



Vol. 2, No. 4

Published by the History Museums of San Jose

July 1998

CHINESE SUMMER FESTIVAL '98

JULY 19, SUNDAY

10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

SIXTH ANNUAL



FREE ADMISSION

Sponsored by the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project and the History Museums of San Jose

at the
Historical Museum in Kelley Park
1650 Senter Road
San Jose, CA 95112

For more information,
call (408) 287-2290

- ◆ Tour the Ng Shing Gung Temple
- ◆ Taste Asian food
- ◆ Participate in hands-on activities
- ◆ Watch martial arts demonstrations
- ◆ Take in the dragon dance and parade
- ◆ Shop for Eastern arts and crafts
- ◆ Enjoy Chinese opera and acrobats
- ◆ Hop the trolley

On Sunday, July 19, the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project (CHCP) co-sponsors the ever-popular Chinese Summer Festival with the History Museums of San Jose. This one day event celebrates the rich Chinese heritage alive in the Bay Area. As always, there will be something for everyone at this year's event.

Don't miss the Dim Sum Dragon Parade featuring the Dragon of Hearts Delight, CHCP's award winning dragon. Although the dragon has only been with the CHCP for two years, its base is much older. The story of how the dragon received its scales (not to mention its name) is a story that any CHCP member will gladly share.

Inside *The News*

Chinese Summer Festival	1
Board of Directors	2
Building Update	2
Welcome New Staff	2
Historical Highlights	3
Members' News	4
Special Events	4

HISTORY MUSEUMS OF SAN JOSE
1650 SENTER ROAD
SAN JOSE, CA 95112-2599

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

*****5-DIGIT 95070
MILLYS PECK
14275 SARATOGA AVE
SARATOGA CA 95070-5930

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 2271
SAN JOSE, CA

Welcome New Staff

Senior Curator of Collections

Alida J. Bray, of Pacifica, joined us as senior curator of collections on Monday, June 22. She will supervise all collections and archives employees and will be responsible for supervising and managing all aspects of the museum's collections, including curation, registration, conservation, care, exhibition and access.



Ms. Bray comes to us directly from the Oakland Museum of California, where she was registrar and traveling exhibit coordinator for the "Gold Fever" exhibition. From 1995 to 1997 she was registrar and senior registrar with the Bureau of Exhibitions at the San Francisco International Airport. She was a project manager for the Society of California Pioneers in 1994 and collections manager for the Mexican Museum of San Francisco from 1991-1993.

Ms. Bray holds a bachelor's degree in anthropology from San Francisco State University and a master's in museum studies from John F. Kennedy University. She has facilitated the following traveling exhibitions and special projects: "The Jews of Sarajevo" for The Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum in Berkeley; "Runs, Hits, & an Era: The Pacific Coast League 1903-1958"; and "Strength and Diversity: Japanese American Women" at the Oakland Museum of California.

Ms. Bray combines outstanding technical skills and experience with a strong commitment to using artifacts creatively to serve the broadest possible audiences. She will be with us for a short time before she returns to the Oakland Museum for two weeks to direct the crating and shipping of "Gold Fever" to its next destination.

Facilities Director

Mary Stokes joined the History Museums of San Jose on May 26, 1998, as the new facilities director. Ms. Stokes, former senior development officer of the Redevelopment Agency of the City of San Jose has over 20 years of diverse professional experience in special events coordination, project management, business and trade association management, and local government coordination.



Ms. Stokes has a degree in marketing/merchandising from the University of Arizona as well as study programs at the University of Helsinki in communications and relations.

Ms. Stokes was the manager of national identification services and training services for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA), a national trade association in Washington DC. With NRECA, she coordinated over 200 training programs, conferences, conventions and trade shows. She was also involved in the trade associations product marketing and merchandising.

As the first executive director of the East Santa Clara Street Business Association, Ms. Stokes helped organize programs and retail efforts for over 200 business and property owners. With the association she created and organized events and promotions, conducted membership drives, produced newsletters and provided liaison services to the city of San Jose. Ms. Stokes also helped develop the Redevelopment Agency's first Store-

front Improvement Programs.

