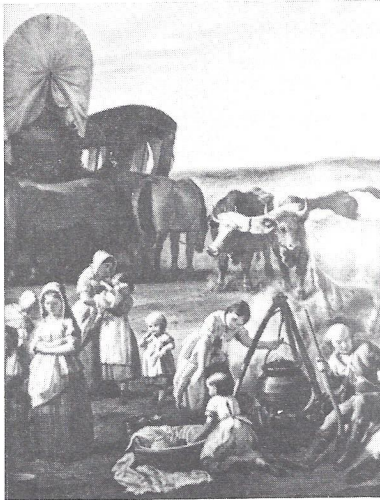


QUARTERLY BULLETIN
OF THE CALIFORNIA PIONEERS
OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY
INCORPORATED 1875

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No. 4



Prarie Schooners Were Their Cradles

Indeed, 1925 was a momentous period when our Golden State took to celebrating its Diamond Jubilee in honor of its admission into statehood on Sept 9, 1850. Hosting the mammoth affair was San Francisco who responded with an enormous parade on Admission Day reaching a length of nearly seventeen miles and lasting over five hours. The entire spectacle bubbled with chivalry, beauty and historic enthusiasm. Among the most heart-warming entries was the "Covered Wagon Babies Review". Propelled by the California Pioneer Society and Native Sons and Daughters, Forty five such 'babies' were located about the state. These personages had all been born on the Overland Trail to California between the years of 1845 to 1864. On parade day they occupied eight decorated automobiles with all 'babies' in satin sashes with the inscription, "Covered Wagon Baby". Area notables aboard were Mrs. Sierra Nevada Smith who was born in the family wagon of her parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Martin Ogan, as they traveled across Utah in 1863. Mrs. Smith was still living on the Berryessa ranch acquired by her father that year. Mrs. Smith was a member of our Society. Then came San Josean Mrs. Louise Herrington who startled a wagon camp fire group with her arrival near Salt Lake in 1859. Another was Katie Deseret Travis of San Jose who saw the light of day at the last sink of the Humboldt River in Nevada in 1856. Truckee N. Steward of San Jose And J.C. Woodson of Saratoga were also prairie schooner arrivals. It was made known this was the group's first 'get together' unmarred by mishaps and all reached their homes in good health.

H.C.

WHALE BLAZERS

SAN JOSE GRAND JURY REPORT, 1893: Railroad Nuisance, "We have heard complaints against railroad companies relative to making up trains and on and over North First Street, The Alameda and other important thoroughfares, and we find that the acts occur many times each day and the same is an intolerable nuisance. Street cars as well as pedestrians are caused much unwarranted delay, thereby endangering life and limb from the fright of fractious horses and otherwise, and we therefore recommend the Board of Supervisors and City Council to enact such ordinances as will compel said corporations to make up their trains and their switching on their own grounds"!

SAN JOSE, November 1902: The newly organized Retail Clerks Association had started a drive on local stores who insisted on remaining open evenings.

November, 1904: "Fruit Cake Baking - How To Do It Without Hard Crust Or Scorching - To insure good results bake cake in pasteboard corset boxes, 16x5 inches is a good size. Many store keepers are glad to give them away. Choose boxes no less than two inches deep, three is better. Line each box with manila paper well greased, pour in batter, place a thoroughly greased manila paper over the box and put on the pasteboard lid. Place boxes in a slow oven and bake until cakes are done through, no longer. This will require at least five hours. Baked this way the cake will come from the oven retaining the fruit flavor, with no hard crust or scorching. We promise you excellent holiday baking with assured results--If you can find a supply of corset boxes!"

San Jose, November 1908: The Victory theatre had just begun the checking of woman's high hats. Large racks with hat boxes, large enough to hold the most stupendous feminine headgear had been placed in the lobby along with a milliners assistant put in charge. Each hat was checked in separate boxes. Fashionable hats had become so large the owner could no longer pin them to the back of theatre seats.

