A crowd-pleasing Wells Fargo Stagecoach will be featured at Living History Days. Photo courtesy of Wells Fargo Bank.

LIVING HISTORY DAYS 1990

The San Jose Historical Museum will come alive with memories of 100 years ago as it presents its eleventh Living History Days from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, May 19, and Sunday, May 20.

This annual event brought over 15,000 visitors to the Museum grounds last year to enjoy the sights, sounds, and smells of days gone by. Numerous costumed volunteers participate in the exciting historical re-enactments, explain artifacts on display, and demonstrate period arts and crafts.

KRON-TV 4 will once again be a co-sponsor of this event. KRON personalities Sylvia Chase, Suzanne Shaw, Catherine Heeman, Lila Petersen, Gary Radnich, Jerry Graham, Dominique DiPri ma, Tom Sinkovitz, Rita Cohn and Karl Sonkin will take turns strolling the grounds in turn-of-the-century costume mid-day Saturday and Sunday.

KRON-TV 4 is one of the event's four major sponsors, together with the San Jose Mercury News, the City of San Jose Department of Recreation, Parks and Community Services, and the San Jose Historical Museum Association.

At KRON's booth this year, you can pick up free balloons and buttons, have your photograph taken with cutouts of your favorite KRON personalities and purchase souvenir Living History T-shirts.

We hope to see you at Living History Days with your family and friends. This is a perfect time to introduce the Museum to someone new.

Refer to the activities article for Living History Days which appears on page 5 for more details and admission price information.

GROUNDBREAKING SCHEDULED FOR NG SHING GUNG

JUNE 10, 1990

Museum Association members and the public are invited to join in groundbreaking ceremonies for Ng Shing Gung, a replica building to be constructed by the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project on the grounds of the San Jose Historical Museum. The celebration will begin at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, June 10, 1990.

Preceding the formal program, musicians from the Hoy Fung Musical Club of San Francisco will play traditional Chinese music as background entertainment, and a Chinese ribbon dance will be performed by the Bib-Tau Dance Workshop. The formal ceremonies, highlighting the historical significance of Ng Shing Gung and recognizing the efforts of the many individuals who have made this project a reality, will be held between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m. Following the program, refreshments will be served.

An exhibit of photographs and artifacts relating to Ng Shing Gung will be on display in the Pacific Hotel.

The original Ng Shing Gung stood on 6th and Taylor Streets in one of San Jose's early Chinatowns. Built in 1888, Ng Shing Gung was actively used by the Chinese community until 1940 when it was demolished. The building was a two-story brick structure with ornately curved wood exterior pieces. The interior housed one of California's most spectacular Chinese altars, consisting of five altar layers. The altar and all the exterior wooden pieces were preserved and will be incorporated into the reconstruction.

The present project consists of replicating the brick building. The second floor, in keeping with historical authenticity, will house the altar and the first floor will provide space for a variety of exhibits relating to the history of the local Chinese community.

Construction of Ng Shing Gung will begin this spring. The exhibit will be open to the public in 1991.

Please call (408) 949-5681 to let us know you plan to attend.
FROM THE EDITOR

San Jose Historical Museum Association has been fashioned at the City's Historical Museum and the preservation of history in the Santa Clara Valley. This spring, Museum membership has doubled — primarily of two additional non-profits whose presence will enhance our efforts. Along with the San Jose Trolley Company, a non-profit transportation which built the Trolley Barn in 1983-84 and has restored several antique trolley cars for the Downtown Transit Mall, the Historical Museum is now home to the Rotary Club of San Jose, Inc., whose new headquarters is the restored Western Hotel. And on June 10, 1986, ground will be broken for the replica of Ng Shing Gung, a historical reconstruction that was possible through the non-profit Chinese Historical and Cultural Project.

These four organizations together represent tremendous personal involvement and dedication to the community.

Although each of our fellow non-profits — the Trolley Corporation, the Rotary Club, the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project — have additional purposes and goals, they all obviously share with the San Jose Historical Museum Association a desire to preserve our local history. We welcome their participation and presence at the Historical Museum and look forward to working closely together in the years to come.

Seeking Volunteers

The Nominating Committee of the Board of Directors is actively reviewing the needs of our organization for 1991 and beyond. If you have particular skills and talents to share, you would like to suggest a candidate for the Association's Board or committees, we would like to hear from you! Please contact the Museum or speak to any current Boardmember.

Kathleen Muller
Association Administrator

ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

San Jose Rotary

Welcome to our new friends, the San Jose Rotary Club! Now that you have moved into your new facilities — the Gordon House — you can take a breezer once in a while and enjoy the surroundings at the Museum from your back deck and second floor. All of us are excited to have you here and look forward to meeting each of you. We're also a bit jealous that your offices are in such a beautiful structure with a lot of memories of another era.

Ng Shing Gung

The fundraiser for Ng Shing Gung sponsored by the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project Committee was an exciting event. All three floors of Neiman Marcus in Palo Alto had food and drinks for all. The foot was delicious and the desserts on the third floor! A historical exhibit, a celebrity artist, and a dance band round out the festivities. There was informal modeling, including some dynasty robes which were on loan. The Committee is not far from reaching their goals and historic sign finance and dust it off. If you don't have a costume, call Vintage Reflections and they'll put you together. See you at the event on May 19th.

