HISTORY MUSEUMS OF SAN JOSE!

The San Jose Historical Museum Association is now officially the History Museums of San Jose. On November 26, 1996 the Board of Directors of the San Jose Historical Museum Association validated the Association member's written ballots approving new by-laws and articles of incorporation. The final ballot results were as follows:

Number of ballots mailed: 1710
Number of ballots returned: 896
Approve Name Change: 748
Approve New By-laws: 895
Approve Board of Directors: 850

The directors and the staff of the Association thank you, our voting members, for your prompt response and support. The new board and staff of the History Museums of San Jose are committed to retaining the same high quality of service to our members as before, and we all look forward to working with you in the exciting years to come.

Practically speaking, what does all of this mean? First, the name of the Association has been changed to History Museums of San Jose (we still haven't found the right colloquialism to encompass this new name, but we will). The Museum in Kelley Park, for the time being, will still be known as the Historical Museum: the City Council-approved Museum Master Plan does recommend the site be named Historic San Jose. Second, a new board of directors will oversee the operations of the non-profit History Museums of San Jose and will eventually assume the operational responsibilities for the Historical Museum. It is anticipated that the operations transfer will occur in the summer of 1997. Third, the impact of the by-laws will evolve over time. One significant change is that members, while invited to, are no longer required to vote on a proposed slate of directors or on by-law changes. So, no more ballots!

As you read through this first edition of the History Museums of San Jose News, you will note few changes. Our columns, programs and the format remain the same. The masthead has changed, however, to reflect the fact that the History Museums of San Jose is the umbrella organization for several museums. Our mission statement has changed, and the only board listed under the mission statement at page 2 is the present HMSC board of directors. Undoubtedly, as we move forward, changes to both the organization and the newsletter will occur, but for now everything is essentially the same.

Winter Lecture Series

The 1997 History Museums of San Jose Winter Lecture Series begins in January and continues through March. Our lecturers this year will be four of the authors of Reflections of the Past—an anthology of San Jose. Terry Christensen, Mary Jo Ignoffo, Ellen Garbokie and Charlene Duval have varied backgrounds, professions and areas of interest, and we are sure you will enjoy them all as they enhance and embellish the periods of San Jose history they wrote about in Reflections of the Past. We will begin the series in the present-day and travel back in time to the birth of California statehood over a period of six weeks. Be sure not to miss a chapter.

The programs will be held either in the meeting room of the Pacific Hotel or at the Firehouse beginning at 7:30 PM. Admission to each lecture will be $2.00 for Association members and $5.00 for the general public. If you are a member of the History Museums of San Jose at the $50.00 level or above, please inform the membership coordinator when you make your reservation. You are entitled to two free passes to the lecture of your choice.

Please make reservations by calling 277-3780. Entrance to the Museum will be through the Phelan Avenue gate.

January 23

Terry Christensen: Politics, San Jose Style

Terry Christensen is the present chair of the Political Science Department at San Jose State University and has been on their faculty since 1970. Always interesting and thought provoking, Dr. Christensen usually sprinkles his lectures with intriguing anecdotes about the politicians we know/knew and love/loved. Don't miss Terry's "take" on the San Jose most of us have experienced.

February 6

Mary Jo Ignoffo: Valley of Heart's Delight

Becomes Silicon Valley

Mary Jo Ignoffo is a local author of note. She recently wrote Sunnysvale, From the City of Destiny to the Heart of Silicon Valley and edited Austen Warburton's Santa Clara Sagas. Mary Jo also serves as the editor of The Californian, the California History Center at De Anza College's magazine. Ms. Ignoffo's lecture will take us from the depths of the Depression to the beginning successes of Silicon Valley. A delightful writer and entertaining speaker not to be missed.

February 20

Ellen Garbokie: From Fruit to Flappers

Ellen Garbokie is one of the Museum's most dedicated volunteers. You might see her in a Portraits of the Past fashion show or answering the Museum phones during Victorian Christmas. She is versatile and energetic, and has fortunately not learned how to say no. Ellen has a special interest in historic architecture and has promised to share this knowledge with us both verbally and visually. Plan to attend and see Ellen in her latest Museum endeavor—lecturer.

