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Pioneers Acquires Roberto-Suñol Adobe

By Paul Bernal

The California Pioneers of Santa Clara County now owns an adobe, one of only two remaining in San Jose. On May 31, 2013, siblings John Bruzzone Jr., Jeanette Bruzzone, and Joyce Lo Franco donated the Roberto-Suñol Adobe, as well as the Laura Ville two-story historic landmark and grounds, to the Pioneers. The Pioneers will create a museum for the benefit of the public. The adobe, at 770 Lincoln Avenue in Willow Glen, San Jose, California, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

This generous gift represents a monumental opportunity for the Pioneers to further its mission of historic outreach to our community. Besides the Pioneers educational presence on the internet and through hands-on projects for children such as "Westward Ho!," Laura Ville will become the second brick-and-mortar museum of the Pioneers. The Pioneers will continue to provide displays at the Paulson House Museum at History San Jose.

The Roberto-Suñol Adobe & Laura Ville will showcase the five major eras of our valley's history, with all eras being represented in a very tangible way at the site. The story will span the Native American era, the Spanish era, the Mexican era, the American era, and the modern era. The Pioneers will specifically tell the history of Willow Glen as seen through the eyes of the adobe occupants throughout the centuries.

May 31 was chosen as the date of transfer because it is the birthday of the late John Bruzzone Sr. Bruzzone bought and restored the site in the 1970s. His three children are the donors who re-

cently gifted the property to the Pioneers. Following the recordation of the deed at the County Records Office, a transfer ceremony occurred at Laura Ville. The ceremony was followed by a luncheon for the Bruzzone family at the site, to celebrate the shared excitement of the family and the Pioneers.

Also present was architect Gil Sanchez, the adobe reconstruction expert who cut his teeth on this early project in the 1970s. At that time, there were not vast resources of information on how to seismically retrofit an adobe, let alone how to successfully restore an adobe. Sanchez was

(Continued on pg. 2)



Joyce Lo Franco, John Bruzzone Jr. and Jeanette Bruzzone at front gate of the Roberto-Suñol Adobe & Laura Ville.

Roberto-Suñol Adobe (Continued)



simultaneously working on two San Jose adobes, interestingly both built by Native American Indians. This speaks to the contribution and integration of the indigenous people to early Pueblo San Jose life.

The Pioneers is committed to oral history, and to that end, a series of oral histories began on May 31 with the videotaping of architect Gil Sanchez. Sanchez not only

spoke about his work on the Roberto-Suñol Adobe, but the steps that led to his lifetime achievement in becoming a premiere adobe restoration project manager throughout the southwest and California. Sanchez shared his family stories, his philosophy about architecture in general, and how adobe restoration methods have changed over the decades.

(Continued on pg. 5)

"As I see it, the gift of the Roberto Adobe does not come from myself or my sisters, but rather for these last few years we were custodians of the legacy that belongs to our parents John and Julia. This is why I felt we needed to put the property in the best shape, for the transfer to the Pioneers. The Pioneers will be the new custodians of their legacy to the people of Willow Glen and all who cherish history. My father was a Pioneers member. He respected the work and dedication of the Pioneers. In the short time I have had the pleasure to get to know the Pioneers members, there could not have been a better group that has the passion of preserving the past for the future generations."

-John Bruzzone Jr.

"I am honored to have shared in a small portion of the life of the Roberto Adobe. And I look forward to its new guardians, the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County, and what they can offer the Roberto. We are pleased that our grandchildren are old enough to see what their great grandparents made possible through their vision, dedication and hard work."

-Joyce Lo Franco



Top photo: the Board of Directors of the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County on the front veranda. Above: The Pioneers members with the Bruzzone heirs who generously donated the property to the Pioneers.

Photos: Hans Halberstadt

Message from our President



Ken Machado, President
California Pioneers of Santa Clara County

As I prepare to begin my role as the next President of this fine organization I can't help thinking of this opportunity as a type of journey. It is a journey of discovery....discovery of seemingly untouched and plentiful valleys, bountiful streams and rivers, ancient redwood forests and gold. It is a journey of Ohlone Indians, Spanish explorers, Catholic Missionaries and Mexican vaqueros. It is a journey of families seeking a better life and open land, freedom from religious persecution, servitude and poverty. It is a journey of risk takers, prospectors, sod busters and merchants who came here to improve their lives and in turn turned this

golden state, and in particular this County of Santa Clara, into both a "Valley of Heart's Delight" and a valley of silicon innovation. It is the journey of our Pioneers.

The California Pioneers of Santa Clara County was established in 1875 by members of this county who were proud of their pioneering spirit and who wanted to preserve that spirit, its artifacts and history for future generations. We continue that tradition.

I am proud and humbled to step into the footsteps of all those Pioneers who walked before me and who endeavored to inspire and enhance in this community of immigrants, a sense of place and a knowledge and respect for the past. For as we continue to look to the future, to innovate, to create and to change the landscape of this great valley, we must not forget nor ignore the contributions of those pioneers who came before us and who leave us with the legacy of the land which brought them here.

As the latest in a line of men and women who have led this organization since its founding over one hundred and thirty eight years ago, I hope to continue

that journey and press forward with our mission **to preserve, promote and celebrate the history of Santa Clara County and the heritage of its past generations.** I hope to follow the example and foresight of those past presidents who have lead our organization and guided it to prosper, and to focus on and enhance the mission of the Pioneers.

