1991 ENDOWMENT FUND ACQUISITIONS ANNOUNCED

A delightful painting of local historical significance was acquired for the Museum’s collections in February through the Museum Association’s Endowment Fund. This acquisition is the landscape “Path in Los Gatos” depicting a location near Wasehicken Avenue.

The artist was Clarkson Dye (1869-1955). A San Francisco native, Dye studied at the San Francisco School of Design and exhibited his early works at the California State Fair in 1888. In 1986 he assisted Frank Van Sloun in painting large murals in the rotunda of San Francisco’s Palace of Fine Arts. Although Dye later traveled extensively, most of his paintings were of the San Francisco Bay Area, including many nocturnal San Francisco street scenes with interiors of buildings discernible through windows or half-opened doors. By 1941 he was living in Los Gatos and summing in Santa Barbara and Bon Air.

“Path in Los Gatos” is 12” x 14” in size and the medium chosen by the artist was oil on board. The painting is an asymmetrical representation of a path in the woods. The artist used a palette of greens and blues and dappled the sunlight to reflect the softness of light as it filtered through the trees. Although Dye’s travels included trips to the Orient and the South Seas, he used a Western perspective in this painting.

RAILFAIR ’91
OLD SACRAMENTO SATURDAY, MAY 4, 1991

WHEN: Saturday, May 4, 1991
WHO: Association members and their guests
HOW: Royal Coach Tour Bus — leaving from and returning to the Phelan Avenue parking lot of the San Jose Historical Museum
TIME: 7:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. (Bring your own hot beverage. Doughnuts will be served on the bus in the morning.)
COST: Members $34.00 (lunch is not included)
Non-members $39.00 (lunch is not included)

Railfair ‘91 will commemorate the California State Railroad Museum’s 10th anniversary with a grand spectacle emphasizing the history and diversity of the railroad industry. Your ticket will allow you onto the grounds and into the Musical Revue. Lunch is on your own.

The Railfair ‘91 grounds of 15 acres contain seven buildings and well over a mile of exhibition track. Within the grounds will be spectacular displays of locomotives and cars, some from England that have never been seen before in this country. There will be exhibits by railroad industry suppliers, and an extensive exhibit of railroad photography and art.

The Musical Revue that will be staged at the far end of Old Sacramento will be a pageant on the history of the railroad. It will consist of a merging of dance, song and select locomotives used as continuing backdrops to the story.

Reservations for this trip are limited and refunds will be made only when there is a waiting list for the trip. Checks should be made payable to the San Jose Historical Museum Association (SJHMA) and sent (along with the coupon below and a SASE) to the San Jose Historical Museum Association, 1650 Senter Road, San Jose, CA 95112. Attn: Earline Shields.

RAILFAIR ’91, SATURDAY, MAY 4, 1991
(7:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.)

NAME: ___________________________
ADDRESS: ___________________________
PHONE: ___________________________
RESERVATION CONFIRMED: [ ]

Bus leaves from Phelan Avenue parking lot of the San Jose Historical Museum

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SAN JOSE HISTORICAL MUSEUM ASSOCIATION
1650 SENTER ROAD
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA 95112

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DIRECTOR'S REPORT
An Annual Report

Thanks to a program developed by the City Manager of San Jose, Leo White, I was able to have the support of a high-level intern for a seven-week period over the Christmas and New Year's holidays to coordinate an annual report. Laura Kornfeld, as an intern, facilitated staff efforts to produce a 46-page document which is not only an annual report for 1990 but also a status report for the Historical Museum. The report, focused on 12 program sections defining purposes, gives background histories and highlighting achievements for 1990. It includes the scope, complexity and productivity of the Museum are all recognized.

I'd like to thank Laura Kornfeld for her efforts. In the coming months, the report will be used as a document to staff, volunteers, Board Members and the community.

I believe 1990 should be remembered as the year that the financing for the Museum streets was secured. It is the year that the Gordon House was completed by the San Jose Botany Club and the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project broke ground for Ng Shing Gung.

Via Plan for the Past, new programs of Oral History and a San Jose History Curriculum were started in 1990. The program has continued, received continued funding from the San Jose City Council, and all programs showed tremendous scholarship and growth.

It takes a great deal of teamwork to operate and develop an institution such as the San Jose Historical Museum, and I wish to thank all those who contributed so much to the success of this organization and who helped make 1990 a year of spectacular achievements.

Mignon Gibson
Museum Director

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
Planning for 1991

The San Jose Historical Museum Association Board of Directors and staff started off 1991 with a bang. We had our annual "retreat day" in downtown San Jose on Saturday, January 12. Also in attendance were City staff members Bob Overture, Director of Recreation Parks and Community Services; Mignon Gibson, Museum Director; and Jim Murphy, Kelley Park Manager. We were further honored to have with us George Shirakawa, our District 7 representative on the City Council.