Living History Days

It's hard to believe that Living History Days are almost upon us. Time again to get out that goal and historic sign finance and dust it off. If you don't have a costume, call Vintage Reflections and they'll put you together. See you at the event on May 19th.

Patricia Borbo MacDonald
Association President

HELP US NAME OUR GIFT SHOP

Send to: The Shops Manager San Jose Historical Museum 635 Peral Ave., San Jose, CA 95113

For information call:

(408) 297-2999

Suggested Name

Robert Shields

Photography

Model Portfolios • Portraits • Fashion Art

San Jose Historical Museum Association

In the Collections

Records Management

The San Jose Historical Museum collection started with donations to the Statehouse Museum beginning in 1950. Today the collection consists approximately 500,000 artifacts and countless documents. The task of maintaining records on the collection is one of the major responsibilities of the collections curators. Systematic collection records establish ownership, provenance, and historical context and significance for the objects entrusted to the Museum.

The process of documenting an artifact accepted into the collection is referred to as "accessioning." The accessioning procedures currently followed at the San Jose Historical Museum are outlined in its Registrar's Manual, dated June 15, 1986. When an artifact donation is accepted, a "Deed of Gift" is prepared, signed by the curator and donor, and countersigned by the Executive Director. The Deed of Gift is a legal document formally transferring ownership to the Museum. Each Deed of Gift is logged in the Master Accession Register and assigned a unique number.

The next step is the preparation of a descriptive worksheet, as no individual artifact is recorded. This primary record contains information on the history and origin of the artifact and its current location in the Museum. Additional information is added over time, such as condition and treatment records, exhibition reports, or research data. The Museum's collection is a standard set of functional categories developed especially for use in history museums. Each artifact is assigned to an appropriate category and a catalogue number is prepared. Using the complete record system, it is possible to locate any object in the collection by the name of the object, name of the donor, or accession number.

One challenge that all museums face is reorganizing or adding to the records from existing collections. The San Jose Historical Museum's early records are less detailed than our current standard. Collection of volunteers are currently reviewing additional records for the existing collection to supplement these early records. Records management in the Museum is constantly becoming more sophisticated. The Museum's collection record system is periodically reviewed to keep abreast of new developments in the field.

Sarah Heigho Nunes Curator

IN THE COLLECTIONS

Records Management

The San Jose Historical Museum collection started with donations to the Statehouse Museum beginning in 1950. Today the collection consists approximately 500,000 artifacts and countless documents. The task of maintaining records on the collection is one of the major responsibilities of the collections curators. Systematic collection records establish ownership, provenance, and historical context and significance for the objects entrusted to the Museum.

The process of documenting an artifact accepted into the collection is referred to as "accessioning." The accessioning procedures currently followed at the San Jose Historical Museum are outlined in its Registrar's Manual, dated June 15, 1986. When an artifact donation is accepted, a "Deed of Gift" is prepared, signed by the curator and donor, and countersigned by the Executive Director. The Deed of Gift is a legal document formally transferring ownership to the Museum. Each Deed of Gift is logged in the Master Accession Register and assigned a unique number.

The next step is the preparation of a descriptive worksheet, as no individual artifact is recorded. This primary record contains information on the history and origin of the artifact and its current location in the Museum. Additional information is added over time, such as condition and treatment records, exhibition reports, or research data. The Museum's collection is a standard set of functional categories developed especially for use in history museums. Each artifact is assigned to an appropriate category and a catalogue number is prepared. Using the complete record system, it is possible to locate any object in the collection by the name of the object, name of the donor, or accession number.

One challenge that all museums face is reorganizing or adding to the records from existing collections. The San Jose Historical Museum's early records are less detailed than our current standard. Collection of volunteers are currently reviewing additional records for the existing collection to supplement these early records. Records management in the Museum is constantly becoming more sophisticated. The Museum's collection record system is periodically reviewed to keep abreast of new developments in the field.

Sarah Heigho Nunes Curator
TO THE AVERAGE PERSON, A MUSEUM BRINGS TO MIND THE VISION OF A SOMETIME RUSTY BUILDING FILLED WITH DISPLAYS OF DUSTY ROSES. HOWEVER, SAN JOSE HISTORICAL MUSEUM IS A PLEASENT SURPRISE TO OUR VISITORS! IN ADDITION TO BEING IMRRESSED BY OUR GUIDED TOURS THROUGH TWELVE BUILDING EXHIBITS, THEY ARE QUITE SURPRISED TO LEARN THAT WE OFFER A RICH VARIETY OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS.

OUR HISTORICAL TRANSPORTATION EXHIBIENCE ATTRACTS SECOND GRADE YOUNGSTERS TO A PROGRAM THAT FEATURES TROLLEYS, CABRIOLES AND FIRE EQUIPMENT THROUGH THE DAYS, WEEKS, MONTHS AND YEARS. A TOWER TOUR OF WESTWARD GO! GIVES FIFTH AND SIXTH GRADERS A CHANCE TO LEARN ABOUT THE HARDSHIPS OF OVERLAND TRAVEL (OREGON OR CALIFORNIA) DURING THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

WE ALSO HAVE SPECIAL PROGRAMS THAT HANDICAPPED PERSONS ARE ABLE TO ENJOY. VISUALLY IMPAIRED VISITORS ARE ABLE TO "SEE" ARTIFACTS IN THREE BUILDINGS WHILE DECOY PAINT VERBALS. AN ARTICHAIR TOUR INCLUDES A SLIDE SHOW AND A TOUR OF SELECTED BUILDINGS FOR PERSONS WITH LIMITED MOBILITY.