For the past nine years, Ms. Stokes was the senior development officer and an assistant to the executive director with the Redevelopment Agency of the City of San Jose. Ms. Stokes was responsible for implementation of the agency's marketing/communications programs, event production, vendor and consultant contracts and preparation of special events budgets. Ms. Stokes managed over 50 groundbreaking, grand opening and special events. She was also involved in the downtown parking program, sidewalk cafe permit program and community outreach. Ms. Stokes also worked with a number of multi-cultural groups including the Hispanic, Vietnamese, Portuguese and Black Chambers of Commerce.

Site Manager

Dorian Washington joined us on June 15, 1998, as the new site manager for the History Museums of San Jose. Mr. Washington is a lifelong resident of the Bay Area and currently lives in Morgan Hill with his three daughters. He is a big sports fan and plays baseball, football and basketball when he is not working at HMSJ.

Mr. Washington will perform daily site management duties and will also double as a handyman.



Please join the volunteers, members, directors and employees in welcoming Alida Bray, Mary Stokes and Dorian Washington to the HMSJ family.

Board of Directors

Raymond Ostby Appointed

The History Museums of San Jose is pleased to announce the appointment of Raymond Ostby to the Board of Directors. Mr. Ostby is currently the chief financial officer (CFO) at QuickTurn, and also serves as the incoming president of the Silicon Valley Chapter of the National CFO Organization. He is especially interested in the history of electronics and the Santa Clara Valley, with a particular interest in the past as it relates to the present and the future. Mr. Ostby has served as an honorary member of the board on the Silicon Valley Charity Ball. Welcome, Raymond Ostby.

Jerome Munday Resigns

It was with regret that the History Museums of San Jose Board of Directors accepted the resignation of board member Jerome Munday. Mr. Munday has been a member of the board since January 1997, and also has been an active member of the volunteer core at the History Museums since 1988. Mr. Munday has served the museums in a variety of ways, from working in the archives to counting money for special events. He will be missed.

Building Update

The One-Room Schoolhouse

The 127-year old one-room schoolhouse, Santa Ana School from Hollister, now stands tall on the museum grounds between two oak trees—with its roof in place. Skilled workers from Hensel Phelps Construction Company of San Jose, donated their time and materials on May 16 to make this possible.

While workers swarmed the schoolhouse pounding nails and raising the roof, over eighty people, sponsored by numerous supporters, walked the museum grounds in the third annual Walk for Education fundraiser for the restoration project. The San Jose State University College of Education Alumni Association received over \$25,000 in pledges to the schoolhouse from this walk.

The money raised will help complete the schoolhouse in 1890s period furnishings, and provide materials for children to relive a school day experienced by children in the Santa Ana School in the 1890s.

Honoring a teacher with a \$100 donation to the schoolhouse is a wonderful way to contribute to the project. A contribution to commemorate a retirement or simply recognize years of service, will permanently display the educator's name in the schoolhouse foyer. For more information, call (408) 924-3642/3603. The One-Room Schoolhouse will be dedicated on the museum grounds Saturday, September 26, in an all-day public celebration.



photo courtesy of Leonard Espinosa

Leslie Masunaga and Franklin Maggi watch the exciting roof-raising activity.

History Museums of San Jose

VOLUME 2 • NUMBER 4 • JULY 1998



The History Museums of San Jose will involve diverse audiences in exploring the varieties of human experience that contribute to the continuing history of San Jose and the Santa Clara Valley.