This day began with self-introductions, and it always amazes me what divergent and exciting backgrounds each of us brings to this common endeavor. The meeting was followed by a presentation on the Master Plan, prepared and presented by members of the Development Council. The presentation was exceptionally informative, showing us the physical growth and development of the Historical Museum throughout the years. Members of the Development Council fielded many questions after the show and the discussion gave each of us a sense of greater awareness.

Our afternoon session was facilitated by the Honorable Jeremy Fogle, Superior Court Judge. He did an excellent job of keeping us focused and continuously moving forward to completion. We have reserved our general three-year goals, adopted in January, 1990:

1. Increase membership
2. Actively support completion of the master plan
3. Promote the Museum
4. Implement on-going lobbying efforts

Small groups discussed each goal and defined tasks for 1991. Each group is committed to make the whole we further expand on our objectives and ultimately arrive on the work ahead of us for this year.

Our Mission Statement: The purpose of the San Jose Historical Museum Association is to support the San Jose Historical Museum and to provide the preservation of the Santa Clara Valley's history; and our slogan: Preserve Yesterday for Tomorrow, so are we and give us the reason to be.

I am proud to be a member of such a distinguished and dedicated group of individuals, I'm looking forward to the accomplishments of 1991.

Patricia Borba McDonald
President

FROM THE ARCHIVES
"Looking for clues to the past...

The study of history is a continually evolving process. In recent years there has been growing interest in history at the local level, particularly the phenomenon of "history from below." This involves the incorporation of historical data from the community at large. Women, ethnic groups, special organizations, and individuals now often enable us to fill out the view of history which we once derived primarily from textbooks and classrooms.

One of the needs in the research and augmentation of the story is the finding documentation. Many basic materials still remain within the individual communities and only through the collaboration of the various organizations and materials be shared with the community as a whole.

Official records may not always be helpful in researching segments of our community. For example, the early Great Register lists only males who qualified to vote. While this is a great asset when researching men residing in the area, it does not list women, minority males, or other persons not entitled to vote at that time.

Interesting records which assist in finding additional information about individuals not found in the mainstream records is a challenge. In women's history in California one helpful document is the Sole Trader. On April 13, 1852, this act of the California legislature authorized married women to transact business in their own names as sole traders. (This was many years before women won the right to vote!)

continued on page 3

FROM THE EDITOR
Membership Survey Results

During the month of January 400 members of the Museum Association were selected at random to complete a written survey which they received in the mail. The purpose of the survey was to determine the future needs of the Museum Association are most appealing to our members, solicit new ideas, and help us pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses of our organization.

The response to the survey was exceptionally high, and we are currently in the process of analyzing the results. A full report on the findings of the survey will be shared with you in the next issue of the Association News. The many thoughtful comments and suggestions we received will be passed along to the Board of Directors and the Membership Committee of the Association for discussion and action.

Thank you to all who took the time to participate.

Auxiliary President Receives Award

John Cochran, Auxiliary President and member of the Association's Board of Directors, was a recipient of one of ten Good Neighbor Awards presented in January by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Association of Santa Clara Valley.

John, who retired from GE in 1986, received the award for running a warehouse to sort and distribute relief items after the 1989 earthquake. In addition to his work with the Good Neighbor Committee in the area of Collection Care, John also volunteers at Burnett Academy in the San Jose Unified School District.

Congratulations, John!

Kathleen Muller
Administrator

MUSEUM AUXILIARY
A Volunteer's Perspective

The San Jose Historical Museum Auxiliary is an organization that has volunteers distinct from the Docent Council. The Auxiliary represents the service areas: Archives, Collections, Gift Shop, Lobby Desk, O'Brien's, Vintage Reflections and Trolley Barn.

Here at the Museum we have a synergistic blend of professionals and volunteering as exemplified by the recently completed cleaning activity of the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project. The project was provided by the majority of whom were from the Chinese community, donated 816 hours to cleaning approximately 720 objects which will be used in the Chi Shing Gung reconstruction. This provided an estimated savings to the project of about $4,000 when compared to the cost of having the work done commercially.

The key to such achievements is a professional staff willing to work with volunteers. In this example, the work was so varied and the materials so fragile that about 190 hours of supervisory work were required for the project. The work was performed under the professional guidance of Sarah Nunes, Nancy Valley and Patty Leach.