THESE OUTREACH PROGRAMS TAKE THE MUSEUM TO THE PUBLIC. THE VICTORIAN SCHOOLCHILDREN ARE ABLE TO LEARN ABOUT DAILY ACTIVITIES, DRESS IN PERIOD CLOTHING AND PLAY IN GAME OF THE 1880'S. THROUGH THE INDIAN SCHOOL KIT, STUDENTS IN GRADES THREE THROUGH SIX TRACE THE DAILY LIFE OF THE OHIOAN. THEY THEN LEARN TO GRID A SITE INTO MUSE, PLAY "DICE" WITH STICKS AND LEARN HOW THE INDIANS LIVED WITH NATURE. AN ADULT OUTREACH KIT REMINDS PEOPLE OF THAT TIME BETWEEN THE WORLD WARS THROUGH A COLLECTION OF PHOTOS, MEMORABILIA AND MEMORIES OF THE 1920S.


FINALLY, THE MUSEUM OFFERS A DOWNTOWN WALKING TOUR WHICH INCLUDES 82 FOCAL POINTS OF HISTORICAL INTEREST. THIS TOUR IS BROKEN INTO SEGMENTS RANGING FROM 45 MINUTES TO 3 HOURS, AND FEATURES HISTORIC BUILDINGS SUCH AS THE TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF AMERICA AND THE OLD COUNTY COURTHOUSE.

WE HAVE A RIGHT TO BE PROUD OF OUR MUSEUM AND ITS OFFERINGS!

Charles Morrow
Docent Council President

MUSEUM STAFF

Mignon Gibson Director

Offices

Wanda Foss Senior Steno

Jeanne Kondo Clerk/Typist

Archives

Loralyn Masunaga Archivist

Education

Virginia Beck Curator of Education

Volunteers

Dulce Janzen Volunteer Coordinator

Nancy Frey Wilson/Press Coordinator

Events

Monte Duran Museum Events

Collections

Milita Rico-Samaniego Curator

Sarah Haigh Nunes Curator

Nancy Janzen Curator

ASSOCIATION STAFF

Kathleen Muller Administrator

Administrative Services

Carolyn Gip Gagnon Administrative Asst.

Carol Osselette Bookkeeper

Earlino Sheilds Shop & Tour Coordinator

Shops

Carol Carlson Manager

Anita Kamhat Shop Supervisor

Margrita Sponer Shop Supervisor

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Blueprints of the Valley's Architectural Heritage

Architecture is a unique art. On one hand, it must be grounded in reality as buildings must be structurally sound and functional; on the other hand, the visionary side of the architect gives a building its sense of time, space, and intrinsic life.

The Santa Clara Valley has lost many of its historic buildings in recent years and some of the sense of its architectural heritage. We have a few structures left designed by various Northern Californian architects, such as Willis Polk, A. Page Brown, and Bernard Maybeck, as well as locally renowned architects, such as Theobald and Jacob Leamen.

The Archives of the San Jose Historical Museum has a smattering of blueprints documenting architecture in the area. These range from the rather modest WPA period restrooms at St. James Park, to the "Plunge" at the nataatorium at Alum Rock Park, to a few sheets from architect Julia Morgan's San Jose TWCA building.

The Archives is particularly fortunate to have recently received a collection of the work of local architect Ralph Wycoff. These came to us as a gift from Dorothy Wussch, whose late husband, Peter, was an architect in Wycoff's office.

Wycoff practiced in San Jose in the early to midportion of this century and a number of civic, commercial, and industrial buildings remain from his work. There are examples demonstrating a variety of styles from the eclectic Spanish Colonial to the Moderne and International. Among the Wycoff blueprints are those of the Anglo-California Bank (now the San Jose National Bank), the Modernesque Wober, the French and Drama Building at San Jose State University, and McKinnon School.

Probably Wycoff's best known work is the St. James Post Office. This building, still in use as a post office, was designed in 1938 in the Spanish Colonial Revival style popular at the time. What is interesting to note in the blueprints are the changes the structure underwent to become the version we recognize today. (Photo above)

While the basic structure is the same, the earlier drawings depict a far more ornate facade with heavily encrusted doors, windows, and "crowns" on the lower roofs. A more restrained version is what was finally built. Equally interesting are the blueprints of the floor plans and how Wycoff plotted out the various functions of this particular facility.

What this array of blueprints, drawings, and elevations shows us is not only the development of the project, but the stages of the architect's thinking and the reality of construction issues. As a document of San Jose's past, a blueprint can provide us with a unique view of the architecture of our city.

Leslie Masunaga
Archivist

ARCHIVES:

Open Saturdays: May 5 and June 9 and 33 from 1 to 5 p.m.

Please call for an appointment (297-2290).