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HISTORY MUSEUMS OF SAN JOSE

The News

Vol. I, No. 1

Published by the History Museums of San Jose

January 1997

NONPROFIT ORG. US POSTAGE PAID SAN JOSE, CA PERMIT NO. 379
Congratulations, we did it! By now I'm sure that you have heard the news that with all of the votes counted we had more than enough ballots cast to approve the name change, the new by-laws, and the new board of Directors. Thank you for your support.

In the feed back that I received, and the questions that were asked during the voting, it was clear to me that we on the Stabilization/Governing Board had not done a good job of explaining the desired change. For that, I may, I would like to clarify the issues. From the questions that I received it appeared people thought we were changing the name of the site instead of the organization. This is not the case. The name change to "The History Museums of San Jose" only pertains to the non-profit corporation formally known as the "San Jose Historical Museum Association." The site on Senter Road is still named the "San Jose Historical Museum." There were several reasons for the new organization name change. First, it is a new organization with new by-laws with a different purpose in the future. Second, this new organization could potentially operate multiple museum sites within the city. It will start out in mid-1997 with two, the main site on Senter Road and the Peralta-Fallon Site in the downtown area.

As I close out my year as President of the Association it is necessary for me to turn to the new board, I look back with great pride on what the board and the membership accomplished for the Museum this year. We played an important role in the general fight to purchase the Beech Nut site for its Central Service Yard (CSY) facility, and to store the Museum's archives and collections. When the Museum was overlooked in the post-purchase planning process, members of the Association board and staff worked hard to re-open the space allocation discussions we eventually obtained enough space at the CSY for both collections and archives. The purchase of the site is a key to our future development and official status critical to the future management of the Museum's resources.

I am particularly pleased with the 25th anniversary event that was held in September. The event was so successful that I believe we prove to the community and to the community that the Museum can put on a signature event. We can now build upon this experience for future fund raising activities.

Each newsletter through out this year I have recognized the past presidents of the Association, this month to make the list complete I would like to acknowledge the last three.

Gerry DeYoung, Vic Giacalone, and Tim Starbuck. Tim was my immediate predecessor in 1995. Vic was president for 1994 and also served on the core committee. President in 1992-93, served on the Core Committee, chaired the Master Plan Update Team, and chaired the Beech Nut Sub-committee for this year's board. (And if that wasn't enough he taught me how to tend bar at the Holiday parties) thanks to you for your contributions to this wonderful organization.

Finally, I would like to thank the Association staff for all of their effort and support throughout this year, especially Kathy Muller, Barbara Johnson, Judy Henderson, Toni Evans, Carol Ouellette and Bob Pedretti (and all of the people who work for them).

It has been a challenging, fast, and fun year. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your president.

STEVEN M. COX, PRESIDENT

DIRECTOR'S REPORT
1997 Should Be a Great Year

I look forward to 1997 with great optimism for the future of the San Jose Historical Museum and all those who have helped to make it great. In 1997 The History Museums of San Jose, as an organization, becomes official and the challenges are many. You may count on me to promote and help the Museum in any way that I can. I look forward to all of you staying active and involved for the upcoming year and the good plans for 1997 and need you to help implement them.

Best wishes for 1997!

MIGNON GIBSON, MUSEUM DIRECTOR

FROM THE EDITOR

I am writing this article as Jim and I swing our way home from our Christmas vacation in North Carolina. I had planned to write the column on the trip east, but being your typical procrastinator I waited. Actually I am glad I did, now I can share my impressions of North Carolina with you.

We stayed with my brother-in-law and his family in their brand new home (the quality of housing and the moderate prices tempt you to think maybe we can all afford to live in a California in Cary, N.C. which is within the Raleigh, Durham, Chapel Hill triangle, an area preparing itself to become Silicon Valley II. It reminded me of the Santa Clara Valley thirty years ago. I do hope they learn from our mistakes. If I look at my list of recommended sites would be: Duke University (you feel like you are in England), Wilmington and the adjacent beaches area (Wilmington has saved 200 contaminated blocks of land), I-880/238 (a very old property) and the small town Main Streets which will surely disappear as the larger cities continue to expand. Downed trees, resulting from the passage of Hurricane Fran, can be seen everywhere and the local community is hard at work to build back and out of their ground floors for some time thanks to Fran. All in all, an exciting area poised on the brink of change, and hopefully, with strong enough roots in their past to save, for future generations, the elements which will visually help tell the historical story of North Carolina. We look forward to visiting again.