In her talk to the Joint Volunteer Meeting on January 14, A. J. Ng Shun provided an excellent insight into the nature of the Ng Shing Gung restoration work and an appreciation of the materials involved. In doing the project, the majority of whom were new to the Museum, the knowledge and expertise helped the project was the opportunity to learn new skills and to work with the delightful people who were new to the Museum and the contact, may become interested in joining us as volunteers.

The skyline of the Museum grounds is changing as the Ng Shing Gung provides a new landmark to the area. Soon it will be completed. Then comes the work of installing the exhibits, training Docents, and finally the happy day when the goal of the Chinese Historical and Cultural Program can be achieved.

There is a tremendous opportunity for creative involvement in the organization of the San Jose Historical Museum. Let us all try to interest our friends and neighbors in joining the operation of this organization.
FROM THE ARCHIVES

continued from page 2

One of the earliest citations in the Solr Trader volume in our Archives is that of Mary Coohey: Be it remembered that on the 12th day of Jan-
uary A.D. 1854 Mary Coohey, a married woman and wife of John Coohey residing within the County of Santa Clara and State of California personally appeared before me, a notary public in
and for said county and having been duly sworn upon oath states and declares before me that from this date she intends to carry on the business of farming and dealing in and raising farm produce and stock of every kind in said County of Santa Clara in her own name and on her own account.

There are other records not commonly consid-
ered that can provide information on the life and people of an area. Corner recorder list names of people and the inquest documents probing into the circumstances of their deaths give a picture of their living and dying lives. For example, Asian Americans, who rarely figure in early land, legal or
vital statistics, are documented within the corner
recorder; the inquiry demonstrates the mundane details of their lives.

We continue to gather documentation on as many segments of our community as possible. The reexamination of our local history necessi-
tates the evaluation of our data banks. Just because the formal records do not bring forth easy access to the information does not mean that the facts do not exist. We need to continue to expand our collection and our understanding of the documentation process.

Leslie Masunaga Archivist

ARCHIVES
Open Saturdays:
March 16 and 30, April 13 and 27, from
1 to 6 p.m.
Phone: Archives for an appointment
(387-2200)

The Easter Bunny Has Arrived at the Gift Shop!

MUSEUM STAFF
Mignon Gibson Director
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Wanda Ross Senior Steno
Jeanne Kondo Clerk/Typist
Archives
Leslie Masunaga Archivist
Althea Johnson Steno
Education
Virginia Beck Curator of Education
Deborah Minamisaki Typist Clerk
D. Cordella Dawley (p/t) Education Project
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Volunteers
Dorothy O'Kelley Volunteer Coordinator
Nancy Freeman (p/t) Volunteer Coordinator
Projects
Events
Monte Duran Museum Events
Collections
Miyoko Katsuyama Curator
Sarah Helgbo Nunez Curator
Nancy Valpy Curator
Trolley Barn
Fred Bennett Master Car Builder
Dick Purman (p/t) Trolley Barn Supervisor

ASSOCIATION STAFF
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Administrative Services
Carolyn Gip Gagnon Administrative Asst.
Carol Guillebeau Bookkeeper
Earline Shields Membership Coordinator
Paulineiti Bruni Costume Shop Manager
Toni Evans Manager
Anita Kazuhiko Scheduler/Supervisor
Margaretta Spomer Shops Supervisor

IN THE COLLECTIONS

Preservation is a major function of a Museum. The term "Curator" is derived from a Latin word meaning "to care for." Thus museums, curators have a primary responsibility to care for and per-
serve the collections. A variety of means are used to fulfill this responsibility.

All of the volunteers and staff involved in car-
ring for the collection have received special train-
ing to learn appropriate techniques to care for objects. The "Care and Preservation Corps" mem-
bers, for example, spend several sessions learning how to handle objects and particularly how to care for furniture. This dedicated group has pri-
mary responsibility for maintaining our exhibits.

Their weekly efforts are supplemented by a semi-
annual exhibit maintenance day.

Objects not currently being exhibited are main-
tained by providing the best storage conditions currently available. Textiles, for example, are
gently cleaned and then wrapped and layered with acid free tissue. Garments made of similar
fabrics are stored together in an acid free box. Similar sized paintings or other framed pieces are
kept together. Metal objects are boxed separately from glass or ceramics. Objects are surface
cleaned before placing in storage whenever feas-
ible. We have applied for an Institute of Museum Services Conservator's grant to make some
improvements in the North Warehouse. If the grant is successful, the furniture and painting
collections will receive the major benefit of rest}heling.