Saratoga, November 1935: The community was long labeled a bankless town that was full of bankers. It was since 1913 that they could claim a bank, however, just a few months previously the American Trust Bank here closed, saying banking business here was negligible. "Bankers everywhere," said citizens, "but where's a bank!"



William (Billy) Jones

By Bill Chivers

Billy Jones' father was Seldon Jones who crossed the plains in 1860 in an ox cart and settled in Ben Lomond in the Santa Cruz mountains where Billy was born on January 26, 1884.

The Senior Jones later became a railroad engineer for the Southern Pacific Railroad, and Billy at the age of 13 followed in his Dad's footsteps and went to work for the same line. His early youth coincided with the region's logging history. He grew up in the roundhouse and shop atmosphere with all its grime, noise, sweat and brotherhood. Career railroad mechanics, surrounded by soot, oil and racket, took satisfaction and pride in knowing that their's was an exacting and interesting craft, and it was no small achievement for a roustabout boy to work his way up to be an engineer. By the time he was 21, Billy was an engineer on the narrow-gauge run from Ben Lomond to Santa Cruz, and for the rest of his working years with the Southern Pacific he never left the engineer's cab.

Billy Jones loved Los Gatos, and in 1917 he purchased ten acres of orchard property at the corner of Daves Avenue and what is today Winchester Boulevard. He fell in love with Geraldine McGrady, a school marm from Wright's Station on the Southern Pacific line between Los Gatos and Santa Cruz. They were married in 1918. Billy worked for fifty years in the coastal division of the Southern

Pacific and spent much of that time on the run between San Francisco and Los Angeles on the San Francisco Daylight.

1939 is when the real story of Billy Jones started that led to the events that made Billy a legend. He was on the run between San Jose and San Francisco with long layovers in San Francisco. To pass the time away he walked over to the docks not far from the station at Third and Townsend Streets. While watching the ships, he saw a rusty railroad engine on the dock headed from its former service at Venice, California for Japan as scrap metal. He found the owner and paid \$100 for her and had it lugged home to his ranch in Los Gatos. He found that it was a 1905 Prairie-type locomotive, a relic of the Venice, California Miniature Railway, known as the VMR Number 2, designed by John J. Coit, a Southern Pacific civil engineer. The 2-6-2 locomotive weighed approximately five tons and was constructed to a 1/3 scale to run on an 18 inch gauge track. The prairie design was the most efficient design for a freight locomotive of its era. A sister locomotive was constructed at the same time and is in operation in a Los Angeles Park. Its called Prairie Number 1.

Billy began constructing his own railroad in his orchard on Daves Avenue in 1941. He loved children, and he and his wife had four of their own, two boys and two girls. Tragedy struck the Jones twice during World War II. when both of their sons were killed in action. With the help of friends, he repaired the engine and built cars, and in 1947 the railroad cars and a loop of tracks around his orchard were completed and ready for operation. He operated the railroad on weekends for children of the entire valley. He called it the "Wildcat Railroad." Although there was never a charge for rides, a gallon glass pickle jar was placed at the station, and the donation went to a wide group of sponsoring organizations. It could be accurately said that more Los Gatos people knew Billy Jones on sight than any other private citizen.

His little railway began to draw national fame in the late 1940's when two black limousines drove into Jones' semicircle driveway. The two limousines contained Walt Disney and his entourage. They were here to get advice on starting a railway that the famous motion picture producer planned to start in Southern California. The group had flown to San Francisco and motored to Los Gatos. Like Jones, Disney was a railway buff. Disney's idea at the time was to purchase one of Billy Jones' steam engines. From his visit to Los Gatos, the idea germinated for a railroad to be incorporated into his plans for Disneyland. Several years later, Billy was a guest engineer for a special running of Disney's railroad the day before Disneyland officially opened to the public.