MUSEUM AUXILIARY

DISCUSSION GROUP 1000

1200 YARD COURT

SAN JOSE, CA 95113

(408) 296-5777

ENDOWMENT FUND DONATIONS

During the months of March and April 1990, contributions were made to the Museum Association's Endowment Fund Special Projects Fund in honor of the following individuals:

In Memoriam

Amelia Combs
Frank Cuneo
Pat Kelly
Victoria Layard
Violet Moore
Bonnis Morris
Russel O'Brien
Charles Shields
Lois Stelling

In Honor

Volunteers of the Vintage Reflections Costume Shop 60th Anniversary of Wilmer and Nora Bailey

Gifts to the San Jose Historical Museum Association to honor someone on a special occasion, or as a memorial, may be sent to the San Jose Historical Museum Association, 635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose, CA 95112. A letter of acknowledgement will be sent to the person being honored or the family of the deceased.

Anne Louise Heiglo
Assistant Director

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: ON YOU!

There's a volunteer spot for you! Phone Volunteer Coordinator Dulce Janzen at 297-2290.

ENDOWMENT FUND DONATIONS

During the months of March and April 1990, contributions were made to the Museum Association's Endowment Fund Special Projects Fund in honor of the following individuals:

In Memoriam

Amelia Combs
Frank Cuneo
Pat Kelly
Victoria Layard
Violet Moore
Bonnis Morris
Russel O'Brien
Charles Shields
Lois Stelling

In Honor

Volunteers of the Vintage Reflections Costume Shop 60th Anniversary of Wilmer and Nora Bailey

Gifts to the San Jose Historical Museum Association to honor someone on a special occasion, or as a memorial, may be sent to the San Jose Historical Museum Association Endowment Fund, 635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose, CA 95112. A letter of acknowledgement will be sent to the person being honored or the family of the deceased.
It wasn't the easiest thing to do: He led a party of five from Independence, Missouri, to California in under three hours. Of course, our wagon party organized around Chuck Morris, a young man who accomplished such miracles at the San Jose Historical Museum on a regular basis.

Chuck's wagon (which couldn't resist) can be found near the stable adjacent to the Westward Hol supply store, always ready to outfit another group of adventurous children.

This day he had journeyed with children from Spangler School in Milpitas. As he rested and was interviewed, he removed his hat and tipped on an O'Brien's cider.

Chuck Morris is our current D Occident President, who retired as principal at Oak Ridge Elementary School seven years ago and is now more active than ever. Chuck gives a lot of attention to Museums activities when he isn't busy working on San Jose Exp with his wife, Marva, or enjoying a Caribbean cruise. At the Museum he attends Assoc Council meetings, and as the Docent Coordinator, gives downtown tours and is known as a Priest Shop building specialist.

Nearly everyone who has lived in San Jose and appreciate being close to their married daughter, Kerry, and their married son, David, of Modesto. They have one grandchild, Taylor, and are about to become grandparents for the second time within a few months.

Chuck was born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. After World War II, he was discharged from the U.S. Army Air Corps and decided to live in California after his parents who had moved here to work at Hunter's Point Shipyard. There were many young men at this time using their GI Bill to get an education, and Chuck joined them. San Jose State University was crowded, "A and only often held classes in church basements and quest halls. Chuck began in Engineering but decided Elementary Education was a better career for him.

His timing was good as the Bay Area was rapidly growing after the war. Schools were being built to accommodate the huge population of elementary school "baby boomers." Opportunities in teaching were everywhere and San Lorenzo attracted Chuck and his wife, who was a teacher at the time as well. Eventually, Chuck found his way to our Valley.

Years ago he accompanied a mentally gifted child to the Museum. Chuck stated, "I know I would be back someday." He certainly did come back.

Chuck recalled being a newswoman at an all-ferne Museums meeting time. "Which one of you ladies is taking the minutes?" he unfortunately said in a principal-like tone. Virginia Beck promptly assigned the task to him.

Chuck has enjoyed the Museum, particularly any project that allows him to reach out to young people. He is proud of his part in presenting the Victorian School Kit and happy he has the opportunity to work with talented people like Gail Mann, Audra Weber, Margie Mdhilde and others who are always giving.

Though Chuck thinks progress on the Museum Master Plan sometimes seems slow, it is steady. This is evidenced in the addition of the Fireplace, Cheischl, Zender and Gordon Houses, and the Fruit Barn. Since they were made, the Museum staff, the Board of Directors and the public who doesn't show, such as planning and painting. And how about all of that trolley work our 'buses'; with Destination Downtown and the Pavilion opening is something to be proud of too.

With that, Chuck had finished his cider and had quite enough of sitting. He donned his western hat, summed a smile, and moseyed off.

MUNICIPAL SEAL OF THE CITY OF SAN JOSE

Last fall when I was hearing cases in the Federal Court Building and spending a lot of time downtown San Jose, I happened to notice an image on the sewer manhole covers — the appearance of a batch of wheat surrounded by vegetables. My curiosity being picqued, I did some investigation and found the design was the original Municipal Seal of the City of San Jose. There with, as they say, hangs a tale.

The minutes of San Jose's Common Council meeting of July 23, 1850, contain the following language:

A resolution requesting the Mayor to furnish a description of the seal was offered by Mr. Cory and accepted.