Speaking of change, thank you for returning your Association ballots so promptly. We have now started the process which will eventually produce a notable transformation of the Museum. As you can imagine, staff at the Museum is facing these changes in their own individual ways. Some love the idea of moving forward and implementing new and different techniques, others find comfort in the tried and true methods. My personal experiences have left me with the philosophy that while the process of change is often difficult and unsettling, once a situation stabilizes it becomes bearable. The new year should start to bring about this stabilization.

Don't forget to join us for our Winter Lecture Series beginning January 23. Hot coffee, cookies and an interesting lecture awaits you each time you come. We promise to make your venture into a cold and dark night worthwhile.

I hope you all had lovely holidays and will have a happy and healthy 1997.

JUDI HENDERSON, EDITOR

VOLUNTEER REPORT

The volunteers' first year as a combined organization is at the half way point. I am happy to report that the transition has been very smooth. We have held helps for each meeting and although the group is large, 25 regular members and four ex-officio members, the meetings have been very productive. After adding one-half hour to a planned two hour schedule, we have been finishing on time.

Naomi York informed us at our last meeting that she was moving to Maine and the December meeting would be her last. Naomi was the Vintage Reflections Area Representative. She will be greatly missed. Good luck in your new surroundings.

Each year the volunteers hold a Cultural Awareness event. This year the event will be held in April. Please watch for future announcements of the time, place and name of the event.

The Continuing Education tours for volunteers during the first half of the year have been outstanding. Thanks, Lani Evans. Watch for future outings in the Light Tower Press, the volunteers newsletter. Alicee Ewan's Program Development Committee has established a One Room Schoolhouse Curriculum Committee. When the one-room schoolhouse is ready, a program will be ready. Martha Dignam's Admissions Committee is preparing for the next docent training sessions. Joan Helms' Service Review Committee is conducting the required three-year evaluations for the docents falling into the 1997 cycle. As you can see, there are many educational and rewarding opportunities for being a Volunteer. Have a very HAPPY NEW YEAR by joining us.

DEAN HELMS, PAST PRESIDENT, VOLUNTEER COUNCIL

FROM THE ARCHIVES

On Ending the Millennium and Forecasting the Future

As we approach a new century, one that promises changes which we can't even fathom, we can look back at the 20th Century and reflect on the massive changes over the past 100 years. In the late 19th century life was revolutionized by new technology and all the supporting technology that came with it and the resulting social culture. In the 20th century we have experienced quantum leaps in discovery, technology and practice. Who would have thought 100 years ago that people could fly around the world in a day? Who would have thought we would have satellites orbiting the globe in a matter of minutes? That would have been the moment we had been thinking about all the time.

For a community archives this presents a continuing challenge in collecting materials for the future. Not only are the formats and media so varied, but the data banks are so rich. One of the major concerns is the current archiving problems; the difficulty in deciding what materials should be collected.
We need to look on the what we collect and why, and what are the really important stories and information that we need to keep. We know that people are deeply interested in politics, in community and in their own lives. Research requests which want information on the community, housing, land and genealogy are increasing (or maybe it's just the advancing baby-boomers and a more static population.)

What are some of the stories which should be maintained for the next generations about San Jose and the Santa Clara Valley? Should we focus on technology and the rise and impact of Silicon Valley? What about the disappearing food industry which in the early part of the century was so very important? Who are the people we should be collecting materials about? Do we collect only the well known, or do we try to document the lives of ordinary people? Do we need. It is, however, so important to focus on the history and the environment, or are there new areas that will be of interest? Can we reflect on the current status of the world and see it in the light of future generations?

An example would be the field of communication. Once communication meant writing words on paper and sending them, in some fashion, to another. Now it includes not only written materials on real paper, but e-mail, voice mail, computer lists, message machines, post it notes, faxes, radio, video tapes, telephones, audio tapes, digital images, Internet, television, etc.

So in planning for the 21st Century, do what you think we should document from the 20th? Please send an old-fashion post card or note to the Archives. We'd be curious to know.

