

QUARTERLY BULLETIN
OF THE CALIFORNIA PIONEERS
OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY
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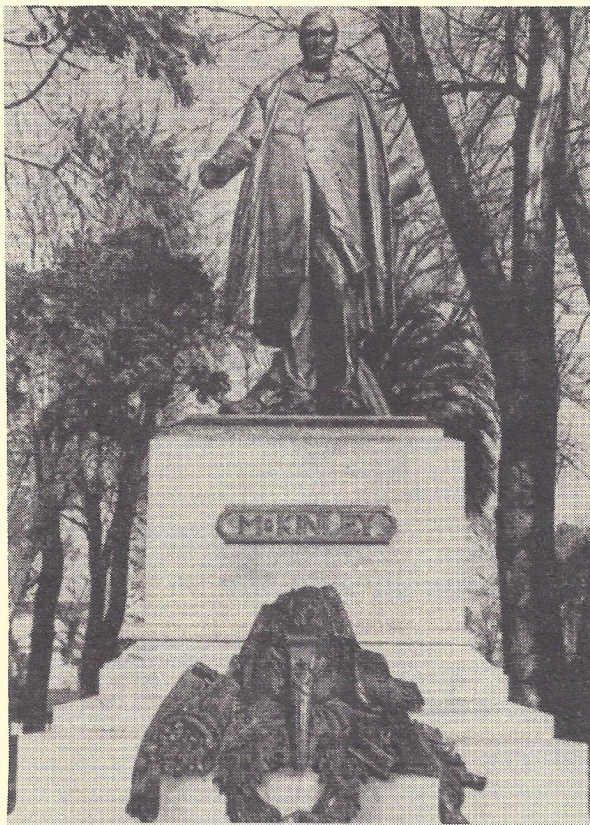
The formal unveiling of this monument to America's martyred President William McKinley had taken place in San Jose at St. James Park on February 21, 1903 on the very site where he had addressed crowds earlier on May 13, 1901.

The capital for this effort was raised by popular subscription amounting to over \$16,000. Plans and specifications, as noted in the San Jose Herald, at the time, were prepared by William Bender, a San Jose architect and the Reid Brothers, long noted San Francisco civic designers. The Hon. James D. Phelan, among others, had also taken an active part in the construction of like monuments in San Francisco.

By March 10, 1902, a sub-contract was entered into a written contract with one Rupert Schmid, a San Jose sculptor who had created the figure of the President in clay in his downtown San Jose studio for the reported sum of \$13,500 under the immediate supervision of a committee. As no firm on the Coast could cast such a huge piece of art bronze it was proposed it be cast in New York City.

This was satisfactorily accomplished by the Henry-Bannard Bronze Co., there. While the casting was in progress, the foundry was paid a visit by none other than Hon. James D. Phelan who had hailed it "as fine a lot of bronze casting as can be made anywhere in the world."

As for the granite and concrete commitments, the San Jose Western Granite and Marble Co., was issued the task with a bid of \$2,615.



(Continued on page 5.)

WHALE BLAZERS

SAN JOSE, 1869 — According to herald accounts of the day a new sport had arrived on the scene. It appeared somehow, the carriage factory of John Christian, at the corner of First and William Streets was turning out some remarkable velocipedes as well. His approved item had created a tremendous demand for this new type of 'French bicycle'. Its popularity had even motivated a 'training school' at the local Armory Hall. Terms of tuition along with the use of the bike ran from ten cents for 20 minutes or five tickets for one dollar. "Twenty minutes," reported cyclists, "was all a beginner's muscles could endure."

SAN JOSE, March 1907 — Every youngster in the city was having a chance to earn money since the Board of Health was paying 'bounties' from one to five cents for every mouse or rat brought in. A goodly number of young people had already taken to the extermination program head on which authorities hoped would end with such planned annihilation. With just five days into the 'trap program' bounties had been paid on 57. One lad brought in 13 he had trapped in a restaurant. Such 'trap lines', like others, were making money while the boys slept.

SAN JOSE, 1912 — To better acquaint Santa Clara County the Board of Supervisors authorized the expenditure of \$2,707 for advertising in the "Country Gentleman."