I have been awed by the historical knowledge and ancestral roots of my immediate predecessors to this title, Jim Zetterquist and Paul Bernal and the anecdotal wisdom of Jerry Rosenthal who could make us laugh with his stories of San Jose's characters from the "Greatest Generation." And while I cannot hope to match them in their personal historical knowledge or share their familial links to this county's early settlers, I hope to at least bring to this organization my commitment to further the resolve of the Pioneers to preserve our past and to honor the memory of those who walked this beautiful valley before us. With the help of our fantastic board and from all of the wonderful members of our society, I am confident we will continue the journey. ❖

-Ken Machado

Pioneers Sept. Luncheon Speaker

The speaker for the Pioneers luncheon on Sept. 8th will be Craig Harwood, author of "Quest for Flight: John J. Montgomery and the Dawn of Aviation in the West," a biography of the principal aviation pioneer hailing from west of the Mississippi who's most important achievements occurred in Santa Clara County at the turn of the century. At that time when many grappled with the seemingly impossible "problem of aerial navigation," Montgomery independently solved the problem of human controlled flight and served as unofficial dean to a community of California based aviation pioneers at that critical tipping point in the race to conquer the skies. Santa Clara County served as an important locale for pivotal events in this technological saga. The book recently received honorable mention in the 2013 San Francisco Book Festival (History Award category). Harwood is a fourth generation Californian and a great-grand-nephew of John Montgomery. He is a professional engineering geologist and a history enthusiast. ❖

Trailblazer

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The Pioneers is a 501(c)3
non-profit organization

Pioneers Quarterly Luncheon

Saturday, Sept, 7th, 2013

11:00 AM to 2:30 PM

THREE FLAMES RESTAURANT

Banquet Room—1547 Meridian Ave. in San Jose

Make Reservations by Wednesday, Sept. 4th

E-Mail "sccpioneers@aol.com" or call
408-554-7587 with your menu selection

Presentation

Craig S. Harwood

Author of "Quest for Flight: John J. Montgomery
and the Dawn of Aviation in the West," a biography
of principal aviation pioneer, John Montgomery.

See page 3 for more information

Cost \$25 (make checks payable to
California Pioneers and bring to Luncheon)

Menu Selections

No BBQ this year!

Three Flames Special Steak

tri-tip steak topped with sautéed mushrooms.

Chicken Parmesan

Both above served with garlic mash potatoes
and fresh mixed steamed vegetables

Penne Pasta

with basil, spinach, garlic feta, tomato and sauce

All of the above served with Salad, Coffee and Dessert

No Host Bar for soft drinks, beer and wine

*Parking is limited in front of the restaurant; however, ample parking
is available in the rear and close to a separate banquet room entrance.*

Outstanding Service Awards



Photo: Gayle Frank

The Board of Directors of the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County celebrated the donation of the Roberto-Suñol Adobe & Laura Ville on May 31st. The highlight of the luncheon on the beautiful back patio of the Adobe was presenting the awards of "Outstanding Service" to the Bruzzone family and to architect Gil Sanchez who restored the Adobe in the 1970s with the Bruzzone family.

The large gathering enjoyed tours through the house, adobe and gardens. Then guests enjoyed a delicious lunch organized by Patty Machado. ❖

*On the back patio of the Roberto-Suñol Adobe & Laura Ville
stands from left to right, Gil Sanchez, Jeannette Bruzzone,
Pioneers President Paul Bernal, Joyce Lo Franco and John Bruzzone Jr.*

Roberto-Suñol Adobe (Continued)

The Bruzzones were also interviewed at their family estate, Rancho Don Bosco in the Santa Cruz mountains. The oral histories will be the source of a Pioneers Film Archive feature on the history of the adobe. The film, produced by Pioneers member Bill Foley, will tell the story of the property through its five eras. A truncated version will be shown to visitors within the museum, and a longer version will be uploaded to the internet for the world to learn about this significant Pioneers project.

Not only did John Bruzzone Sr. and his wife Julia lovingly keep the property in excellent condition during their stewardship, the Bruzzone children made sure the buildings and grounds remain meticulous.

Because of this, the intended museum already has an outstanding foundation within which displays can be exhibited. Each of the Bruzzones and Sanchez received the Pioneers' Outstanding Service Award for their contributions to the site. ❖



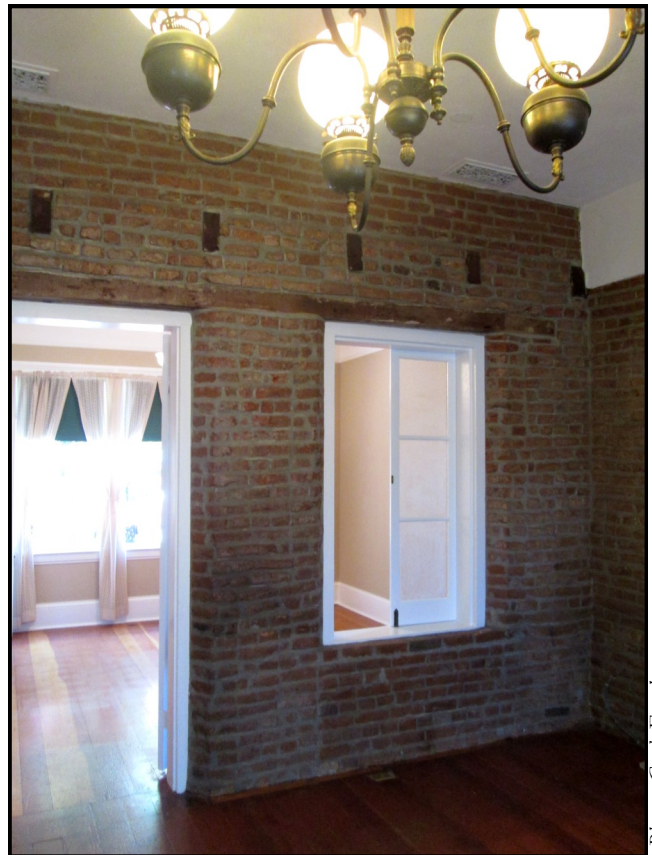
Roberto-Suñol Adobe & Laura Ville in 2013.

