

VOLUME 41

NUMBER 2

JUNE, 2000

HAPPY 125TH BIRTHDAY PIONEERS

Message from President, David McKinney

Dear Pioneers,

June 22, 2000 marks our 125th Anniversary of Incorporation. Few groups in this valley have been incorporated so long. We will celebrate this Anniversary at the June 3rd Quarterly Meeting with Covered Wagon Birthday Cake. (I hope it is chocolate!)



Every year, I say that the June meeting is my favorite-it is a chance to hear award winning essays from a truly diffuse group of authors. We also will have our new 125 year pins available for sale at \$4.00 each. There are a limited number of these pins. We plan to sell them out this year and they will not be restocked. So-come to the June Meeting, buy a pin, enjoy the essays and have a piece of Birthday cake.

At our September 2 meeting, we will celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Statehood-the Sesquicentennial-with Dr. Judson Grenier who will talk about California's statehood and his new book, *Golden Odyssey*.

On Saturday, September 9, Admission Day, we will celebrate the Sesquicentennial of Statehood by dedicating the Bascom Monument at Oak Hill Memorial Park. Look for details in the next Trail Blazer.

Mark your calendars for June 3, September 2 and September 9, 2000. See you there. Eureka!

David

FIRST PIONEER LUNCHEON

June 22, 1875

FROM THE TRAILBLAZER, VOL 15, #2, SPRING, 1875
The History of Santa Clara County, by Eugene T. Sawyer, 1922 and
Hall's 1871 *History of San Jose*

As we gather together for our celebratory birthday luncheon, let us look back 125 years to the First meeting of the Santa Clara County Pioneers. The date was June 22, 1875 and the place-O'Donnell's Gardens. With feverish excitement, 274 Charter Members adopted our Constitution and By-Laws and paid their \$2 dues. The first President was the Honorable Augustus L. Rhodes.

Rhodes had come to California and San Jose in 1854. Born on May 25, 1821, he was a native of Bridge-water, New York and a graduate of Hamilton College, Clinton, New York in 1841 where he studied law. In 1845, he moved to Bloomfield, Indiana where he was married on September 1, 1846. He brought his family to Santa Clara County in the fall of 1854, resuming the practice of law in 1856. He held the office of County Attorney for a short period and was elected to the State Senate in 1859.

He was well thought of in the Senate and assigned the chairmanship of the judiciary committee. He introduced some important amendments to the Constitution which were adopted. In 1863, he was elected on the Republican ticket as one of the Supreme Court Justices. In drawing lots for repective terms of office, he drew 8 years. In 1871, he was the Chief Justice. When he returned home, he was persuaded to serve Santa Clara County as a Superior Court Judge.

Rhodes had a "pre-fab" country mansion shipped around the Horn in 1850. The lavish manor was assembled in 1859 on what is today, Rhodes Court and the Alameda. He lived there until his passing in 1917, at 96. The estate was "developed" in 1927.

Other founding officers included John M. Murphy

and Peter O. Minor, vice presidents; Alex P. Murgotten, secretary; John H. Moore, treasurer; and directors, Coleman Younger, Cary Peebels, Davis Divine, A. Pfister and B. D. Murphy.

The Third Annual Picnic was held on June 16, 1877, according to *The Pioneer; Official Organ of the Santa Clara County Pioneers of 1877*. It was held at O'Donnell's Gardens. William O'Donnell converted his nursery and orchard land at 9th and William in the 1870's to a Zoological Garden and Park. He advertised it as the finest resort in the state. It was best remembered for a full grown sea lion escaping on September 23, 1877, creating a commotion. He was soon collared flipping in the direction of Alviso.

Frank M. Pfister, Esq., a native of San Jose, was selected as Orator for the occasion. Bronson & Daggett's Band was engaged to add dancing to the enjoyment of the day. The Secretary sent out 2,500 invitations which were inadequate to meet the demand. Each member was given a ribbon badge to wear in the buttonhole. Just as the exercises were about to conclude, Governor Irwin arrived accompanied by his Secretary of State, the Honorable Thos. Beck. The Governor was presented to the audience of 10,000 and a few happy words were addressed to the old pioneers.

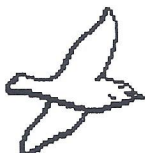
The refreshments were in the shape of a basket dinner and there was plenty to eat of the very best that our wonderful country afforded.

* * * * *

THE AUSTIN Warburton Collection is at the Headen-Inman House behind the Triton Museum on Warburton Street in Santa Clara. It is open for viewing on Sundays from 1-4 p.m.