1914 — The Palace Hotel in San Francisco began running jitney bus excursions to Santa Clara County to better acquaint all with the wealth and beauty of the region.

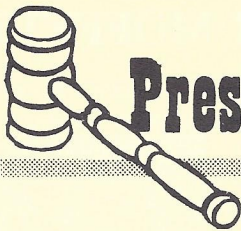
SAN JOSE, 1914 — Friends of one George Bertheld, once the village cobbler of Monterey, reported he had provided \$5,000 for a monument to his friend Robert Lewis Stevenson whose shoes he had often mended.

SAN JOSE, 1914 — A senator believed a one-eyed man was entitled to operate an automobile saying, "A one-eyed man can't see nearly so many people to run down as a two-eyed driver can."

SAN JOSE, 1936 — How many recall when 'traffic control' here placed a peanut underneath the tire of a prospective overtime parker? Well, if the peanut was whole and hearty after an hour the parker was issued a citation, if crushed and oozing the driver escaped for the time.

SAN JOSE, 1937 — Proposed parking meters here were being declared invalid. Among the many opinions, including the California Automobile Association who stated, "The motorist is already charged for the use of the street through license fees and taxes and the city has no legal right to charge an additional tax." The Association also declared, "Charging five cents an hour for parking is unconstitutional."

PALO ALTO, 1937 — Efforts to prohibit auto trailers for eating and sleeping purposes through an ordinance would also limit their presence in the city limits or parking such on streets or vacant lots.



President's Message

James A. O'Connor

A new decade and renewed hopes for our organization! The plea for the donation of a 'new home' for our Board meetings, records, archives, and treasures did not go unanswered following our last Luncheon in December. We have already received one offer and others may follow. Everything is tentative but hopeful. Perhaps at our March Luncheon we may have more on this and the storage of the furnishings of the Jackson Estate donated us recently in the vicinity of Morgan Hill.

Currently our Board is updating the list of our archives at members' homes and at the Main Library and Historical Museum.

It is, also, encouraging to hear due to efforts of historical voices some of San Jose's long established streets such as Prevost and Balbach have been saved from further growth intrusion. Louis Prevost was a pioneer silk culturist in the 1850's which brought fame to San Jose, while John Balbach has been long considered the city's foremost blacksmith and wagon maker, and the designer of the first plow for the open market on the West Coast in 1852.

Also, as a memorial to our late Past Pioneer President, Alice Vetterle, a historic volume has been placed in her memory in the California Room at the San Jose Main King Library.

We must say among the joyous surprises at our Christmas Luncheon was the introduction of our enthusiastic 91 year old Alfred Casalagno whose maternal grandfather was Louis Pellier, who along with his brothers, introduced the renowned French prune to our valley in the 1850's.

As we go to press we find our 'eternal' Louella Luhrman, a nurse during WW I, has passed away at the Veteran's Nursing Facility in Menlo Park. She was 108 years of age and the oldest living war veteran in America. As "Aunt Lou," she claimed six nieces and five nephews, fourteen grand-nieces, and eighteen grand-nephews as well as sixteen great-grand-nieces and fifteen great-grand-nephews. Miss Luhrman was also a member of San Jose Memory Post 399, American Legion, enjoyed the *Trailblazer* and, until very recently, had her hair done every Friday.



DON'T BE LEFT OUT

Annual dues are now past due! All members who have not paid for 1990 by the March Luncheon (March 3, 1990) will be considered delinquent and will not receive the *Trailblazer*. The Financial Secretary will be available at the Luncheon to receive payments.

Those who wish to mail their payments can do so by sending the \$5 check along with a stamped self-addressed envelope to California Pioneers, P.O. Box 8208, San Jose, CA 95155. You will receive your membership card in the mail.

Any questions? Please call Membership Chairman/Financial Secretary, Tommy Warren at (408) 241-8942.

WILLIAM ADGER MOFFETT

By: Bill Chivers

Most people in Santa Clara County and Northern California know of the U.S. Naval Air Station at Moffett Field, but few of us know who Moffett was and why the air field was named for him.