"As my parents had a family home and business in Willow Glen, their name will always be associated with the Roberto Adobe. This gift will allow so many who haven't had a chance to see the Adobe to appreciate the dedication that so many had in preserving it for future generations.

As a family, together we felt if the Pioneers accepted our offer to donate the Roberto Adobe, you would move forward with true enthusiasm.

It has only been a month since the May 31 donations and the Pioneers have already proven we were right in our decision."

-Jeannette Bruzzone



Photos: Gayle Frank

Brick wall interior of the Roberto-Suñol Adobe & Laura Ville, first floor.

History of the Roberto-Suñol Adobe By Paul Bernal

The story of the 177 year old Roberto-Suñol Adobe precedes its creation. The indigenous people known as the Tamien lived in what was later called Willow Glen for thousands of years.

In 1775-1776 Spaniard Captain Juan Bautista de Anza led a settlement expedition that resulted in the founding of Pueblo San Jose de Guadalupe. San Jose was the first civil settlement in California, and would later be California's first state Capital.

Mission Santa Clara was founded in 1777, and what became Willow Glen was part of the mission lands, used primarily for grazing sheep and used somewhat for raising pigs.

A Native American named Roberto Balermينو was born c1782 and grew up on this part of the valley in a rancheria called San Juan Bautista, where the Guadalupe and Los Gatos Rivers came together in Willow Glen. His father was a captain of the ranch workers. Roberto Balermينو married twice, had children, and was a cook. He probably served food to the small army of Indian workers at his rancheria.

Around 1836, Roberto Balermينو built the Roberto Adobe, which still stands today. He petitioned the Mexican governor for a land grant called Rancho de los Coches (Ranch of the Pigs). He was granted the 2,219 acres in 1844. On this rancho he raised cattle, pigs, and sheep. He had a fenced-in orchard and garden. His wife and two children worked outside the adobe and slept in the space above the ceiling at night.

By 1844, Spaniard Antonio Maria Suñol was living upon Rancho de los Coches with his wife Maria Dolores Bernal and their children. Suñol was among the more educated citizens of San Jose, having been schooled in France, and helped Roberto Balermينو with his petitions and business affairs. In 1847, Suñol acquired Rancho de los Coches, and built a brick house adjoining the Roberto Adobe. It was the first brick house to be completed in Alta California. At this residence, which still exists on the historic site, Suñol entertained members of the first California Legislature. Sunol allowed the Balermينو family to live out their days in their home.

In 1853, a Dalmatian sea captain named Stefano Splivalo purchased the Suñol

home, and the surrounding ranch. Splivalo added a second story and encased the brick walls in wood siding. He added three rooms to the back of the house up through about 1870. This is how the home looks today.

The home passed through many owners until 1906 when the Basuini family purchased it. Basuini descendants inhabited the house until 1966. The house stood vacant for seven years until 1973 when it was sold to John Bruzzone Sr.

The Bruzzone family owned the Pied Piper Exterminator Company and later Western Roofing Supply. John Bruzzone Sr. owned the land behind the adobe site. In 1973, Bruzzone first laid eyes on the adobe and Splivalo's home, which carried the name "Laura Ville." Bruzzone wanted the property so that he would have truck access directly to Lincoln Avenue. He planned to demolish the buildings and erect modern offices.

However, Bruzzone fell in love with the historic structures when he learned of their significance. He was particularly impressed that San Joseans petitioned the State of California and the City of San Jose to re-route Highway 280 in order to spare the buildings from a wrecking ball in 1966. Bruzzone decided not only to save the two structures, but to restore them to their former glory.

Bruzzone simply knocked on architect Gil Sanchez' front door and said, "Are you Gil Sanchez? I am John Bruzzone. I read you are rebuilding the Peralta Adobe. Do you want to rebuild my adobe?" Sanchez jumped at the opportunity.

Spending three years and \$300,000 in re-construction, Bruzzone successfully achieved his goal, the result being part-restoration and part-adaptive-reuse.

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The original 1936 Roberto Adobe today with a horno (outdoor oven) added in the 1970s.

Photo: Gayle Frank

Peddy Wins C.C.H.S. Award

California Pioneers of Santa Clara County board member Tim Peddy received the Individual Award from the Conference of California Historical Societies. The award was presented to Peddy at the CCHS luncheon in Sacramento on June 22. His award is the Conference's way of "thanking those whose contributions to California history add luster and significance to lives around them. The award recipients help to nurture and preserve our priceless heritage."

The program described all that Tim does and the reasons he was honored

with this award. It states: "Tim Peddy's support and dedication to the Pioneers Film Archive has been essential to its success. He put together systems to run the digital film capture machines that make the heart of the Film Archive.

Tim also constructed by hand, a rig for photo restoration, allowing the Pioneers to clean glass plate negatives and photograph them at very high quality, a project which helped History San Jose process a set of 200 otherwise-unseen local photos from the early 1900s. His tireless work and encouragement has

made the Pioneers Film Archive what it is today, and he continues to prove a priceless asset to the local historic community."



Tim Peddy

Congratulations Tim!! A well-deserved award and the Pioneers appreciate all that you do. ❖

A Century of San Jose Hospitality

A visit to the Martin Luther King Library in downtown San Jose will carry you on an historic journey through San Jose's world famous hospitality.

As San Jose became a transportation hub and grew as a supply center, the hotels, restaurants, saloons and retail shops flourished with visits from tourists and prominent celebrities.

The Sourisseau Academy for State and Local History has installed beautiful

photographs and compelling memorabilia from a century (1840-1930) of change in San Jose's hospitality industry. Life in San Jose dramatically changed from a sleepy Pueblo to the first State Capital to a modern metropolis.