More recently the Chinese Historical and Cul-
tural Project and the Museum developed a pro-
gram to clean the Chinese temple artifacts in the Museum collection. Roger Brusseau, Conservator and Curator from the Asian Art Museum, spends one day a week training volunteers to clean
gold leaf. He also made himself available for consultation as the program progressed. Museum Curators (Sarah Nunez and Nancy Valpy) provided the daily supervision of the work. In all 22 volunteers cleaned approximately 75 objects. These pieces will be installed in the Ng Shing Gung as part of the exhibit for the public. Many of the temple artifacts were made in Canton, China, about 100 years ago. They are elaborately carved and gilded or painted wood.

Another project about to begin is the resto-
rating of a dump wagon. The project is being funded by a grant from the Endowment Fund with the work to be performed in the Trolley Barn. The wagon has been moved and preliminary ex-
mamination has begun. A plan of work is being developed.

An important aspect of these projects is the growing involvement of volunteers. A workshop describing the work performed and the materials used is made for each object. Each object is pho-
tographed before and after treatment. Some of the intermediate steps are also documented. The worksheet and photographs then become part of the permanent record for that object. Similar records of treatment are maintained by the Care and Preservation Corps.

Caring for and preserving the objects in our col-
collection is a real responsibility. Any treatment is documented. As we learn more about preserving materials, the effects of past treatment can be determined. Recycling methods are used wherever possible. At the same time it is desirable to remove harmful dirt and chemicals. Most objects benefit from being kept clean, at a constant tem-
perature and out of the light. Museum staff and volunteers continue to work toward the best pos-
sible care for the Museum's collections.

Nancy Valpy Curator

Volunteer Harry Lew reassembling a glass lantern.

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DOCENT REPORT

Docent Fortune Marsden happened to be in front of the Museum fire station the other day when a fire delivery van drew up and the driver hopped out.

"Pardon," the driver said, "but could you tell me where the SAN JOSE HISTORICAL MUSEUM is located?"

"Why, sure," Fortune said. "You're standing right in the middle of it. All these buildings are the Museum," and he went on to direct the driver to the offices. This story points out two very important needs for the future of our Museum.

Everybody laughs and calls it the best kept secret in Santa Clara County. All of us are con-
stantly spreading the word and results are defi-
nitely evident: Membership in the Association Advances, educational and service programs are more heavily booked; the City government and the media seem to accept us more.

A great boon to the Museum, which the deliv-
ery man episode points out, would be a broad placement of signs directing the public to our gates and delivery men to the offices. Drive about in our section of San Jose and try to find a sign pointing to the Museum. Drive U.S. 101 and U.S.
280, Drive South 1st Street or Monterey Road. Drive Keysy, Story, Almas, Phelan or Tully. Don't strain your eyes. There are no signs.

Yes, we have one beautiful sign on Senter Road. It is large. The colors blend and contrast. It has raised letters and big side posts. It needs help, however. A Museum sign as part of a Kelley Park sign needs to be located at Keysy and Senter and Phelan and Senter.

Our other great need is to spread the word that the Museum is not a black block, three-story building in the Park. We are a small town, 24 buildings, houses, offices, stores and workshops depicting San Jose 100 years ago. We are Laws, trees, streets and sidewalks. We are delightful, interesting, educational and stimulating. We are a place to go for indoor/outdoor fun, great snacks and sodas, and a chance to experience early San Jose as our pio-
neer families lived it.

Let's let the public know where we are and what we are, and then brace ourselves for the stampede to our gates.

Charles Walton
Docent Council President
INTRODUCING KEN PROLO

As an adult, Ken is concerned about the crowding of the Valley. The original Prolo family home no longer sits alone in the countryside where he, Jeff and older brother, Mike, played with snakes and climbed to the mines near Oak Hill Cemetery across a nearby wide-open valley floor.

Now to enjoy the City of San Jose, Ken and family prefer to take advantage of light rail for trips downtown. To discover the outdoors, they head to the family cabin in the Soledad Pass area where fishing and hiking are the attractions. It is the same area where Ken's parents took their annual family vacation.

Ken met his wife, Carol Ingersoll, who was teaching fourth-grade teacher in Gilroy, while at a church function. Ken had completed his BS and MS in Business Management from San Jose State University when they met. Ken and Carol deserve congratulations for they are approaching their twentieth-fifth wedding anniversary.

The couple has a married son, David, who is attending Brigham Young University in Utah. Just recently David's wife gave birth to Ken and Carol's first grandchild, Alexa. The Prolo's oldest daughter, Karen, is a newlywed now living in Salt Lake City. Four younger daughters, Diana (18), Kimberly (17), Michele (15) and Jillene (12), are still living at home. Ken describes a loving, well-managed home. He relaxes through reading, listening to sounds of piano music (all the children play), and enjoys church participation. Away from home, Ken thrives on his twenty-five-year career at IBM, where he is Personnel Operations Manager.