GONE TO THE GOLDEN HILLS

Charles Mortell- January 14, 2000
Roy Couzin- January 23, 2000
Marguerite Kemmeries-February 14, 2000
Theron Fox- February 17, 2000
Lynn D. Smith- February 18, 2000
Mary Moro- February 19, 2000
Johanna Haynes- February 27, 2000
Helen Hawkins - March 31, 2000
Eunice Huss - mail returned



YEAR 2000 DUES

from Membership Chairman, Melita Kelly

Thanks to all the members who have sent in their dues for the Year 2000. A number of you have received reminders in the mail, and if you have not yet remitted payment, please send your \$10.00 per member check, made out to the California Pioneers to Melita Kelly, 460 N. 15th St., San Jose, CA 95112-1725. Please include a self addressed stamped envelope.

Thank you.

(If you don't remember if you have paid, check the digits after your name on this Trail Blazer, edit.)

NEW MEMBERS

Elva Altonn
Bernadette M. Burke
Diane M. Charlesworth
Edward T. Chin
Eleanor Contratto
J. Marilyn Dobson
Dorothy Raney de Yoe
Ruby E. Goodnight
Dorothy H. Kirby
Joseph Kirby

F. Joyce Luhdorff
Veronica MacMillan
Patrick & Mary Anne Maloney
Mary J. Miller
Geraldine Osborne
Jeffrey Prolo
Glen Reinegger
Ethel Reinegger
Doris Romas
Joanne Sanfilippo



Touring With The Californians

Rose Crimi Muench - Tour Director

Nancy Hill-Phone Res: 258-3449 M≠F a.m. until June 30.

Marie Rider-Phone Res: 251-7887 M≠F a.m. as of July 1.

Pauline Hawkins - Treasurer:

390 No. Winchester Blvd. #7B

Santa Clara, CA 95050,

Beverly Fisher - Luncheon Registrations

REGISTRATION FOR SPRING TRIPS begins at the June 3d luncheon. Checks are preferred over cash. Non-members and guests may sign up starting June 13th. If you do not get a trip flyer at the luncheon meeting, please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Pauline's address above. Pick-up point (unless otherwise indicated) is at Valley Village, 390 N. Winchester Blvd., Santa Clara, at the Dolores Street side.

THURSDAY, MAY 25, 2000 - BERKELEY HIGHLIGHTS

Leave: 8:30 A.M. Return: 4:30 P.M. Price: \$ 32

This trip is filled, but you may place yourself on the waiting list.

THURSDAY, JUNE 29, 2000 HISTORIC DOWNTOWN

OAKLAND (Date to be confirmed) Oakland is blessed with the loving attention of renowned architects who designed unique downtown buildings in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Fortunately, these buildings have been restored rather than destroyed. We are able to enjoy visiting them today with our local Oakland guides. Some of the buildings we will tour are: the recently refurbished *YWCA Building* and the *First Baptist Church*, both designed by *Julia Morgan*; the *Tribune Tower*; and the Beaux Arts style *Broadway Building*. Our included lunch will be at the well-regarded Vietnamese restaurant, *Le Cheval*. .

Our final stop will be the *Bonsai-Suiseki Garden* in Lakeside Park, where we will see bonsai trees some hundreds of years old, set among suiseki stones, as well as modern examples of bonsai art.

Leave: 9:00 A.M.

Return: 4:30 P.M. Price: \$ 29

THURSDAY, JULY 20, 2000 MARIN CIVIC CENTER
and MARIN ART and GARDEN CENTER

We ride along the East Bay and cross the five-mile Richmond - San Rafael Bridge for our first stop at the *Marin County Civic Center*, the only public building designed by *Frank Lloyd Wright*. He developed the plans in the late 1950s, but he died in 1959 and never saw the completion of his project. Nestling into the rolling landscape, it is a typical example of Wright's architectural style and a fitting memorial to his genius. We will have a guided tour of the building and its gardens. Our included lunch will be in *Larkspur Landing* at *Yet Wah Restaurant* for a bountiful eight-course Chinese meal. Next we go to the *Marin Art and Garden Center in Ross*. Once a part of a Mexican land grant and large estate, the garden is a treasure of flowers and historic trees. In July, many unusual plants are in full bloom, such as the brilliant blue Chinese plumbago, fuchsia-pink Cornish heather, gladiolus, and red lobelia. Historic trees include the rare dawn redwood, southern magnolia, and giant sequoias. We will have a guided tour of the gardens as well as time to visit the flower decorations store, antique store, and the art gallery.