In 1951, the Wildcat Railroad roundhouse suffered a fire, and the citizens of Los Gatos and the surrounding area, many of them children, came forth with cash donations and donations of time to help rebuild the damage. The railway had 1973 feet of track, three en-

gines(two 12 tons and one 4½ tons), six finished coaches, a round-house, coach shed, two box cars, two flat cars, a water tank and a machine shop. The walls were lined with historical railroad photographs.

It was a sad day Los Gatos on January 10, 1968 when the beloved Billy Jones died of leukemia at the age of 83. It is said that Billy's funeral was the biggest ever seen in Los Gatos. It was only a short time after his death that many of his friends, both adult and children, petitioned the Town Council to save the railroad. A group of businessmen formed a non-profit corporation to purchase the railroad from the Jones' estate and relocate it in a corner of Los Gatos Oak Meadow Park and a portion of the County Vasona Park. The corporation raised all of the money needed to purchase the equipment through many fundraising activities. An all volunteer construction project started in early 1969 with the transferring of equipment from the old Jones' ranch to the park. Completed on July 26, 1970, a golden spike was driven into a laurelwood tie, and the new Billy Jones Wildcat Railroad began to operate.

Anyone who knew Jones will agree that the new Billy Jones Wildcat Railroad is a fitting memorial to him, and it goes without saying that Billy would have approved what has happened to his railroad.

A Letter to share from Ralph Rambo:

Dear Hank and Laura,
...So let's see if I can arouse some old yearnings.

Cutting cots? Every year that I could belly up to a try! One year, 1904, I cleared \$35.00. I bought a Sherman (medium size) bicycle at SID MINNS BIKE SHOPPE ON Santa Clara's Main just off Old Franklin, the main street. (Bet Clyde (Arbuckle) could confirm my memory on this location). I believe the Pierce was THE bike of the day. Bet Clyde had one. We pause to wander down Old Franklin Street, ideal replica of an Antique Shopping Center. I can still name 14 diversified stores. To us, in a totally underdeveloped Cupertino, Santa Clara was our shopping Center. I had anything we might require. We even took our luscious Early Crawford peaches and our brown eggs and traded them at Alerman's Grocery for groceries.

By the way, what became of the Skinner Seedling apple? The finest, sweetest, eating apple in the Valley. The seeds or scions were brought across the plains in 1850 by Judge Henry Skinner. What became of egg plums and green gage plums? and the Muir peach? Not juicy but ideal for drying and flavorful. You could eat a dozen without a bellyache.

“El Camino Real A Myth,” Said Well Known 1905 Pioneer

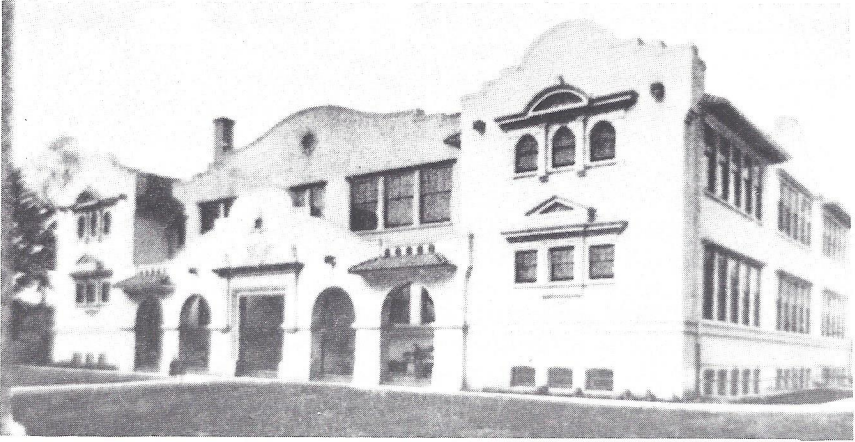
“Regardless of individuals, male or female, dupes and victims or knowingly promoters of the scheme known as “El Camino Real”. It is a myth, an ideal fiction with fraud attempted upon the citizens of California, no matter how plausible the pretext and statements may be,” said Edwin A. Sherman in the Oakland Enquirer in 1905. Sherman contended he was city clerk of Sonoma from 1851 to 1854 under General Vallejo and saw his military maps of California and there was none that had marked on them ‘El Camino Real.’ “I helped to survey El Rancho Santa Rosa at that time upon which the city of that name is located and often traveled the trail to San Rafael on horesback and there was not a road there until after the American emigration came in 1846-56. I asked of pioneers who had arrived in the early 40’s as well as native Spanish Californians if they had ever seen or heard of El Camino Real and all professed profoundest ignorance of any such highway.

