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silicon valley from a to z

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THE Exchange

HISTORY SAN JOSÉ

MAY 2005

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Saving Memories of Dairy Hill

First-ever online exhibit brings historical mitigation to a world-wide audience

Have you ever gone back to see a favorite landmark from your childhood and found it's now just a memory? Not every old building or open space can be saved. But through historical mitigation, we can at least help preserve our memories of a site in a tangible form. Traditional historic mitigation documents our cultural heritage by recording the characteristics of the site before it is demolished through research and photographs—both current and historic—and compiling the information into a report. The report is then distributed to local libraries and historical institutions. The History San José Research Library is a major repository of historical mitigation documents.

Unfortunately, that incredible wealth of information can languish on shelves if the public doesn't know about it. That's why HSJ will launch its

first online historical mitigation exhibit this summer, focusing on Dairy Hill. Dairy Hill is one of the small hills adjacent to Oak Hill Cemetery, between Highway 87 and Monterey Road, and Curtner Avenue and Capitol Expressway. Now a new SummerHill Homes development, Dairy Hill was home

to the American Dairy Company, the last Grade A dairy farm in Santa Clara Valley. The dairy's closure after 80 years marked the end of an era. The Dairy Hill Online Exhibit will trace the site from grassland to a self-sufficient farm with over 200 head of cattle, and now to new housing.

The online exhibit represents an important partnership between HSJ and real estate developer SummerHill Homes, and will provide a new model for historic mitigation, one that, to

Online Exhibit, continued on page 4



It is a natural question. "Why did History San José present *Between Dirt and Sky*, a children's musical on the life of Cesar Chavez?" And it deserves to be answered.

First, despite general wisdom to the contrary, we don't only become interested in history when we get old. Children are born historians. Remember their first questions: "What was life like with the dinosaurs?" "Was there life before the Xbox?" By these questions children are trying to define who they are by relating to experiences they have not had. They are historical questions, and the children who ask them are historians.

We only learn to dislike history when we experience it in our schools as dull memorization of meaningless dates and faceless names. The performance of *Between Dirt and Sky* presents a particular historical experience in a way that can be received, understood, and appreciated by children, and that is a most worthwhile goal.

Between Dirt and Sky offered a singular opportunity of special appeal because of the subject matter and quality of the work. We will continue to explore other potential collaborations with a broad variety of arts and cultural organizations in order to present Santa Clara County history to new audiences through innovative formats. We hope that this performance will establish a model for those future partnerships.

HSJ has been fortunate to have a longstanding collaboration with the Mexican Heritage Plaza. We have been honored to assist the Plaza with exhibit installations in the past, and the partnership with *Between Dirt and Sky* was natural. The Plaza stands on an important piece of ground directly associated with Chavez and amid a community that

played an important role in his life. The Plaza's theatre is one of the best performing arts spaces in the City, and its location allowed us to enrich the curriculum of three Alum Rock schools beyond the saintly references and benign platitudes usually associated with designated holidays. The partnership added depth and meaning to the entire Chavez Holiday celebration.

Finally, *Between Dirt and Sky* provided an important lesson in civics that fits well within the mission of History San José. The histories of America, California, and Santa Clara County are rife with conflict, with legitimate struggle between people, and among peoples, over what constitutes the American dream and how to achieve it. To remove this conflict is to sanitize the past, while at the same time removing the opportunity to continue the discussion today.

Personally, I was delighted that a children's musical presentation was as complex as its subject. *Between Dirt and Sky* did not shy from any of the more controversial elements of the story. It was an honest presentation of a complex and controversial subject, and that is unusual these days. Perhaps even more remarkable, it respected the ability of children to handle that complexity and controversy and to figure things out for themselves.

Those of you who attended the performance of *Between Dirt and Sky* will remember how special the evening was. Those of you who were unable to attend missed a wonderful presentation. History San José was pleased and honored to be part of it.