Rear Admiral William Adger Moffett was one of the few military leaders in our nation whose influence has long outlived him. His career spanned an entire technological era of U.S. Naval history. He was known as the "Father of Naval Aviation."

Moffett was born October 31, 1869 in Charleston, S.C. He attended public schools there until his appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy in 1886. As a midshipman from the Naval Academy Class of 1890, he trained on the frigate *Constellation* built in 1797. Following his graduation, he had various assignments including duty under Admiral Dewey aboard the *USS Charleston* during the Spanish American War. After the defeat of the Spanish forces at the Battle of Manila Bay, Ensign Moffett was appointed Captain of the Port of Manila, enabling him to make a very enviable reputation by his effective and skilled clearance of the wreckage from the harbor.

Years later while commanding the cruiser *USS Chester*, he won the Congressional Medal of Honor for heroism under fire during the expedition to Vera Cruz, April 21 and 22, 1914. "Commander Moffett brought his ship in the inner harbor during the night of the 21st without assistance of a pilot or navigational lights and was in a position on the morning of the 22nd to use his guns at a critical time with telling effect. The skill of Commander Moffett in mooring his ship at night was especially noticeable. He placed his ship nearest the enemy and did most of the firing and received most of the hits."

During 1914-1917, he was Commandant of the 9th, 10th and 11th Naval Districts. In 1917, he was promoted to Captain and sent to command the Great Lakes Naval Training Center in Illinois, serving there until December 1918. At Great Lakes, Captain Moffett established an aviation training unit including an aviation mechanics school. He also developed at Great Lakes the largest brass band in the world, composed of 1,700 musicians all under the supervision of Lieutenant John Philip Sousa. In handling these difficult command positions, he again gained official recognition in the form of the Distinguished Service Medal for "exceptionally meritorious service in a position of great responsibility in the World War."

In December 1918, he assumed command of the battleship *USS Mississippi*. Soon thereafter, his ship was transferred to the Pacific where she remained during his tenure as commanding officer. The ship was fitted for handling seaplanes which allowed Moffett to use his knowledge and inventiveness in aircraft handling techniques. He devised and sponsored numerous experiments which led to advances in fleet aviation as well as to his own knowledge of the field. This resulted in his appointment as Director of Naval Avia-



tion on January 3, 1921. Shortly thereafter, he was appointed by President Harding as the very first Chief of Navy's Bureau of Aeronautics and was promoted to Rear Admiral. This was the organization that would oversee the enormous development of naval aviation over the next 20 years.

Moffett was technical advisor to the Limitation of Armaments Conference in London in 1930 and worked tirelessly for its ratification by the U.S. Senate. He believed, however, that the United States should build up its naval and air forces to treaty strength and pushed through a five year program of expansion, including the commissioning of experimental aircraft carriers, catapults on battleships and cruisers, acquisition of flying fields at strategic points, development of aircooled engines, and erection of airship mooring masts. He urged the construction of two giant rigid airships, the "Akron" and the "Macon." He advocated dirigibles not only for scouts for the fleet but for commercial purposes, such as overseas transportation.

He was instrumental in the approval of two new aircraft carriers, the *Lexington* and the *Saratoga*, both of which made a very impressive record during World War II. He was one of the leading proponents of a West Coast site for the dirigible base here in Santa Clara County. Because the base was to be between Mountain View and Sunnyvale, which both cities wanted to claim, it was felt that the officials in Washington, D.C. might not like the sound of an air base named Mountain View, so it was decided to call it Sunnyvale Naval Air Base. When the *USS Akron* visited the new air base in May 1932, Rear Admiral Moffett came with it. She moored to a special mast there. The huge dirigible hangar was being built at the time. On April 12, 1933, the Sunnyvale Naval Air Station was commissioned, but a grim shadow hung over the proceedings. Eight days earlier, the *USS Akron* had crashed into the Atlantic Ocean in a storm killing 73 of the 78 men aboard, among them Rear Admiral William A. Moffett, Chief of the Naval Bureau of Aeronautics. In May 1933, the Sunnyvale Naval Air Base was renamed Moffett Field in his honor.