“I have visited the U.S. surveyor general’s office in San Francisco where all archives are kept and are and have been in the special charge of my friend, Mr. Gomperty, their custodian for nearly thirty-five years. When asked if any of the maps of Spanish or Mexican grants had traveled roads marked upon them continuously anywhere and known as ‘El Camino Real’. His reply was emphatically, ‘No! Nothing continuous and El Camino Real was a mere trail between some few points where it was referred to as a boundary between grants; but as a highway and continuous there is nothing of the kind to be found in this office to base such a statement.’

“For fifty-five years,” Sherman said, “the board of supervisors in all counties of California laid out all roads of the state with the assistance of the county surveyor, viewers and overseers and they would not have overlooked or obliterated so important a road as El Camino Real if it ever existed and crossed the boundaries of any two counties there would have been a convention of their boards of supervisors to have taken action for its preservation and continuance.

“In 1870 I visited the Mission of Santa Barbara and we had to have guides to take us over the Santa Ines Mountains as there was no road, only impenetrable Chapparal and thicket which bore the name of Sal-se-puede, which means get out if you can.

“There was no such generally traveled road,” said Sherman. “Rastros or trails were sometimes called ‘Caminos’ as a general term, but used for the likes of carretas with two wheels drawn by oxen where it was usually level.



Horace Mann School

Bits and Pieces

by Joe Jenkins

Remember that old saying “It takes a heap of living to make a house a home”? I think it also takes a lot living to accumulate the times and events that somehow endear us to certain places. I’d like to share three little memories that have made San Jose remain very dear to my heart.

I went to kindergarten at Horace Mann School. My Horace Mann was the Moorish architecture building that was torn down almost two decades ago because it wasn’t earthquake proof. As clear as yesterday I can recall my mother dragging me by the collar to my first class. Mom addressed teacher with, “I don’t know when he’ll stop screaming. Should I walk him here everyday till he stops?” Wise old teach said no, to leave me in her charge. It was my first taste of system discipline — and it worked. What stuck, though was the fact that in those days kindergartners took naps. You brought a 3 x 5 rug to school and then in the afternoon ceremoniously unrolled it as your spartan resting space. I bucked the system by taking the prone position, raising my legs skyward and then dropping them — KABOON! Veteran teacher advised; “Alright, Joseph, if you insist on making that noise you may. But, remember, California is subject to earthquakes and I wonder if you’d want to be responsible for such a calamity?” Silence came to Horace Mann in 1941.

Downtown San Jose in the late ‘30s was, from my five-year-old station in life, a very metropolitan place. I was a kid full of joy and giggles. Everything amused me. One of the biggest thrills to me was when Mom and I had finished shopping at Roos Bros. (I will never forget the mahogany random plank floors and the mannish smell of

oxford cloth and tweeds) we would catch the bus at the corner of 1st and Santa Clara Streets. It was a windy corner then, too. We always prepared for the wind and hugged up close to the Bank of America building. Well, one day we came sailing down 1st Street and turned the corner only to have my Mom's skirts blow straight up in the air — causing her to do sort of a whirling dervish dance to recover her modesty. Not about to allow that to happen, I stood shrieking gleefully, "Look everybody, look at my Mommy!" over and over again. Mom tells me, to this day, she has never forgotten that intersection either.