Editor: Carol Provenzano

President/CEO: David Crosson

Board of Directors: Harriett Arnold, Ann Atkinson, Bonnie Bamberg, Roy Bigge, Keith Cakebread, Steven Cox, John Davis, Alicelee Ewan, Joe Head, Robert Kumamoto, Art Lund, Patrick Magee, Patricia Borba McDonald, Norman Mineta, Jim Oneal, Raymond Ostby, Stephen Pahl, Javier Salazar

Staff: Fred Bennett, Alida Bray, Fernando Chavez, Cecilia Clark, Kay Edgar, Lisa Falk, Wanda Foss, Jan Hall, Barbara Johnson, Reddy Koduru, Jeanne Kondo, John Lusardi, Leslie Masunaga, Susan Miller, Vivian Sarmiento, Pam Schmidt, Jennifer Skebba, Mary Stokes, Wells Twombly, Nancy Valby, Monica Vargas, Dorian Washington

History Museums of San Jose
1650 Senter Road
San Jose, CA 95112-2599
(408) 287-2290 FAX (408) 277-3890
Website: www.serve.com/sj/history

Historical Highlights of Santa Clara Valley

Santa Cruz Mountain Writers III RUTH COMFORT MITCHELL: NATIVE DAUGHTER

by Jack Douglas

Ruth Comfort Mitchell was one of the few Los Gatos/Saratoga writers who could claim to have grown up in the area. Her father John S. Mitchell was a well-to-do San Francisco hotel man whose family spent the summers and weekends in Los Gatos. Ruth's first literary effort to be published appeared in the *Los Gatos Mail* when she was only thirteen. A paean to her favorite town, it began:

*The Rockies may be grander,
And the Alps are more sublime,
And things are far more wonderful
In far off foreign Clime,
But for rich and natural beauty
And simple rustic grace,
On all the earth's broad surface
Los Gatos is the place! ...*

Several of her later novels would also have local settings.

Ruth was born in San Francisco on July 21, 1882, and, except for a brief period at the Irving Institute in that city, was entirely home schooled by her nannies and grandparents. At the age of sixteen she took private lessons in writing from W.C. Morrow. Ruth spent most of her young adult years traveling and developing her writing skills. She spent a year and a half living in Europe, then traveled extensively in Canada and Mexico as well.

She was 32 when she married Sanborn Young, an Easterner who owned a ranch near Fresno. The couple lived there for several years while Ruth endured the isolated country life of a rancher's wife, an experience that would be useful in her later literary efforts. She came to have a love of animals, particularly dogs and horses, during these years.

LITERARY SUCCESS

After years of effort Ruth broke into print in 1916 with the critically acclaimed *Night Court and Other Verse*. Her first novel, *Play the Game* was published in 1921. Following this, a new book by Ruth Comfort Mitchell would become almost an annual event. She wrote about family life and the vicissitudes of young love. Every story had a happy ending. Many of her short stories appeared in *Ladies Home Journal*, *Woman's Home Companion*, *Redbook* and other publications slanted towards a women's audience. Her novels included such titles as: *Jane Journeys On* (1922); *A White Stone* (her favorite) (1924); *The Wishing Carpet* (1926); *Call of the House* (1927); *Army With Banners* (1928); *Blue for True Love and Curtain* (1929); *Fire* (1930) and *Water* (1931).

She wrote a series of historical novels set in San Francisco: Old San Francisco, and one set in 1840s San Jose titled *The Legend of Susan Dane* (1933). This book is dedicated "to the Honorable James D. Phelan, a devoted student of California's past, a constructive influence in her present, and a cherished heritage in her future." This dedication, made four years after the Senator's death, was a moving gesture to the Saratoga neighbor who gave much encouragement.

agement to California writers. Ruth would become associated with the Montalvo Estate and the Montalvo Foundation until her death in 1954.



Photo courtesy of Jack Douglas

Detail of a portrait of Ruth Comfort Mitchell which hangs in Villa Montalvo.