The death of Admiral Moffett proved unfortunate for San Jose, because he was one of the leading proponents of a deep water port for naval vessels at Alviso. He felt this would be an important adjunct to the air base operations.

In August 1936, another honor was bestowed on the late Admiral Moffett when a new Navy destroyer, the *USS Moffett*, was commissioned in Boston Massachusetts. His daughter, Miss Beverly Moffett, sponsored the new ship in her father's memory. William Moffett and his wife, Jeannette Beverly, had six children. One of his sons, W.A. Moffett, Jr., made the Navy his career and also made Rear Admiral. The former Chief of the Bureau of Aeronautics of the Navy, Commander of ships, shore stations and Naval aviation, Congressional Medal of Honor holder, Rear Admiral William Adger Moffett led an illustrious Naval career. The Naval Air Station Moffett Field is a fitting memorial to this outstanding Naval hero whose contributions remain a living tribute to Naval aviation.

McKinley (Continued from Page 1)

Cordial invitations had been sent to schools of all levels in Santa Clara County who had contributed in some way to the monument's cause.

Astonishingly, today, our Pioneer member Elizabeth Telfer, presently a resident of the Odd Fellow's Home in nearby Saratoga, relates when as a third grader at Hester School in San Jose, like other children, had contributed pennies and nickels to the beloved President's monument, who was tragically shot down on September 6, 1901 in Buffalo, New York.

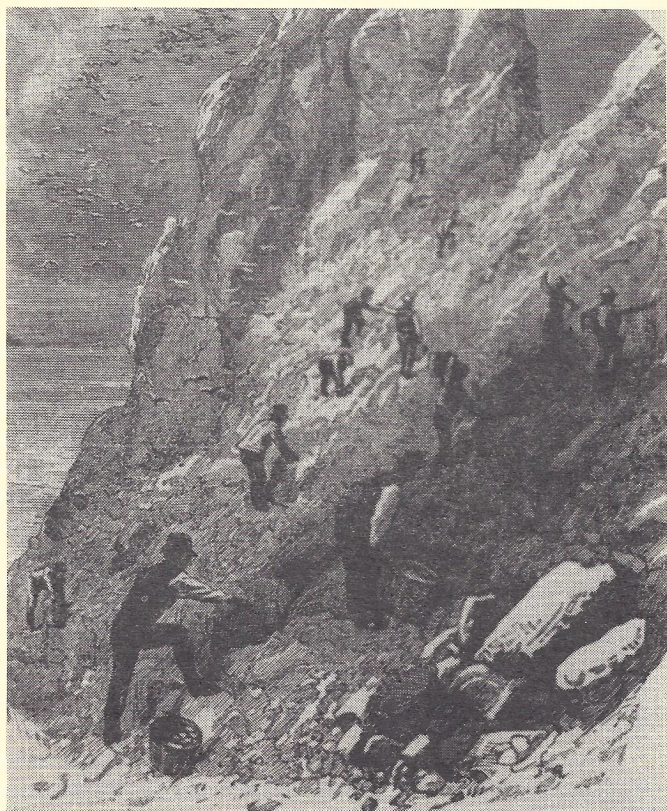
It was after this tragedy when the Secret Service was charged with the protection of the President.

GOING TO SEA FOR EGGS

By: Laura Calloway

Opposite the Golden Gate and approximately thirty miles off shore are to be found seven small rugged rocky islands scattered along a line about seven miles long. To the Spanish explorers of the Manila Galleons they were the Los Farallones de los Frayles. Sir Frances Drake marked them on his map as the Islands of St. James. But today we know them simply as the Farallones.

In the early 1900's the Russians established a fur trading outpost on the largest of these islands. The settlement furnished Fort Ross and other Russian communities with salted sea lion meat, oil from the blubber while the marine mammal hides and intestines were used in the making of boats and garments.



By the time gold was discovered the Russians were gone. San Francisco was short on food rations for her ever expanding population. Eggs being one of the scarce commodities, several enterprising individuals decided to bring murre eggs to this profitable market.