Mr. Cory was Benjamin Cory and the Mayor was Josiah Belden. The minutes of the Council's September 9, 1850, meeting state:

The following bills were then presented: City to J. Beden for City Seal $48.

Presumably, Beden was Mayor Belden. There being no foundry in San Jose at the time, the engraving was probably done in San Francisco. For articles which required the actual design of the seal was never approved. This was remedied in 1867 by resolution of the San Jose City Council.

The seal depicts a sheaf of wheat with grapevine leaves. Research has failed to determine whether some secondary significance or meaning was attached. Not, however, language from an account of the March 30, 1850, issue of the San Jose News:

The design of the old seal, which (San Jose City Clerk) Orenter feels is the original but which has no date or manufacturer's name on it, employs ancient symbols of prosperity in its use of grapevine and sheaf of wheat. The latter is especially significant. (Clyde) Arkleache puts out, because the site for the original pueblo was chosen because the land around would produce a good wheat crop. This was most desirable to the little community charged with supplying food for the presidio up on the Bay.

It is noteworthy that in 1850 wheat and grapes were important crops of the city. The prunes would not become a prominent local product until the 1870s.

The seal remained unchanged until 1972 when the San Jose Chamber of Commerce sponsored a bicentennial logo contest. Its $1,000 savings bond prize was won in August of that year by Frederick Gray, an art student at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

The logo quickly became popular. Les Frazier, a 78-year-old retired construction engineer, spent 84 hours creating a tapestry reproduction of the logo requiring the typing of 15,000 knots in 1974. In 1977, he presented his work to Mayor Janet Gray Hayes who hung it in City Hall.

At the end of her term, she gave it to the downtown branch of the City Library, where it hangs on the third floor near the entrance to the California Room. Despite assurances that the new logo was not intended to replace the old seal, the logo was soon to be found on City stationery and automobiles. On Tuesday, March 13, 1979, the City Council exchanged the old seal for the new logo which "was in keeping with modern times."

Little did Council members realize they were unleashing a torrent of discontent. The San Jose Historic Landmarks Commission adamantly urged the Council to reverse its decision. Commission Chairperson Bonnie Bamburg stated:

ANNUAL CORPORATE MEMBERS

PATRION
Burlington Air Lines

BEQUESTED
Berean astronomers Foundation
Central Counties Supply, Inc.
Cline Corporation
Fairfield Co

MAJOR SPONSORS

McIntyre Vineyards
Miller Construction Supply, Inc.
Pomerance Brothers Building Materials
San Jose Lumber

SUSTAINING

Schanz Associates Inc. CPA
Bank of the West

Sponsor:

Charlotte Burnham & Banfi

AVIVI Properties
Schafer Oil Co.
Gage Associates
Cooper, Collins & Parks Accountancy Corp.

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno

Beleno
of-war, marbles. Do some Maypole dancing, watch a puppet show or wash clothes on the Victorian washing machine (old washboard).

Parade
The parade alone is worth the price of admission. It will be held both days at 2:00 p.m. The baggy full of fancy ladies from the local salon and the decent, socially-elevated townspeople riding in their fine carriages conjure up all manner of memories of the past. The sounds of the horseless carriages as they move along the Museum streets makes the carriage horses nervous are, indeed, sounds we no longer hear today.

Admission Information
The admission is $6.00 for adults; $4.00 for seniors; and $3.00 for children. This year a Family package is available for $15.00 (2 adults and up to 3 children per pass).

Due to the fundraising nature of this event, members of the San Jose Historical Society Museum Association will not receive free admission; however, with advanced ticket purchase available by using the form in this newsletter; members do receive a discount. The payment must be received by May 10 at the Museum. Admittance at the gate on May 19 or May 20 will be at full price.

Barbara Oeha-Carumanis

LIVING HISTORY DAYS
SPECIAL BOOK SALE

For two days only — May 19 and May 20 — during Living History Days the following past premium books will be available for only $10 each or three for $25.00. The books will be available in the Gift Shop and at a special table in front of the Hotel. No additional member discount.

Barnstorming
Sunshine, Fruit and Flowers
San Jose and Other Famous Places

Pen and Inklings
California Cavalier
Signposts I and II

MEMBERS ONLY

DISCOUNT TICKETS FOR LIVING HISTORY DAYS
May 19 & 20, 1990
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Get out your red pen and May calendar and circle May 19 and 20! Preparations for Living History Days 1990 are underway and the event promises to be educational and fun-filled once again, as we turn back the clock to a simpler age.

For the first time this year members of the Museum Association have the opportunity to purchase advance admission tickets to Living History Days for 10% less than the general public. Purchasing advance tickets not only saves you money, but will enable you to bypass long ticket lines on either May 19 or 20 and walk right in. Tickets are good for one day on either Saturday or Sunday, so you needn't decide which day you can go until the weekend of the event. A ticket form appears below. Just fill it out and mail it with your check made payable to SJHMA and a stamped, self-addressed envelope to:

San Jose Historical Museum
Attn: Living History Days Tickets
636 Fitch Avenue
San Jose, CA 95112

Make the most of your Museum membership! Join us for Living History Days and take advantage of this special offer for members only. MAIL IN MUST BE RECEIVED BY MUSEUM BEFORE MAY 10.