* LESLIE MASONAGA, ARCHIVIST

Governing Board

This is an exciting time for Museum members and the Governing Board. The Governing Board will transition into the Board of Directors of the History Museums of San Jose (HMSJ) on January 1, 1997. As the Governing Board transitions to the Board of Directors, a goal of the Board and the City has been, and continues to be, to maintain an uninterrupted level of service to Museum members and the public that relies on our services through the transition. The purpose of the transition was to improve services to the San Jose and Santa Clara Valley community over the long-term as the custodians of its history. Now that the transition is progressing further, your continued support is important for the Museum to achieve this goal. Your support will enable the HMSJ to fund the necessary projects expected to be initiated in the coming year.

Following is a description of some of the projects that are planned by the Board following the transition.

As part of the transition, the Board, together with City staff, will be developing performance criteria to be met by the History Museums of San Jose. The performance criteria will be important for the purposes of contract monitoring by the City to assure that the History Museums of San Jose is meeting its obligations.

The Board plans to draft a strategic and business plan which will look at the organization's mission and the ways that its mission can be accomplished financially and programmatically. (The adopted mission of HMSJ is to preserve and reflect the rich historical legacy of San Jose and the Santa Clara Valley for the education and enjoyment of all.)

The Museum's collections are expected to be moved from the Stockton Street Warehouse to the Central Service Yard in September, 1997. Staff is currently working on ways to configure the collections there, and the potential improvements to the space. The inventory of Museum collections at the Stockton Street Warehouse was completed on November 13, 1996. Collections housed at the North and South Warehouses (Behind the Pacific Hotel) on Museum grounds also are planned to be inventoried.

The Board anticipates the President/CEO will begin work at HMSJ in March, 1997. The Board's Executive Committee plans to interview the candidates in January.

Board meetings normally are held twice a month from 7:00-9:00 P.M. at the Museum Firehouse Conference Room. However, only one Board meeting is scheduled for January: January 22, 1997. I encourage you to attend. Call the SJIM at 277-4017 to confirm meeting times and dates.

ADRIANA M. GARZA
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INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HMSJ

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PERALTA & FALLON ADOBE HOUSE
HISTORIC SITE
Victorian Parlor Pastime at the Fallon House
January 11, February 8 and March 8
Visit the Fallons and their friends as they spend an afternoon singing around the piano, playing parlor games, discussing politics, reciting rhymes, both ribald and ribald much more. All in all, it will be an excellent day's entertainment with living history reenactors recreating the parlor pastime of early Victorian times.

Donor Wall Plaque
The many individuals, community organization, corporations and foundations that have contributed to the restoration and furnishing of the Peralta Adobe and Fallon House are acknowledged on the newly installed Donor Wall. The names are prominently displayed on a plaque in the visitors' area of the basement exhibit in the Fallon House. The History Museums of San Jose and the City of San Jose are grateful to all the benefactors who donated items to furnish these two historic houses.

Great Job
The Garden City Doll Club of the Santa Clara Valley did a wonderful job of decorating the Fallon House for the Christmas season. The many visitors to the site enjoyed the beautifully crafted decorations reflecting the holiday decorations that would have been used in the mid 1800s. Seed pods, dried flowers, shells, garlands and ribbons gave a truly festive look into holidays past.

* BOB PEDRETTI

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**MUSEUM STAFF**

- Mignon Gibson: Director
- Wanda Yoo: Sr. Curator
- Jeanne Kondo: Clerk/Typist
- Leslie Masunaga: Archivist
- Virginia Manzi: Curator of Education
- Montie Duran: Museum Events
- Sarah Hisago Nunes: Curator
- Nancy Voth: Curator
- Fred Bennett: Trolley Barn Manager
- Beverly Blockie: Volunteer Support (977)
- Donna Ferguson: Volunteer Support (977)
- Jim Greger: Volunteer Support (977)
- Michael Kotowski: Volunteer Support (977)
- Carol Provenzano: Volunteer Support (977)
- Mary Jane Schier: Volunteer Support (977)
- Al Sprack: Volunteer Support (977)
- Beverly Tronkle: Volunteer Support (977)