Among the many species of seabirds nesting on the rugged slopes of the Farallones is the murre which is a bird of about 17 inches in length. This bird lays an egg which is about twice the size of a chicken egg, and according to the consumer of the day quite palatable. The egg could be used almost in any way that a chicken egg could be used. According to one report an egg sold for \$1 but if it were cracked the price fell to 50 cents.

The collecting of the murre eggs was such a lucrative business that many got into the act. The Pacific Egg Company or Farallones Egg Company was organized by three egg hunters in 1851.

Each nesting season which was roughly the months of May and June, a group of ten to fifteen men employed by the egg company would be put ashore to gather the eggs from the breeding cliffs. It was dangerous work on the narrow ledges and the slippery rocks, but the profits were so great there was much competition. The egg company received exclusive egg picking rights from the Federal government because of the ruthless manner in which some groups despoiled the eggs and the birds.

The outfit for a professional 'egger' consisted of a blouse-like shirt which was drawn

tightly around the waist and had the capacity for holding a great many dozen eggs. The eggging shoes had soles of braided rope and canvas tops. The picker carried a coiled rope to assist in climbing the steep places.

With the construction of the lighthouse came trespassing accusations. However, as the Company was rather in awe of the U.S. Government, a truce was instituted. All went well until some of the lighthouse keepers decided to get into the egg business too as a supplement for their very low pay.

The struggle for the eggs became a curse of the islands. There was a constant conflict of the egg company vs the lighthouse keepers and then the egg companies vs all other invaders. The time of conflict became known as the Egg Wars. In March of 1863, Captain Charles Shannon of the U.S. Revenue Service, was dispatched to remove a group of men who had deemed to take possession of the Islands. They were removed without incident. However, they tried to return in June with three boats of about 25 armed men. They were met by the egg company and a twenty minute battle found the trespassers defeated.

The truce with the lighthouse authorities was severely tested when the egg company began taking sea lions for their oil. The keepers complained of the stench of the rotting carcasses and the fact that the smoke from the rendering works would tend to obscure the light. The final blow came when some of the egg pickers accosted a light keeper for gathering eggs for his own domestic use.

In 1881 the U.S. Marshall with 21 soldiers evicted all non-government persons from the islands. This was the end of the egg company. Now the way was clear for the keepers and local fishermen to engage in their own egg business, although by this time egg picking was illegal. Still the authorities seemed to turn a blind eye. But as time went on the price of the murre egg continued to decline until 1905 it seems to have been washed from the pages of business.

Although the egg business is now prohibited by law, it was doomed to die anyway. The murre egg never tasted as good as the hen product, nor were they appetizing in their appearance. The yoke is a golden red and the white retains a gelatinous transparency even when cooked.

Early California authors, Bret Harte, Prentice Mulford and Charles Warren Stoddard, give an account of the egg trade. Prentice Mulford had made his living as an egg-sorter when he first came to California.

The Farallones became a part of the city and County of San Francisco in 1872. In 1909 they were made a Federal bird sanctuary and the eggs are now free to develop into chicks.

1990 SANTA CLARA COUNTY HISTORICAL ESSAY CONTEST

The California Pioneers of Santa Clara County are once again sponsoring their annual essay contest. Both High School and College students and the general public will be eligible for cash awards.

The prize for the winning essay will be \$500. A second prize of \$250 and a third place prize of \$125 as well as three Honorable Mention Awards of \$25 will be given.

The subject of this essay, of from 3000 to 10,000 words, may be of any person, place or event concerning Santa Clara County from its beginning to the recent past. Deadline is Monday April 30, 1990.