ADVANCE TICKET ORDER FORM
1990
LIVING HISTORY DAYS

Name: _____________________________
Address: _________________________
City: ______________ Zip: __________ Phone: __________

Please send me the following General Admission tickets which are valid for one day:

Adult ticket(s) @ $6.00 each = $__________
Senior's ticket(s) @ $4.00 each = $__________
Children's ticket(s) (6-17 years) @ $3.00 each = $__________
Family Pass (2 adults + up to 3 children) @ $15.00 each = $__________

Total amount at regular price: $__________
Less 10%: $__________
Total amount enclosed: $__________
HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION CORNER

San Jose’s Historic Landmarks Commission has identified over forty official historical sites and several historic districts within our community. One of the most historic areas is The Alameda.

The Alameda
The Alameda is a portion of the El Camino Real (King’s highway) within San Jose that was established to connect California missions, pueblo, and presidios.

The Alameda was the link from Mission Santa Clara (founded as the eighth California mission by Father Junipero Serra) and Father Munguia in January of 1777 to the Pueblo of San Jose de Guadalupe. The Pueblo was California’s first Spanish civil settlement and in November of 1777 near First and Robson but later it was moved to the present Market and San Fernando area after 1787.

Father Magin Catala of the Santa Clara Mission recognized the importance of a convenient route between the Mission and civil settlement. In the late 1790s with the help of 200 Indians of the Mission, he directed planting of two rows of Black Willows (alamos). The willows provided a canopy above the road for many years. In the next two centuries, the number of rows and types of trees has varied.

In the early 1800s, a horse drawn trolley line was established along The Alameda and was named the “Way of the Willows.” In 1888, the San Jose-Santa Clara Electric Company established the first electric trolley line on the West Coast to be powered by overhead wires along The Alameda. A trolley ran every seven and one-half minutes and fare was five cents. The Alameda with its 116-foot right-of-way became an elite residential area with many elegant mansions.

At present, the willows have been replaced with sycamore trees, bushes have replaced the electric trolley, and some of the residences have been replaced with commercial buildings.

In 1982, the Historic Landmark Commission recommended that the historical link to our past be designated as a historical area. In 1985, the City Council established The Alameda City Historical Landmark with an accompanying Planned Development Zoning to preserve this historical area of our community.

San Jose has also established the St. James Park, the Hesnally Area, and a downtown commercial area the 1st and the Santa Clara Street as historical districts. The San Jose Historic Landmarks Commission coordinates and implements the City’s Historic Preservation Programs and the Historic Preservation Ordinances as adopted by the City Council.

Landmarks Commission Meetings
The Historic Landmarks Commission meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month in Room 304 in City Hall at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome to attend.

William A. Thomas, President
Historic Landmarks Commission

PHOTO CREDIT:
Photo Courtesy of Keystone Company.

STROLL OUR STREAMS
It is not easy to walk back in history where we live. The old landmarks are mostly gone, covered by cities which have merged into one giant rooftop lined by sidewalks of freeways and streets.

Only the streams remain relatively unchanged, and several members of the San Jose Historical Museum Association are finding streams provide a link with the Valley’s history they had not realized until they walked along the banks of the Coyote Creek and the Guadalupe River.

Garbled trees trunks mark on old orchard; a palm tree tells of a forgotten riverbank garden.

South of the old town of San Jose, a platform and cable denote the high-water crossing on the Malech Ranch and concrete structures between Monterey Road and Coyote Creek remain old timers of the days when the railroad hauled gravel out of the creek area.

The mansion built by James Lick may be glimpsed amid towering structures of a housing development on the west bank of the Guadalupe north of Montgomery Street.

Coming up out of the Guadalupe River north of the old railroad yards, three old brick warehouses bring back memories of a small business life in San Jose . . . only slightly faded; the letters on the building read “Mangrum & Otter Co., hardware, dry goods” . . . “Hat’s, San Jose’s Big Department Store” . . . “Anderson-Sanborn Mfg. Co.”

Both the Coyote and Guadalupe are on the list of future parks. Along the Coyote for most of the way between William Street Park and the base of Anderson Reservoir east of Morgan Hill, there are surfaced paths for joggers, bikers and hikers.

The Guadalupe has paths from Alviso to about Hobson; but through “downtown” San Jose, cyclone fences hug the edge of the riverbank and trailer stop down to the dam of tenia and makeshift shelters of the homeless.

Between the San Jose Historical Museum property and the Road, the Coyote is dotted with fallen trees, old cars, mattresses and other debris dumped over its banks. Much of the Guadalupe, where it is accessible to traffic, has also become a garbage dump.

But there is beauty to offset the ugly: wildflowers in the spring, magetic cottonwoods and sycamores whose naked branches in the winter expose the nests of egrets and hawks. There are ducks and great blue herons, red-winged blackbirds, corncrows, woodpeckers, quail, red-tailed hawks. And if you’re lucky, you might see a night heron or a deer or a tree squirrel.

Those who grew up in the Valley will rediscover old crossties, such as Hobson Street on the Guadalupe, Ogier and Burnett down south on the Coyote.

It has been suggested a tour map be produced, but there’s still the south stretch of the Coyote, Los Altos Creek, the Penitencia, Los Alamitos Creek, and maybe a few others.