Leave: 8:30 A.M. Return: 4:00 P.M. Price: \$ 36

SANTA Fe OPERA - AUGUST 1925, 2000

This trip is filled, except for replacing any cancellations.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2000 HISTORIC
AGRICULTURE TOUR of the SALINAS VALLEY

As Santa Clara County has become more and more urbanized, we must look further south to discover the centers of agriculture, the current "gold" of California. Our guide, Evan Oakes, will begin in Castroville with the history and present day production of artichokes, a

vegetable hardly known 50 years ago, with a visit to the Pezzini farms. We will visit another farm producing lettuce, broccoli, cauliflower and celery. We ride through the *Salinas Valley*, learning about the history of vegetable production, *John Steinbeck's* descriptions, and the influence of the central California missions. Our included lunch stop will be at the *Smith and Hook Winery* in Soledad, where we will enjoy our picnic lunches in the vineyard overlooking a beautiful view of the Salinas Valley. A wine-tasting, winery tour, and vineyard walk is included. We drive north along River Road, viewing more vineyards during peak grape harvest time. You will have opportunities to purchase fresh produce and wines. Leave: 8:30 A.M. Return: 4:30 P.M. Price: \$ 41

RIVER BARGE EXCURSION Nov. 27 - Dec. 5, 2000

We go into the Cajun country on the *Intracoastal Waterway between New Orleans and Galveston*. City tours of *New Orleans and Galveston*, swamp tours and wild-life spotting, passages through several canal locks, tour of Lafayette, capital of the Cajun country, and the villages of Vermillionville, Port Arthur oil country and "*Lagniappe*." Price is \$2095 windows cabins, or \$2280 balcony cabins. Price includes: RT air fare from San Jose to New Orleans, and return from Galveston, two nights in New Orleans, eight-day cruise, all shore excursions, tips and taxes. An *optional* eight-day extension to Matamoros, Mexico is also available at \$1485 and \$1675. Brochures are available.

OTHER EVENTS OF INTEREST

June 15-18, 2000, Conference of California Historical Societies Annual Meeting - Sacramento, to celebrate Sesquicentennial of Statehood. (The Pioneers are members) (253-9514)

Tuesday, June 27, 2000 Celebration of the arrival of the **Anza Party** at the Presidio of San Francisco. Ceremony at 11 a.m., Pershing Square at the Presidio. Sponsored by Los Californianos, Tel: 650-583-0424, Edna de Larios.

Pull Out this page & return to Rose!

The Californians 2001 Trips Survey

NAME _____

PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____

Please check the trips of serious interest to you to help us plan for next year. All prices are approximate. Round trip air fare is included in out-of-state and out-of-country trips. Return the surveys to the Tour Table at the June 3d luncheon or mail them to Rose Crimi Muench, 1289 Martin Avenue, San Jose, CA 95126 by June 30.

Thank you.

California Overnights

Palm Springs New Year's at the Miramonte Resort, December 29th-January 2d, 2001. Eleven acres of landscaped grounds at the base of the Santa Rosa Mountains, Living Desert Museum, Palm Springs Follies, tram to San Jacinto Mountain, New Year's Eve party and New Year's Day brunch, Joshua Tree National Monument, and more. Includes air fare to and from Ontario with motor coach to Miramonte Resort. \$1285.

San Antonio Mission, Hearst ranch house "The Hacienda," designed by Julia Morgan; Agricultural and Rural Life Museum in King City. Two days, \$200.

Ramona Pageant Hemet. (April and May) Dramatic conflict of Native Americans, Californios and gringos in a beautiful outdoor setting. Price TBA.

Mammoth Lakes and Yosemite Summer 2001, four days. Stay at Jagerhof Lodge; Twin Falls Forest Chapel; Devil's Postpile; a guided tour in Yosemite Park via Tioga Pass featuring the natural history, Indian legends, and tales of John Muir; lunch at Awahnee Lodge. \$455.

California Gold Rush-in the Northern Mines- October 2001, four days. Gold Rush Trail in Tuolumne County: Angel's Camp, Murphy's, the first strike at Coloma, Dry Town, Gold Country Museum in Auburn, Grass Valley, Empire Mine. \$480.

Other suggestions ?