David Crosson
President & CEO

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Free admission for one year to
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Between Dirt & Sky Play

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Family Days



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Dairy Hill Online Exhibit



Artist Theodore Wores Captured the Valley in Bloom

by Jack Douglas

Courtesy of Triton Museum of Art



Theodore Wores, *Spring Blossoms of Los Gatos*, 1925.

Theodore Wores, one of California's foremost early artists, found in the Santa Clara Valley an endless source of subjects. Settling in Saratoga towards the end of a successful international career, he and his wife sought peace and solace among the blossoming orchards that distinguished our valley at the turn of the 20th century.

Unlike William Keith, Thomas Hill and Albert Bierstadt, the first wave of pioneer eastern artists who came west during the gold rush, Wores was born in San Francisco in 1858. His artistic talent was evident at an early age. He took instruction from Virgil Williams, founder of the San Francisco Art Association School of Design. When he was 16, it was decided that Wores should travel to Munich, which was at that time the center of artistic creation in Europe. He joined other San Francisco art students in what would become a club of young American artists whose leader was the talented young artist Frank Duveneck. From

Duveneck, Wores learned the new technique of nature painting—called plein-air in France—in which the artist abandoned the studio for painting out of doors. Wores was so successful that he won a generous scholarship, which included the free use of a studio and academy-paid models.

After several years of study and travel in Europe, Wores returned to San Francisco, where he was the first to paint scenes of the city's then-mysterious Chinatown. His paintings of Chinese subjects were prized by the city's new rich, his reputation soared and commissions for his work rolled in. Unlike many artists, Wores never had to worry about money. He was even welcomed into San Francisco's notorious Bohemian Club.

Wores was present when Oscar Wilde made his famous visit to California in 1882. The artist convinced the peripatetic playwright to sit still for a formal portrait. Acquaintance with Wilde gave Wores entry to high artistic circles in

England, where he gained encouragement from James McNeil Whistler, the reigning artist in Europe.

Whistler was intrigued by what he had heard about Japanese art, and at his encouragement Wores soon went to Japan. The country was still closed to most westerners, but he gained entrance as a teacher of English to a well-placed family and once there, traveled the country, painting the natural beauty and Japanese culture. Wores' ability to capture intimate detail came into its own. His paintings of the flowers and lush vegetation, almost always present in his Japanese work, are outstanding, and his techniques would later be repeated in his scenes of Santa Clara County's blossoming orchards. Wores was at the forefront of the wave of interest in all things Japanese that took the European continent by storm in the 1890s. He returned to Japan in 1892, completing 120 paintings in 15 months.

Back in San Francisco, he produced many landscapes of the surrounding countryside. The earthquake and fire of 1906 destroyed his McAllister street home and studio, but he was soon at work re-establishing the San Francisco Art Association Art School, where he was dean until 1913. In 1910 he married Carolyn Bauer of a prominent local family. They traveled together around the Southwest and he completed many canvases of native Indian life.

AT HOME IN THE HILLS

Wores had developed an antipathy toward "modern art," and exhausted by city life and the responsibilities of administering the art school, he and his wife looked for a more peaceful place to settle and paint. On a trip through the Santa Cruz Mountains in 1926, they came across the little village of Saratoga. In a March 1938 issue of *Women's Club Magazine*, Wores stated: *Of all the countries I have visited in search of material for my brush, California ranks first as a land of sunshine and*

Wores, continued on page 5

Family Days at History Park

There are many wonderful experiences waiting for children and their families at History Park's summer series of Family Days! Plant an herb, take it home and start your own herb garden. Try to find the queen bee in a hive full of worker bees. Taste some Feijao à Portuguesa. Dig in the dirt for clues from our past. Developed for families with children up to the age of 10, Family Days take place one weekend day per month from May through October. See calendar for dates and times.

SPRING IN THE VALLEY

Spring in the Valley will offer activities that families have enjoyed together in the past. What's a Sunday afternoon without ice cream? Join History Park's staff and volunteers in making and tasting some homemade ice cream. Where does lemonade come from? A can? A jar? No, lemons! Build your muscles as you squeeze lemons for some old-fashioned lemonade. Participate in lawn games. Learn about the origins and history of "base ball," and see what kind of equipment was used at the turn of the last century. Take a tour of the museum's gardens and see what's just starting to sprout and grow. Bring a picnic lunch, find a spot on the lawn and spend a Sunday afternoon like your great-grandparents did.