Then, of course, follow so many hours of service to the community: six years on the Board of the Santa Clara Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross; twelve years of part-time teaching for San Jose State University; six years teaching in the Early Bird Engineering Management Program at Santa Clara University; four years teaching at Golden Gate University; and two years as Chair of the Personnel Committee for United Way. And was the service on the Board of Directors of the San Jose Historical Museum Association mentioned earlier? I believe it was. Whew!

Ken is a proud member of OCTA, the Oregon-California Trails Association and the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County. Ken even belongs to the Tuolumne County Historical Society in the Sierra foothills. A fascination with the Sierra trails and Gold Rush history has made him to stalk antique stores, library sales and, most definitely, our own Gift Shop in search of books on the Old West to add to his collection. Ken confides that he has recently resorted to computerizing the titles of his books to avoid duplicate purchases.

Brian Serpa was wise, indeed, to show Ken our Gift Shop and introduce him to the Museum. The result has been that the Association has gained another talented, congenial and energetic volunteer who is able to spend ordinary 24-hour days into 48-hour adventures.

Entries will be accepted until just before the drawing, so bring a friend. An hour of fun, and they'll be ready to join on the spot — and you'll have an extra chance to win! In the meantime, improve your odds by passing out membership brochures to friends, neighbors, co-workers and family members, accompanied by some gentle arm-twisting. If you would like membership brochures, pick them up in the Association Services office in the Pacific Hotel or call Earline Shields at 287-3290.

Please come join the fun on April 11! You can't lose, because good times are guaranteed for all. And if you recruit a new member, you may turn out to be the big winner!

Tom Campen, Membership Committee

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

San Jose Library Foundation

"Old Time San Jose in Movio" will be presented by the San Jose Library Foundation on Tuesday, April 2, to benefit the San Jose Public Library. Three films will be presented on local history at 7:30 p.m. at Le Petit Trianon at 73 North Fifth Street in San Jose. A reception with wine, hot food, coffee and live music will follow. Tickets can be obtained for a donation of $25.00 per person. For additional details call 267-1193.

Oregon-California Trail Association

"OCTA's Annual Meeting" this year will be held in Sacramento from August 14-18, 1991, with headquarters at the Radisson Hotel. This annual event will consist of official business, educational, and the traditional group tour and its fascinating end of the trail. Contact Tom Mahan who is the Convention Chairman at 6661 Aerie Road, Pollock Pines, CA, 95726 (916-944-4384) or call Mary Lou Lyon at (408-283-8514) for necessary details.

Silicon Kids

"Silicon Kids" is a half-hour magazine format children's television program with twelve-to-sixteen-year-old young producers and interviewers. During Living History Days 1991, young reporter Annie Yang was on hand to interview many of the costume models at both the Civil War Association, Black Powder Muzzle Loaders, and KXON-TCV celebrity Jerry Graham. A concert will occur Tuesdays, March 12 and March 19, at 6:30 p.m. on Channel 22B (San Jose), Channel 29 (Mountain View and Sunnyvale) and Channel 62 (Palo Alto). On Wednesdays, March 13 and 20, at 5:00 p.m. it can be seen on Channel 30 (Cupertino and Los Altos). This program was produced by Linda Grodt, a public access producer at Channel 30 (De Anza College, Cupertino).
Ralph Wyckoff, Architect

One of the lesser-known California architects was Ralph Wyckoff who was born and raised in Watsonville, California. He was to work in the office of architect William Weeks as a draftsman. According to the late Peter Wuss of San Jose who worked with Wyckoff, he stood five feet, 8 inches tall, had a good sense of humor and was around with a pipe in his mouth most of the time. Ralph married his childhood sweetheart, Nellie Myrtle Cornell, on August 30, 1905, in the bride's home in Watsonville.

"The bride was prettily and daintily gown in a cream-colored crepe de Paris trimmed with all-over chiffon lace and carried a bouquet of pink carnations. She looked charming and presented a splendid picture of robust health and womanly beauty. The bride was attended by Miss Rhoda Rowe, who was neatly gowned in lavender velvet..." The young couple went on a short honey-moon in Southern California.

In 1909, Wyckoff was transferred to the San Francisco office of Weeks where he remained until 1914. At this time he won a scholarship to the École des Beaux Arts in Paris and studied under Professor Grimot, touted as one of the most brilliant architects of his time.

