EMPIRE FIREHOUSE
TO BE DEDICATED
JUNE 9, 1984

June 9 will be a day to celebrate! The long-awaited reconstruction of the Empire Firehouse will be dedicated as a part of the San Jose Historical Museum.

Formal dedication ceremonies will begin at 12 noon with representatives from local government, the San Jose Fire Department, and the Museum participating. Special invitations were extended to all members of the Museum Association.

Throughout the afternoon following the building dedication, the San Jose Fire Department Muster Team will hold a mini-muster, a series of competitive events using antique fire equipment. They will have with them the unique Knox-Martin tractor pulling an 1899 American Steam engine which pumped for over 100 straight hours in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. It is one of the most unique pieces of fire-fighting equipment west of the Mississippi River. Also on the grounds will be a 1957 American LaFrance 400 Series pumper which is another unusual piece of equipment.

Fireman's Union Local #773, under the direction of John DeQuisto, will be cooking and selling pepper steak sandwiches and Italian sausages during the afternoon and the Museum Association will offer wine and beer for sale in special commemorative wine glasses and mugs.

Construction of this replica of the Empire Firehouse was actually begun in 1975. A series of events led to construction being halted for a number of years and the building stood idle until work began again in 1983. The ground floor of the building will house an exhibit of firefighting equipment once used in San Jose, including major pieces of fire equipment, hose carts, early fire extinguishers, brass hose nozzles, fire helmets, and other memorabilia.

This exhibit will not be completed and in place in time for our dedication but will be ready for viewing in the fall. The second floor contains a lovely meeting room, complete with kitchen facilities, which will be available for rent.

The original Empire Firehouse was built in 1869 to accommodate the growing collection of equipment owned by the San Jose Fire Department. It was located at 375 Second Street and housed Empire #1, San Jose's first fire engine. For twenty-three years the Empire Firehouse served the City of San Jose until it was destroyed in a fire that consumed several blocks of the downtown area in July 1892.
ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Here's the lowdown and rundown on more members of our Museum staff.

TERRY DONATO has the official title of Consultant to the City of San Jose as Facility Rental Coordinator. That means if you want to rent space at the Museum, call Terry. She is also the advisor for all of the events and functions held at the Museum. In addition, Terry also helps coordinate public relations for the Kelley Park complex. A graduate of Bradley University, she is a Bradley University graduate. Before joining the Museum she had event-planning experience in Silicon Valley.

DULCIE JANZEN is my buddy who has been so helpful in research projects that I don't owe her one favor. A native of Northern California, Dulcie arrived in San Jose in 1947 where ever since she has been involved in many local volunteer church-related activities. She entered our Docent Training in 1985 and subsequently became a member of the Docent Council. In 1982 Dulcie became Volunteer Coordinator and Weekend Supervisor of the Museum and is now under contract with the Parks and Recreation Department of the City of San Jose. During the period 1982-84 the Museum Services Program, supervised by Dulcie, has grown from 20 to 84 valuable, committed volunteers who give over 700 hours per month.

JEAN KONDO is our part-time clerk-typist who turns out all of that good work. A native of Maryland, she has lived in New Orleans before coming to San Jose. She is a graduate of Head's Business College in San Francisco and works in an office of a local government civilian. Her hobbies include knitting and crocheting.

Judge Mark Thomas, Jr. Association President

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Corporate Membership Program Develops

Under the guidance of Bruce Pohle, Museum Association Corporate Membership Chairman, plans are underway to start an annual Corporate Membership program for the Museum. As we go to press, Bruce has commitments from the following program: to serve on the invitations committee: Ann Akkinson, Dwight Bentzel, John Buckley, Doug Carlson, Colleen Corese, Bob Decker, Cathy Muesick, staff: Ann, Gale, Ernie Renzel, Cliff Swenson, George Starbird, and Asten Warburton, Ann Akkinson, who is Director of St. Joseph's Repertory Company, will help organize the campaign push which will run from May 21 - June 20.

A minimum goal of $25,000 is needed to cover the Association’s funding of the basic operations of the Association (educational) Programs, and part-time funding of the Collections Registrar (the only paid position currently related to the Museum), and as we succeed, the Museum has a growing wish list of items to fund, such as: reconstruction of the 1868 Chinese Temple (the Museum has raised $25,000 of the $50,000); the Firehouse Annex at $100,000; the restoration of the Camborn School (if acquired) at $70,000; the restoration on the Zanker House (if acquired) at $20,000; the restoration of the Chiechi House (on site) at $10,000; and a long list of exhibit improvements, office equipment, collection storage supplies, and another long list of staffing needs.

The San Jose Historical Museum is a big operation with great potential. The members of the Docent Program, the Association, and the Service Council should be thanked in advance for their interest and ambition. I know that as this program grows over the years, it will become a vital source of support for many projects.

Newsletter

Kathy Muller, Association Services Coordinator and Newsletter Editor, has the challenging job of publishing this newsletter which contains all the information about Museum activities, events, local historical articles, Landmarks Commission news, Santa Clara County Pioneer Society news, etceteras. Space in the Association News is becoming very precious and not all of the Museum’s activities can be mentioned. The Association Board is extremely active as is the Museum Service Council, the collection volunteers, the Events/ slated Program, the Trolley Corporation, the trolley volunteers, the Docents, the Junior Docents, the San Jose Parks and Recreation Department.