As a child whenever I would leave someone's company, it was my practice to say, "So long, keep your chin up!" Everyone knew that would always be Joe's parting shot. Well, almost everyone. Christmas of 1938 we were on 1st Street watching the wonderful Christmas parade. Santa's fabulous float was approaching and all we kids hugged the curb to get a glimpse of the great one. We waved, screamed and carried on as only the very young can do, what came next was not within my range of expectations. Santa leaned way over as he passed by and yelled above the din, "So long, Joe! Keep your chin up!" Needless to say I was rendered speechless and immediately elevated by my friends to a position of great respect. None of us noticed the slightest resemblance between Santa and Mr. Franklin, our next door neighbor. You know, I still love Santa!

I'll close with another truth if I may: "It's a small world." Little did I know when attending Horace Mann almost 50 years ago that today I would be living in my nearly 100 year old home built by the gentleman that built that school - Mr. Z.O. Field. I'd have never guessed a half century later the corner of 1st and Santa Clara would still remind me of my Mom's greatest humiliation and infinite patience. How could I have surmised so many years later, I would be wishing my fellow Pioneers a happy holiday season. I hope you love Santa too.

THE NEW ALMADEN QUICKSILVER COUNTY PARK ASSOCIATION MUSEUM is now preparing, labeling and cataloging the Connie Perham mining collection.

Any articles, photographs or writings pertaining to the mining site you would care to donate will now be protected by professional cataloging and preserved and displayed with proper acknowledgment. Museum phone is 268-1729.

The trustees of the California History Foundation and the Women's Heritage Museum invite you to the exhibit: CALIFORNIA WOMAN SUFFRAGE celebrating 75 years of women's right to vote in California, California History Center, Trianon Building, DeAnza College. This overly interesting exhibit will run through March 13, 1987. The Center is open from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, Saturdays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

“Sunshine Fruit and Flowers”

The San Jose Historical Museum Association is announcing “Sunshine Fruit and Flowers” as the Association’s 1987 membership book. “Sunshine Fruit and Flowers is a delightful work containing hundreds of photographs of life in our valley at the turn of the century. Published in 1895 it sold out immediately and was reprinted, with changes, in 1896. This delightful ‘adventure’ captivates with over 300 pages and is available exclusively through membership with the San Jose Historical Museum Association for 1987. Museum memberships with the accompanying book are excellent gift ideas. Representatives from the San Jose Historical Museum Association will be at the December 6 Luncheon to assist you. Thank You!

Be aware that A VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS is planned for the Historical Museum on December 11, 12, and 13. Look for further announcements.

CARRY NATION VISITS SAN JOSE

Donald Tustin

(The following item is from the files of the late John L. Tustin, Donald’s father.)

The lady paid a short visit to San Jose at the turn of the century. Next door south of the Victory Theatre was the “Richelieu”, an attractive drinking place with a long well polished bar and back bar, and large billiard parlor with walls decorated with lighted paintings by Cooper, the San Jose artist. A small crowd gathered in front looking in over the swinging doors when someone shouted, “Carry Nation is there with her hatchet and is breaking up the place.” Police came out struggling with a stocky gray haired woman dressed in black and wearing a black ribboned widow’s bonnet. She and a couple of men were carried off in the horse drawn paddy wagon.

(Editors Note: Carry Nation (1846-1911) American temperance leader was a native of Kentucky who used a hatchet to ruin saloons was arrested 30 times for her havoc-wreaking calls. Proceeds from lectures and sales of souvenir hatchets paid for her bail and fines and also enable her to found a home for wives of alcoholics in Kansas City, Kansas. Her first husband, Chas. Gloyd, a physician died of alcoholism.)

The Oregon-California Trails Association’s successful fourth annual convention was held in August at Carson City, Nevada. Headed by Mary Mueller, the San Jose delegation was the largest. Adding to the delight of area chapter members was OCTA’s Meritorious Achievement Award presented to Clyde Arbuckle for his extensive Overland Trails involvement.

Time For Payment Of 1987 Dues

Another year is almost here and it is time once again for payment of our annual dues. Since we do not bill individually it is the responsibility of each member to be certain that the payment is made and that your membership card is a current one.