**HISTORY MUSEUMS OF SAN JOSE STAFF**

- Barbara Johnson: Acting Executive Director
- Development Director
- Judith Hixson: Program Coordinator
- Todd Evers: Shop Manager
- Carol Overlette: Bookkeeper
- Lance Phelan: Membership Coordinator
- Robert Pedretti: Peralta-Fallon Site Director
- Wells Twombly: Peralta-Fallon Program Assistant
- Julie Peterson: Vintage Reflections Manager
- Pat Laumann: Peralta-Fallon Shop Supervisor
- Susan Miller: Shop Scheduler/Supervisor
- Charity Riggs: Shop Supervisor
- Kay Edgar: VP Shop Supervisor
- Gnip Gagnon: VP Site Supervisor

**PHONE B.J. 1246**

**Sponsor Our Newsletter**

* The History Museums of San Jose is seeking sponsorship for its bi-monthly issues of *The News*. Through sponsorships and advertising, we are able to provide *The News* to our members and to visitors at our Museums. Organizations or companies interested in sponsoring an issue of the newsletter or purchasing advertising space should contact the HMSJ's offices at 277-3780.
The San Jose Historical Museum Association's Holiday Party

As you can see, a good time was had by all at the San Jose Historical Museum Association's Holiday Party on December 12. The grounds of the Museum and the beautifully decorated hotel lobby and bank were the perfect backdrops for the festivities. So, it was with fond memories, delicious food provided by Catered, Too and Greenlee's Bakery and vintage wine that the Association bid adieu to its twenty-fifth anniversary year.
Backesto Park
by Helen Kuesel

In 1920, the City of San Jose purchased 2½ acres of land for a city park. The land, bounded by North Thirty-third, North Fifteenth, Jackson, and Empire Streets, had been owned by J.Q. A. Ballou, a Vermont native who settled in Milpitas and became an orchardist and a member of the County Board of Supervisors. With funds ($33,000) donated to the city in 1899 by the widow of Dr. John Perrie Backesto, the park, named for its benefactor's husband, was built and opened to the public in 1922.

Dr. John Perrie Backesto was born in 1831 in Pennsylvania and received his education in the public schools of Ohio. After he graduated with high honors from Cincinnati Eclectic Medical Institute he established a practice in Germantown, Indiana, and later one in Indianapolis. Because of ill health, he and his wife came west to San Jose in 1867 where he practiced medicine at 540 North First Street until his death on March 17, 1890. Dr. Backesto is entombed in the Backesto Mausoleum at Oak Hill Cemetery.

Of special interest in the park is the fountain dedicated to John Perrie Backesto. The fountain was designed by architect Ernest Curtis, a partner in the Binder & Curtis architectural firm and decorated with tiles produced by the Solon & Schemmel Tile Company (S&S Tile). Ernest Curtis had introduced Albert Solon and Frank Schemmel to each other in 1920, and shortly thereafter Mr. Solon and Mr. Schemmel founded S&S Tile (then located at 1881 South First Street), a company still in existence today.

was the day a success? Judging from the comments I received from Jan Bernstein, Dave Jones and the boys, I would say it was an enjoyable and rewarding educational experience for the participants. The other docents and myself felt that even though it “rained on our parade,” the outcome was satisfying. The Museum also gained from this program because it acquainted another group with all the wonderful things the Museum has to offer and was a step forward in the Museum’s goal to incorporate the diverse groups in Santa Clara Valley into the cultural life of the Museum.

Garden Club by Laurel Petrusa

1996 was a very productive year for the Museum Garden Club. Over 2,400 volunteer hours were recorded by our volunteers. Garden Club volunteers developed ten new projects, at the same time maintaining projects already established. In November, 500 King Alfred daffodil bulbs, donated by San Jose Beautiful, were planted on the Museum grounds. This is an exciting addition to the bounty of bulbs planted in 1994 and 1995. Plan to visit the Museum in late winter to enjoy the bright color, and experience the cheer the bulbs will bring.

The Museum garden projects were entered into San Jose Beautiful’s Home Improvement Award Program: the Garden Club placed first in the Neighborhood Improvement category. Each Garden Club member’s efforts and dedication made this achievement possible. San Jose Beautiful has supported the Garden Club in various ways and their interest is much appreciated.