YUNG SEE SAN FONG
With her literary career underway Ruth convinced her husband to leave the ranch and build their dream home in Los Gatos on land given to her as a wedding present by her father. Their unique oriental style home at 16660 Cypress Way was inspired by a Chinese play written by Ruth. The house has oriental decorative motifs and pagoda roofs. The carved wooden decoration in the interior was supplied by craftsmen from Chinatown in San Francisco. The home is four stories high

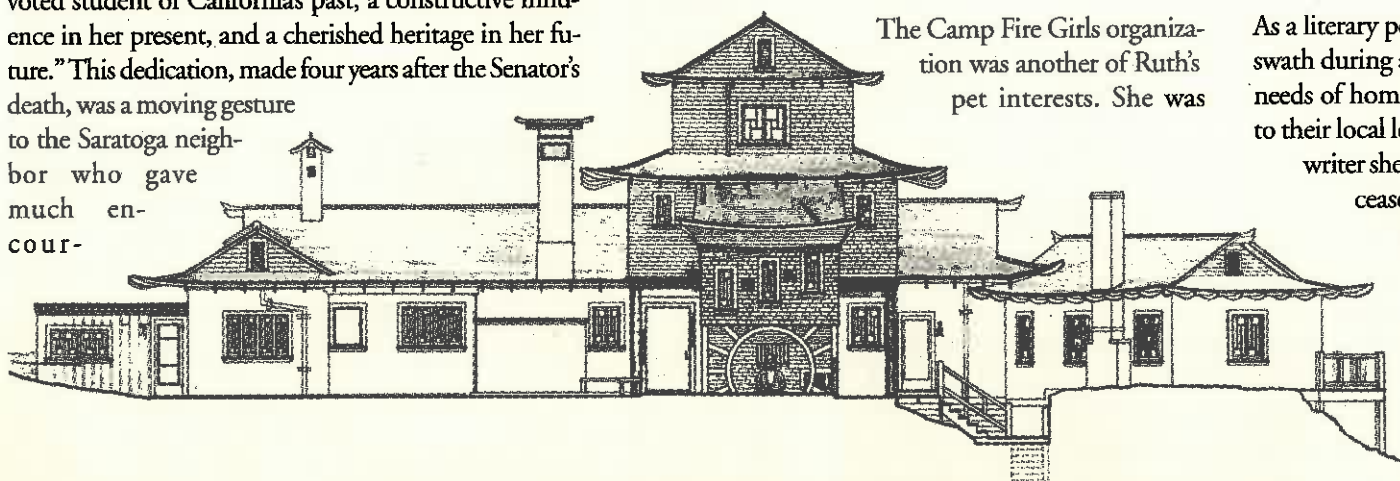
and encompasses 5,000 square feet. It was jokingly referred to as a "bungahigh." The couple named their home "Yung See San Fong" which means "Young's Home in the Hills." This extraordinary house is a Santa Clara County Landmark, and it is one of the few local landmarks to be included on the Department of Interior's Historic American Building Survey.

POLITICS AND PARTICIPATION

Sanborn Young was drawn into politics when his friend Dr. Charles Wayland convinced him to serve on the Santa Clara County Grand Jury in 1923. This group was looking into gambling, prostitution, liquor violations, slot machines and illegal traffic in narcotics. As chairman of the Morals Committee, Young was appalled by the seemingly carefree way the County was handling narcotics offenders. His zeal in this enterprise led his friends to back him for a seat in the State Senate where he could draft stronger legislation to stamp out drug trafficking.

During his three terms in the State Senate Sanborn Young became an authority on drug matters, and he and Ruth were sent by President Hoover as U.S. delegates to the International Conference of the Limitation of the Manufacture of Drugs in Geneva. Ruth lived with her husband in Sacramento during his time in office, and she became very involved in Republican Party politics. Like her neighbor Kathleen Norris, Ruth went on the campaign trail on behalf of Herbert Hoover and other Republican candidates.

The Camp Fire Girls organization was another of Ruth's pet interests. She was



sent as a delegate to the international congress in Vienna in 1931 and at the time of her death was honorary chairwoman of the County organization.

Proud of her pioneer heritage she was active in the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Colonial Dames. She was a member of numerous writers' organizations and was a frequent speaker at local literary gatherings.