If there are any questions, concerns, or suggestions, please call, visit or write the Museum. Look forward to our next newsletter in July.

Mignon Gibson
Museum Director

O'BRIEN’S ICE CREAM & CANDY SHOP

Now serving sandwiches daily, except Monday.

Hours: Tues. - Fri. 11:00 - 4:30
Sat. - Sun. 12:00 - 4:30

DOCENT REPORT

I take great pleasure in reporting that April, May, and June are fully booked with pre-scheduled tours. Our schedule includes field trips, phone book that is, until next fall. Well done, Museum Herd! Thank you, Nancy Leonard and your faithful committee. You have done a great job promoting our docent services.

I'm sure all of our Creative Programming projects are nearing completion for use in the fall. The Indian Kit awaits the Handbook/Guide which Sue Mason is currently working on. Allen Wise has finished the Friendship Garden Walking Tour Guide and it awaits editing and publishing. And Florence Haney and her committee are finishing up the Adult Outreach Kit. These will be three fine additional services our docents can offer the community.

Our Docent Council members are looking forward to May when we do our "Spring Cleaning" and take part in Living History on the 19th.

Betty Broun
Docent Council President

MUSEUM SERVICE COUNCIL

A Certificate of Appreciation for outstanding volunteer community service was presented to the Service Council by the Junior League of San Jose and the Volunteer Center of Santa Clara County at the 15th Annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon on April 11th.

This is a well deserved award! In the two years since our founding, the number of volunteers has increased from about 20 to 84 and service hours increased from 175 to over 700 a month. With the City’s continuing need for volunteers, it will be necessary to help organize the volunteers to share the responsibility for the Museum Service Council program. The Docent Council has been successfully organized for about ten years, and the time has come for the volunteers.

We have a wide variety of opportunities to serve and always need new volunteers to cover the many scheduled hours at the desk, the gift shop, O’Brien’s Ice Cream Shop and to staff buildings on weekends.

Wheelchair Donated

Ask and you shall receive! Our thanks to Eric Bracher for the wheelchair donated to the Museum just days after we received your request in the last newsletter. Several guests have already appreciated this added service.

Remembering Hazel McIntyre

Hazel McIntyre, a friend to many and one of our most committed desk volunteers, died suddenly on March 25th of a heart attack. Photography was one of Hazel's many special talents. A slide show of her took place in the Museum over the weekend. Our post card contest last year is one of three views on sale in our Gift Shop. Hazel was a special lady and will be greatly missed.

Dulcie M. Janzen
Volunteer Coordinator

FROM THE EDITOR

Our March 18th Authors Party proved to be a very successful and enjoyable event for all who attended. Thank you to the authors, our wonderful musicians, and all of you who participated. As a result of hearing tale of Sky at our party, Mayor Tom McEnery invited them to play at his picnic in May here at the Museum.

The Museum Association’s membership drive is progressing extremely well. Individual memberships are actually up almost 100% over the last year. Our thanks to all our volunteers for their enthusiasm and willingness to promote his book, and our membership drive, by speaking to various groups and organizations.

Under the direction of Board member Phil Grasser, our Speaker’s Bureau has also been successful in helping the speaker to arrange group meetings to make presentations on the Museum and its programs.

Keep this in mind for your church or civic organization! You may arrange for a speaker, with side presentation, by calling the Museum.

Kathy Muller
Editor
THE ALAMEDA

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION CORNER

THE ALAMEDA

HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION CORNER

THE ALAMEDA, on February 21, 1984, earmarks The Alameda, from Race Street to Hwy. 17, as a city landmark. Historically, The Alameda is one of the first streets to take advantage of the major gateways into San Jose. As part of the Spanish settlement period, it served as the Eje Principal of the Alta de San Jose. This became the Guadalupe and the Mission Santa Clara de Asis and is a part of the El Camino Real. During the late 19th century period of American development saw the growth of "urban farming/steading", of which a few beautiful Victorian homes remain. Today, The Alameda is a major transportation roadway which included the use of car lines driven by horse, steam and electric power. Many of the large mansions of this period still remain, creating a feeling of stately grandeur.

In progress is the development of design guidelines which will help maintain this sense of place for the Alamedas. These have completed preliminary review by the Historic Landmarks and Planning Commissions and are being forwarded to City Council for review and adoption.

CALIFORNIA HERITAGE TASK FORCE STUDY

For the first year, the California Legislature's Heritage Task Force has been hard at work. The group was formed to consider legislation and policy, to promote the passage and implementation of laws and programs to provide for the preservation and historical study of California's cultural heritage. The group meets quarterly in Sacramento and has also sponsored two statewide preservation policy and program. The preliminary draft of findings has been circulated and the report is now being written. A major thrust is to draft a report for review. (Contact Leon Kimura, 277-5648). This study is very important because of the need and concern for the preservation of the cultural heritage and the indigenous organizations throughout the state who are active in heritage preservation and the recommendations on programs being put forth.