We will kick off our first 1997 maintenance day on Tuesday, January 7, from 9:00AM to noon. If you enjoy working in the garden, please join us and discover what our garden club is all about. New members are always welcome: hours and level of commitment are very flexible. Maintenance day in February will be on Tuesday, February 4, 9:00AM-noon. Call Laurel Petrusa (354-7153) or May Force (268-3692) for more information.
THE MONTGOMERY HOTEL: SOCIAL CENTER OF SOUTH FIRST STREET

BY JACK DOUGLAS

A good tourist hotel can become a social center where visitors and locals can gather in its restaurants, bars, barber-shops and conference rooms, or just pass the time in its inviting lobby, patio or roof garden. It is the only business or institution on the street which is open 24 hours a day.

T.S. Montgomery, San Jose's one man redevelopment agency, understood this principle when he proposed that a major hotel be built way down on South First Street to strengthen his other holdings in this area. At the turn of the century Montgomery was trying to move the center of downtown San Jose away from its traditional hub at Santa Clara and First Streets.

Opposing him were business and real estate operators who had an interest in this area. This powerful group included the Claytons (First National Bank and county-wide real estate holdings), the Hart family (department store), the Hayes family (newspaper), and Normandin and Campen (automobile dealerships). There was much skepticism by these and others when T.S. Montgomery proposed building his Montgomery Hotel at the corner of South First and San Antonio Streets. Why, they asked, would visitors choose to stay in a hotel so far from the North First Street train station, or in an area with so few other amenities. Besides, there were already two first class hotels, the Vendome and the St. James, which satisfied the needs of a city whose population was less than 25,000 in 1910. Montgomery, who had backed that classic tourist mecca of the 1880's, the Vendome Hotel, surmised that downtown would need a less ostentatious establishment to cater to traveling business men and conventioneers.

Groundbreaking

Montgomery's Conservative Realty Company purchased, in 1907, the site of the old McSngles Foundry, one of the city's first large scale metal fabricating shops. Plans were made to place several substantial buildings along the western side of South First, starting with the Montgomery Hotel and moving south. The hotel was to have the commanding location, giving it frontage on two major thoroughfares. The site next door would be for a three story building to house Robinson and Son's Furniture Store.

On March 17, 1910 the ground was broken for this major project. Within minutes the San Jose Contracting Company, with ten four-horse wagons, began hauling away the dirt from the basement area of the new hotel. The plans for the hotel had been drawn by William Binder who, by this time, had become Montgomery's chief architect.

San Jose's First Modern Hotel

The Montgomery Hotel came along just as many revolutionary inventions were coming of age. New construction techniques using concrete and steel would make the Montgomery San Jose's only truly fire-proof hotel. It was the first hotel to have electric circuits built into it for lighting, fans and elevators. Of the 140 rooms, 120 would have private baths. Steam heat and hot water would be provided from a boiler in the basement. Each room would be equipped with that newfangled device, the telephone.

The dining room, grillroom and barber shop would face the San Antonio Street elevation. A sizeable store would occupy the corner space. Another major feature would be the roof garden in the center of the building above the lobby (roof garden trellises are still visible from the front of the hotel). Attractive ladies parlors and writing rooms faced the roof garden on the second floor. A new Kissel Kar automotive bus, supplied by Harrison F. Smith, would transport guests to and from the train station. The total cost of the new hotel came to $150,000.

The Grand Opening

The Montgomery Hotel opened on July 22, 1911 with much fanfare. The lobby was fitted with flowers from Montgomery's supporters. The largest arrangement was done in a pattern of the Henry Montgomery coat of arms. An elaborate banquet was prepared for well wishers such as Henry Murgotten, Walter Trinkler, S.B. Hamburg, Frank Chapin, William Alexander, Mayor Charles Davidson, Judge E.B. Brown, Henry Doerr, Victor Scheller, Dr. O'Connor, Fred H. Moore, Justice Lorrigan, John Kuster, Louis Oneal and many others. The O'Abalga Orchestra provided the music. Host for the occasion was C.H. Burkhart, manager of the hotel, and William G. Alexander served as toastmaster.

Alexander introduced a number of enthusiastic speeches, tried to be diplomatic: "The lauded Montgomery: I am pleased to have this opportunity to express my words of appreciation and good opinion of all our good fellow citizens for the name of Montgomery, and to Mr. Alexander the President of the Conservative Realty Company, for establishing such a modern hostelry in San Jose. The name Montgomery spells success and we haven't any doubt of the success of the establishment under which shelter we are gathered tonight.