The exhibit is located in the lobby of Special Collections on the fifth floor of the Library. Open hours are Mon-Thurs. 11-6; Fri. 11-5; Sat. 1-5. ❖



Vendome Hotel was an early San Jose hotel visited by three U.S. presidents.

History of the Adobe (Continued)

Sanchez guided the project to re-enforce the Roberto-Suñol Adobe and the Suñol-Splivalo House. They lifted the second story off the Splivalo House, used concrete and steel to strengthen the building, and placed the second story back down on the first story. Rebar, bracing and sheer panels were added to the adobe, hidden within its walls and attic area. Numerous specialized craftspeople were brought in to make sure the historic fabric was saved or replicated. Other than adding

modern bathrooms and a kitchenette (which were designed to look pre-1970s), all choices were driven by Bruzzone's desire to return to an 1840-1870 context. Bruzzone sponsored public tours throughout 1977. Then the property was rented to attorney Richard Arzino until 2012.

After John Sr. and Julia Bruzzone passed away, their three children sought a reliable historic organization to take possession of the property. Their wish

was in line with John Bruzzone Sr.'s love of local history. They chose the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County.

The Roberto-Suñol Adobe is on the National Register of Historic Places, # 7700034; is a State of California Historic Landmark, # 898; on the County of Santa Clara Heritage Resource Inventory; and is a City of San Jose Historical Landmark, # 83. ❖

19th Century Schoolchildren Compositions

By Mary Hanel

In the 19th century, essays that school children wrote in their English grammar classes were called “compositions.” The children would write thoughtful pieces on an assigned topic using their best grammar and penmanship.

Housed in the Santa Clara City Central Park Library Heritage Pavilion is a book titled *Compositions*. Over 1300 pages long, the book consists of a collection of essays written by elementary, middle, and high school students attending Santa Clara County schools in 1886. Volunteers from the Santa Clara County Historical & Genealogical Society have transcribed the essays.

What is so intriguing about these essays is that they are written on such a wide variety of topics. The stories the children wrote provide a look at the interests, dreams, family life, prejudices, and everyday concerns of children near the end of the 19th century in Santa Clara County. The surnames of the children and teachers that appear in these essays can be found on city streets today: Bird, Blodgett, Brannan, Bubbs, Burrell, Eberhard, Gallimore, Harrison, Hart, Hoover, Hyde, Laird, Lawrence, Menzel, Montgomery, Murphy, Overfelt, Raney, Rea, Swope, Suñol, Van Gundy, Wilcox, and Zanker.

Generally, the essays are about family vacations, geography, natural history, farm life, blossom time in the valley, local attractions, pets, pastimes, and current affairs. Here is a sampling:

- 10-year-old Tom writes about taking the train from Santa Clara to Alma (a town that used to exist south of Los Gatos).
- 11-year-old Nettie details rescuing a cat she names Tabby behind the barnyard of her country home in Santa Clara.
- 13-year-old Lizzie enumerates the number of grocery stores,



Santa Clara School District Archive Collection

A Santa Clara school classroom in the 1900s

blacksmith shops, hotels, and saloons in her town of Gilroy, and discusses nearby landmarks and attractions.

- 15-year-old Mary tells about the election of President Grover Cleveland.
- 15-year-old Daisy writes of the importance of music in her life.
- 16-year-old Frank explains why he loves to play billiards, “which is a very nice game, even though you sometimes get into bad company when you play.”

Below is an interesting composition regarding how paper was made at the Lick Mill; the essay ends with great humor:

My Trip to Agnews

By Eva La Montagne, age 14 years
Union School, Second Grade
Miss M. F. Kooser, teacher

Not long ago, I took a trip to Agnews and had a very pleasant

time. I started at eight o'clock in the morning and arrived about half past ten.

Nearly all the way down, on each side of the road are tall trees which make a fine shade. On the banks of the creek, are willows and under these are artesian wells, and from these the blackberries and strawberries are irrigated.

Near the Lick Paper Mills, is a large bridge built over the same creek and under that is a dam. Near the creek is a pond.

Upon the opposite side, stands a handsome house surrounded by trees and flowers. It was built by James Lick and is now occupied by the superintendent of the works, and the members of his family. Scattered around are a number of smaller houses.

About a mile from the mill, is the Agnews depot. The ground

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19th Century Compositions (Continued)

on which the new Insane Asylum is to be built is situated half way between the mill and the depot.

The mill is a very large building and is the largest and most important paper manufacturing factory in the state. It was founded by James Lick in 1852 being then a flour mill.

After walking all over the grounds, and visiting the neighboring strawberries; I went to lunch and in the afternoon, I started to go through the mill and learn the process of making paper. Before entering, I saw a large number of bales of dirty rags and old scraps of paper. I was told that they came from all parts of the United States and England, and are used for making paper.

First the buttons have to be cut off the old clothes and the colored paper has to be separated from white. After that, the rags are put

in a duster and beaten until they are clean.

When taken out of the duster, they are dropped to the floor below through a trap-door and put into a machine that cuts them into small pieces. Then they are passed through another duster, and thrown through an opening to a still lower floor. The scraps are then put into a machine that moves very slowly and steam is forced into them. By this means they are cooked.

The mass is next carried to the second story again by means of an elevator and placed in the washing machine which keeps it in motion, while hot and cold water pour in continually, and small knives very close together cut the pulp still finer.

The material for bleaching is next added which takes out every particle of color. Then it is thrown

through valves to the draining room beneath. It stays there about a week, and is then passed through the second washing and beating.

After this, wood pulp is added. Then the mass is well mixed and goes through the refining machine. When the pulp passes through the first rollers, it flows in a nearly liquid state and looks like dirty water. By the time it has reached the last roller, it is thick enough to hold together and passes upon a thin sheet of cloth which carries it around twelve large irons heated by steam, which soon dry the paper. Then it is ready to be rolled or folded.