After a short stay in Berkeley where he had his own office, he returned, in 1915, to Watsonville to take over the business of architect H.B. Douglas. Some of the buildings Wyckoff designed during this period were the Radcliffe School, the Mari- novich Building and the Watsonville Women's Club. A daughter, Frances Elmiras, was born on May 16, 1918.

In 1919 the family moved to Salinas where Wyckoff opened an office in partnership with Hugh White. There he designed the Salinas High School, buildings for Hartnell College, remodeling of the Elks building and a number of private residences.

His stay in Salinas was of short duration as in 1921 the firm moved to San Jose and the Wat-sonville and Salinas offices were closed. The partnership was to be dissolved in 1928 with White moving to Oakland and Wyckoff staying in San Jose. Here he was to design the San Jose Post Office, Anne Darling School, Willow Glen Grammar School, the Crocker-Anglo Bank, San Jose State science building and speech and drama buildings, the Molera Drug Store, the McKinnon School and the Washington School in Santa Clara.

San Jose Post Office.

Mr. Wyckoff was a member of the American Institute of Architects, president of the Central Coast chapter and, at one time, treasurer of the state organization. His hobby was photography and he was a co-author of a book entitled How to Build and Equip a Modern Darkroom along with Neister Barrett, Mercury News photography columnist. Ralph was also a member of the committee that chose the civic center site at Ross and First Streets. He returned to Watsonville to design the Fire Station on Second Street, the Pajaro School, Ford's Department Store and a number of private residences.

On August 30, 1955, Wyckoff and his wife went to Watsonville to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary at a dinner with friends and relatives. Just under a year later Ralph died at the age of 72 at his home in San Jose. He was one of those capable architects who are little known but whose structures still stand as reminders of their contribution to our architectural heritage.

Betty Lewis

Silverado Western Gunfighters

While Living History Days 1991 won't be held until June 22 and 23 this year, it is not necessary to wait to see the Silverado Western Gunfighters. They will fill the streets in front of the Pacific Hotel with surefire action on March 9 and April 14 at 1:00, 2:00, and 3:00 p.m. The photo above was provided by Carol Sho, eff.

Postcards in this article courtesy of Betty Lewis
1991 LECTURE SERIES

The 1991 lecture programs are open to Association Members and guests. They will be held throughout the year in the meeting room of the Pacific Hotel. The Gift Shop will be open a half hour before and after each lecture.

The cost is $2.00 for Association Members and $5.00 for non-members. If you are a $50 or above 1991 Association Member, please contact Earline Shields (277-3780) for your two passes to the lecture of your choice.

TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 1991, 7:30 P.M. — MIRASSOU WINERY
Steve Wilson, Director of Publicity for Mirassou Winery, will speak on the history of Mirassou Winery. Mirassou Vineyards was established in 1854 and is the oldest winery in the San Jose area. There will be a small tasting of one of their wines.

MONDAY, APRIL 29, 1991, 7:30 P.M. — GRANT RANCH
Ron Brimbert of the Friends of Grant Ranch Park will speak on geological history, as well as the history of the Grant Ranch and its surroundings. The Ranch is located on the West slopes of Mt. Hamilton, in the area known as Halfs Valley (named for Frederick T. Hall, who wrote one of the first histories of San Jose in 1871). It was originally part of a Mexican land grant in 1839.

Please make your reservations by phoning the Association at 277-3780. Entrance to the Museum will be through the Phelan Avenue Gate.

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION CORNER

Proceedings are currently underway for the creation of City landmark status of buildings and sites important to San Jose's history. From a list of worthy candidates, the following two site nominations have been initiated this year and are now proceeding through the formal adoption process:

Zanger House
A stately 19th Century Italianate residence at the corner of Alma Street and South First Street, many in our community have had a curious eye on this site as we journey down Alma on our way to the San Jose Historical Museum. Generally known as the Zanger House, Dr. Henry Zanger M.D. lived in this residence from 1923 to 1937. Dr. Zanger had married Clara Cribari in 1923 and moved into the house that year, later purchasing it in 1939 from Clara's mother, Emma Bisigiglia Cribari. Dr. Zanger died in 1967 and Clara continued to live at the house until 1985.

The Bisigiglia family had purchased the house in 1918 from Phil Harold (Harold's Shoes), who had owned it since 1902, but prior to 1902 its history remains less clear. That is, until additional research linked the house's origins to James Lick.

The property was part of the 105 acres of the Lick Tract (Jick Annex), bought by James Lick in 1848. Lick built the house around 1863. He had plans to build a conservatory at the site at the time of his death; the materials were later moved to Golden Gate Park in San Francisco and became a conservatory that is still in use today.

The Zanger family, which still owns the site, has stated a strong interest in seeing this house preserved and are pursuing preservation options.