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

There are several projects on the horizon moving towards restoration and revitalization of downtown San Jose. Some structures for which future restoration and rehabilitation have been outlined include the Medical Arts Building on Santa Clara Street, The De Anza Hotel, and the Irene Bridge. However, the area surrounding downtown San Jose, you will see the near completion of the PT & T Building on Market Street, and the extensive work being done by Leopoldi Building on Santa Clara Street and the St. James Hotel on First Street.

A BELATED INTRODUCTION

Leon Masunaga (well, not quite so new) Commission staff. As a Development Officer with Central City Development, Leon Masunaga is now accepted into the "sherdarding through" many development projects in the downtown area. As a planner, he has worked with neighborhood groups and individuals to study and develop many areas of San Jose. Leon's office is in the historic downtown building of the Santa Clara Building and his phone number is 277-5548.

We also wish to say farewell and thank you to Teresa Crow, who has been a secretary to the Commission since 1980 and who has organized many a long session with us. Teresa has left the Private Development Department to become Assistant City Manager Lea White's secretary. We'd also like to welcome Debi McIntyre, Bill Phillips, and Debbie O'Brien, new secretaries who will also be staffing the Commission.

A REMINDER

May 13 - 19, 1984 is Preservation Week. The theme for this year is "Preservation is Taking Care of America",Look around and see what a lot is being done in San Jose and in the Santa Clara Valley. It's a very exciting time as we renew our historic resources through our interests and concern in preservation.

Leslie Masunaga
Commission President

SAN JOSE, STEINBECK COUNTRY?

The recent publication of Jackson Benson's biography of the renowned and celebrated literary figure of John Steinbeck has brought the late California novelist and Nobel prize winner back into the news.

Most people associate John Steinbeck with the Salinas Valley, the setting of his novels which were the inspiration for some of his best known works: East of Eden, The Long Valley, Cannery Row, Sweet Thursday, and Tortilla Flat. Few people know of the important role which Santa Clara County played in the author's life.

Steinbeck's maternal grandparents, the Hammerstein family were early settlers in Santa Clara County. Samuel Hamilton came to New York from Ireland when he was seventeen. There he met and married Elizabeth Fagen, whose parents came from the same part of Northern Ireland, and from whom he was on their way to San Jose where his sister was already residing. The Hamiltons lived in San Jose from 1851 to 1871, a time which John Steinbeck referred to as his "California years."

John Steinbeck's mother Olive Hamilton (Samuel's daughter) was born in San Jose, but she spent most of her youth in the Salinas Valley after her family moved there. John Steinbeck, who had a real affection for the Hamilton side of the family, wrote into his otherwise fictional Salinas Valley saga, East of Eden.

Steinbeck attended Stanford University for two years in the mid-20's, but was at best a dissolute student. While there, he wrote pieces for the Stanford Spectator, and made life-long friends of several students who shared his ditziness. In 1928 he left without a degree to become a professional writer, but the University and his Stanford friends have never forgotten the connection. The Stanford University Library Special Collections Department has a rich collection of letters and other material relating to the author.

Steinbeck's strongest San Jose connection came when he met his first wife Carol Henning, the daughter of a local estate broker Wilbur Henning. The Hennings lived at 235 S. Crittenden Street (now 16th St.) in the Naglee Park neighborhood. Carol attended San Jose High School which was then located on 7th and San Fernando Streets.

John and Carol became acquainted in the summer of 1928 in Tahoe City where John had a job in a fish hatchery, and Carol and her sister were vacations. A final meeting in 1930, it was Carol who provided most of the financial support until the author's first real success. Of Men and Men, was published in 1937. During those lean years, Carol, a talented artist and writer in her own right, typed all of John's manuscripts and was his only reliable critic. It was she who suggested the titles for Of Mice and Men, and Grapes of Wrath. The latter she dedicated: "To Carol who lived this book."

During the writing of Grapes of Wrath, the Steinbecks resided in a modest cottage they had built on Greenwood Lane in Los Gatos. The world seemed to descend upon them with the publication of Mice and Men. The privacy that the couple had hoped for was shattered through many development projects in the downtown area. As a planner, he has worked with neighborhood groups and individuals to study and develop many areas of San Jose. Leon's office is in the historic downtown building of the Santa Clara Building and his phone number is 277-5548.

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Leslie Masunaga
Commission President

The John Steinbeck Research Center has grown over the years and now contains over 4,000 items, by and relating to, the author's life and works. Scholars from the world over come to do research at the Center. One of the Center's most recent acquisitions is a collection of documents relating to the sale of the Biddle Ranch to the Steinbecks in 1938.

When people refer to "Steinbeck Country" (King City, Salinas, Monterey, Watsonville, etc.) they should start to think that its northern boundary is San Jose and Santa Clara County.

Beck Douglas
Landmarks Commissioner

CITICORP TO HELP SPONSOR LIVING HISTORY

We would like to welcome Citicorp Savings as a new sponsor for our biannual Living History Day event.

