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Volume 43, Number 4

December, 2003

President's Report

Jim Arbuckle

New Members

With the recent change in membership rules, we're starting to bring in new members from San Jose history circles, people who were really unaware of us. I think that we can all help each other.

A first step in making ourselves better known was the March program, Ladies of Preservation with the Preservation Action Council (PAC/SJ). This led to Bev Blockie, a member of both groups, leading one of Rose's tours, this one of Downtown San Jose. Then, on August 9, the Preservation Action Council sponsored a program in Alviso, the former Port of San Jose and canning center. It was a clear, warm day that allowed us to enjoy the quiet beauty of the marshes, and finishing that, we had a lunch prepared by our own member, Jim Bunce. That lunch was at the South Bay Yacht Club, which is celebrating its centennial this year.

A similar effort looked southward, to the New Almadén Quicksilver County Park Association and their annual Pioneer (not us) Day, which this year fell on October 11.

That event and group are described here by our essay contest winner and new member, Jeanne Lewis.

Nominating Committee

For too long, we've not had a nominating committee (for officers). Board vacancies need filling and officer elections are to be held next year. Please consider becoming a member of the nominating committee, and let's talk about this at the December luncheon.

Essay Contest

Essay contest notices have gone out, and are still going out. Member Rosaleen Zisch has gotten our notice on the County Office of Education's web site. If you would like a notice, please contact a board member.

Board Meetings

We have started holding board meetings Monday afternoons in Willow Glen.

Christmas Program: SJSU Choraliers

Our Christmas Program will consist of a "triple-quartette" from the SJSU chamber choir, the Choraliers . Their performance several years ago brought us one of our largest turnouts in recent times. This world-renowned group, under the direction of Dr. Charlene Archibeque, has won many international competitions, their repertoire ranging from intimate Renaissance chamber songs to folk and contemporary song.

In 14 international tours, they have won firsts at Spittal, Den Haag, Talinn, Miedzhdroje, and Gonzia. Dr. Archibeque gained her bachelor's degree at the Oberlin Conservatory

and her Ph.D. from the University of Colorado at Boulder. CDs of their music will be available after their performance, "stocking stuffers" for the holidays.

September Program



Former San Jose Mayor Tom McEnery described his picture of San Jose, absent the abduction and murder of Brooke Hart. This view would have included a thriving downtown, with a reconstructed Light Tower, an attraction rivaling the Eiffel Tower of Paris, and Valley Fair and Santana Row's being consigned to footnote status.

Dues Time Again!!!!

Melita Kelly

As our veteran members are aware, December is dues time. For most of you, they expire December 31, 2003. Current dues are \$15.00 per year per person or you may become a Life Member by remitting \$150.00 for one person, or \$250.00 for married couples. I will be at the Dues Table at the December Luncheon to accept your checks or cash. OR, save the standing in line and mail your checks to me. Do not forget to include a *Self-addressed Stamped Envelope*, if you want your membership card sent to you. *Please make your check payable to the California Pioneers.* My address and

phone number are listed on the Board of Directors page of this Trailblazer.

In addition, I would also like to welcome all of the new members who have joined this past year. I hope that you will enjoy your membership and that you will be an active participant in our organization.

Trailblazer Indexing

Member Jeanne Rudy, the daughter of Bev and Bob Fisher, has volunteered to undertake the long, probably one year, task of indexing the old Trailblazers. When she is finished at her computer, the articles of interest to researchers will all be indexed on one small, floppy disk. One copy of this disk will go to the California Room.

In years past, members contributed well-researched articles on various facets of the Valley's history. These tasks may have started as projects years ago in one of Norma Youngberg's writing classes. Soon, a researcher will be able to do a *Keyword Search* and be able to search virtually 40 years of records in an instant. Ideally, this record would be accessible from the web, so that one would not even need to go to the California Room.

Cornish Carols Add Distinction to a California Christmas and New Almadén Pioneer Days

The two articles here are by long-time member Gage McKinney and by Jeanne Lewis, our essay contest winner. Her article is excerpted from one that she wrote for the *Almaden Times*.

Cornish Carols Add Distinction to a California Christmas By Gage McKinney

In their Spanish style house on South Fifteenth Street in San Jose the family of John Drew, last general manager at the New Almadén quicksilver mine, gathered around the large floor-model RCA radio in the living room. A baby grand piano and a decorated Christmas tree flanked an arched window of the room. The radio crackled and sputtered, and then the family heard the Grass Valley Carol Choir singing the unique old carols that Cornish miners brought to American from Cornwall, a Celtic land in the southwestern-most corner of Britain.