GRAPES OF WRATH CONTROVERSY

The publication of the novel *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck, a resident of Los Gatos at the time, caused a great stir among the growers and conservatives who feared the influence of communism among the ranks of the unemployed. Ruth, a staunch advocate of purism in speech, attacked Steinbeck's excessive use of profanity, and she expressed the opinion that the author did not give a fair picture of the growers. She set out to put the record straight by writing her own version of rural life in the Central Valley, drawing on her own experiences as a farm wife many years earlier. Her novel *Of Human Kindness* was published in 1940, and although it may have impressed her conservative friends, it was not a critical success.



photo courtesy of Jack Douglas

Yung See San Fong, home of Ruth Comfort Mitchell and Senator Young

Her last novel *They Shall Come Again* published in 1944, was a possible reflection of her Pro-America isolationist philosophy. It was about a mother's determination to keep her son from entering military service—until Pearl Harbor.

Ruth continued her active social life until her death on February 18, 1954. Her husband lived a decade longer, dying at the age of ninety in 1964.

As a literary person Ruth Comfort Mitchell cut quite a swath during a time when romance novels gratified the needs of home bound women who made regular trips to their local lending libraries. As a professional woman writer she was an excellent role model, and she never ceased to share her experiences with new audiences. It is ironic that she has gone down in literary history, not for her many accomplishments, but for her reactionary stance to *The Grapes of Wrath*, perhaps the greatest novel to come out of the California experience.

Members' News

Welcome

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

- John Angell
- Ken Check
- Jim & Suzanne Crawford
- Mark Marietta
- Diana & Lee M. McLaughlin
- Judy & Jeff Steinberg

Endowment Fund Donations

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

In Memory of: DeWitt E. Hogle
Helen Ulrich Hall

In Honor of: Anne Louise Heigho
Julie Pifer

Gifts to the History Museums of San Jose to honor someone on a special occasion, or as a memorial, may be sent to the History Museums of San Jose Endowment Fund, 1650 Senter Road, San Jose, CA 95112-2599. A letter of acknowledgement will be sent to the person being honored or the family of the deceased.



MINEWEASER & ASSOCIATES
ARCHITECTURE CONSTRUCTION
CONSULTING SERVICES

Achlitects for historical/Residential and Commerical properties, plus
Historic Technology Investigation
Historic Structure Reports
Restoration Planning
Building Forensics
ADA Compliance

(408) 947-1900

1154 Park Avenue, San Jose, California 95126 • Fax (408) 947-1984

Portuguese dancers entertain visitors at the Festa in June.

Special Events

Civil War Memorial

The History Museum at Kelley Park was teeming with activity on Memorial Day weekend. The clash of swords, swirl of horses and boom of cannons captivated thousands of visitors at the fifth annual American Civil War event at Kelley Park. Co-sponsored by HMSJ and the National Civil War Association (NCWA), hundreds of uniformed soldiers and costumed civilians camped on the museum grounds and agricultural area, where they thrilled visitors with re-enactments from the Battle of Chancellorsville.

Other popular activities included children's games from the 1860s, town ball demonstrations—an early form of baseball, period fashion shows, veteran memorial services, and lectures ranging from politics and war strategies to women's underwear of the 1860s.

Portuguese Festa

On Saturday, June 6, the Portuguese Heritage Society of California hosted the second annual Portuguese Festa at the Kelley Park site. The celebration kicked off with a grand parade of decorated floats, marching bands and 3,000 lb. oxen teams. Hundreds of visitors enjoyed lively music, brightly attired dancers and traditional Portuguese food and beverages throughout the day.

The Portuguese Imperio, opening soon to the public, welcomed visitors in for a sneak peak of the exhibit. The imperio is a replica of the first permanent social hall built on Santa Clara Street in San Jose.

Each year festas around the Bay Area celebrate the role of Portugal during the *Era of Discoveries*, while recognizing the contributions the Portuguese have made to our communities.