The following five Citicorp Savings branches in San Jose will be giving away free Senior Citizens tickets to Living History Day, May 19, 1984, 11:00 - 5:00 P.M. Along with the purchase of these tickets, Citicorp is placing ads in the Senior Times newspaper and the San Jose Mercury News.

We thank Citicorp for their support and invite you to visit them at one of the following locations in San Jose:

1110 Blossom Hill Rd.
488 Blossom Hill Rd.
4724 Meridian Ave.
5375 Prospect Rd.
2160 Tully Rd.

MUSEUM ASSOCIATION ENDOWMENT FUND

The Museum Association has recently established an Endowment Fund to receive monetary donations that will provide a future income for the Museum. Gifts to the Museum Endowment Fund can be made in honor of a loved one or for a special occasion, such as a birthday, in memory of, or as a memorial.

Since January, 1984 gifts have been received in memory of:

Leila Cali
Anita Thomasa, Sr.
Eleanor Vennum
Helen Conroy
Evelyn Bernacle

In addition, donations were received from the Women of Unity, the Women's Fellowship of the Church of the Valley, and the San Jose Metro Widow and Widowers Association for programs provided by our Speakers Bureau, and from Barbara J. Bowen in gratitude for assistance she received from volunteers in our Archives.

Gifts to the Museum Association Endowment Fund should be sent to the San Jose Historical Museum Association Endowment Fund, San Jose Historical Museum, 630 Phelan Avenue, San Jose, CA 95112.
KILOMETERS FOR KIDS

The San Jose Historical Museum is the place to be June 3, 1984 at 8:30 a.m. The Optimist Club of San Jose Inc, and the Advisory Board of the San Jose Children's Shelter is holding a 10 Kilometer Fun Run to benefit The Children's Shelter. The shelter is home to the battered children of the South Bay.

For more information call Mary Prichett at 267-1361.

AN INVITATION TO HAMILTON HOUSE

On Friday, May 18, from 6:00 to 10:00 P.M. an Open House will be held at Hamilton House, 2295 S. Bascom Avenue, Campbell. At that time a plaque will be displayed naming this historic old home to the National Register of Historic Places. The building currently houses a real estate office owned by Mr. & Mrs. Steve Birkeland, Museum Director. Light refreshments will be served and all members and friends of the Museum Association are invited to attend.

ART & WINE FESTIVAL TO BENEFIT CHILDREN

On Saturday, May 5, 1984, Ka'La's Charitable Creative Art & Wine Festival will be held at the San Jose Historical Museum. Slated to be an annual event, the proceeds will go directly to benefit the San Jose Children's Shelter. Winery owners and local artists who are involved in the event will be there to sample and sell their products. The proceeds from the event will benefit the San Jose Children's Shelter will receive the proceeds. Come, enjoy the festivities. They will be there from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Winery tickets will be on hand to answer any questions you may have regarding wine. In addition to art and fine food, there will be a benefit for the children. For more information, please call 293-6655.

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SUGARHIDE

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Winery tickets will be on hand to answer any questions you may have regarding wine. In addition to art and fine food, there will be a benefit for the children. For more information, please call 293-6655.
NEW POLICY FOR PRESERVATION OF CITY RECORDS

On April 3, 1984, the San Jose State City Council unanimously endorsed policy recommendations proposed for the preservation of the City's historical records. I am proud to have brought these recommendations to the Council for consideration. I do so with the opportunity to inform you, the members of the Historical Museum Association, of how the recommendations can be made a reality—by the action of the Council.

My family spent several generations in San Jose, and I have long been interested in the history of our City. Several months ago I discovered that the City did not have a formal policy covering the preservation of historical records. The absence of such a policy had two significant impacts: First, historical records are currently stored at the General Services Warehouse. The warehouse does not provide adequate facilities for the preservation of valuable documents. Additionally, the records are not adequately catalogued and inventoried, and are not indexed in any of the City's historical, archival, or the interest public; and 2) the identification and preservation of historical records was not properly incorporated into the City's existing records management program. This meant that current records of potential historical significance were not easily targeted for preservation.

Dr. Charles Burdick, historian and Dean of the School of Library Science at San Jose State University, discussed with me a unique proposal for the housing of City records. The proposal was presented to the faculty of the University. Dr. Burdick has received a substantial amount of support for the proposal from the faculty. The space is secure, and records are already in place. Dr. Burdick's recommendation is to establish a departmental repository for historical records. The "regional archive" concept has been advocated at the state level.

The City's interest in preserving its records is not purely historical. He agrees that the Historical Museum and the Library rightfully have a stake in City records. During the research phase of my proposal formulation, Museum Director Mignon Gibson graciously took the time to visit the University, and tour of the University's storage facilities. It was readily apparent that space and staff limitations severely restricted the Museum's ability to accommodate the volume of records that can be considered to have historical significance. Dr. Burdick's recommendation is that the Museum and Library are unable to house, and that could otherwise be destroyed. The City would thus accept ownership of the legal property of the City. The proposal offers an alternative to destruction and a means of better preserving our historical heritage.

