



**history|san josé**  
silicon valley from a to z

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# THE Exchange

HISTORY SAN JOSÉ

NOVEMBER 2004

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## Annual Campaign Kickoff!

With much enthusiasm, History San José's Board of Directors kicked off the 2004 Annual Campaign at the September 1, Board meeting. Like all nonprofits in Santa Clara Valley, History San José must continue to raise funds through annual campaigns to sustain ongoing programs.

HSJ reaches over 20,000 students annually with award-winning school programs that meet History-Social Science Content Standards for California public schools. These programs are in high demand by teachers to help them meet their curriculum goals. For the 2004-05 school year, some of the school programs were filled within eight hours after opening registration. The Annual Campaign raises much needed funds to support school and other educational programs.

Although the Annual Campaign is board driven, its success relies on people like you. The Annual Campaign will run through December 1. Board members are focusing their fundraising efforts on increasing individual and corporate memberships. A variety of sponsorship and naming opportunities are available to recognize financial support.

As an individual member, please consider upgrading your membership or including an extra donation when renewal time comes around. History San José wants to thank you for



*HSJ board members gather to kick off the Annual Campaign. Front row from left to right: H.G. Nguyen, Margie Matthews, Anne Louise Heigo, Pat Magee. Back row from left to right: Bonnie Bamburg, Steve Cox, Jim Towery, Tom Scott, Dan Shore, Mark Ritchie, Gerry DeYoung*

choosing to support the only institution committed to preserving and sharing the continuing stories of the entire Santa Clara Valley. If you have any questions about the Annual Campaign, feel free to call Barbara Johnson, Director of Development at 408-918-1053 for more information.

## History Park and Peralta Adobe-Fallon House Now Free

History San José is making admission free to History Park and the Peralta Adobe-Fallon House Historic Site. Why would we do this when financial times are tough? Doesn't free admission devalue the experience? What in the world are we thinking?

First and foremost, we are thinking about the people who live and work in the Santa Clara Valley. It is your history that we hold, preserve and share. It belongs to you, and not to History San José.

Free admission is about access not finances. It's about making sure that there are no barriers between the people of the Santa Clara Valley and our shared past. Free admission ensures that the history of the Santa Clara Valley is accessible by and shared with everyone.

Second, for most of my professional career I have operated under the premise that people don't value what they don't pay for. After thirty years, though, I have been forced to admit that I have seen little evidence that substantiates that claim. HSJ's mission is simply to share the Valley's history as widely as possible, and free admission supports that goal.

Will we lose members with free admission? Nationwide, people become members of historical organizations to support what the organization is doing, not to receive a complicated array of membership benefits. We have every reason to assume that this is the case in Santa Clara Valley, too. Isn't that why you are a member?

Third, by eliminating financial barriers to what we do and increasing our visibility, we can present a stronger case to potential donors for the need to keep those barriers down and retain the increased level of public service. And, by increasing numbers, we increase our appeal to donors, especially to those who desire broad public recognition and identification with a well-used public service.

Someone once advised me that I should never be the first or last to try something. We aren't the first San José cultural institution to try free admission. In a daring move three years ago, the San José Museum of Art proved that free admission can be good business, and we have every reason to believe that it will work well for us.

In fact, we have been providing free access for quite some time, just not on site. Although many of us still believe that there is no substitute to being there, to standing where others stood or to reading an actual document, to many others a visit to History Park is little different than a visit to the HSJ web page. History San José doesn't charge for access to our website [www.historysanjose.org](http://www.historysanjose.org) or to [www.siliconvalleyhistory.com](http://www.siliconvalleyhistory.com), and web-based technologies are by design increasingly important ways for us to reach and serve more people. It no longer makes sense to make a distinction between sites—physical or virtual—when charging a user fee.

In order to support this initiative, however, it is essential you renew your membership. Better yet, increase your membership level. Or best of all, bring in a new member. Just like history, we're all in this together. And that's the way it ought to be.

David Crosson, President & CEO

### OFFICERS 2004 – 2005

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Lynn Crocker  
Editor

# HSJ Volunteers Receive Appreciation and Awards

On Tuesday August 17, some 200 volunteers and staff gathered under an oak tree to celebrate the contributions volunteers have made to History San José over the past year. Volunteers celebrating anniversaries received their 5-year, 10-year, 15-year or 20-year pins. This year, five volunteers reached the landmark 20th anniversary: Eric Butler, Jack Douglas, George Klaar, Ray Peterson, and Audré West. We also celebrated a VERY SPECIAL 30th Anniversary for Jim Gard of the Printer's Guild. Jim has been volunteering at the museum since he was a teenager! A brightly decorated

birthday cake was presented to docent Mary Lamson in celebration of her 90th birthday. Congratulations to all our volunteers for their achievements in all areas of History San José's work!