I think if all children could see paper made they would never want to chew it again." ❖

Transcribed from: 428.2 S23 Case Compositions (Santa Clara County Public Schools) [1886], pp. 1230-1233.



Children and teacher pose outside their schoolhouse from the Agnew Collection

Notes: In the late 19th century, the Santa Clara Public Schools most likely labeled the grade closest to graduation as the 1st grade, and the grade second in line to graduation the 2nd grade, following the British model.

Below are four other examples of these early compositions that are available at <http://CaliforniaPioneers.com/compositions/compositions.html>.

“Alviso”- a description of the student’s home on the Guadalupe River.

“San Jose”- describes the schools, banks, light tower, churches, parks and more.

“Santa Clara City”- describes the agriculture, nature, rivers, and railroads.

“Santa Clara Valley”- a poetic and complimentary essay on “one of the fairest spots in God’s creation.”

A Journey Into the Apricot Orchards

By Robin Chapman

My father built our family's first home in a Santa Clara Valley apricot orchard. He was an officer in the Army Corps of Engineers during World War II and was a native of Birmingham, Alabama. So it took quite a few accidents of history to transport him from Alabama, then to the East China Sea—where he was at the end of the war—to the orchards of California. It was my father's journey, and a small surprise he left behind, that led me to begin writing the history of Santa Clara Valley's apricot orchards. These orchards brought such richness to the valley in the twentieth century, and to my own life.

William Ashley Chapman took his first job with General Electric in Philadelphia. He barely had time to unpack his bags when his reserve unit was called to active duty in July. Thus, he was at Fort Belvoir, Virginia, puzzling over why a recent graduate with a degree in engineering would be taking an engineers' refresher course, when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. He was in uniform "for the duration" as Americans said in those days.

World War II wasn't just the largest and most deadly conflict the world had ever seen. It was also the greatest movement of people and goods around the globe. My father was off on a nine-thousand-mile odyssey, more than halfway 'round the world, to the Battle of Okinawa. On leave in Spokane before he shipped out, he met and married my mother. Now all he had to do was get back home.

He was one of the lucky ones. Though he lost friends in that last, terrible battle of World War II, he did make it safely home. By 1947 he was working at Ames Aeronautical Research Laboratory at Naval Air Station Moffett. No civilian housing had been built during the war so he and my mother had to rent a single room in a house on Emerson Street in Palo Alto. Things got



Photo: Chapman family collection.

Apricot orchard where William Chapman built the family's first house, 1947

even more crowded when my older sister Kimberly was born that same year.

Back in the States, the apricots of the Santa Clara Valley had played their own role in the war. The fruit was purchased by the War Department, processed, and shipped around the world to millions of men and women in uniform. From 1941 until the war ended in 1945, all of the apricots grown in the Santa Clara Valley were bought up by the Pentagon. Those were prosperous times for growers. But the transition to a peacetime economy was difficult. The trees were still producing bumper crops, but without the big government contracts of the 1940s, prices for every kind of produce fell. Still, it turns out there was something profitable just around the corner in the orchards — subdivisions.

In 1940, Santa Clara County's population stood at 174,000. By 1950, it had grown to 290,000. By 1970 it had zoomed past a million. People needed homes and growers, who saw an uncertain future in the fruit business, discovered they could settle into a comfortable retirement by subdividing their land for housing. That is how my father and so many others like him were able to buy the land they needed for their

homes. The fact that the building lots often came filled with apricot trees was just another bonus of life in California. It took my father two years to build our family's first house, working weekends, while he held down his fulltime job at Ames. The house was finished just in time for my arrival in March 1950. Dad left more than a dozen apricot trees from the old orchard on our property. Those trees kept us busy every summer and put dried and canned goodies in our cupboard for use year-round.

In 1959, we moved from that first house, to a newer home, just across the street. It was larger, but it had fewer apricot trees on the land. I often wondered how my father felt about that—leaving the little house he had worked so hard to build. He never expressed a regret. He and my mother lived the rest of their long lives in that second house on the street they loved in the Santa Clara Valley. They died, after sixty-five years of marriage, just a few months apart.

After my father's death, I opened the top drawer of his dresser, as I sorted through a house filled with half a century worth of stuff. It is an intimate

(Continued on pg.11)

Apricot Orchards (Continued)

thing to go through someone's belongings, and here, among his socks and handkerchiefs, I found a small, battered memorandum book. Inside, was a neat log of the dates, hours, the type of work he had done on every task performed building that first house in the orchard.

At that moment, I could feel the warmth of the July sun and smell the scent of apricots on the breeze. I saw an apricot pie, hot from the oven. I saw the sulfur smoke from his drying shed. I remembered the old hand-crank ice cream maker he brought home one day and how we passed it around on the patio in the early evening, turning its handle, dreaming of apricot ice cream for dessert.

My father was not a man who spoke much about his life. But looking at the notebook, I now knew how he felt about the lucky road he had taken and how little it had to do with bricks and mortar.

Shortly afterward, I began the book that became ***California Apricots***. Designed as a tribute to my father, it led me on an unexpected path of my own to the origins of the apricot in Asia, to its days in the Mission gardens of Alta California, and into the orchards of the Santa Clara Valley that fed the hungry in war and peace. These same orchards—sold and developed, and the money invested—helped transform

the region into the prosperous valley we see today.

The treasure I found in the bureau drawer was my father's legacy to me. It was a reminder of his life's history and of a time he had clearly cherished.