José Theatre
Built in 1904 by David Jacks on the former site of the Empire Firehouse on South Second Street, the Spanish Eclectic style José Theatre was the third theatre built in San Jose and played an important part in the vaudeville entertainment occurring in the downtown at the turn of the century. Such celebrities as Al Jolson and Harry Houdini played its stage until vaudeville made way for silent film in the 30s. The José remains the oldest continually running theatre in San Jose. As redevelopment of the downtown focuses on the 24-hour city concept and entertainment again becomes the centerpiece of activity, much can be learned from our past experiences, of which the José remains one of the last remaining vestiges. Construction of new entertainment venues downtown will work if there is a critical mass of diverse options available, both in form and function. Historic facilities such as the José Theatre are valuable to making the new downtown work.

The following two sites are pending City landmark status processing:

Montgomery Hotel
Although landmark proceedings for this historic building on South First Street adjacent the Fairmont Hotel are still pending, the City Council has approved a design, construction, and reuse program for the building which will remain under Redevelopment Agency ownership but will place hand in hand under the Master Developer of San Antonio Plaza. Occupancy is targeted for late 1992 and we hope to see some quality retail and restaurant uses moving in to reawaken this historic building.

Photo from San Jose Historical Museum Collection.

Twochy Building
Across South First Street from the Montgomery Hotel lies the Twochy Building (also known as the El Paso Building) which is pending landmark designation. Although partially occupied, the Redevelopment Agency is providing the spark for the owners to begin restoration and reuse of the building to bring it to full utilization. Completion is targeted for late 1992 as with the Montgomery Hotel.

Landmarks Commission Meetings
The Historic Landmarks Commission meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at City Hall at 7:00 p.m. Beginning in March, we anticipate moving meetings to the Council Chambers on a regular basis rather than Room 204. All are welcome to attend.

Franklin Moggi, President
Historic Landmarks Commission

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HISTORICAL FOOTNOTES
OF SANTA CLARA VALLEY
by Jack Douglas

HISTORIC BUILDINGS AT
AN JOSE STATE

Preservation of historic structures at San Jose State University, as in the downtown area, has seen a series of ups and downs over the years. Only the last-minute efforts of the students, staff and alumni saved Tower Hall from demolition in the mid-sixties. Tens of thousands of signatures on telegrams and petitions convinced the university to, at least, spare the Tower and Morris alley Auditorium. The remainder of the old campus was destroyed. The Tower, symbolic of the university, now proudly bears a plaque noting that it is No. 417 on the State list of historic landmarks.

The news is definitely mixed regarding the following three historic buildings on the campus: the Scheller house, the Kottinger house and the old science building.

The most critical issue at the moment is the scheduled demolition of the grand old Scheller house on the corner of 5th and San Carlos Streets. The Scheller house by University architect during its existence in the sixties, this classic Edwardian house was constructed about 1904 by Victor Scheller whose family owned the largest agricultural holdings south of San Jose. Victor, a graduate of what is now Santa Clara University and Hastings College of Law, became San Jose's first district attorney. After serving two terms he went into private practice and was considered, until the 1930's, the dean of local attorneys. He was very prominent in civic affairs (he chaired the committee which planned the local celebration for the sailors of the Great White Fleet when it arrived in San Francisco in 1908) and was president of the Chamber of Commerce from 1901 to 1912.

Prior to 1900 very few quality houses were to be found around Washington Square, due, no doubt, to its proximity to the Southern Pacific line on 4th Street. City fathers and developers hoped to change this by upgrading and widening the street east of 4th Street and naming it Main Street, but 5th Street was cut off Main Street in 1904. Victor Scheller, whose family had owned most of the adjacent land, was the first to build an opulent home in this neighborhood.

The Scheller house has many unique architectural features which would be almost impossible to duplicate today. The House has an octagonal entrance, the beveled bay windows are of museum quality; the woodwork, most of it fresh as new, has a brown finish with the older galvanized leaves above the doors. Many of the doors themselves are sliding pocket doors. There are numerous leaded windows, fancy windows, cabinets, and fine examples of brass hardware. There are beautiful tile-covered fireplaces and interesting patterned hardwood floors. The front rooms on the first floor and second floors are oval shaped with curved glass windows.

This home could qualify for the National Register of Historic Places; but unfortunately, since it has been State property for so long, it has not been possible to include it on any of the City of San Jose historic inventories. Considered just another "temporary building" by University planners, the Scheller house is presently considered and exterior paint contains asbestos. Now that room has been found elsewhere for the academic programs that were residing there and funds are temporarily available to remove the asbestos covered siding, there is a rush to demolish the structure.