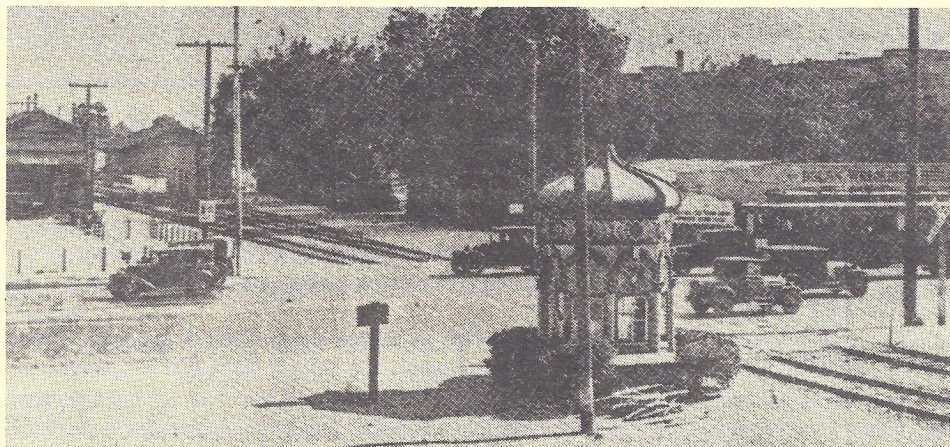
For the contest rules contact Helen MacCarthy at 578-4485.

DAYS BEFORE SUBWAYS AND WIG-WAGS

This was William R. Beydler among the last of the flag and lantern men to warn traffic of approaching trains from such tiny oil heated flag stations as he did from the likes of this one at Fourth and Santa Clara Streets in San Jose for the last time in June 1936. Railroad officials had taken such action due to the re-routing of the Southern Pacific through West San Jose. Only stations in the industrial sections of South San Jose were retained but were soon replaced by electric wig-wags. Several of the long familiar window-studded huts were moved to other locations while a few that had watched and felt puffing locomotives for years had been assigned to demolition crews.



Safety zones were also being ripped out marking the passing of the 64-year old South First Street car line for new motor buses just as the Fourth Street track removal marked the relocation of railroad facilities here.



How many recall this unique pagoda styled flag station near the old Westside depot? The scene, described as unsightly, was on The Alameda near the present Amtrack Station.

HELP

A replica of the old Chinese Temple that stood at 6th and Taylor Streets, San Jose from 1889-1949 will soon be under construction on the grounds of the San Jose Historical Museum. They need to find persons who remember the interior of this old temple or have photographs that the Museum may copy. Please contact the Museum curators at 287-2290.

Have you joined the San Jose Historical Museum Association this year and received your premium book?

Smoke Signals

It was the spring of 1908 when two enthusiastic students of San Jose High School had conceived a plan to publish a weekly school newspaper. They were, Edward Botsford as editor and Irving Van Dalsem as business manager, who with their stirring group set the San Jose High Herald on its feet. By March 1909 it was reported the publication was hailed as the largest and best high school weekly in the United States. The staff consisted of: Edith Hale, Cecil Etheredge, Reginald Laughlin, Edward Nelvin, Jerrod Owen, Harold Pierce and John Sansome.

SAN JOSE, 1911 — At a meeting of the Sons and Daughters of Pioneers held at Cottage Grove in South San Jose, it was moved and carried unanimously that the secretary be instructed to write a letter to be read aloud at their next meeting. The letter was to state in emphatic terms that the Sons and Daughters of Pioneers were opposed to admitting persons simply because such person had been a resident of California for fifty years. It was also declared by the Sons and Daughters that no one should be eligible to become a member of the Pioneers who had come to California after 1858! In fact most of the membership of the Sons and Daughters opposed accepting those who had arrived after 1856 at the latest because after 1856 there were no longer any hardships to encounter — ‘the true grit of a pioneer.’

OCTOBER, 1877: Seventy-five residents of our county made application to become members of our organization in just one day.

ALVISO, 1906 — A number of market-bent duck hunters were seeking to know whether they would be violating game laws by using a small sized ‘cannon’ loaded with buckshot for hunting. It was reported the Bay here, at the northern end of the county, teemed with canvasback ducks that layed on the water all day in huge flocks numbering in the thousands, but always beyond the range of their 10-gauge shot guns. Hence, the disappointed hunters wanted to know if they resorted to a 4-gauge gun, which when fired would create havoc within the duck sanctuary, even at 100 yards. In the meanwhile the eager market bent hunters had to wait in idleness or hunt in fear of their mulish county game warden, Isidore Koppell.