DIA DE PORTUGAL FESTIVAL

Dia de Portugal Festival is presented by the Portuguese Heritage Society of California as a way of introducing visitors to the culture and heritage of Portugal. There will be ongoing entertainment on the Main Stage, as well as a variety of Portuguese food vendors. The highlight of the day will be the parade at 1:00 pm. Children's crafts and a special exhibit, *California Shore Whaling* help round out the event.



(l) Children working in a dig box on Archaeology Day; (r) Parade through History Park at the Dia de Portugal Festival.

ARCHAEOLOGY DAY

Archaeology Day returns again this summer. This popular event provides children with the opportunity to engage in many of the same activities as archaeologists do. Children can don authentic gear and use tools similar to those used by archaeologists to search for artifacts. Dig Boxes located at the Ng Shing Gung Museum and the Umbarger House hold clues that tell part of the story of each building. Children learn how to shake dirt through a sifter to find small artifact pieces that otherwise might be overlooked. Then they sort their finds according to material. Finally, they can try to reassemble assorted potsherds to see what has been found during this day of fun and discovery.

Each Family Day offers a different view to the past, and features activities in a variety of the park's historic buildings. Ride on a historic trolley, see an 1874 printing press in action, and pump water from a backyard well. It's all waiting for you at History Park's Family Days.

HSJ extends its deepest gratitude to Air Systems Foundation, Inc. and Target for making Family Days possible.

Online Exhibit, continued from cover

our knowledge, doesn't exist anywhere else in the country. Visitors to the online exhibit will have access to photographs and objects from the HSJ collection, objects on exhibit in the Portuguese Historical Museum, and photographs, films and memories from people who lived and worked at the American Dairy.

Please visit www.historysanjose.org on July 1st to view the exhibit.

Thank you to Summerhill Homes for sponsoring this groundbreaking project.

American Dairy Creamery at 17th and Santa Clara Streets, San Jose, c. 1920; (cover) Sign from an American Dairy Co. delivery truck, c. 1920.





Freshly cut apricots drying in the sun, Sorci Ranch, San Jose, 2003.

Photo by Sarah Puckitt

Harvesting History

Looking around our bustling, high-tech community, it's hard to imagine how rural and quiet the landscape used to be. While today we harvest technological advances, in years past local families harvested fruit from their orchards, particularly apricots. From 1870 to 1970, apricots figured prominently in the Santa Clara County economy. There were over 18,672 acres of apricots planted in 1944 alone, although today fewer than 17 acres remain.

Working with filmmaker Sheila Malone, History San José documented San José's last commercial apricot harvest, which took place at the Sorci Ranch. The film features stunning visual images of wooden drying trays filled with brilliantly colored fruit stacked under lush green trees. But more importantly, the film captures the stories of the people who harvested and managed the orchard. This August, look for your invitation to *The Last Harvest* film premiere at History Park.



Joseph and Eldiva Sorci with children John, Roselee, Margaret and Annette, Easter, c.1955.

John (Sonny) Sorci took over management of the land from his parents who started the Zoria brand name. Initially, local families worked the orchard, but as the Valley grew and other job opportunities increased, the labor base shifted to migrant farm workers. These workers and their families returned to work the Sorci orchard, year after year, for over 20 years.

In HSJ's *Valley of Heart's Delight* school program, third and fourth graders learn about the Valley's agricultural history by visiting the Stevens Ranch Fruit Barn in History Park. Students

focus on the family farm as they learn about land use and management, the canning industry, and urban sprawl in today's Silicon Valley. Beginning with the new school year in September 2005, *The Last Harvest* film will become an integral part of the program, greatly enhancing the curriculum's breadth and depth.