Volunteers are always needed to help us better care for our collection and serve the public. For those interested in becoming a tour guide or program docent, we'll offer our popular Docent Training Class again this fall, on October 30, November 6 and November 13. If you'd like to join our corps of volunteers, please contact Kristin McCaman at (408) 918-1047.



Photos: Monica Tucker

*Kristin McCaman, HSJ Program Coordinator, presents an award to Jim Gard for his 30 years of volunteer service with the Printer's Guild.*



*Volunteers celebrating 20 years with History San José. From left to right: Eric Butler, Print Shop; Kristin McCaman, HSJ Program Coordinator; Jack Douglas, local historian and contributor to The Exchange; Audre West, Docent; Aminah Ramezany, HSJ Education Assistant.*



*Fellow volunteers helped Mary Lamson celebrate her 90th birthday.*



*Volunteers enjoy a special evening of fun and recognition at History Park.*



*Volunteers celebrating 15 years with History San José. From left to right: Bob Langford, Docent; Dean Helms, Accounting; Edith Walter, Docent, Portraits of the Past; Kristin McCaman, HSJ Program Coordinator; Aminah Ramezany, HSJ Education Assistant; Joe Walter, Docent, Portraits of the Past.*



*Volunteers celebrating 10 years with History San José. From left to right: Don Ostrander, Collections; José Pantoja, Collections; Bob Loewer, Retail; Kristin McCaman, HSJ Program Coordinator; Aminah Ramezany, HSJ Education Assistant; Evelyn Sullivan, Retail; Valarie Bibb, Retail.*

# The Italian Count and the Brick Maker's Daughter

by Jack Douglas

The notice, in 1932, of the impending marriage of Miss Lillian Remillard, vice president of the Bay Area's largest chain of brickyards, to the Italian Count Alessandro Olioli Dandini, came as a surprise to many. Some might have wondered that the matronly fifty-year-old should attract such a handsome husband who was twenty years her junior.

The count, who was born in Mexico, was a dashing young Italian army officer in World War 1. With his pencil-thin mustache and his star quality good looks, he could have had his pick of film goddesses—Errol Flynn looked like a choir-boy when compared to this suave Italian.

Like the plots in novels by Edith Wharton or Henry James, this story of the marriage between a rich American heiress and an old-world aristocrat had predictable results, but none of the fictional daughters of the nouveaux riche could hold a candle to our locally-raised Countess Lillian Remillard Dandini.

## IN THE BEGINNING THERE WAS ONLY THE CLAY

In 1854 the French Canadian Remillard brothers left their Montreal home to find their fortunes in the California gold fields. By this time, unfortunately, most of the gold had been claimed, but of clay, there was plenty. Pierre and Edward bought into a small brick-making firm near Lake Merritt in Oakland. This was a smart investment, as the many fires that ravaged San Francisco and other gold rush settlements increased the demand for fire-proof brick buildings (Henry M. Naglee built the first one in San Francisco).

The great demand for brick required the Remillards to find other sources of clay, so they established plants in San Rafael in 1870 and in Greenbrae in 1889. In 1892 they purchased the 250-acre San José farm owned by James Ashworth, a gold rush pioneer who settled here in 1854. (The Ashworth home, built in 1860, still stands on Story Road and is a registered City Landmark.) Running through the property was the Coyote Creek, the banks of which provided particularly rich clay. Bricks were made from this clay until the company was shut down in 1968. Pierre and his family spent summers on this rural property.



Remillard home as it stands today on Story Road.

Photo courtesy of Jack Douglas

Confident that her father and brother would carry on the business, Lillian studied the fine arts, and she hoped some day to sing opera. But deaths in the family would change that. Pierre and his son died within a few years of each other, and in 1904 the company was in the hands of his widow, who became president, and Lillian who became vice president. Lillian continued her music study in New York until 1906, but she was forced to return home when the company was inundated with orders after the San Francisco earthquake.

The two women took on this monumental job that might have daunted the most experienced male corporate executive. Bricks from the Remillard factories are part and parcel of a majority of the Bay Area's important landmark buildings, bridges, canneries and schools. Lillian managed to maintain her interest in music, even while assisting her mother at the factories. With her wealth she sponsored a number of musical activities. She was a founder of the San Francisco Opera Company in 1920, and she served as president of the Pacific Opera Company as late as 1958.