Local historical groups, neighbors and politicians, who feel that there are alternative means of taking care of the asbestos problem, are making a new attempt to get the University administration to put off dismantling the Scheller house until a solution can be found to restore it or move it to another site. The University claims it has offered the house for moving but has had no takers. If readers have any ideas regarding either of these alternatives, please contact the Union as soon as possible.

Unfortunately nothing can save the Kottinger house. It was bulldozed this January 28. The humble little brick store was built in the 1890's by pioneer settler John Kottinger to be a business for his son Frank. Kottinger arrived in California from Austria in 1849 and was shortly thereafter married to Maria Bernal, daughter of one of the larger Spanish landholders in Northern California. Her dowry included most of the area now known as Poinciana. Kottinger founded that city and many of his descendants still live there.

Kottinger felt that his family should have the advantages of the city so he moved to San Jose where all five daughters attended the State Normal School. His heirs lived in the family home adjacent to the store until the house was razed in the early 1960's. The store remained, however, and was acquired by the University in the early sixties. Several attempts were made by student organizations to use the store as a student art and coffee house art gallery — but were rejected by the University officials. With the recent earthquake, and concern about unreinforced masonry buildings, the University proceeded with the demolition.

On the brighter side, the old natural science building, now named Washington Square Hall, has just reopened after a two-year renovation. Built in 1931, with the blessings of Governor James Ralph who saw it as a way of providing jobs in the midst of the depression, the building helped make the college a nationally recognized center for science education. It was designed by Ralph Wyckoff, a leading local architect who also did the drawings for the post office on St. James Square. As illustrated in the architect's drawing below, one can see that it succeeds in blending into the Spanish Colonial architectural style of the Tower Hall complex, but it has more rich and terra cotta ornamentation.

Recently, when the University faced the problem of either replacing or restoring the building, it seemed that by far the most economical solution was to demolish it. It was discovered, however, that there were financial advantages to restoring historic structures, so this made restoration more feasible.

The results, compared to other rehab efforts on the campus, are astonishing. The character of the interior has been tastefully maintained, while new features such as advanced lighting and air conditioning systems have been added. Even the antique wooden (read hard) seating in the lecture auditorium have been brought back to life. Everyone associated with the "new" Washington Square Hall is justly proud of the effort.

If some of the same creative efforts could go into the restoration of the Scheller house we could have another architectural showcase on the campus. Situated as it is, near the proposed grand entrance to the University, it would make an ideal hospitality house or center for such campus institutions as the Ira Brilliant Center for Beechworth Studies, the John Steinbeck Research Center or the Center for Literary Arts or the Institute for Arts and Letters.

The Scheller house is too important a piece of the City's heritage to be simply thrown away.

*San Jose Historical Museum Association News, January 1990.

The Preservation Action Council of San Jose (408-971-0940), has provided the following information for people interested in the Scheller House.

If you feel inclined, you can contact the University directly, President Gail Fullerton, (408) 934-1177, and Vice President Handel Evans, (408) 934-1500, or responsible for overseeing the future of the building. Their address is 5651 One Washington Square, San Jose, California 95192. The acting chancellor of California State University is Dr. Ellis E. McGuire, the California State University, 400 Golden Gate, Long Beach, California 90802-4275, (213) 390-5501 or 5506, and (213) 635-5501.

NEW SCIENCE BUILDING STARTED

Drawing from the February 1933 Alumni Bulletin of San Jose State Teachers College.
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The San Jose Historical Museum is part of the
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ENDOWMENT ACQUISITIONS —
continued from page 1

Many of Clarkson Dye's other works are held in the Bohemian Club, of which he was a member. Additional paintings are the property of the Los Angeles Cathedral in Durham, Mexico, and the Grand Opera House in Waco, Texas.

This is one of several acquisitions and capital improvements funded through interest earned from the Endowment and gifts to the Special Projects Fund during 1990. Other items selected for funding by the Endowment Committee include books for the Archives, the reconstruction of a wagon in the collection, an exterior exhibit building sign, office equipment, photo conservation materials, and Victorian School kit improvements.

Thank you to all who have supported the Museum through donations to our Endowment Fund. Your gifts continue to give long after they are made. As the principal in the Endowment Fund grows, there will be more interest every year to use as a source of funding for significant Museum acquisitions and improvements.

Judge Mark Thomas, Jr.
Advisory Board

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Pacific Hotel
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April 11, 1991
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Membership Party
Pacific Hotel
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Lecture Series
Great Ranch
Pacific Hotel
7:30 p.m.

May 4, 1991
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7:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.

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