Patricia Loomis

KEYSTONE COFFEE TRUCK DONATED

In January 1990 Dorothy Dean Helzer, Henry J. Down, Jr., and John Dowun Luckhardt donated the Keystone Coffee Truck to the San Jose Historical Museum in memory of David R. Helzer and Henry J. Down.

The vehicle in a 1913 Ford Model T Delivery Truck. It was purchased from Jackie Cooper, Columbus Pictures Inc. in 1969 and restored in the early 1970s. According to the donation record, the Keystone Company purchased the truck and because it was a duplicate of the vehicle that they had used for their deliveries during the early years of this century. They used the duplicate vehicle in parades and car shows, and it proved to be great advertising for the Company name and product.

The Keystone Coffee Company took great pains in restoring the vehicle to its original state. The Keystone Model T Truck has gas lights and non-demonstrable rims on its front and rear tires. It has a solid brass spider (bub legs) on the 15-inch outside diameter steering wheel, Kerosene side lamps with squaw tops and bases mounted on frame, and a brass single twisted bulb horn. The lower half of the front windshield slopes back and the top half folds forward. The Model T Truck is painted red with black fenders and gold lettering that says “Keystone — First Model T to deliver coffee in San Jose” on the sides of the body of the truck. The vehicle is in very good condition.

Additional information provided to the Keystone Coffee Company by the Model T Ford Club of Northern California in 1972 states that the body of the truck was made by some company other than Ford, as they did not make delivery trucks between 1912 and 1917. The original price tag of the bare chassis truck was probably $410.00, and the buyer then spent another manufacturer installing the delivery body.

The Historical Museum was very pleased to receive such a valuable article of early coffee and wishes to say “thank you” to Dorothy Dean Helzer and her family for the Keystone Model T Truck and its accompanying historical documentation.

Milita Rios-Samaniego
Curator

“MOM, SWEET MOM”

Wondering what to give that special lady for Mother’s Day? A gift membership in the San Jose Historical Museum Association will solve your gift-giving woes. Think of the many pleasures a membership brings: admission to the Museum; discoveries in O’Brien’s, our Gift Shop and Vintage Reflections Costume Shop; opportunities to go on trips; invitations to lectures, special events and a copy of our wonderful premium gift book, San Jose: A Personal View by Wee Peyton. Gift cards are available on request.

Remember Father’s Day is just around the corner and a Museum membership would be a great gift for Dad too!

To order a membership, simply fill out and mail the membership application in this issue of the Association News on page 8, or call Earlene Shinn at the Museum’s Coordinator, at 297-2290. If you would like the book sent, please add $2.50 to cover handling charges.

Laurel Persino
Association Board
HISTORICAL FOOTNOTES OF SANTA CLARA VALLEY

By Jack Douglas

ALBERT SOLON: MASTER TILE ARTIST

With the waning of the International School of Architecture and their bland, colorless glass boxes, architects are considering the use of decoration on their "post modern" structures. This, of course, is nothing new, as most of our buildings from the 1880s to the ornate deco buildings of the 1920s and 30s were lavishly covered with terra-cotta or glazed ceramic tile. Resistant to sun and weather, terra-cotta could be molded into any desired shape or design.

Most of our older buildings in downtown San Jose are covered with terra-cotta surfaces. The fire of Gladding and McBean, with its principal plant at Lincoln in Pleasanton County, molded and fired the terra-cotta siding for many of San Jose's early buildings, as well as major structures throughout the West.

Some of our best examples are the St. James Post Office, the Towsley and Doehrmann buildings, the Sainte Claire Building and the Sainte Claire Hotel. The Old Bank of America and the Medico Dental use terra-cotta in their decorative elements. (A new book, entitled Architectural Terra-Cotta of Gladding and McBean by Gary F. Karruta, is available in the Museum Gift Shop.)

Besides architectural terra-cotta, brightly colored ceramic tile was frequently used for decorative purposes on California buildings as far back as the Mission Period. Modern use began at the turn of the century with the Craftsman and Spanish Revival movements in architectural design. San Jose became the West Coast center for decorative tiles when Albert Solon and Frank Schimmel set up their S & T tile studio and plant in 1920.

Solon, who was born at Stoke on Trent in Staffordshire, England, was descended from a family of potters and sculptors in the potteries industry for 300 years. The Solon clan began perfecting their craft near Toulouse, France in 1680, and they eventually became recognized masters throughout Europe. Moving to England during the French Revolution, the family continued working in the famous Minton factory. Solon's father, an artist/expert on English china, perfected the process of painting with white clay on a black body, a technique which won him the highest awards at the Paris Exposition in 1878.

Young Albert, after serving his apprenticeship in England, came to San Jose in 1910 to teach ceramics at the San Jose Normal School. The practical arts were an essential part of teacher training, and one of the courses he taught was Rural School Pottery in which teachers learned to make clay objects from local materials and improvised firing methods. He taught physics when he wasn't busy in the pottery studio.

Old Economics Building at San Jose State University. Photo courtesy of Jack Douglas.

Larkin, who had learned the business by working at Garden City Pottery, would eventually take over the business in 1947.