As always Financial Secretary will be available at the December luncheon to receive payments from anyone wishing to pay at that time. For all others this can be handled by mail. Dues are \$5 annually, per person; so make out your check to the California Pioneers and send it along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope to California Pioneers of Santa Clara County, P.O. Box 8208, San Jose, CA 95155. You will receive your membership card by return mail.

As always, for those of you who would rather pay once and not have to be concerned about dues again we do offer Life Memberships. Fees for them are \$60 per individual and \$100 for a married couple. The payment process is the same as above but you will receive a lovely white and gold card with your name hand lettered.

If you need more information about any of this please call Financial Secretary, Mary Wahlberg at 374-5776 and she will be happy to answer your questions.

HISTORIC HOME TOUR '86

Santa Clara Arts and Historical Consortium presents HISTORIC HOME TOUR '86 on Friday, December 12, and Saturday, December 13, 1986 from 12 to 5 p.m. Advance tickets are: Senior, \$7; General, \$8. At the door: \$10. Tickets can be ordered by mail by sending a check made out to Historic Home Tour, together with a stamped self-addressed envelope, to Historic Home Tour, 726 Woodhams Road, Santa Clara, CA 95051. This is a benefit for preservation of the historical Harris/Lass House, 1889 Market St., Santa Clara. Tour will be of Peebles/Hichborn House, Madison Street Inn, Morgan House and Sullivan House.

Our Annual Historical Essay Contest Announced Increased Cash Awards Await Winners

There will now just be one category with the general public and high schools competing. The First Prize will be \$500, second \$200, and third \$100.

The essays in the English language are to be at least 3000 words and contain a bibliography. The papers may reflect on any subject, person, or place concerning the history of Santa Clara County.

April 30, 1987 is the deadline to have essays mailed to Austen Warburton, 12th Floor, Bank of America Bldg., 101 Park Center Plaza, San Jose, CA 95113.

For further information, please, send a stamped, self-addressed legal size envelope to Helen MacCarthy, Essay Contest, California Pioneers of Santa Clara, P.O. Box 8208, San Jose, CA 95155. Phone 578-4485.



Touring With The Californians

RESERVATIONS by phone begin on Monday, Dec. 8th, for MEMBERS ONLY. Call Ruth Gross at 294-9830 ONLY BETWEEN 9 a.m. and 12 noon Monday through Friday. After Ruth confirms your reservation, make check payable to The Californians and send to P.O. Box 32121, San Jose, CA 95152. After the quarterly meeting a Trip Brochure and Flyers can be obtained by mailing a stamped, self-addressed legal size envelope to the above address.

Dec. 16, Tuesday: A CHRISTMAS EXPERIENCE This Victorian exhibit of trains and ethnic dolls is presented by the San Mateo County Historical Society. Reminisce as you watch a short film of the San Mateo area. A visit to AH SAMS FLORIST SHOP where Holiday Decorations will take your breath away. Lunch included. CALL NOW!

Feb. 24 - March 2, 1987: EXPLORATION CRUISE PANAMA AND THE CANAL This unique venture offers more of Panama, Pearl Islands and Spanish Main Gold Ports. On Explorer Class, you see them all up close. Because your ship is smaller, we venture where big ships can't. With fewer than ninety fellow passengers, you'll experience Panama personally. You will visit remote villages and lovely secluded islands. It all adds up to more scenic beauty at the most affordable price. CALL NOW!

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MENU
Baked Ham and Hams
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Open 10:30 Luncheon 12:00

LOUIS VILLAGE

The San Jose Historical Museum Assoc. will be here to introduce their 1987 premium book, Sunshine Fruit & Flowers, 1896 Edition.

DUES: \$5 Please send a self-addressed stamped envelope for the return of your membership card. Make checks payable to California Pioneers and mail to Financial Secretary, P.O. Box 8208, San Jose, CA 95155.

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Associate Editor - Laura Calloway

Assistant Editor - Bill Chivers

Staff Artist - Ralph Rambo

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