## WEDDING BELLS

Lillian must have been flattered to be courted by such a handsome young aristocrat, but she was no doubt smart enough to realize that it wasn't just her looks or personality that interested him. The marriage took place at her mother's home in San Francisco and the couple settled into their country home in San José. It was not long before the new husband was angling for control of the firm, so to satisfy him, Lillian made him president of a new branch, which became known as the Remillard Dandini Company. With the death of her mother in 1934, Lillian became the sole shareholder in the company.

Soon there were rumors of the Count's dalliances with other women, and in 1936 Lillian sued for separate maintenance, citing a report that he had behaved violently toward an attractive Central American woman. Lillian also claimed that he has misappropriated \$50,000 from the Remillard Dandini Company. The Count's slippery financial dealings

The Italian Count and the Brick Maker's Daughter continued on page 7

# Chinese Summer Festival Returns This Year

On Sunday, July 18 the Chinese Historical and Cultural Project hosted its annual Chinese Summer Festival in History Park, celebrating the 13th anniversary of the Ng Shing Gung Museum. The festival featured a variety of Asian foods, Chinese cooking, martial arts demonstrations, cultural performances and children's arts and crafts.



The day was full of entertainment, food and fun.



HSJ President and CEO David Crosson (center) joins CHCP Board Members Gerrye Wong (left) and Lillian Gong-Guy (right) at the annual Chinese Summer Festival at History Park.

Photos by Jacob Crosson

## Crosson Elected to Top Leadership Post in AASLH



David Crosson, President and CEO of History San José

History San José President and CEO David Crosson was installed as Chair of the American Association of State and Local History (AASLH) during the organization's annual meeting in St. Louis, Missouri. AASLH is the only comprehensive national organization dedicated to state and local history. Headquartered in Nashville, TN, AASLH provides services and assistance to over 6,000 institutional and individual members and provides leadership for history and history organizations nationally.

Crosson was elected to the position of chair by the AASLH membership and was inducted into office during the Meeting of the Membership on Friday, October 1, 2004.

Terry Davis, AASLH President/CEO states, "David has been an extraordinary volunteer for AASLH and is widely known and respected in the museum field. He is articulate, has strong convictions, is giving and thoughtful, and is a true leader in the field."

Crosson has been an active member of AASLH during his career. He served as treasurer from 1972-96 and vice-chair from 2002-04. In addition, he chaired the Committee on Standards, Tenure, and Ethics when it drafted and adopted its first statement of professional ethics in 1990. His term of AASLH Chair will continue through 2006.

### History San José's Sponsor's Corner

#### Corporate Sponsors

**Cinnabar Commons, LP**  
Affordable Housing for San José

**SUMMER HILL HOMES**  
COMMUNITIES OF DISTINCTION

Comcast

Heritage Bank

Vice Mayor Pat Dando

#### Corporate Members

Cornerstone Properties

### Make it Memorable

History Park is a perfect place to host a memorable event. There's no other place in the Bay Area where you can make a spectacular entrance in a historic trolley car, dine under the stars, and dance under a soaring light tower—all located within 14 acres of beautifully landscaped grounds.

History Park creates a special ambiance for corporate gatherings, meetings, picnics and wedding celebrations where all are given special attention. Our gated facility can accommodate as many as 10,000 people for concerts and festivals or just a few people for an intimate, serene wedding or special occasion. The versatility of this location provides an ideal setting for theme parties and events. Any party you envision can happen at History Park and it will be memorable.



Photo courtesy of Beth Cala, Any Events

*An event at History Park is a great time for everyone. Pictured is a stilt walker at a corporate Country Fair party.*

### Veteran's Day Open Mic: Come Share Your Stories

In recognition of Veteran's Day, American war veterans are invited to participate in an open mic program moderated by HSJ President and CEO David Crosson. Crosson will invite all veterans in the audience to respond to questions by sharing their war time experiences. This is a unique opportunity for veterans to tell their own stories, and for non-veterans to learn about war from many different perspectives. The event will take place on Thursday, November 11 at 7:00pm at Barnes and Noble Booksellers at the corner of Almaden Expressway and Blossom Hill Road. Admission is free and no prior registration is necessary.

Once again Barnes and Noble is extending a fundraising opportunity to benefit History San José. By presenting the Barnes & Noble Book Fair Voucher included in this newsletter, a percentage of net sales on all merchandise\* purchased on November 11, between 5:00 & 10:00 p.m. will be donated to History San José.