-8-

Out-of-State Trips

River Barge Cruise Lower Mississippi and Atcafalaya Basin, swamps and bayous tours, local entertainment, antebellum homes and plantations, St. Martinville and the Evangeline Oak, McIlhinny's Tobasco factory, Baton Rouge state capital and Huey Long tales,. March 1-8, 2001. \$2275 or \$2475, plus optional pre-cruise Mardi Gras package \$ TBA.

Columbia River Cruise on the Columbia Queen, May 5 - 13, 2001. Portland, Willamette River, Astoria, Lewis and Clark Expedition sites, Columbia River Gorge, Pendleton, wine country, Hell's Canyon, Oregon Trail sites, Mount Hood. Includes shore excursions, and cruise tips. \$2310 or \$2570.

Santa FÈ Trail- June 2001, eleven days. From St. Louis follow the Trail: Boonville, Arrow Rock, Independence, Council Grove, Dodge City, Raton Pass, Cimarron, and three nights in Santa FÈ. \$2215.

Erie Canal Cruise September 29-October 11, 2001. Cruise begins in Boston: Long Island, Manhattan, Hudson River with West Point and Hyde Park, Albany, Erie Canal and Mohawk River, Oswego Canal, and Lake Ontario to Kingston, Canada, St. Lawrence River and the Thousand Islands to Montreal. Includes shore excursions and tips. \$2750.

New York Art and Theatre Tour November 24-30, 2001. Broadway shows, museums, and Christmas decorations. \$TBA.

Other suggestions ? _

Out-of-Country Trips (Passports required)

Vienna and Salzburg New Year's December 26 to January 5, 2001. Hofburg Palace Kaiser Ball, concerts in Vienna and Salzburg, deluxe hotel. \$2800.

England, Scotland and Wales two weeks, March or Nov, 2001. Salisbury, Bath, Tintern Abbey, Ruthin Castle, Lake District, Loch Lomond, Inverness, Edinburgh, York, Durham, Coventry, Stratford-on-Avon, London. \$2300

Holland Tulip Time Cruise Nine days, April or May 2001. Seven day cruise with outside cabins. Tulip fields, Keukenhof Gardens, flower auction at Aalsmeer.
\$2200 - \$2400,

Cooking school in Tuscany, Italy April to October, ten days with touring. \$2500.

Basque Country- Spring or Fall, 2001. Madrid, Segovia, Burgos, Leon, Santiago de Compostela, La Coruna, San-tander, Bilbao, Guggenheim Museum, Spanish and French Basque country, Lourdes, Carcassone, Andorra and Barcelona. \$3000.

China and the Yangtze River Two weeks in May, or September or October, 2001. Four day Yangtze River cruise, Shanghai, Wuhan, Xian and the terra cotta warriors, the Great Wall, Beijing, Tienanmen Square, Forbidden City, Ming Tombs, and several entertainments. Includes three meals daily, all outside cabins, and all excursions. \$2500.

Danube River Cruise and Tour 15 days, June through September 2001. Munich; Ludwig Castles, Salzburg, Prague, Bohemia, Passau, Melk Abbey, Budapest, Bratislava, Vienna. Eight-day cruise with shore excursions. \$3200 to \$3500.

Other suggestions?

Day Trips

We generally have day trips on Tues., Wed., or Thur. Please circle which days might conflict with your other activities. We do not assign seats on day trips. Do you prefer to have seats assigned according to the order of registration ? (yes/no) _____ If yes, you may indicate your seat mate by bracketing the two names.

Any other suggestions ?

Saturday, September 16, 2000 Rancho Day at Sanchez Adobe in Pacifica, depicting life on a 1846 rancho with living history demonstrations. Tel: 650-359-1462.

CAPTAIN WILLIAM FISHER

Captain William J. Fisher, ancestor of our own Bob Fisher was probably born in Bristol, England. His tombstone in Santa Clara Mission Cemetery indicates a birth date of July 25, 1810 in Boston, but there is no record to confirm that.

He suffered from poor health and went to sea at age 14, sailing to Boston, Massachusetts. In 1830, he left Boston for the West Coast as mate of a vessel. He located in San Jose del Cabo in Baja California where he owned a brigantine, the *Maria Teresa* with Julian Hanks. The partners sailed from Cabo San Lucas to Mazatlan on the Sea of Cortez and up and down the coast as far north as San Diego and Monterey carrying goods to early settlers. The Larkin Papers cite a number of accounts involving the ship and Captain Fisher.