When the Drew family heard that broadcast in the 1940s they were just one of the San Jose families tuning in, and they were joined by listeners from coast-to-coast, and especially from all the mining districts of the West. From Hancock, Michigan to Globe, Arizona, from Leadville Colorado to Sonora, California, miners and descendants of miners tuned in to hear the carols that had become associated with hard rock mining around the world. In the most memorable of those broadcasts, which were a seasonal feature for nearly a decade, the choir performed from the 2000-foot level of a gold mine.

The former inhabitants of the mining camp at New Almadén mine, twelve miles south of San Jose, shared the heritage of the Cornish carols. When the mine was going strong in the late nineteenth century, and hundreds of men, women and children inhabited the rustic settlement on Mine Hill, Cornish carolers trooped from cabin to cabin every year. Over and over again they were invited into the miner's cottages for tea (or as some remembered it, something stronger than tea), and then continued their singing through the camp. The predominantly Cornish congregation also sang the carols in the Methodist church that stood on a hill above the camp.

When the mining families resettled, most of them coming to San Jose in the early twentieth century, they sang their carols in the Methodist church on Santa Clara Street. Perhaps the greatest occasion of carol singing was when the Grass Valley Choir itself came to perform in San Jose in the 1950s. Owing to good publicity, the church was packed with descendants of miners and many who had heard of their Cornish heritage from their parents or grandparents.

Today you won't hear the Cornish carols on television or in the shopping malls as you will other Christmas songs. You have to go to Grass Valley, in the Gold Country, where the carol choir performs on Friday nights between Thanksgiving and Christmas at an event called "Cornish Christmas." The group also performs in local churches and for charity. The Cornish carols have become a part of our California heritage, and they belong to the old mining districts as do hammers and drills, picks and pans.

Gage is the author of *When Miners Sang: The Grass Valley Carol Choir* (Comstock Bonanza Press, 2001) available at Willow Glen Books on Lincoln Avenue. He also produced a set of compact disks that includes historic and contemporary recordings of the Grass Valley group.

New Almadén Pioneer Day's 19th Annual Celebration
By Jeanne Lewis

On a perfect Indian Summer day, the 19th Annual Pioneer Day was held October 11 near the El Senador Mine site in the New Almadén Quicksilver County Park. The event was sponsored by the County Parks and Recreation Department and the New Almadén Quicksilver County Park Association (NAQCPA). Approximately one hundred members of the NAQCPA and interested residents witnessed the dedication of a new plaque.

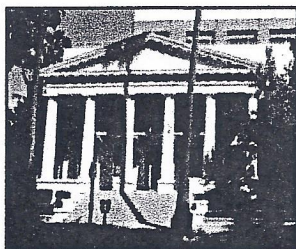
Pioneer Gage McKinney helped start the program, as a circuit rider in his traditional top hat and suit of the late 1800s. Kitty Monahan, NAQCPA President, gave the welcome and introductions for the event.

John Drew spoke of his Cornish family's history at the Senador Mine. His grandfather, also John, worked at the mine from the 1880s through the 1920s and he ultimately held the position of superintendent of the mine. John Drew's mining expertise was instrumental in finding the large veins of pure cinnabar at the Senador location.

The unveiling and dedication of the plaque were done by Park Manager Erick Goodrich and President Kitty Monahan, with applause and cheers from the crowd.

California Pioneers in attendance were Jim Arbuckle, Pat Loomis, Mary Mueller, and Mr. and Mrs. Richard Hill (Nancy Hill won a raffle prize of a table centerpiece), and Gage McKinney. All enjoyed the day's remembrances into the past of the New Almadén Mine.

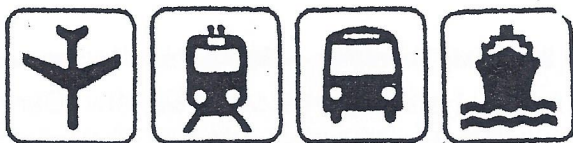
Pioneers' Old Digs



Recently Bob Johnson came across in his house a copy of the Mercury-Herald from the day his wife Irene graduated from San Jose High. There was an article announcing a Pioneers Society program, one with a number of locally prominent speakers, the meeting being held at the Pioneers' Building at 148 North Third Street. Our own building? Bob went down with his camera to make a record of our old building. This is it.