Stephen Payne, a member of the history faculty at the University specializing in public history, and Micki Ellis of the City's General Services Department, worked with Dr. Burdick and I in the development of the proposal, and presented it to the City Council. Two kinds of records are involved: 1) those historical records currently in storage at the warehouse; and 2) City records housed at other sites appearing on retention schedule but not currently stored in the archives. Category two involves an ongoing procedure, in that records would regularly be transferred to the archives site based on documentation of their ongoing benefit. The proposal included the following stipulations:

1. San Jose State University will provide suitable storage for the City of San Jose’s historical materials used by the City and the University archives.
2. The storage area is available on an indefinite loan basis with a six month termination notice.
3. The storage area will be available on a rent-free basis.
4. All archival materials, and equipment will remain in the legal custody of the City of San Jose.
5. The City's archival materials will not be integrated with San Jose State University materials.
6. The City's archival materials will be stored in the same location.
7. The City's archival materials will be stored for restricted access.
8. Any research requiring the use of any archival materials will be supervised. Specialized archival training will be provided to qualified staff. Only staff will be allowed to check out the City archives, and the public.
9. All access to historical records will be by the access to City records.

Grant monies are available from various sources for projects involving the preservation of City records. Such grants aid historians with the tedious time-consuming task of cataloging, indexing, and indexing voluminous records. The City's old records are sorely in need of this service. In fact, the City applied for a grant for indexing assistance. The grant was rejected, partially because the City did not have a policy regarding historical records preservation. A City-University agreement could be mutually beneficial in securing grant monies.

The recommendations I brought to the Council, which were unanimously adopted, are as follows:

1. The City Council will formally endorse a policy providing for the protection of historical records.
2. Administration was directed to formally incorporate the preservation of historical records into the existing records management program.
3. Administration was directed to negotiate an agreement with San Jose State University providing for the transfer of identified historical records currently stored at the warehouse, and storage of same at the archival facility located at San Jose State University.
4. Administration was directed to negotiate an agreement with San Jose State University providing for the regular transfer of records scheduled for destruction to the archival facility located at San Jose State University.

Now that my recommendations have been adopted, City Manager Gerald Newhouser has directed staff to implement them. This process has already begun, and staff is scheduled to report back to the Council in June.

Gail Fullerton, President of San Jose State University, has been a strong advocate of closer City-University ties. This proposal presents a unique opportunity for the City of San Jose and the University to strengthen their relationship. President Fullerton, her faculty and staff, and the City Council of San Jose City Councilmember District 9 have been instrumental in bringing this proposal to fruition.

James T. Beall, Jr. City Councilmember District 9

FROM MEADOW TO MOFFETT

Imagine, if you will, an area that is flat, wide-open country. Think of fields of growing vegetables, grassy meadows, and pastures. Perhaps a salt marsh with its pickleweed and plants tinged with red. The only buildings in sight, an occasional farm structure low on the horizon. Around the edges of this fertile expanse, a pear orchard here and there whose branches seem to reach for the sky.

Along with this wondrous vision, imagine the fragrance of onions and broccoli growing in the fields, the tang of salt air from the nearby ocean, the freshness of dewy fields, and the hint of sweetness of pear blossoms.

To complete our sensory illusion, listen to the song of the meadow larks, the sound of the tule reeds rubbing against each other in the marsh as they bend to and fro by the gentle breeze.

This lovely scene that you have just created in your mind was once a reality. As one drove down the Alameda northward, through the town of Santa Clara, one came to the edge of town and there was a just a few miles—then there were the first sights of orchards, fields and salt marshes with the all the wonders of this beautiful, smelly, and sounds, and smells.

One day, in 1931, a new era began. Congress decreed there should be a naval base in the midst of our lovely land. We were now on the way to losing the natural beauty around us.

In the area now known as Moffett Field, a huge man-made lake was formed. It was 1,133 feet long, 308 feet wide — the largest hangar in the world. It was to be the home of a different kind of man.

My parents and I often drove through this area of the Santa Clara Valley and one day I was taught to wear the airplane. The fields were still there, but now a monstrous building arose in the center, looking strange and so out of place. It dove right into the lake, covering it all.

It was exciting to follow these huge ships being brought in to their tethers and be pulled to the ground as it is today to watch our space shuttle come in for a landing.

When tragedy struck with the crash of both the MA and AK, this ended the era of dirigibles. It was a sad day for all of us who felt we were a part of their history.

The lighter-than-air craft were gone, but the hangar remains today. It is a giant, even though no longer surrounded by fields and marshes. High rise buildings dot the skyline, but the hangar still overshadows the landscape. It is only the fog of San Francisco Bay that can ever hide its majestic profile.

Wilma Virgo Lea

James T. Beall, Jr. City Councilmember District 9
SARIATDAY NIGHTS IN SAN JOSE

"Dream — when you're feelin' blue, "Dream — that's the thing to do..."

To the honey-sweet strains of the Pied Pipers we all swayed and cuddled close on the dance floor, because we knew that was "the last dance" of the evening. Another Saturday night at St. Pat's was over. The year was 1954, and we were enjoying a recreational phenomenon that seems to have since disappeared, along with bobby sox and hula hoops — the local teen dance club.