It gave me a tangible clue to the things he did not say, but had so long held in his heart. I know *he knew* I would find it. ❖

*Chapman wrote **California Apricots: the Lost Orchards of Silicon Valley**, (History Press, 2013). Chapman was a television journalist, with several years at KRON-TV. For a schedule of local discussions with Chapman about her book, visit her blog at:*

<http://robinchapmannews.blogspot.com/2013/05/check-out-coming-attractions-for.html>



Photo courtesy the Los Altos History Museum

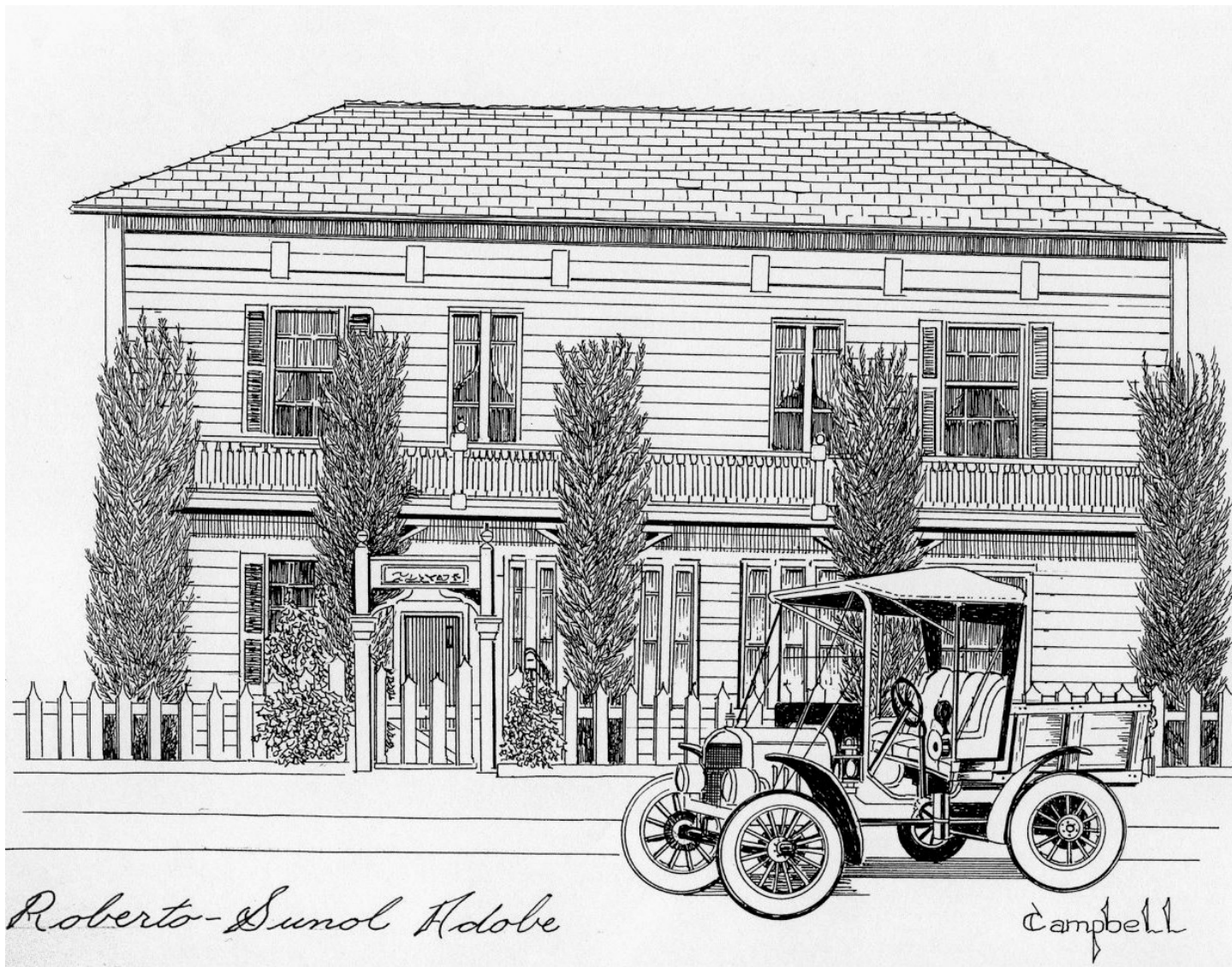
Boys sampling apricots in a Santa Clara Valley drying yard.



Robin Chapman with her father in Shoup Park, 2007

Roberto-Suñol Adobe & Laura Ville

by Jim Campbell



The Roberto-Suñol Adobe & Laura Ville property on Lincoln Avenue in San Jose was once part of Mission Santa Clara lands. It became Rancho de los Coches—one of the few ranchos in California granted to and occupied by a Native American, Roberto Balermino. Roberto built a small one-room adobe where he lived with his family from about 1836 until 1847. That adobe still stands today in Willow Glen.

In 1847, Roberto transferred title of the rancho to *don* Antonio Suñol in payment of a \$500 debt. Suñol was a Spaniard who served in the French navy. Later as a seaman on a French merchant ship, he arrived in California in 1817.

Suñol served as the first postmaster of Pueblo San Jose and also ran a grog shop. He became *alcalde* in 1840 and was appointed sub-prefect by the governor in 1841. This made Suñol the supreme local authority for San Jose, Branciforte (Santa Cruz), and all lands down to San Juan Bautista.

Next to the adobe, Suñol built a three-room home, made from fired brick. This structure is the earliest brick house built in Alta California.

In 1853, Suñol sold the house and land to Captain Stefano Splivalo who encased the brick walls in wood, added three small rooms on the first

floor, and a full second-story addition with a balcony. Splivalo shipped "Around the Horn" the home's glass-paneled front door, seven-foot window shutters, marble mantle-piece and hand-carved banister.

The wooden sign over the gate reads "Laura Ville," and is known to have existed before 1900, but the name's origin has not been determined.