The Historic Landmarks Commission marker in front notes that it had been the Scottish Rite Temple until 1925 when the latter group moved to new quarters at the corner, what is now the San Jose Athletic Club. The marker notes that the building was sold to the Eagles, not saying when, who held it until all but the façade was demolished in 1982 so as to build the high rise in the background.

Can anybody add to this history?



Touring with the Californians

December, 2003

Tour Director Rose Crimi Muench

Reservations Marie Rider
(408) 251-7887 Mon to Fri, A.M

Treasurer Beverly Fisher
3435 Yuba Avenue, San José, 95117-2966

Luncheon Pauline Hawkins

Registrations

Registration and Pickup Point

Registration begins at the December 6 luncheon. Checks are preferred or exact cash. Preference is given to Pioneers members to register at the luncheon and through the following week. Non-members and guests may sign up starting December 15. If you do not get a Trip Flyer at the luncheon meeting, please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to our Treasurer.

The Pickup Point (unless otherwise noted) is at Valley Village, 390 N. Winchester, Santa Clara, at the Dolores Street side.

DAY TRIPS

December 11, Thursday — Nob Hill Landmarks at Christmas

This trip is filled and has a waiting list.

Leave: 11:30 AM Return: 7:00 PM Cost: \$ 49

January 29, 2004, Thursday — Santa Cruz Rediscovered

Santa Cruz always has new places to explore. Our primary attraction will be the *Museum of Art and History* at the McPherson Center with a guided tour of its extensive Santa Cruz County historical exhibits and its archives. We will also have free time to see the art section, featuring a special exhibit of graphics from Latin America. We will also visit the *Del Mar Theatre* recently restored to its 1936 ornate glory, and the *Paperweight Museum* display of hundreds of modern and old paper weights. Paperweights are on sale at the Gallery. For our included luncheon buffet we return to an old favorite, *Chaminade*, with its panoramic views of the hills and ocean. Don't miss the historic photos in the hall showing when *Chaminade* was a boys' high school.

Leave: 9:00 AM Return: 4:00 PM. Cost: \$ 39

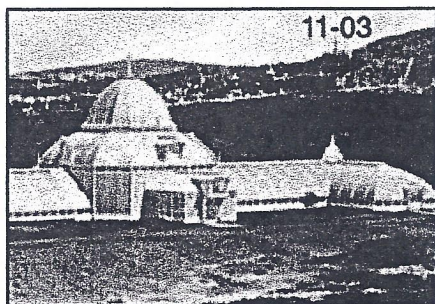
March 4, Thursday — Oakland Historic Homes plus Fenton's Creamery

We start with a guided tour of the Pardee Home, a handsome 1868 Italianate villa. George Pardee was governor of California 1903 to 1907, and both he and his father served as mayors of Oakland. His daughters preserved the home and contents, and today it is a treasury of decorative arts spanning over 100 years. Our second stop is at the *Peralta Hacienda Historical Park*, the last vestige of the 45,000-acre Spanish land grant of 1820. Docents will describe the Californio period and guide us through the 1870 Victorian house built on the site of the original adobes. (We still have our *Peralta Adobe!*) Our included luncheon we return to Fenton's Creamery, the 100-year-old Oakland favorite, back in business after the 2001 fire.

Leave: 9:00 AM Return: 4:00 PM Cost: \$ 42

April 6, Tuesday — Legion of Honor Art Deco Exhibit and the Conservatory of Flowers

The *Victoria and Albert Museum* has sent a collection of 300 objects of the Art Deco style (1910 to 1939), including: furniture, decorative arts, and jewelry. Designers were inspired by Egyptian, Oriental, African, and native South American motifs, which collectors treasure today.



We will next visit James Lick's *Conservatory of Flowers* in Golden Gate Park, a treasure that San Jose lost to San Francisco. The 1879 glass greenhouse, severely damaged in a 1995 storm, has finally been reopened. Architecture critic Alan Hess called it the *Crown Jewel of Gingerbread*, personifying the opulence of the Gilded Age. We tour the interior displaying 1500 species of tropical plants from all over the world. Our included luncheon (between stops) will be an eight-course Mandarin feast at Yet Wah Restaurant.