T.S. Montgomery Speaks

T. S. Montgomery responded: I have been called upon to make a few remarks, not because I am an orator, but because I am related to this hotel. We are in a veritable Garden of Eden, in a city of fruits and flowers, and I hope and trust that this hotel will be so conducted as long as I live that I can walk across the street and point with pride to the Hotel Montgomery. Thirty-five years ago, when I was much younger than I am now, I got it into my head that San Jose had to grow; and I said to myself: 'Why not get together a combination of capital and energy which would make possible such an institution as we see before us tonight. I am glad to see so many beautiful and lovely ladies here—for the knockers, however, are conspicuous by their absence, but the boosters are well represented. Oh! you boosters, I love you! Here is my friend O'Alton. We were born the same year—1868. (he was kidding) and there is John L. Kuster, Judge Brown and Henry Murgotten and other members of the boosting fraternity. ... A real poet never resorts to prose, and for that reason I guess I'll have to close."

Victor Scheller, founding president of the Board of Trade, tried to be diplomatic: "We have had in the past and have now two hotels in San Jose we should be proud of, and when the founders of the institution we are now in decided to construct this hotel I think they had no intent to interfere with the other hotels but felt that there was room for another hotel in the City. Louis Oneal, county political kingpin, predicted what current preservationists will always want. The Hotel Montgomery is destined to become one of the landmarks of the City and will contribute in making San Jose one of the most magnificent cities on the Pacific Slope."

Queen of South First Street

The Montgomery Hotel and its neighbor the Twoby Building formed a firm anchor at the corner of First and San Antonio Streets. Soon the Theatre Delux and the Hippodrome would bring the most up-to-date entertainment to this block. Perhaps the most significant event which indicated that the center of town had moved south was the relocation, in 1928, of O'Brien's popular confectionery and restaurant to the
Ride the Rails, Sail to New Seas, The Caribbean And Yucatan

The History Museums of San Jose and LifeLong Learning, Inc. are sponsoring a wonderful travel adventure that will take place over 14 Days and 13 Nights. As an added bonus, the stay in New Orleans is scheduled to coincide with the celebrated New Orleans Jazz Fest where the world's musical greats perform.

You are invited to attend a PREVIEW outlining this exciting itinerary.

Time: Tuesday, January 21st • 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.
Empire Firehouse Meeting Room at the San Jose Historical Museum
1600 Senter Road • San Jose

As seating is limited, please RSVP (800) 854-4080.
If you are unable to attend, please call for a brochure.

Victorian Christmas
Doll & Toy Donation Drawing

The Museum's Victorian Christmas was very successful and the Doll and Toy Donation Drawing was as popular as ever. In all, sixty-six toys and dolls were donated. Thank you to all who participated. Below is a list of the happy winners.

Diana Archley (3)
Robert Bailey
G. Bonacorso
Sharon Bryan
Helén W. Buck
Keith Cakeshead
Rose Camacho
Barbara Chadwick
Melinda Chuirato
Kristyn Cox
Bianca L. Diaz
Marlyn Dobson
Debbie Drake
María Feench
Elizabeth Ferguson
Fawna Ferguson (2)
Ann Fitzgerald
Maria García (2)
Heather Giddens (2)
Thomus Greenley
Dorothy Hanna
L. Hinze
Damali Jablin
Dulcie M. Janzen
Dorothy Johnson
Claire Kowowski
Ann Lin
Barbara Lockwood
Leslie Masunaga
Peter Meckel
Jennife Murphy
Ruth Noseworthy
Sarah Nunes
Carl & Jean Orr
Joanne Ostrander
C & Carol Ouellette
George & Eva Bagot
Amanda Pollock
Joseph Recotta (2)
Heather Giddens
Thomus Greenley
Dorothy Hanna
L. Hinze
Damali Jablin
Dulcie M. Janzen
Dorothy Johnson
Claire Kowowski
Ann Lin
Barbara Lockwood
Leslie Masunaga
Peter Meckel
Jennife Murphy
Ruth Noseworthy
Sarah Nunes
Carl & Jean Orr
Joanne Ostrander
C & Carol Ouellette
George & Eva Bagot
Amanda Pollock
Joseph Recotta (2)
William & Sandra Rich (2)
V. Rose
Dolores Salazar
Rose Schen
Carol Schirrmacher
Joan Scott
Sandy Scra
Lucy Stillad
Kozkawski Skow
Charles Slater
Frances M. Smith
David Spitzer
Barbara Steffen (2)
Linda Takacs
Edith L. Walter
Julia Walters
Pan Williams
Mary Young
Christie Zimmerman
HISTORY MUSEUMS OF SAN JOSE
ENDOWMENT