Albert Solon and his wife, Emma, raised three children in their South 16th Street home. He was active in the Elks, was president of the San Jose Lion's Club, and kept up his relationship with San Jose State through the Alumni Association. He died suddenly of a heart attack on August 2, 1949, while visiting his daughter in Santa Barbara. In addition to his brother, Camille, there were also Philip, who made fine porcelain in New Jersey, and Leon, a world authority on architectural polychrome and a celebrated zulalist, portrait painter and ceramicist. It is not known how many of the Solon offspring entered the ceramics field, but it would be a pity if 300 years of tradition had died out after only one generation in the New World.

Albert Solon is remembered by very few, but there is probably no architect or artist whose work may be seen in so many places, from modest suburban homes to hotels and monuments such as San Simeon. Many buildings which displayed his art have been torn down or carelessly remodeled. The former courtyard and fountain at the Sainte Claire Hotel is an example of the latter line.

Only recently, with the rise of the preservation movement, have many of the architectural details of our older buildings been noted and appreciated. Once one becomes aware of these colorful ceramic gems, they seem to shine out everywhere. Solon and his ancient art continue to brighten our lives.

TILE TRADITION LIVES ON

The art of making fine tile in San Jose did not die with the passing of Solon and Larkin. The Stonelight Tile Company on Pomeona Avenue is an offshoot of the original company. Early Albert Solon patterns are still in their inventory, and people who wish to replace broken tiles may find replacements at their shop. The Stonelight factory, with its staff of twelve, manufactures a variety of modern tiles both decorative and functional. Under the direction of David Auson their kilns are still producing some of the finest product in the country.

In this era of high technology, it is surprising how little the basics of tile making have changed. The glazes are still applied by hand to the decorative slip, as they were a hundred years ago. Richard Garcia, who oversees the mechanical apparatus, has been with the company for thirty years and can recall the time when Larkin ran the plant.

If you are at all interested in tiles, a visit to the plant and showroom at 1651 Pomeona Avenue will be a real experience.
MYSTERY PHOTO

Can you identify any of these people? We’d love to know who the billboard girl is! For the March mystery photo, the identity of the gentleman watering his Victorian garden remains a mystery. Let’s do better this time and give Leslie Masunaga a call at the Archives (287-3290) with the identity of these Frontier Village enthusiasts.

DE YOUNG MUSEUM
SAN FRANCISCO

TREASURES OF AMERICAN FOLK ART
AMISH: THE ART OF THE QUILT
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13, 1990

WHEN: Wednesday, June 13, 1990
WHO: Association members and their guests
HOW: Royal Coach Tour Bus — leaving and returning to the Phelan Avenue parking lot of the San Jose Historical Museum
TIME: 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
COST: Members $23.00 (lunch not included)
Nonmembers $29.00 (lunch not included)

You will begin the day at the De Young Museum with a docent-led tour of the “Treasures of American Folk Art” from the Albright Rockefeller Folk Art Center in Williamsburg. Much of this collection has not been seen outside of Williamsburg in decades. Nearly 200 two- and three-dimensional examples will be in this exhibition. It includes paintings — among them “Peaceable Kingdom” (1832-34), attributed to Edward Hicks — trade and shop signs, pottery, quilts and covers, weather vanes, furniture, and toys.

Lunch is on your own. You may wish to bring a picnic lunch to enjoy in Golden Gate Park, dine at the Cafe in the De Young Museum or in one of the many nearby restaurants.

In the afternoon you will have a docent-led tour of "Amish: The Art of the Quilt." The quilt motifs of the Amish often reflected the rural environment of their lives. Their world of natural beauty shows up in the broad, geometric planes of color which conjure up rolling fields, farm structures and the peace of the countryside. These beautiful quilts are from the extensive Esprit collection.

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, 635 Phelan Avenue, San Jose, CA 95112. Attn: Esprit Shields.

DE YOUNG MUSEUM, WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13, 1990
(8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.)

NAME: ____________________________
ADDRESS: _________________________
PHONE: ____________________________
NUMBER OF RESERVATIONS: [ ]

RESERVATION CONFIRMED: [ ]

SAN JOSE HISTORICAL MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

Name: ____________________________
Mailing Address ____________________
(Please indicate method of payment: □ Check □ Cash)
Zip: ______________________________
(Bus.) Phone ________________________
(Res.) Phone ________________________

MEMBERSHIP

CLASSIFICATIONS
□ Pioneer Circle ($500)
□ Mission Circle ($1,000)
□ Tower Circle ($200)
□ Century Circle ($100)
□ Contributor Circle ($50)
□ Family ($45)
□ Individual ($30)
□ Senior Citizens ($30)
□ ADD $2.50 TO RECEIVE YOUR BOOK BY MAIL.

Gift of: ______________________________

Expiration Date: ______________________

Signature ____________________________

Please indicate your membership level:
□ Master Card □ Visa

(Please list all digits from your charge card)

For Credit Cards

□ Office Use Only

□ Check ____________

□ Bank statement

□ Sold by: ____________________________

[ ]

DATES TO REMEMBER

May 19 and 20, 1990
Living History Days
Saturday and Sunday
from 1:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

June 19, 1990
Groundbreaking Ceremonies
for Ng Sheng Gung
1:00 p.m.

June 13, 1990
Bus Trip to De Young
Museum in San Francisco