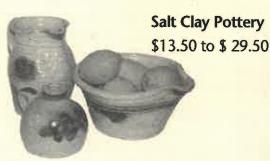
City Store Sidewalk Sale September 21, 1998

September 21, 1998 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. San Jose Historical Museum

Specials in City Stores

Members-Only 15% Off Sale!

September 24–26, 1998
Start your holiday shopping early!
Take an additional 5% off your standard members' 10% discount on selected items.



HMSJ Tee-Shirts, Tote Bags & Sweatshirts

Tee Shirts \$15.98
Tote Bags \$16.98
Sweatshirts \$28.98





A Walk Through the Past \$25.00

Pat Loomis's lastest book about early gravesites of prominent people in San Jose's history.

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Annual Corporate Members