Plans for an Association membership drive are underway. Details can be found on the back page of this newsletter. For a limited time, the Association will be offering a gift copy of "Early Day San Jose" with new memberships. Encourage friends to join us in the development of our historical museum.

Save the dates January 25 and February 1 - both Tuesdays. We will provide guide training from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon with lunch and a program following the February 1st meeting. Approximately 50 school children tour the museum daily. To make the most of their trip, we need more trained guides. We hope many of you will be able to participate.

A Merry Christmas to all!

Sylvia de Benedetti

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

The outdoor museum project moved one step nearer to reality this month with the hiring of the architectural firm of Churchill and Zlatunich. The firm will master plan the plaza project on the museum's site at the south end of Kelley Park. Scheduled completion of the plan will be July 1, 1972. There will be much research and many meetings of the museum staff, the Association, and the architects to assure everyone that the project will successfully depict old San Jose as it appeared between 1850 and 1920. It is expected that construction on the site will begin next summer. In the meantime the museum staff will be busy preparing the 1874 Umbarger House, the Dentist's Office, and the Newspaper Office for exhibit to the public by late fall.

Your Director is very pleased with the response of the schools to our invitation to visit the Museum. December and January are booked solid and already February, March, April, and May have a sprinkling of classes scheduled. In case you're interested, your Museum still needs docents to guide classes. The staff takes this opportunity to wish you all a happy holiday season.

John B. Dowty

Urgently needed for a variety of jobs:
Assistant Editor - Newsletter
Guides
Membership
1972 Bond Election
Numerous others!

Write to the Museum Association
635 Phelan Avenue
San Jose 95112
GEORGE WASHINGTON FOWLER, M.D.
PIONEER DOCTOR

By Frances L. Fox

Any doctor who gripes if he misses his Wednesday afternoon golf game should have known the late Dr. George Washington Fowler who worked excessively long hours seven days a week. He practiced medicine for 61 1/2 years, the longest of any doctor in Santa Clara County's medical history.

Dr. Fowler was born August 2, 1867, on the Evergreen ranch of his father Andrew Jackson Fowler, who came across the plains in 1852 from Missouri.

Studying to be a doctor was no sudden whim on his part but an early boyhood dream he shared with two of his closest friends.

Following graduation from local schools, Dr. Fowler enrolled in Santa Clara College, forerunner of the University of Santa Clara, graduating in 1888 with a bachelor of science degree. He continued his education at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School where he obtained his doctor's degree in 1892. A brilliant honor student he was offered a full professorship in gynecology upon graduating. Still he preferred to return home to this valley.

He began his career in June, 1892, in partnership with Dr. George W. Seifert which was later terminated.

His first medical challenge was a major typhoid epidemic which broke out in Santa Clara due to water pollution. He persuaded the city to deepen its wells which was done immediately under his supervision. Consequently there were no further outbreaks and neither did he lose a patient at this time.

He cared for the University of Santa Clara students for eight years, was a sanitation engineer for the City of Santa Clara many years and served on the Santa Clara School Board 12 years starting in 1902. In 1903 he served four years as administrator-supervisor for the County Hospital providing his own instruments for operations with only the aid of one nurse.

In 1892 he was on the staff of O'Connor Hospital then located at Race and San Carlos Streets (now the present site of Sears). In addition to his many duties, he assisted and instructed the sister pharmacist how to fill difficult prescriptions and also taught nursing to students gratuitously. He carried keys for every pharmacy in the area for emergency prescriptions.

His success was not only confined to medicine but to a very happy marriage. The quickening of his pulse in meeting attractive Lena Manschot culminated in their marriage in 1894 at Mission Santa Clara. There was such a huge crowd outside the Chapel that the doctor asked, What are all you people doing here? One man replied, "You said everybody in town could come to your wedding, Doc, so here we are."

Two children were born to them, Melvin and Doris. Melvin died in 1934 and Doris (Mrs. Leland Prussia) lives in San Jose.

His rounds were made by horse and buggy until 1918 even though cars were already in use. He did all the diagnoses, surgery and obstetrics as well as taking care of the psychological needs of his patients. This gave them a sense of security and definite place to turn to for advice and help.
During the 1918 flu epidemic he treated more than 525 persons in three days without losing a patient. His daughter, Doris Prussia, said, "He would stand on the running board hopping off at each house with his medical kit while his friend, Chet Maloney, drove the car. They had a long list of calls to make and they made every one working beyond exhaustion."

Dr. Fowler prided himself on never sending a bill. "Those who can pay me will and those who can't won't. The main thing is to save their lives." Yet judging from his extreme generosity towards his family many patients must have paid him without a bill. "He was always reaching in his pocket to give people money" Mrs. Prussia recalls.

Sometimes Mrs. Fowler assisted her husband by consoling the patient's wife and children in the office while her husband examined the patient.

All renumeration were not monetary. One day Dr. Fowler found his back yard overrun with a flock of white leghorn chicks. A farmer receiving no bill for his services, left them as payment. He had evaluated them at ten cents a head but Dr. Fowler phoned a poultry producer and sold them at twenty cents a head. He could be a shrewd businessman at times!