*\*Valid on all merchandise except consumable goods, gift cards, and readers' advantage memberships.*

### Summer Family Programs Wrap Up at HSJ

A wide variety of monthly family programs were presented by History San José and its Affiliate organizations over the summer. Starting in May, the Hellenic Heritage Institute hosted the *Olympic Legacy*, a multi-day event presented at several local venues in tribute to the upcoming Olympic Games. Programming included a May Day celebration and Greek Wedding, both held at History Park. Also in May, History San José's popular hands-on Archaeology Day was held.

In June the Portuguese Heritage Society of California presented its annual *Dia de Portugal*, a worldwide celebration of the Portuguese heritage and culture, providing opportunities for visitors to learn about the contributions that Portuguese Americans have made to our nation. A record 5,000 people attended this annual event.

The Chinese Historical and Cultural Project brought back its always-popular Chinese Summer Festival, celebrating the 13th anniversary of the Ng Shing Gung Museum. This day of demonstrations, exhibits and cultural performances highlighted not only the Ng Shing Gung Museum, but also the Chinese community in the Santa Clara Valley.

In August hundreds of families flocked to History Park in

search of Hidden Treasures. Visitors were given clues from the past as they entered the park and were directed on a self-guided search to solve a "history mystery". In September the Santa Clara Valley Model T Ford Club hosted its 4th Annual Antique Autos in History Park. Along with an extensive display of antique autos, visitors saw antique motorcycles and a display of early gas engines. Summer family programming ended in October when History San José presented an Autumn Festival focusing on fall and harvest activities.

Each summer this growing mix of recurring family programs expands opportunities for families to come together for a full menu of fun, cultural and educational activities. Thank you to Air Systems Foundation, Inc and Bank of America for sponsoring this year's events.



*Children gather around Michael Boulland to listen and learn during Archaeology Day at History Park.*

## HISTORY SAN JOSÉ CALENDAR

### NOVEMBER

#### Docent Training

Saturdays, October 30,  
November 6th and 13th  
9:00am – 5:00pm

*History Park*

These classes will teach tour techniques, communication skills, storytelling, and more. For more information, please contact Kristin McCaman at (408) 918-1047 or visit our website, [www.historysanjose.org](http://www.historysanjose.org),

*Advance Registration Required*

#### History Makers

#### Veterans Day Open Mic: Come Share Your Stories

Thursday, November 11th

7:00 – 8:30pm

*Barnes and Noble Booksellers at  
corner of Almaden Expressway and  
Blossom Hill Road.*

Moderated by HSJ President and CEO David Crosson. Crosson will invite all veterans in the audience to respond to questions by sharing their war time experiences. No prior registration is necessary.

*Free*

#### Photographs by Shirlie Montgomery from the Leonard McKay Collection

November

*City Council, 6th Floor*

In celebration of Founders Day, HSJ has mounted an exhibition in City Hall about San José featuring the photographs of Shirlie Montgomery, one of photography's "pioneering women." The exhibition is on display during the month of November. Montgomery captured on film everything from canneries to blossoming apple orchards, and county fairs to elegant social functions—all in San José. The exhibit provides a brief overview of her work. Photos include: a Chinese New Year Parade at Valley Fair Shopping Center in 1973; Nurses in Training at O'Connor's Hospital in 1957; and Activities at Girl Scout Camp in 1958. In December, this exhibit will move to History Park.

*Free*

### DECEMBER

#### Member Holiday Party

Thursday, December 9th

Don't miss this year's holiday party. Be sure to save the date and look for your invitation in the mail.

#### Ongoing Classes at History Park

*Advance registration required.*

*Call (408) 247-4685 or visit*

*[www.hellenicheritageinstitute.org](http://www.hellenicheritageinstitute.org)*

#### Greek Dancing

**Mondays 7:00 – 9:00 pm**

Learn to dance like Zorba!  
(Adult Classes)

#### Greek Cooking

**Tuesdays 7:00 – 9:00 pm**

Designed for all lovers of Greek food. In addition to well known dishes like Moussaka, Dolmathes, sweets such as Baklava and Kourabiethes, this class will teach you some lesser known recipies.

#### Modern Spoken Greek

**Wednesdays 7:00 – 9:00 pm**

Involves the study of modern Greek language in relation to its historical origin and its usage in contemporary Greece.

*The Italian Count and the Brick Maker's Daughter* continued from page 4

ended up in court, where he was sentenced to eighteen months in jail for tax evasion.