The Splivalo family lived in this home for nearly thirty years and

(Continued on pg. 13)

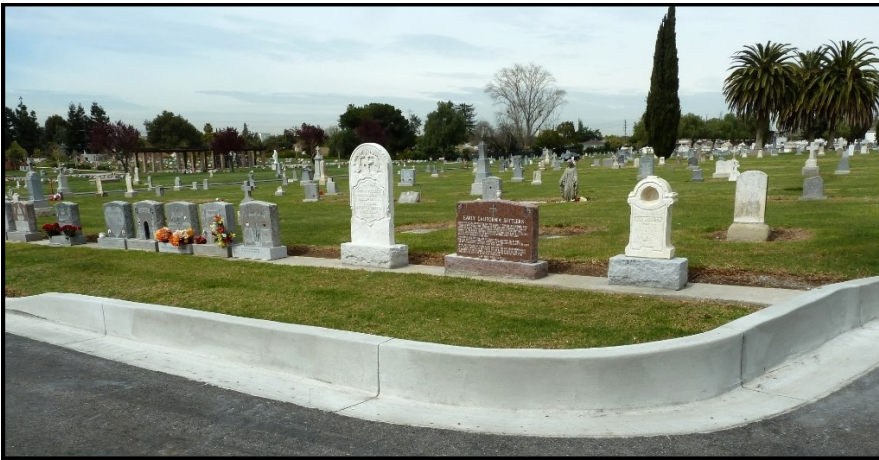
Pellier Headstones Restored

The Louis Pellier headstones have been rebuilt and replaced following a March 10, 2012, vehicular collision at Calvary Catholic Cemetery on Alum Rock Avenue in San Jose. The Cemetery arranged the restoration. The disheartening destruction of the gravesite occurred barely four months after the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County located and returned these monuments of significant valley settlers to the cemetery in 2011. Calvary Cemetery also built a raised curbside near the headstones to further protect the markers from future destruction. ❖



Photos: Tim Peddy

Above, Louis Pellier's (1817-1872) larger white headstone on the left side. Louis P. Pellier (1858-1873) on the right. Louis Pellier is considered the father of the prune industry in Santa Clara Valley. Louis P. Pellier was his nephew.



Left, distant view of Pellier headstones shows new protective curb at Calvary Cemetery.

For more information on these headstones, see Trailblazer articles in the March and June 2012 issues.

San Jose High Continues 150th Celebration

San Jose High School is still celebrating its 150th birthday, 1863-2013, on Saturday the 21st of September with a parade and open house. In the parade, Mr. Mark Briggs, a retired SJHS Art teacher who began teaching in 1951, will serve as the Grand Marshall. The parade will begin at 10:30 AM and proceed down 24th Street from Julian to Santa Clara Street, then turn

west on Santa Clara Street to 21st Street. After the parade there will be open house campus tours.

Each tour will end in San Jose High School's special Heritage room. For more information on this and upcoming events go to SJHS's Foundation web site:<http://www.sanjosehighfoundation.org/>. ❖



Roberto Adobe Drawing (Continued)

then the house passed through multiple hands before belonging to the Basuini family. The Basuini's owned the buildings for 67 years. In 1973 they were purchased by John Bruzzone Sr., a man fortunately sympathetic to the preservation of the history of the Roberto-Suñol Adobe

and who beautifully restored the home. In 2013, the significant historic structure was donated to the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County by Bruzzone heirs John Bruzzone Jr., Jeanette Bruzzone and Joyce Lo Franco. ❖

Docent Opportunity

The California Pioneers of Santa Clara County offers a unique opportunity to become a docent in our Paulson House at History San Jose, open on most Sunday afternoons.

For more information, call Bev Blockie at 408-274-1625 or email her at bev@blockie.com. ❖

New Pioneers Members—Welcome!

Adrian (Cib) Cibilich is a native Californian and lives in San Jose. He is retired from elementary school administration. His pioneer ancestor was Stefano Splivalo, who from 1853 to 1877, just happened to be the third owner of the Pioneers' newly acquired Roberto-Suñol Adobe and Laura Ville. Captain Splivalo transformed Suñol's brick home by encasing the walls in wood, erecting a second story and adding three rooms to the east side of the house.

Greg Barr is a native Californian and lives in San Jose. He is interested in website and Facebook projects.

Stephen C. Smith is a native Californian, raised and resides in San Jose. His mother is Pioneers member Adele Smith. He and his wife Joan have two sons, Craig and Kyle. Stephen works in the health care industry and also serves on the Board of Directors for the Health Care Financial Management Association of California.

Robert P. Carter lives in San Jose and he is a meat cutter. His family, mother Dorothy B. Bach and father Beryl B. Carter, arrived in California in 1947 from Boise, Idaho. Robert is interested in photography, history of California and Santa Clara Valley and physical education.

Charlotte Doudell is a native San Josean and presently lives in San Jose. She served as an Information Systems Librarian Manager. Charlotte joined

as a Life Member. Her California ancestor's include Doudell, Lannin and Keeble. Charlotte's father, Raymond Doudell was born in San Jose in 1917. His parents, John Doudell and Rose McKeon Doudell arrived in California in 1896 and 1899 respectively and settled in San Jose around 1911. Charlotte's maternal great-grandmother, Agnes W. Lannin arrived in San Jose in 1908 with her seven sons, including Charlotte's grandfather John O. Lannin, aged 14. Charlotte's grandmother, Pearl Keeble, came to San Jose with parents Edward and Mary Catherine Keeble in 1904.

Deborah Glaggman is a native San Josean and still lives in San Jose. She is an Interior Designer. Her great-grandmother, Georgia Noble was born on the Oregon Trail and her father, George Noble, was the sheriff of Hollister while raising horses for the Santa Clara County Fire Department. After George retired he was the county cattle inspector. The Nobles arrived in California in the 1860s.