Kitchen surgery was not confined to isolated cases. When an emergency necessitated immediate surgery, he operated on the kitchen table personally scrubbing the kitchen walls and floor before starting the surgery.

His grief and shock was so acute over his wife's death in 1931 that he actually closed his office and became a recluse. Patients urged him to return. It was not until Mrs. Claire Eberhard, a close family friend, became critically ill and refused any medical assistance unless it was Dr. Fowler. He finally answered her call which made him realize the impact and respect he had on the community. Once again he hung out his shingle and practiced medicine over twenty more years until his retirement on Washington's birthday, 1953. He phoned his daughter and simply said, "Doris, I'm quitting right now. Come and get me." He was 86 years old.

Rather than live with Mrs. Prussia he moved to an apartment at the El Retiro Rest Home in Los Gatos where he lived in easy retirement until his death in 1962, age 95. At that time he was the county's oldest medical doctor and oldest alumnus both of the University of Santa Clara and the University of Pennsylvania.

Fowler Street in Santa Clara was named in his honor and Fowler Road in Evergreen was named after the senior Fowler family.
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New members of the Association will receive a copy of the book "Early Day San Jose" by Smith-McKay Printing. (Offer ends Feb. 29, 1972.) Join now! You may pick up your copy at the Museum Office on your next visit.

☐ Family $15.00 a year
☐ Student $5.00 a year
☐ Individual $10.00 a year
☐ Contributing $50.00 a year
☐ Newsletter only (non-members) $1.00 a year

Mr. 
Miss
Name: Mr. and Mrs.

Address: ____________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________ State: ___________ Zip: ___________

GUIDE TRAINING:

The Museum Association will sponsor another orientation and guide training program on Tuesday mornings January 25 and February 1, 1972 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon at the Historical Museum. The February 1st meeting will be followed by an evaluation and program (bring a bag lunch). Participation is open to anyone interested in the Museum. For further information, call Mrs. Marvin A. Bamburg at 264-8199.

Drawings and lettering courtesy of Mr. F. Ralph Rambo.

San Jose Historical Museum
635 Phelan Avenue
San Jose, California 95112

Mary "Madge" Saksena, Editor
Cecilia Morales, Secretary
San Jose Historical Museum Newsletter
635 Phelan Avenue
San Jose, California 95112
Phone: 287-2290

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PAID
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CHRISTMAS SIXTY YEARS AGO IN SANTA CLARA VALLEY WAS AS JOYOUSLY AND REVERENTLY CELEBRATED AS TODAY. IT WAS CONDUCTED ON A MUCH LOWER, MORE RELAXED SCALE AND TEMPO. I KNOW IN OUR ONE CHILD FAMILY THE OBSERVANCE WAS GEARED TO FIT OUR MODEST CIRCUMSTANCES. THIS DID NOT HINDER ENJOYMENT, IN FACT, LOOKING BACKWARD, IT WHETTED KEENER APPRECIATION. CHRISTMAS WAS MORE FOR CHILDREN THAN PARENTS. Mine did exchange DULL PRESENTS, USUALLY HOMEMADE AND VALUABLE ONLY FOR THE SENTIMENTAL EXPRESSION. Children, specially country boys like writer, (see above from family album) were naive and unsophisticated. We were unexposed to legions of false bearded saints on TV and in shopping centers. I think I believed in Santa until old enough to shave! Toys had none of the "scientific" or the educational value of today's plaything wonders but—We were happy,—because we knew nothing better.

Mama didn't seem overly pleased with Dad's gift of a clothes wringer. But then, neither was Dad thrilled with his pink coat-hanger, stuffed with dried lavender.

Always wanted a "Weeden Steam Engine." I finally bought one 30 years later for—me.

I got a magic-lantern but not for Christmas. I sold 50 pkgs. of BLUINE for this prize. (Mama bought the last 47 pkgs.)

"Tricycle and velocipede" almost forgotten words?

"Hard candy" was most popular, nice to stuff in socks and less deadly than the holiday pinoche and divinity fudge.

One year I was envy of the neighborhood with a wind-up train and six feet of track!

A small boy was chosen as one of the THREE WISE MEN for a Church Christmas. To his disgust, Mama made him a costume; his white nightgown, horridly cotton board & pasteboard crown. While organ played SILENT NIGHT the wee THREE WISE MEN, bearing gifts, etc., solemnly strode after a Star. Ah! but the WISE MAN ahead of me dropped his gift bag of MARBLES! I became "roller bearing" and I spoiled the TABLEAUX—ordid I?

Courtesy of F.L. Rembo from his book "Almost Forgotten"
LOOKING BACKWARD

CAN YOU IDENTIFY THIS PICTURE?

Write to "Looking Backward" care of the Museum Association. The first correct identification will receive an autographed copy of CINNABAR HILLS by Milton Lanyon and Laurence E. Bulmore.

Museum Staff, Clyde Arbuckle, and Laurence Bulmore not eligible!