High school in the '50s meant dancing. We danced every chance we got — during the "beach" and lunch breaks at school, in our living rooms or kitchens, sometimes using the doorframe as a partner. We even danced to TV, when we watched Frank Darvin's "Record Hop" on Channel 11 (American Bandstand) hadn't caught on in the West, yet.)

But, on weekends, we went to our favorite Dance Club. The three most popular when I was going to San Jose High were the Hi Spot on Second and San Antonio, the Whatzit over in Santa Clara, and St. Pat's on Ninth Street. This last one was my favorite. It was run by Father Flanagan of St. Patrick's parish. Every Saturday night we'd meet in the large meeting hall — empty at first, all bare wooden floors leading up to a heavily curtained stage that held a record player and overzized speakers. Folded chairs lined the side walls, these soon to be unfolded and set up around the edge of the dance floor, never to be occupied (we hoped!)

We lined up at the front door, dressed in Wondermam sweater sets and full circle skirts, white bobby sox and rolled ankle socks, pale 50¢ or 59¢ (I've forgotten which) and got our hands stamped with a large green or some sort of symbol (in case we wanted to leave and come back to another show). The other clubs required membership cards which we'd get punched each time we attended, but St. Pat's never got that way.

All the girls would immediately head for the "John", a tiny cubby-hole to the right, off the stage. There we'd light cigarettes, apply fresh lipstick, adjust our chintz belts and prepare to meet "the guys". Smoking was not allowed in the dance hall — we made up for it in the restroom.

The guys stood around in nervous clumps, at first, surveying the scene and waiting for the girls to start moving. Then their eyes locked on the equally nervous clumps of giggling females. The music alternated with fast and slow numbers. "Sh boom" would get us all out on the floor; then if you liked your partner, when the music flowed into something slow like "Blue Velvet," you'd turn melted into your partner's arms and moved slowly, dreamily around the dance floor. If you didn't like your partner, you headed for the sidelines and the folding chairs with a "Whew! that really wore me out — gotta get some air!"

One interesting feature at St. Pat's (more irritating, actually) was Father Flanagan's method of keeping us all "morally upright". The lights were allowed to dim somewhat, especially during the last slow dance (to that lovely "Dream"), but Father F. would circle through the tightly clasped bodies with a flashlight and a whistle. If he spotted a couple who — in his opinion — were dancing too close, he'd shine his light on them and blow his whistle. It became a sort of badge of honor to have the whistle blown on you — it meant you'd really found someone good!

The Hi Spot downtown was located in the basement of the YWCA building. Each club seemed to favor a certain kind of music, and at the Hi Spot we listened to rhythm and blues in its earliest form, because that's where's all the Mexican and black kids went to dance. They considered the music at St. Pat's and the Whatzit to be "Hit Parade junkie". At the Hi Spot you were sure to pick up on the very latest dance steps, all invented (it seemed) by the five or six black students that we knew. We "hopped" erratically to songs like "W-L-P-Le" (White Port and Lemon Juice) or tried exotic rumba steps to "Cubano Jump" — never really equaling the smooth and flowing movements that our darker brothers and sisters could make. But we loved the music nevertheless. And to this day, whenever I hear "Goodnight, Sweetheart, Goodnight" by the Spaniels, I see another "last dance" with lots of leather jackets and beehive hairdos, moving slowly on the dance floor at the Hi Spot.

The Whatzit was in Santa Clara, by the University. It had been started in the late '40's by some students at Santa Clara High, and was by far the best organized. In the '50s the dances were held in the Sodality Hall next to St. Clare's Church. Next to the dance floor was a large recreation room with a pool table and a counter where we could order cokes and root beers. We spent a lot of time in that room, because for San Jose High girls going to the Whatzit took some courage. We didn't know many of the guys, and so we usually ended up dancing with each other (only the fast dancers). To this day, I have a strong tendency to lead.

The Whutzit is still there on Newhall Street, still run by Father Schmidt as a Youth Club, but it also serves as a Senior Citizens' center, or rented out by Civic groups for their annual Christmas dances. I wonder if they still play "I Can't Get Started" as they did in those days.

Except for the Whutzit, the clubs are gone now, but, hauntingly, the music has endured. Every radio station today plays its share of "Golden Oldies" and sometimes, in the middle of going-home traffic on Lawrence Expressway, I am transported back to St. Pat's in 1954 with the sound of,

"Dream — when you're feelin' blue..."

Marcella Flynn

CALLOWAYS WIN COUNTY HISTORICAL AWARD

The Santa Clara County Historical Commission has selected Henry ("Hank") and Laura Calloway as the 1984 recipients of the Award of Excellence in Historic Resources Preservation.

The Calloways were nominated for their decades of outstanding service as Editors of The Trailblazer, Quarterly Bulletins of the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County, and for their valuable participation on many additional projects of the Pioneer Society. Hank has restored and now maintains the historic Hacienda Cemetery in New Almaden for the Pioneer Society. Also, he has written many historical articles for the Santa Clara American.