On May 23, 1845, John Coffin Jones of Santa Barbara wrote to Thomas Oliver Larkin; "Mexico has declared war against the U.S. The news comes by Mr. Fisher from the Cape. He arrived some short time since at San Diego. Mr. Fisher received this news from a gentleman of his acquaintance direct from Mazatlan." In those days, merchant men were the bearers of the news whether written or by word of mouth. When ships arrived in port, they were the center of interest. William Heath Davis in *Seventy Five Years in California*, (1830-1906) mentions that the *Maria Teresa* entered Monterey Bay as early as 1835.

Mr. Fisher was cared for by the Spanish family of Cipriano and Juana Ceseña during one of his illnesses. They had extensive land holdings in the southern tip of the Baja peninsula. He met their daughter and converted to Catholicism in order to marry her and take up land. He took the name of Jose Guillermo Ceseña after his future father in law, in 1829. He and Liberata were married in 1834 and settled on a ranch near San Jose del Cabo while

he continued with his shipping business. It was located just north of San Jose Viejo and was an oasis in the desert area.

From 1834-1846, William Fisher continued his business in Lower California and it was there that his first four children were born, Mary, the twins Thomas and Cypriano and William.

William made several trips to Northern California between 1835 and 1845. He was attracted to the area just south of the pueblo of San Jose. He attended a land auction in Monterey in 1845 and discovered that the Rancho del Refugio de la Laguna Seca of Juan Alvarez, was being auctioned for his debts. Alvarez had served as alcalde of San Jose from 1812-1813, alcalde of Monterey in 1826 and of San Jose again in 1837. The rancho had originally been granted to Alvarez by Governor Jose Figueroa on July 22, 1834. It stretched about a mile north of Coyote to Morgan Hill and averaged 4 miles in width. Coyote Creek flowed through it from the hills near the southeast corner, west, past Coyote Station.

Later on, The Southern Pacific Railroad ran from north to south through the grant and near its middle. He bid for the 19,973 acre Mexican Land Grant along with Charles Weber, (founded Stockton) John Gilroy and a number of other Americans, winning it with a bid of \$6,000. They could not believe that any "sane" man would bid that much for a 4 league grant when there was unclaimed land all around.

Captain John Charles Fremont wrote in his memoirs, "By the middle of February, 1846, we were all reunited in the Valley of San Jose, about 13 miles south of the village of that name on the main road leading to Monterey which was about 60 miles distant. The Place which I had selected for rest and re-fitting was a vacant rancho called the Laguna, belonging to Mr. Fisher. I remained here until February, in the most delightful spring season of a most delightful climate. The time was

occupied in purchasing horses, obtaining supplies, and thoroughly re-fitting the party."

In April, 1846, Fisher decided to bring his family north to establish his home on the rancho. About five families made the voyage with him on the *Maria Teresa*, including Julian Hanks and Ramon Ceseña. They landed at Monterey on May 11, 1846 and spent some time visiting cousins of the Ceseña family. The five families settled on the Coyote rancho with them, creating a nucleus of a settlement that provided the necessary labor for the large estate.

Although records are scarce, it is known that Captain Fisher built an adobe for his family. There two more children, Eulogia and Fiacro, were born on the site where the present house, built by his youngest child, Fiacro, now stands. In 1850, at the time of Fisher's death, the rancho was left to his widow, Liberata and their six children. After Fisher died, Liberata married Dr. George Bull and subsequently gave birth to George Bull.

The living room had a dirt floor, but the bedroom had redwood floors. (Dirt floors were tamped down hard and sprinkled with cow's blood and water at butchering time, which gave them a sweepable gloss.) The garden consisted of roses, verbenas and carnations. The dried petals of the Castillian roses, mixed with dried elder blossoms were used on the ranch for fevers, and also as a laxative. They also sold fruit and watermelons to American immigrants who made their way as far as Gilroy.

Not much work was done on the ranch. Labor consisted largely of riding over the great fields and watching the horses, sheep and goats. Traders from merchant ships sometimes came and bought cattle. Most of their money came from these traders. The neighbors helped each other at harvest time and after work, they danced to the tunes from violins and guitars.

On Saturday evenings, they rode into San Jose to

attend church at St. Joseph's. They visited with relatives in town, attending confession on Saturday evenings and mass on Sundays. On Sunday evenings, they rode back to their rancho.

In December, 1846, William, Julian Hanks, William Gulnac (his brother in law) and several others were called upon to form a committee in the Pueblo of San Jose "to sit and decide on anything that may be required for the benefit of the Pueblo." William Fisher was offered, but declined, the office of alcalde, probably because of continuing poor health and his involvement in raising cattle on his rancho while operating a mercantile business in the pueblo.