Grace Praisewater is a native Californian and from Evergreen. She lives in San Jose and is retired from teaching. Her pioneer ancestor is Johann Hassler who came to California in 1851. Her membership was proposed by Doris Ebert.

Judy Stabile lives in San Jose and arrived in California in 1971 from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Judy has been active in city government and historic



preservation for many years, serving on the Historic Landmarks Commission twice and the San Jose City Council for eight years. She has been involved in the preservation of a number of local landmarks and was the founding director of the Peralta-Fallon complex. Judy has also served on the Board of a number of non-profit organizations. She is interested in volunteering for the Pioneers latest asset, the Roberto-Suñol Adobe and Laura Ville.

Linda Lundy Williams is the wife of recent new Pioneers member Richard Williams and is a native San Josean. Her pioneer ancestors include Riley Septimus Moultrie, Lundy, McKee, Dearing, Petersen, Hascall and Lard. The earliest her ancestors arrived in California was 1846. We hope to hear many stories Linda may have about her predecessors. Paul Bernal says we love Moultries, Lundys and McKees! ❖

Membership Report

The California Pioneers of Santa Clara County has 478 members as of July, 2013.

If you haven't yet paid your annual dues (\$25) for 2013, please pay by mail to CA Pioneers, Membership Chair, P.O. Box 8208, San Jose, CA, 95155.

Additional donations or higher membership levels are appreciated. If you are over 70 ½, this year the IRS allows charitable giving straight from your IRAs or 401Ks and then deducted from your MRD (minimum required distribution) for the year. And please don't forget the Pioneers in your estate planning.

Invite your friends to one of our luncheons. Or ask them to join our organization if they are interested in the history of Santa Clara County and California.

The new Membership Chair is April Halberstadt. You may contact her at aprilhalb@gmail.com or 408-293-2860.

Fundraiser for Hernandez Adobe Plaque

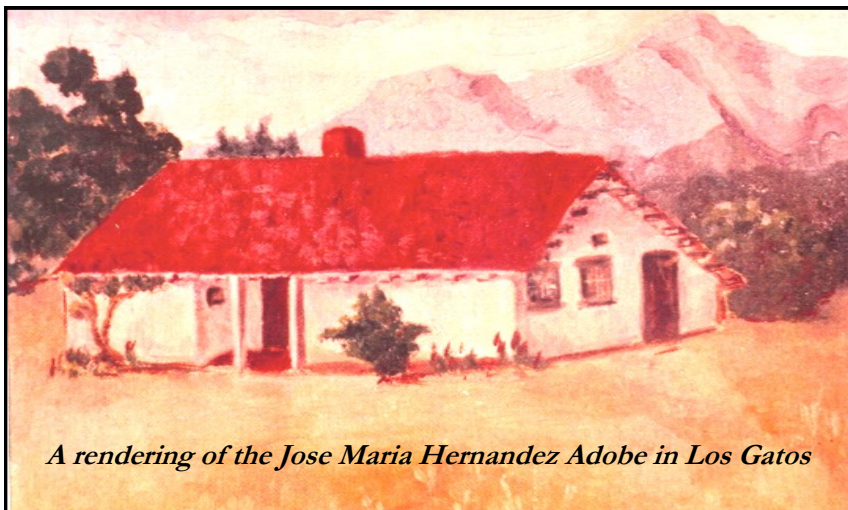
The California Pioneers of Santa Clara County is co-sponsoring the creation of commemorative signage to mark the true location of the first home in the Los Gatos area. This adobe was built c1839 by Jose Maria Hernandez who was the grantee of Rancho Rinconada de los Gatos.

The Daughters of the American Revolution Los Gatos branch asked Pioneers board member Paul Bernal to research the actual location of the adobe. He found the site, which up until now was unknown!

This is especially exciting for us because Pioneers board member Melita Kelly happens to be a direct descendant of Jose Maria Hernandez.

The next step is a community celebration and fundraiser so the interpretive plaque can be added to Vasona Park.

A BBQ dinner will be held on September 29th, from 5 to 7 pm at the Gateway Pavilion in Vasona County Park. Because this is a project of the Pioneers, in conjunction with the DAR, we hope you can attend and show your support. You will be among the first to know the adobe's exact location. ❖



A rendering of the Jose Maria Hernandez Adobe in Los Gatos

BBQ Dinner & Lecture Fundraiser

Sunday September 29, 2013 ; 5 to 7 pm

Gateway Pavilion in Vasona County Park
333 Blossom Hill Rd, Los Gatos, CA 95032

\$45 prepaid (proceeds to go toward Adobe commemorative plaque)
Mail to: DAR Los Gatos ; c/o Mary Slattery ; P.O. Box 461
Campbell, CA 95009

RSVPs due by September 8th

For questions: contact Kim Worrall at kworrall@pacbell.net

New Almaden Event on Sept. 14th

The California Pioneers of Santa Clara County are being honored for our work in restoring the Hacienda Cemetery this past year. Please join us for an old-timey community celebration in New Almaden on Saturday, Sept. 14th at 11 am. There will be a parade at 11 am that will circle around New Almaden for an hour. The BBQ will follow the parade and will cost a mere \$7. Our Hacienda Cemetery will be open that day for you to enjoy at your convenience.

We suggest you be at the New Almaden Community Club House at 21727 Bertram Road by 10:45 am. Parking is limited, so if you are late you will have to park at the Hacienda Entrance to the Quicksilver County Park and walk over. We hope you can join us for the fun day! For questions, call Chairperson Kitty Monahan at 1-408-268-6541. ❖

Pioneers Gone to the Golden Hills



*Robert Bloyed
Mabel Mattos*



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*Our Mission is to promote,
preserve, and celebrate the history of
Santa Clara County and the
heritage of its past generations. We
collect, archive, educate and
encourage research and scholarship.*

California Pioneers of Santa Clara County 2013-2014 Board of Directors

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