HSJ wishes to thank the Sorci family for their time, energy and expertise in making the film and the Sorci Foundation for their generous grant making this project possible.

Wores, continued from page 3
flowers, both in wild and cultivated, I have found endless possibilities in the colorful orchards in Spring blossom time in various portions of the state and especially in Saratoga...we arrived one beautiful day in the little town of Saratoga where thousands of acres of fruit trees were in bloom. We were quite overpowered by the beauty of this magnificent spectacle. As soon as I could articulate I exclaimed "we have reached the end of our journey."

The artist purchased the abandoned Methodist Church and remodeled it as a gallery with an adjoining studio. For the next 12 years he ventured into the countryside to capture the beauties of nature. Like many other California artists and writers, Wores



Theodore Wores, *My Summer House, Saratoga*, 1928.

Courtesy of Triton Museum of Art

caught the attention of Senator Phelan, who commissioned the artist to do a portrait of Edwin Markham. Freed from his responsibilities and the raging controversy of modern versus old art, Wores concentrated on delicate canvases of brilliant color and detail. We are fortunate that an artist of such talent discovered the Santa Clara Valley when it was at its most beautiful. He documented for all time the Valley of the Heart's Delight.

Wores' valley scenes are owned by many galleries and collectors, but Santa Clara's Triton Museum of Art has one of the best collections, thanks to the generous donation by the artist's wife.

Celebrating the McKay Gallery Opening

“The artwork seems to pop out from the walls,” proclaimed Santa Clara artist Bob Tower. He was referring to the colorful walls and track lighting that enhance the artwork in the Leonard & David McKay Gallery in the newly restored Pasetta House at History Park. Some pieces of Mr. Tower’s original art are included in the McKay collection. The Pasetta House was restored to debut the Leonard McKay Collection and create another changing exhibition gallery for History Park. Leonard is known for his love of Santa Clara Valley history, exhibited through his collection of art.

Prior to the March 13, 2005, public opening of the Pasetta House and McKay Gallery there were a number of preview events for members and invited guests. On March 3rd, Heritage 100 members and guests enjoyed a sneak peek. Heritage 100 is a very special group of individuals from families who have helped to create the Santa Clara Valley. Later in the week approximately 450 History San José

members and guests attended an exhibit preview. Among the guests were 44 descendants of the Pasetta Family, with 65 people in all assembling for a Pasetta Family reunion. Some had not seen each other in 30 years, making it a wonderful family event.

Attending each pre-opening and public event, Leonard McKay shared stories about the art and the artists. Some of the artists themselves were on hand to offer insight about the subject matter and how they began as painters. Guests surprised some artists by informing them that they owned an original piece. The artists and owners were thrilled to meet one another and shared wonderful stories.

Each event presented an opportunity to thank Leonard McKay for sharing his love of history and California art. Leonard acknowledged the importance of the collection and expressed pleasure that it’s where it needs to be, available for public viewing. History San José is grateful to Leonard McKay and the donor who purchased the Leonard McKay collection and restored the Pasetta House to become the Leonard & David McKay Gallery.

The McKay Gallery is open to the public on Saturdays and Sundays, 12:00 to 5:00 p.m.



Pasetta House Ribbon Cutting, (l-r) HSJ Curator of Art and Photography Sarah Puckitt, Mary Pasetta, Leonard McKay and HSJ Board member Carl Cookson.



Photos by John Eric Paulson, Master Photographer

Pasetta family members in front of the restored Pasetta house.

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Beginning with this issue of *The Exchange*, we will recognize individuals who have given time and service to History San José or its predecessors over the years. Since families often request donations be made to HSJ in memory of their loved ones, this new feature will allow an opportunity to remember and acknowledge service and contributions to History San José.

Remembering Lucille Buck

October 14, 1908 – February 10, 2005

Although Lucille Buck’s life was active with family, friends, church and community women’s groups, she had time to become an active member and museum volunteer in the mid-1980s. According to her family, she found enjoyment and interest in a variety of museum-related activities. In particular, her interests focused on costuming and working with the volunteers who staged fashion shows for community groups. Ultimately, Lucille donated some clothing and accessories for use in the fashion shows. History San José wishes to thank those who have made donations in memory of their friend, Lucille Buck. All memorial donations are most greatly appreciated.