SAN JOSE HISTORICAL MUSEUM ASSOCIATION's endowment fund is designed to provide a long-term source of income and security for the Museum. When the San Jose Historical Museum Association becomes the History Museums of San Jose on January 1, 1997, the endowment fund will be changed only to reflect the new name.

Many of our members make regular donations to the endowment fund in memory of a friend or loved one, or to commemorate or honor a special occasion. For your convenience, we have enclosed an endowment brochure in this issue of the History Museum News. We are in the process of printing new brochures and will make every effort to make them available to you soon. Until that time, please be assured that the enclosed brochure can be used. For further information, call the History Museum's Office at 277-3780.

The City Store

Due to publication difficulties, Reflections of the Past - an anthology of San Jose was not available in the City Stores in December as advertised in the November newsletter. The book should be available by February. Hopefully, Reflections will be available for purchase at the Winter Lecture Series, and the authors will be happy to sign it. The City Store regrets any inconvenience the delay of the release of Reflections of the Past may have caused you.

One other note: in the November newsletter it was announced that the 1996 premium, the video On the Banks of the Guadalupe, would be for sale in The City Stores after December 1. Due to unforeseen circumstances, On the Banks of the Guadalupe will not be available for purchase. Because the video will not be sold in the future, the deadline for 1996 San Jose Historical Museum Association members to obtain their video has been extended to February 28, 1997. If you have questions, please call the History Museums of San Jose's office at 277-3780.

Book Notes

Reflections of the Past - an anthology of San Jose

Barnes and Noble Bookstore, 3600 Stevens Creek Blvd, San Jose will host a book signing party for the authors of Reflections of the Past sometime in February. An announcement of the exact date will be mailed to you. Reflections of the Past, a brand new book on the history of San Jose, was written by local authors, Terry Christensen, Mary Jo Ignoffo, Ellen Garboski, Charlene Duval and Phil Grassner. Judith Henderson served as editor and Glory Anne Laffey was the photo editor.

The Adventures of a Quiet Soul

A new book for baseball enthusiasts is now available from the author. The Adventures of a Quiet Soul is a biography of Marv Owen, a 1930s and 40s major league baseball player with the Detroit Tigers (1934 and 1935 World Series), Chicago White Sox and the Boston Red Sox. Portland, Oregon fans and San Jose fans may remember him as the manager of their hometown teams in the 1940s.

With over 100 black and white photographs and several color photos, The Adventures of a Quiet Soul is a chronicle of major league baseball in the 1930s and 40s. The softcover, limited edition book sells for $24.95 plus tax and shipping and can be obtained by contacting the author; Vi Owen, PO Box 1602, Aptos, CA 95001-1692.

California Room

The California Room in the San Jose Main Library is a collection of materials on California history with an emphasis on the history of San Jose and Santa Clara County. The collection also includes materials on the cities and counties of the San Francisco Bay Area as well as Northern and Central California. For more information call: 277-4867.

What will you find there?

- California County Histories
- California State Death Index 1940-1994
- California State Marriage Index, 1900-1986
- Census rolls for Santa Clara County, 1860-1920
- Historic San Jose and Santa Clara County street maps
- Index to San Jose building permits, 1940-1986
- Newspaper clippings from the last 30-40 years of the San Jose Mercury covering notable people, places, and events in San Jose and Santa Clara County
- San Francisco Newspapers Index, 1904-1959
- San Jose City Directories, 1870-1979
- San Jose Telephone Books, 1971-present
- Sunborn Maps, San Jose (microfiche and hardcopy)
- Books and magazines on such topics as ethnic groups, Gold Rush, missions, railroads, earthquakes, famous Californians, overland journeys and more.

HOURS: Mon. & Thurs. 2-5 pm; Tues. & Wed. 3-9 pm; Friday: 10-1 pm; Saturday: 1-6 pm.