Leave: 9:00 AM Return: 4:30 PM Cost: \$ 43

EXTENDED TRIPS

Dec 30, 2003 to Jan 3 — Wild West Tucson at the New Year

Trip closed except to replace last minute cancellations.

Document party Dec 18, 1:30 PM at Rose's. RSVP.

Feb 17 to 20 — Palm Springs plus Indio Date Festival

Agency: Golden Gate Tours. We need a minimum of 24 by Dec 6. Enjoy a winter getaway as we fly to Palm Springs. Activities include a ride on the new, revolving aerial tramway up San Jacinto Mountain, with dinner and a magnificent view of the Coachella Valley; Palm Springs city tour; the *Desert Museum*; a day at the Indio Date Festival featuring Arabian Nights floats, entertainment, camel and ostrich races, arts and crafts displays, and intriguing food; and a performance of the fabulous *Palm Springs Follies*. Includes all costs from Valley Village. Final payment due December 12. Brochures will be available at the December 6 luncheon.

Cost: \$ 700

**October 2 to 12 — Mexican Riviera Cruise on the new
*Sapphire Princess***

Agency: Golden Gates Tours. New 2004 ship! San Francisco round trip -- no flights! Ports: Catalina, San Diego, Cabo San Lucas, Puerto Vallarta, and Mazatlán. Cost includes: round trip transfer from San Jose to the San Francisco pier, port charges and fees, baggage handling, cocktail party onboard. Brochures will be available at the December 6 luncheon. December signing bonus of \$ 350.

Cost: Inside \$1020, Outside \$1375, Balcony \$1415, Balcony Suite \$1695.

Below are some trips for which members have expressed interest on our survey but the response was insufficient to offer our own trip. Please call Rose Crimi, (408) 293-0896 for details.

July 26 to 30 — Laguna Art Festival

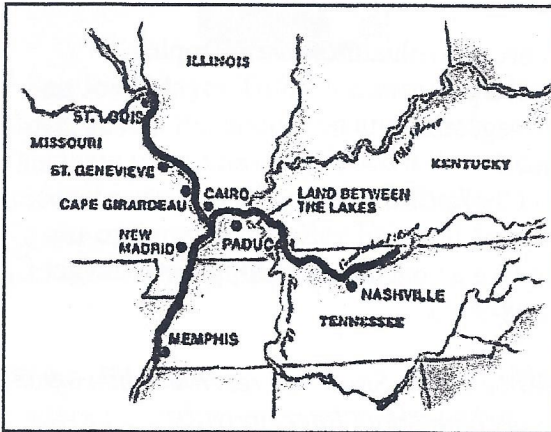
Cost: \$763. (Not enough yet to fill our own bus.)

October 8 to 13 — Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta and Santa Fe
Cost: \$1399

November 2 to 9 — Italian Riviera
Cost: \$ 1899

November 3 to 10 — Ireland
Cost: \$ 1799

Also, the *Expanding Frontiers* River Barge trip on the Cumberland River from Cincinnati to Nashville is available for October 20, November 3, or November 10 departures.



Cumberland River

**Quarterly Luncheon at Lou's Village
December 6, 2003 at Noon
Price: \$16.50**

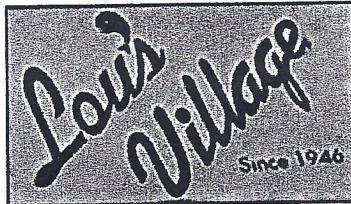
**Reserve by Wednesday, December 3
Telephone: 554-7587**

Menu

Chicken breast with almonds and apples
Red, roasted potatoes
Seasonal vegetables
Green salad
Dessert - Chef's Choice

If you would like a vegetarian meal, please contact Carol
Arnoldy at 298-9043.

*Please do not be a "No Show" or reserve tables after 11:45,
the better to accommodate later arrivals.*



**1465 West San Carols Street
(just west of Meridian Avenue)**

Officers & Directors

President	Jim Arbuckle	265-9722 jarbuck@attglobal.net
1 st VP	Open	
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Record. Sect	Open	
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Historian	Leonard McKay	298-5711
Audit	Bob Johnson	275-1389
	Robert Fisher	241-0224
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Californians

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Reserv.	Marie Rider	251-7887
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Hacienda Cemetery & Jackson Ranch

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Bud Amaral	268-4078
Bob Fisher	241-0224
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