MAY – JULY

History Makers:

From Water Tanks to Armored Tanks: The FMC Story

Thursday, May 12

7:00 – 8:30 pm

Barnes & Noble Booksellers at the corner of Almaden Expressway and Blossom Hill Road

The story of the Food Machinery Corporation (FMC) is a microcosm of the history of the Valley, from a center of agricultural production to a leader in the military complex. Among the panelists will be Adolph Quilici, who retired as Vice President and General Manager, Defense Systems Group, FMC Corporation in 1993 after working 40 years for the company.

Free



Will W. Lester using a Bean sprayer in his orchard, Santa Clara, 1952.

Family Day:

Spring in the Valley

Sunday, May 15

12:00 – 5:00 pm

History Park

Families have the chance to explore different customs and activities from the Valley's past.

Free

Dia de Portuguese Festival

Saturday, June 11

10:00 am – 8:00 pm

History Park

Food, crafts, and entertainment, along with a parade, are part of this celebration of the Portuguese culture.

Free

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR HERITAGE 100 MEMBERS

Heritage 100 members are individuals and families who have been influential in building the community and business development of Santa Clara Valley, known today around the world as Silicon Valley. Since Heritage 100 families have lived in the Valley for over 50 years, they all know each other, making each get-together a happy reunion.

This is advance notice for Heritage 100 members to mark your calendars for two upcoming events. First, there will be a social gathering/dinner at the home of Sharron & Carl Cookson, Heritage 100 Chair, on **Thursday, May 5, 2005**. The evening program will include a presentation by local wine historian, Charles Sullivan, speaking on the history of wine in California and an opportunity for wine tasting. Then, on **July 21, 2005**, the group will spend time with Andy Mariani at Andy's Orchard in Morgan Hill, tasting fresh seasonal fruits and dried fruits, enjoying a tour of the orchards, and shopping in the old-fashioned store. After a morning visit with Andy, the group will lunch at Mama Mia's Restaurant followed by wine tasting at Guglielmo Winery in Morgan Hill.

If you have lived in Santa Clara Valley for over 50 years and are interested in learning more about Heritage 100, please call the development office at 408-918-1053.

Book Signing

Sunday, June 12

1:00 – 3:00 pm

History Park

Jack Douglas will be here to sign his latest book, Historical Highlights of Santa Clara Valley.

Free

Dairy Hill Online Exhibit

July 1, 2005

Go online to www.historysanjose.org to see HSJ's new online exhibit!

Family Day: Archaeology

Sunday, July 17

12:00 – 5:00 pm

History Park

Children become archaeologists for the day as they dig, sift, sort and reassemble authentic historic artifacts.

Free

COMING IN AUGUST

The Last Harvest Film Debut

Sunday, August 7

1:00 – 3:00 pm

History Park

Watch the film and bring the children for harvest activities centered around

the Stevens Fruit Barn! See article on page 5 for more information.

Free

ONGOING

Artists For Hire:

Painting for the Market in Santa Clara Valley

Through July 4, 2005

Tuesday – Sunday

12:00 – 5:00 pm

History Park, Pacific Hotel Gallery 1

Free

Macau – Universal Heritage

Through July 31, 2005

Tuesday – Sunday

12:00 – 5:00 pm

History Park, Pacific Hotel Gallery 2

Free

The Leonard and David McKay Gallery at the Pasetta House

Through February 12, 2006

Saturday & Sunday

12:00 – 5:00 pm

History Park, Pasetta House

Free

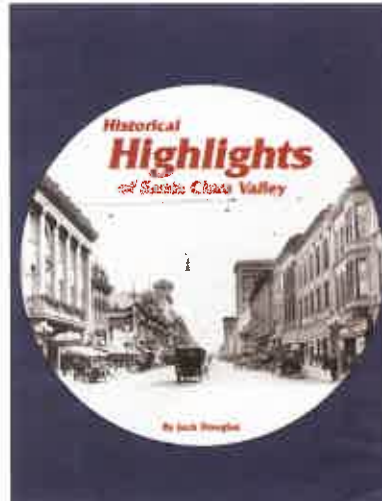


Historical Highlights of Santa Clara County

We are proud to announce the publication of Jack Douglas' book *Historical Highlights of Santa Clara County*. This collection of more than 75 stories of our valley, which have appeared in the *Advisor* and other history publications, culminates more than a decade of the author's work in the field of local history. During the period since his last collection of writings, published by History San José in 1993, Mr. Douglas has added architectural history to his interests. As a major player in the preservation of our county's historical landmarks, he has written portraits of many of the architects who have contributed to our valley's built environment. Two dozen of these men and women are featured in this new volume.

Jack Douglas believes that his chief goal in life is to aid in the building of community in a variety of social settings. During his time in San José and at San José State University he has had ample opportunities for this. On campus, he was a founding librarian and professor of the University's innovative New College, a living and learning environment that spread its activities out into the larger community. Mr. Douglas became involved in the preservation of our cultural heritage by serving on the city and county historical heritage commissions and on History San José committees.

Jack wants to thank all History San José members who have helped this current project by taking pre-publication orders. As with his previous book, Jack assigns all royalties to History San José. He looks forward to greeting his loyal readers at the book signing event on June 12, 2005.



Jack Douglas Book Signing

Sunday, June 12

1:00 – 3:00 pm

History San José Pacific Hotel

Jack Douglas' book provides a wealth of local history about buildings such as the historic Hayes home. The original structure was destroyed by fire in 1899. Douglas writes about the building, "In order to avoid the disaster that befell the previous mansion, this new Mediterranean style structure was built of steel and concrete. The walls are more than two feet thick in

places, and each wing has its own self enclosed basement that would keep fire from spreading. A third floor water tank supplied all the many fire hoses situated throughout the house, and metal safety doors separated each wing as well. The mansion was built to withstand any disaster, which explains why it came through the '06 earthquake with little damage."



Hayes Home, Eden Vale, from *Historical Highlights of Santa Clara Valley*.

MUSEUM INFORMATION

SITES

History Park
Kelley Park, 1650 Senter Road
San José, CA 95112
408-287-2290, Fax 408-287-2291

Peralta Adobe-Fallon House Historic Site
175 W. St. John Street
San José, CA 95110
408-993-8300, Fax 408-993-8088

Administrative Offices
1650 Senter Road
San José, CA 95110
408-287-2290, Fax 408-287-2291

www.historysanjose.org

Rentals and Events 408-918-1055

FEES

As of November 1, both History Park and the Peralta Adobe-Fallon House Historic Site are free.

GROUP TOURS

Groups of 10 or more who are interested in scheduling a custom tour should contact 408-918-1040.

HOURS

SATURDAY & SUNDAY

History Park & Gallery	12 pm – 5 pm
Museum Store	12 pm – 4 pm
O'Brien's Café	12 pm – 4 pm
Peralta/Fallon	12 pm – 5 pm

TUESDAY – FRIDAY

History Park & Gallery	11 am – 5 pm
Museum Store	11 am – 4 pm
O'Brien's Café	11 am – 3 pm
Research Library (Wed)	1 pm – 4 pm

Office Hours (Mon. – Fri.) 9 am – 5 pm

PROGRAMS

All school programs must be reserved.
Call 408-918-1040

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

History Makers
Family Sundays

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Portraits of the Past

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

A Child's Life in the 1890s, Experience Adobe Days, Experience Victorian Days, Explore the Peralta Adobe-Fallon House, Gold Rush Adventure Kit, Historic Transportation Experience, History Hike, History Park Tour, Immigration, People at Work, Peralta Adobe-Fallon House Tour, School Days in the 1890s, Valley of Heart's Delight, Victorian Family Life, Westward Ho!