Suits and countersuits were rampant as the Count tried various ways to drain money from the company. In 1942 he decided to divorce Lillian so that he could marry a pretty young socialite. The Countess challenged the out-of-state divorce and was upheld by the California courts. She further filed a court order to stop the marriage, but, not to be deterred, Alessandro married his new countess in Nevada. The San Francisco Chronicle headline of July 12, 1946 said it all: "Forever Alessandro – Legally Dandini's Done Bigamy – He's East of the Border and Unbothered." That was not to be the end of it, however, for in the following years there would be dozens of lawsuits. The Count was there after Lillian's death in 1973 at age ninety-three, to claim (unsuccessfully) a right to her estate.

#### A TRUE ARISTOCRAT

Lillian paid a great price for her noble title, so even though there was a new Countess Dandini in the world, she continued to be San José's and the Bay Area's Countess. And not in name only, for she was a generous patron of the arts and the center of many social events.

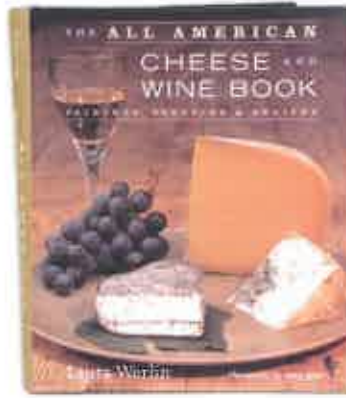
In the early 1950's she learned that the magnificent Hillsborough estate of Harriet Pullman Carolan (known as "Carolands") was be pulled down for newer development. She immediately sensed that this hilltop French chateau, designed by Willis Polk, would be an ideal setting from which she could rule over the cultural world of the Bay Area. For the rest of her long life Countess Lillian used her palace as a center for the arts, where celebrities such as Liberace, violinist Ruggiero Ricci, Bing Crosby, Billy Graham, and an endless list of opera notables were often seen.

Countess Lillian Dandini's fortune may have come from San José clay, but in her heart she was a true aristocrat.

## WHAT'S IN STORE FOR YOU?

### *The All American Cheese and Wine Book*

This book provides guidelines for pairing American cheese and wine. Extensive charts showing the ideal combinations at a glance make this book an indispensable resource. Also included are profiles of 50 American cheese makers, winemakers and 55 delectable recipes for dishes that use cheese or feature cheese by itself.



Photos by Sarah Puckitt



### Cheese Please

The perfect plates for your cheese selections, these attractive plates are packaged in sets of four and make an ideal gift with a selection of your favorite cheese and a great bottle of wine.

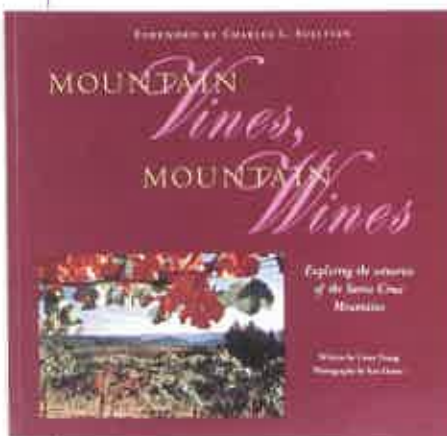
### *Best of the Best: The Best Recipes from the 25 Best Cookbooks of the Year*

Here, in one fantastic volume, is *Food & Wine* magazine's selection of the 25 very best cookbooks of the year. Contains over 100 of the most spectacular recipes and exclusive interviews with the authors, with their favorite cooking tips and tricks, and recipes from superstars such as Mario Batali, Wolfgang Puck and Daniel Boulud.



### *Mountain Wines, Mountain Wines: Exploring the Wineries of the Santa Cruz Mountains*

This book is your complete reference for more than 50 wineries in the Santa Cruz Mountains. Personalities, locations, and types of wines that each winery produces are combined with climate and history. Sidebars provide information on non-winery activities and restaurants that serve a variety of Santa Cruz Mountain Wines.



## MUSEUM INFORMATION

### SITES

#### History Park

Kelley Park, 1650 Senter Road  
San Jose, CA 95112  
408-287-2290; Fax 408-287-2291

#### Peralta Adobe-Fallon House

175 W. St. John Street  
San Jose, CA 95110  
408-993-8182; Fax 408-993-8184

#### Administrative Offices

1650 Senter Road  
San Jose, CA 95112  
408-287-2290; Fax 408-287-2291

[www.historysanjose.org](http://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 – 5pm
Museum Store	12 – 4pm
O'Brien's Café	12 – 4pm
Peralta/Fallon	12 – 5pm

#### TUESDAY – FRIDAY

History Park & Gallery	11am – 5pm
Museum Store	11am – 4pm
O'Brien's Café	11am – 3pm
Research Library	Wed. 1pm – 4pm
Office Hours	Mon. - Fri., 9am – 5pm

### 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!