The nomination letters written by George Kobayashi and Austen Warburton, representatives of the Pioneer Society, also detailed the numerous volunteer contributions of the Calloways to the San Jose Historical Museum. Hank has painted signs for the Museum since 1971 and Laura has been a Museum Docent since 1972. She served as Docent Coordinator in 1973-1974 and Docent Chairperson in 1974-1975. Currently Laura volunteers six hours a month as a Docent.

The Calloways have given years of dedicated and devoted service to the preservation of our heritage in the Santa Clara Valley. They will be honored for their outstanding contributions by the County Board of Supervisors and the County Historical Heritage Commission at an Award Ceremony and Reception in May during National Historic Preservation Week.

Congratulations, Hank and Laura!

Roberta Jamison Awards Chairperson
Santa Clara County Historic Heritage Commission

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The Mirassou had five children, three boys and two girls during the marriage, which ended suddenly with Pierre's death in 1898 at age 33. The next year Henriette's brief widowhood ended when she married the wealthy C. T. C. Cassagnole, a tough minded winemaker from Italy's Piedmont region. This successful union lasted 39 years until Thomas' death in 1929. Henriette lived on until 1937. They had three daughters between 1891 and 1897.

The Prudhommes were the first to leave Evergreen Ranch in 1908. Helen Prudhomme died in childbirth in 1905, but four other children survived. Leon Renaud died in a buggy accident in 1913. Elise lived on as a very sheltered, homesteading homestead near the Evergreen until her death in 1930. The land stayed in the family until 1944.

Josephine, the married, Thomas Cassagnole's brother Michael in 1892, two years before his death. While Thomas Cassagnole had successfully taken over the Pellerin Winery operations, it made it prosper and eventually was able to clear the old debt that had hovered over the place for decades. For a while after the turn of the century Thomas entered into a partnership with the three Mirassou boys, Peter, Herman and John, but the relationship was never a smooth one. In 1910 Henriette and Josephine retired and the three brothers formed a partnership of their own, acquiring about 113 acres formerly farm land on Aborn Road in Evergreen, the land that today marks the home base of the Mirassou winery operations.

When World War I came John went into the army and when he returned the vineyards ended his partnership. The war years had been good for winemakers and the family's holdings had grown. The war caused a good deal of tension between the brothers. Eventually Peter kept the Aborn Road vineyard land, Herman took the Pomponio Ranch in today's Cambrian area, and John got the ranch on Prospect Road. At first it might have seemed that Peter had received the poor end of the partnership breakup, for with the end of the war came National Prohibition. But home winemaking was still legal and the price of grapes soared. Peter remembered his vineyards and the wine grapes while Herman's operation was a mixed one, which included grapes, apricots and prunes. John was strictly in prunes and pears.

Herman became a leader in the area where he settled after the war, acting as president of the local school board from 1922 to 1938. When the land boom began in the 1930s an elementary school was named for him. He also put his side of the Mirassou family back into the winery business when he bought the 165 acre Lone Hill Ranch on Harwood Road. His sons, Clivia, Rudolph, Ambrose and Arthur operated the vineyards and cheese making on the land of shoestring until 1942 when grape prices improved. After the war the brothers re-opened the Lone Hill Winery, which lasted until 1963. Most of the vineyard land had been sold off in the 1930s. Herman and Maria maintained the lifestyle they had known, living in the family's house and playing a golf course, which operated until Maria died in 1961. Herman died in 1968. Today the Mirassou School is named after his father. It operates a golf course and is being cut up and developed. All that remains of the Lone Hill Winery is the old palm tree that once marked its location.

Of course, the name Mirassou today is most often associated with Peter's side of the family who stayed on the Aborn Road land and grew grapes through the 1950s, but made no commercial wine. Peter's sons, Norbert and Edmund, determined to return the family to their historic winemaking tradition and in 1937 the Mirassou Winery was built, ending a 17 year break in commercial winemaking by the family.

For some years the vintages from here went out in bulk to other wineries. These were mostly high grade wines, many of which was the best California Champagne stock to be had. In fact, the annual report for the quality for the Almaden Champagnes in the 1940s and 1950s derives from the fine white wines supplied by the Mirassou. By the 1960s Mirassou wines were on the shelves for the general public. The family's success in this venture was secured by an early move to stock larger holdings into Monterey County in the 1960s.

The two chief lines of the Mirassou descendent from Pierre and Herman have never been close since the somewhat acrimonious breakup in 1920. And this year Peter's descendants have determined to pull up, so far as the Mirassou Winery operations are concerned.

Edmund's children, Daniel, Peter and Jim, have bought out Norbert's son, Steve, and his brother-in-law, Don Alexander. Norbert and Edmund still actually own the winery, which has been leased to the fifth generation partnership for some years. The partnership makes the wine and owns the Monterey County vineyards.

Daniel Mirassou commented on the action, "Everybody has got to be going in the same direction." If such an observation had been made 50 years ago it would probably just as true back in the 1960s for Pierre and Luis Pellerin and for Pierre's three grandsons in 1920. Recognition of this fact in the face of family tensions has certainly been a vital factor in the material success of this remarkable family.