GILROY, 1911 — Concerned ladies groups here were campaigning against the opening of a skating rink, and the likes of nickelodeons and moving picture shows on Sundays as being detrimental to the youth of the community and should be condemned by all religious and law abiding citizens.

Welcome New Members

Derward T. Burbank
Marlyn P. Burbank
Douglas M. Burrows
M. Josephine Hansen
Valentine M. Harrigan
Grace C. Lewis
Frances Manich
Bernice D. McCall
Brooke A. Sanders
Mary Ann Van-Paul
Melisa K. Warren
Marshall L. Winkler

Beyond The Sunset



C. Harold Johnson
Lou Luhrman
Irma L. Murie
Gladys Norris
Dr. James W. Tilden
Russell L. West



Touring With The Californians

YOSEMITE, May 8, 9, 10 — The most enchanting, spectacular waterfalls in the world are at their fullest this time of the year. Your accommodations will be at Yosemite Valley Lodge. Special tours are available to join, or wander off on your own. We will visit the New California State Mining and Mineral exhibit in Mariposa built in the style of the 1890's. Visitors will marvel to the six-million dollars worth of gleaming gold and gems and minerals. Also, a free day to enjoy the valley. Shuttle buses are available all day long to all areas in the Valley — Bridalveil Falls, Nevada Falls, El Capitan, Badger Pass... Come join in or wander off on an adventure of your own.

MEMORIAL WEEKEND WITH AUSTEN WARBURTON! May 25-28 — Reservations for this 'mystery venture' at Luncheon March 3. (Say! We are not revealing its destination so you will all come to the Luncheon to find out.)

BOSTON, CAPE COD, July 17-23 — Ride, walk, and sail this heartland of America, historical Boston, John Quincy Adam's home, Vanderbilt Mansion in Newport, Nantucket Island, Martha's Vineyard, Princetown Harbor where the Pilgrims anchored in 1620, Plymouth Rock, J.J. Kennedy Library, Daniel Webster Sanwiche Inn where we drop anchor for four days.

SWITZERLAND/OBERAMMERGAU/PASSION PLAY, Sept. 11-21

Send SSAE (stamped, self-addressed envelope) to request flyers with all the details on Yosemite, Cape Cod and Switzerland trips. Reservations are now being taken on these three trips. Write to P.O. Box 32121, San Jose, Ca 95152. Call NANCY HILL at 258-3449 to reserve your space. After she confirms your reservation, send your check, made out to THE CALIFORNIANS, to the above address.

1917, HOME AUTO AIDS — If one found it impossible to locate a leak in his car radiator, it was recommended it be placed into a tub of water and air pumped into it. Working in a good strong light would aid one in locating the smallest of leaks.

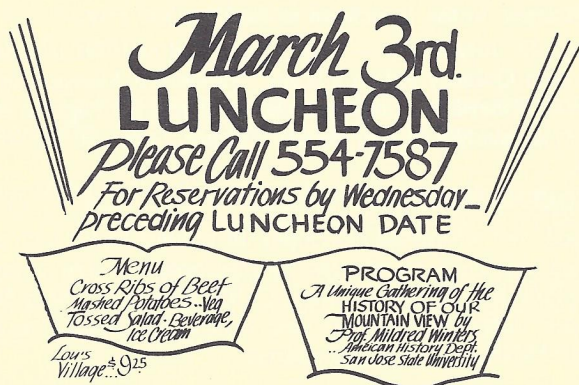
AUGUST, 1918 — A commission selected by the railroad recommended legislation be enacted forcing autos to stop at railroad crossings after a fatal accident at Wayne Station, near Santa Clara.

SAN JOSE, 1924 — Asking for the return of library books here with no questions asked was being circulated. There were over 2,500 books scattered far from home which had disappeared between 1918 and 1923. It was noted more adult books than children's were missing, the youngsters being notably careful and conscientious.

Also, at the time, Zane Grey, the popular western novelist of the day had sent Edith Daley, the city librarian, a handsome autographed photo of himself due to the library's demand of his books which had broken all records in spite of the library's purchase of his books by the bushel as the demand continued unabated.

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