The early years, 1845-1850, were perilous times for the settlers trying to farm and raise cattle and horses because of the threat of Indian activity. Commandant General Castro of San Juan Bautista had been antagonistic to the activities in this area and had excited the Indians against foreigners, in general, and made them promises of valuable presents if they would burn crops and destroy the people. Bernal, a neighbor, and William Fisher, lost several hundred head of horses to these marauding Indians. It was during this troublesome time that Captain Fisher was instrumental in the forming of a mounted group who participated in the controlling of the Indians.

In 1849, because of deteriorating health, William sold his mercantile store to his clerk, Josiah Belden, and returned to Coyote, where he lived until his death on April 5, 1850, at the age of 40. He was buried in the Catholic cemetery in Santa Clara and many members of his immediate family later joined him there. Some artifacts from the family are in the Morgan Hill Museum.

* * * * *

August 7-12-Oregon California Trails Association (OCTA)
Annual Meeting - with all day field trips-speakers-book
room-Kansas City-contact OCTA Headquarters at P.O. Box
1019, Independence, MO 645051-0519

2000 OFFICERS - CALIFORNIA PIONEERS OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY

David McKinney-- President

P.O. Box 6772, San Jose CA
95150-6772 408-732-1946

Richard Hill- 1st V.P.

10393 Doris Court,
San Jose CA 95127-3013
408-258-3449

Jim Arbuckle, 2nd V. P.

988 Franquette Av. San Jose
95125-2619 408-265-9722

Mary Louise Wren-Corresponding Secretary-408-264-0783

880 Franquette Av, San Jose
95125-2617

Doris Herschback-Recording Secretary 95125-1754 408-298-9043

1134 Telfer Av, San Jose, CA
95125-3346 408- 294-1509

Robert G. Fisher-Treasurer

3435 Yuba Av. San Jose, CA
95117-2966 408-241-0224

Melita Kelly Membership

460 N. 15th St., San Jose, CA
95112-1725 408-292-2385

Helen MacCarthy-Archivist

270 Umbarger Road #123
San Jose, CA 95110
408-578-4485

Paul R. Bernal-Legal Advisor

70 West Hedding, San Jose, CA
95110- 408-299-7400

Leonard McKay-Historian

250 W. St. John St., San Jose, CA
95111- 2032 408-298-5711

Hacienda Cemetery & Jackson Ranch

Richard Hill & Bud Amaral
10393 Doris Ct. 6001 Vera Cruz Dr.
San Jose, CA San Jose, CA 95120-4864
95127-3013 408-268-4078

Audit Committee-Hal Messimer

18950 Sara Park Circle
Saratoga, CA 95070-4177
408-253-3888

Audit Committee-Bob Johnson Parliamentarian-Irene Johnson

445 North 15th St., San Jose, CA
95112-1726 408-275-1389

Sunshine-Beverly J. Fisher- Robert G. Fisher-

3435 Yuba Av. San Jose, CA
95117-2966 408-241-0224

Marshall -Carol Arnoldy

1342 Prevost Street, San Jose, CA

95125-1754 408-298-9043

Nominating Committee Chair

Evelyn Ucovich 408-287-8413
416 Millpond Dr.,
San Jose, CA 95125-1431

* * * *

The Californians-Tours

Rose Crimi Muench

1289 Martin St
San Jose 95126-2628

The Californians-Reservations

Nancy Hill -408-258-3449 (to 6/30)

Marie Rider-251-7887 (after 7/1)

The Californians Treasurer

Pauline Hawkins,

390 N. Winchester, 7B
Santa Clara, CA 95050-6570
408-984-0904

Mary Lou Lyon- Editor

879 Lily Ave,
Cupertino, CA
95014-4261
(408-253-9514)

DEADLINE- for September Trailblazer-- July 23, 2000

PO BOX 8208 SAN JOSE CA 95155
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Our 125th Anniversary!

PIONEER LUNCHEON

SATURDAY, JUNE 3 AT NOON

LOU'S VILLAGE

COME HEAR THE WINNERS OF THE

2000 PIONEER ESSAY CONTEST

Cross rib of beef au jus

\$15.50 Salad & Bread

Rice pilaf/Vegetable

ANNIVERSARY CAKE & Coffee

RESERVATIONS 554-7587

BEFORE WEDNESDAY, May 31

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