History Museums of San Jose

Renewal
 New Member

Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____

Mailing Address _____ Bus. Phone _____

_____ Zip+4 _____ Res. Phone _____

MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS

\$1,000	Mission Circle	Gift of: _____
\$500	Pueblo Circle	Please indicate method of payment _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Check <input type="checkbox"/> Cash
\$250	Tower Circle	<input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/> Visa Expiration Date _____
\$100	Century Circle	Credit Card # _____
\$50	Contributor's Circle	Signature _____
\$45	Family/Grandparents	
\$35	Individual	
\$35	Senior Citizens (1 or 2)	

Please check one of the following:

I will: include \$4.00 for shipping and handling of my premium
 pick up my premium at the Historical Museum NOT be obtaining my premium

***Help us if you can! Memberships of \$50 or more enable us to cover more than the costs of our membership program.**

If you are employed by a matching gift company please obtain the appropriate form from your employer.
If unsure, give us the name of your employer and we will check for you: _____
Your gift may then be doubled—even tripled—at no expense to you.
Make checks payable to: HMSJ, 1650 Senter Road, San Jose 95112-2599

- Patron**
BankAmerica Foundation
HPC Architecture
Pahl & Gosselin, Attorneys at Law

Benefactor
Air Systems, Inc.
Barry Swenson Builder
Coast Engraving Co Inc.
Hollander Smith Construction Inc.
Ruth and Going Inc
San Jose Mercury News

Associate
Berger, Lewis Accountancy Corporation
Berliner Cohen
Blossom Floral Shop
Carbonic Service, Inc.
Classic Car Wash
Garden City Construction Inc
Hayes Conference Center
HMH Inc
KBAY/KKSJ Radio
O'Brien Travel Service Inc
Oak Hill Funeral Home & Memorial Park
Ritchie Commercial
San Jose National Bank
Shilling and Kenyon, Inc.
Southern Lumber Company
Sun Garden Packing Co
The Hotel DeAnza
Toeniskoetter & Breeding Inc
Valley Heating & Cooling Co
Valley View Packing Co Inc
Victorian Pres Assoc of SC Valley
Winchester Ranch

Sustaining
Alta Broadcasting Co
Anthony J Mercant Attny at Law
Biggs Cardosa Associates Inc
Boitano, Sargent & Lawrence CPAs
Catered Too
Cooper, Pors & Pfaffle Acct Corp
Cross Land Surveying Inc
Darling-Fischer Chapel of the Hills
David J Powers & Associates Inc
DeRose - Cedoline - DeRose
E Keith Brown & Company
Ed Thomas & Associates
Isolation Products Inc
J & M Glass Co
J Leigh Beveridge DDS Inc
Jenssen Scales Inc
Law Offices of Richard Herz
March Development Company
Markovits & Fox Inc
Mineweaser & Associates
Mirassou Vineyards
Normandin Chrysler Plymouth Jeep Eagle
Olson & Pierce
Orchard Supply Hardware
P W Supermarkets, Inc
Perham Foundation
Pfahl and Hunt Accountancy Corp
Pinnacle Resource Group
Pizazz Printing
Richard Zlatunich Architect
Roma Bakery Inc
Royal Coach Tours
San Jose Blueprint
San Jose Construction Company
San Jose Sharks
San Jose Water Company
Sobrato Development Companies
Stapleton-Spence Packing Co
Stern's Luggage Inc
The Best Electrical
The Hensley House
United Insurance Center Inc
Western Sales Engineering
Western States Oil Company
William M West CPA
Winchester Mystery House
YMCA of Santa Clara Valley
Zoria Farms Inc

Matching Gift Companies
Apple Computers
AT&T
BankAmerica Foundation
General Electric
IBM
Macy's
The St. Paul Companies
Sun Microsystems
Synoptics Communications
TRW Foundation
United Parcel Service
United Technology Corporation
Westinghouse

Trusts & Foundations
Hugh S. Center Trust
Compton Foundation
Knight Foundation
San Jose Rotary Endowment
Santa Clara County Community Foundation
Stella B. Gross Trust Fund
Sourisseau Academy, SJSU
The Valley Foundation

Annual Corporate Members