Charles L. Sullivan

COSTUME/TEXTILE COLLECTION UPDATE

FASHION, FAD, STYLE, MODE, RAGE, describe the Costume Collection and fashions currently on display in the Museum Gift Shop. The contributions to the collection donated by Amelia Land and Family, are catalogued and stored for future study and display. The garments from the Lomeli of Santa Cruz consist of over 500 fashion plus accessories from the 1800’s and 1900’s.

The latest contribution comes from Mrs. James (Connie) Payton. Mrs. Payton’s father was a Marine in World War I. The gifts from Mrs. Payton include a dress Marine uniform, an overcoat, and issue tunic plus accessories.

The Costume Collection is always in need of fashions of every era, including garments of 1894. Handwork books, patterns of garments (McCalla, Simplicity, Vogue, etc.), household lines, laces, handwork equipment, sewing boxes, pictures and dates of the contributed clothing worn, underwear, men’s frocks, women’s frocks, children’s clothing are desirable. These contributions will benefit the Costume Collection, and the costumer, as a tax deduction.

The committee involved in costume care asks that the donations be in good repair, cleaned, and as nearly complete as possible. Work on the Costume Collection is performed on Monday mornings from 9:00 AM until 1:00 PM. Committee members include Kristena Deluz, Bernice Mitchell, Joan Spence, Esther Talbot, and Grace Townsend.

Boy Spence Collection Volunteers
SANTA CLARA COUNTY SUPERIOR COURTHOUSE

Because I now sit on the first floor of the old courthouse on North First Street, opposite St. James Park, the building is of special interest to me. These pictures were graciously shared by retired Superior Court Judge Marshall Hall. Here is, briefly put, the story of that stately facade.

Construction of the courthouse began in 1886. Upon its completion and initial opening on Jan. 1, 1888, the local citizens were delighted with their new creation. The county Board of Supervisors almost immediately used it as bait in an unsuccessful effort to lure the State Capitol back to San Jose. With the colorful prose of the day, author Frederic Hall wrote of the courthouse in his 1871 book _The History of San Jose and its Surroundings:_

"The earliest light which comes streaming through the Porsche gates of Mort smiles upon its noble facade, fashioned after the forms modeled by the artistic hand of Pericles to adorn the Athenian city, to attract the Athenian gaze; and the last rays of the setting sun linger and play in rose and purple tints on its glassey dome. . . . This noble massive pile is a lasting monument of the wealth, the generosity, the taste, the pride, and the advancement of its contributors. From its lofty dome, what beauty, what grandeur present themselves! You may behold the City of San Jose sitting like a queen surrounded by her royal estate, in the fairest valley of the land, bathed in all the glory of the morning sun."

As the years passed the inside of the structure was remodeled to accommodate two more courthouses. This remodeling was basically the only interruption of the routine and orderly conduct of business for many years.

The sleepy Garden City was suddenly awakened on Monday, May 18, 1931 when the courthouse was severely damaged by one of the most spectacular fires this area had ever seen.

The beautiful dome that had served as the building's trademark was gone forever, as were many priceless county records.

The blaze was evidently a result of spontaneous combustion of oily rags in the janitor supply room off the second story, leading to the big dome. Thanks to the outstanding efforts of many firefighters from a number of local communities, enough of the structure was saved so that reconstruction was possible. Work soon began, and on Sept. 17, 1932, the rebuilt courthouse was dedicated. It has housed courtrooms of the Superior Court ever since.

The building was dedicated again on April 27, 1973, following a $700,000 renovation project.

Additional pictures of the courthouse appear in Harry Farrell's _San Jose — And Other Famous Places_, pages 60-63.

Mark E. Thomas, Jr.
Association President & Superior Court Judge

VICTORIAN HOUSE TOUR

The Santa Clara County Victorian Preservation Association is sponsoring its first annual tour of Victorian homes on Sunday afternoon, May 20, Noon to 5:00 p.m. Five private residences are included on the tour. Two are Italianate in design, two are East Lake and one is a Queen Anne. All date from the 1870-1896 era.

Tickets are available for $6.00 at the first home on the tour, located at 762 South Third Street (3 blocks south of Interstate 80). All the homes are located in the downtown area, and maps will be provided at the first home, with the purchase of a ticket.

Refreshments and entertainment will be provided at the last home on the day's tour.

For more information, contact Barbara Conley (279-3864) or Jo Paganini (289-8083).

HIKE AND BIKE-A-TTHON AND "COUNTRY FAIR"

The Loyal Order of the Moose of District 12, and the Northern California Arthritis Foundation will be sponsoring the Third Annual Hike and Bike-a-tthon on June 10, 1984 at the San Jose Historical Museum.

This family fun-filled day will begin with the race at 9:00 a.m. For more information on registration and starting points contact Linda Wery at 294-0830 or the Arthritis Foundation at 377-7990. After the race, which concludes at the San Jose Historical Museum, will be an old-fashioned "Country Fair" with food and fun booths, entertainment and Country Western bands playing continuously throughout the day.

Admission is $1.00 for adults and 50¢ for children and Senior Citizens. The Museum will be open for touring on that day also, with trained Docents to interpret for you the many exciting exhibits and buildings of old San Jose.

SANTA CLARA COUNTY SUPERIOR COURTHOUSE, c. 1900.