



THE

TRAILBLAZER

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OF THE CALIFORNIA PIONEERS
OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY

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AN AMAZING RASCAL

WHALE BLAZERS

SAN JOSE, Oct. 1876 :- Complaints were considerable, due to a great deal of reckless driving on The Alameda and to how it wasn't worth your life to be on the avenue at certain hours. Action was deemed necessary on curtailing race track capers of the mischievous drivers and their mustangs.

SAN JOSE, Nov. 1876 :- Bakers reformed the price of bread, selling and delivering it at the rate of 20 loaves for a dollar. An even further reduction was promised.

SAN JOSE MORNING TIMES, 1880 :- "Chicago is largely engaged in the manufacture of oleomargarine, sometimes known as 'boarding house butter' and vulgarly called 'bull butter.' It is made of lard and other vile ingredients. The entire business is a loathsome proceeding."

SAN JOSE COUNCIL, June 11, 1881 :- Action was taken on the petition of J. J. Owen for permission to erect an experimental electric tower at the four corners of such streets to be determined for such a purpose. Four towers were proposed. The council considered the petition after the insertion of the words "at his own expense" and "the said tower to be erected in 60 days." The report in this regard was adopted.

(A 110 foot replica of Publisher Owen's 237 foot landmark from 1881 to 1915 may be seen at the San Jose Historical Museum at Kelley Park.)

SAN JOSE, Oct. 1881 :- Under an amended ordinance owners of cows, horses and other live stock were allowed to graze their animals on the sidewalks, if in the care of someone. "Poor people," it was noted, "desiring to give their animals a mouthful of grass can profit from this new ruling."

SAN JOSE COUNCIL, Oct. 1881 :- The Chief of Police stated the police wagon needed painting and repairing. The proposal was referred to the Construction Committee with the power to act. Also, authorization to purchase one dozen police badges was granted.

H. C.

"IF YOU ARE CONTEMPLATING MARRIAGE, SUICIDE OR CRIME, SEE US FIRST."

"IF I FAIL TO CARRY OUT MY PLAN, HANG ME TO A TREE."

William E. Riker's HOLY CITY

Holy City is a semi-ghostly one road village in the Los Gatos-Santa Cruz countryside still recalling the antics of its rabble rousing founder, "Father" William E. Riker. From this mountain rostrum Riker aimed to establish it as a monument to his ideals. It was where he endeavored to foster the world's perfect government. Non-stop billboards in caustic rhetoric hailed the merits of his scheme. A reward was offered to anyone who proved otherwise.

Riker was a California native, born in Oakdale in 1883. In 1918 this self-styled reformer of mankind and one time circus barker left San Francisco with his band of 12 converts for their 180 wooded acres to create the faultless state.

A colonist was provided work, clothing, board and room and no pay. Matrimony was taboo with lodging strictly separated by sexes.

The self-supporting community soon took to task an electric generator plant, laundry, forge and blacksmith shop, service station, barber shop, cafe, zoo, observatory and a soft drink bottle operation, while a bustling print shop and radio station ballyhooed the ideal domain.

Tourists were tantalized; they came in droves - the "City" thrived. Down and outters were lured with mutton stew doled out during the depression years, but the gimmick failed to capture followers.

Riker always made racy news, answering to charges of breach of promise, reckless driving, fraud, tax evasion and even murder. Never having been found guilty, he boasted, "I never lost a battle."

However, by 1952 the one time mountain angel population of 150 had dwindled to only 12, all part of the original flock who blazed the settlement 30 years earlier.

William E. Riker, "King of all Wise Men," left his defunct utopia in 1966. He died on Dec. 3, 1969 along with his anxious dreams at the age of 96 at a nearby hospital.

H. C.



NED BUNTLINE

AN AMAZING RASCAL

Living it up as a hero, fraud, showman, political schemer, drunkard, ladies' man and Buffalo Bill's promoter still permitted Edward Zane Carroll Judson time to hack out sea and Wild West stories by the bushel. This prolific rogue wrote under the name of Ned Buntline, boasting an annual income of over \$20,000. Buntline's real life pursuits read like his lurid dime novels rolled into a triple deckered brawl. By the 1860's this story maker was hailed as "King of the Dime Novels."

Buntline's birth is generally accepted as March 10, 1823 in Philadelphia.

In 1840 he distinguished himself by saving a

boatload of midshipmen in New York Harbor. For this act of bravery, President Martin Van Buren granted him a naval commission.

He participated in the Seminole War and later engaged in the Northwest fur trade. He served in the Union Army during the Civil War without combat, although, he said he had been "Chief of Scouts" with the rank of Colonel.

By the time he was twenty, he claimed he was out West killing buffalo, grizzly bears and Indians.

Because of a 1846 aborted love affair in Nashville, he was tried for the murder of a young lady's gunning husband. Lynched, he was cut down in

time to be revived. With a raw neck and several bullet scars, Ned scattered for New York.

There, he helped fortify a movement to rid America of foreigners -- called the Know Nothing Party. He also published a controversial sheet bannered as "Ned Buntline's Own." It denounced politicians and sweatshops while listing the best saloons to patronize.

His roster of scrapes and scandals continued. By 1861 he had shot at least one more man, married two women and was jailed for bigamy. Out of jail he was soon arrested for instigating a labor riot. A discarded wife filed for divorce and he was sued for bad debts.

In 1868 this hard drinking rascal steamshipped to California in a spunkless attempt to hawk on the evils of drink -- between drinks. Buntline spent weeks in San Jose lecturing under the auspices of the local Good Templar Lodge, without much success.

Economic necessity now forced Ned to seek new heroes to conquer for his paperbacks. He headed for Fort McPherson near North Platte, Nebraska tracing one Frank North acclaimed the "most fearless Indian fighter in the West."

North wanted a part of being a Buntline paper hero. He directed Ned to an ideal prospect napping under a nearby wagon. He was a twenty-three year old blonde, handsome, John Wayne type, yawning sleepily and answering to the name of Scout William "Bill" Cody.

The young man had had jobs ranging from laborer, carpenter, mule skinner, innkeeper, express rider and supplier of fresh buffalo meat for the Kansas Pacific Railroad crews.

Buntline lost no time compiling a contract for the use of Cody's name.

Crammed with tall tales heard about campfires Buntline headed East. There he penned the first of countless stories of Buffalo Bill that left even Cody spellbound. Buntline had "Buffalo Bill" Cody tremendously busy rescuing maidens, killing Indians by the score and solving all border and frontier disputes.

The cupcake for Cody and Buntline was now frosted. Cody became the idol of the entire country of all ages as he repeatedly repelled scoundrels who dared to cross his path.

In 1872 Buntline talked Cody into a frontier melodrama tour which also starred Playwrite Ned Buntline himself. From there

on it was easy going for Cody who eventually developed into a polished actor, spending and making millions.

On March 6, 1886 the San Jose Daily Herald reported, "Buffalo Bill in his new play, 'The Prairie Waif,' thrilled an immense audience at the California Theatre. Cody is a fine looking fellow and is never wanting in picturesqueness. He is heroic and through the play wins applause

without stint."

Buntline reaped a fortune for his writing but money slipped through his fingers. Anna, his laudable wife, tried desperately to meet mounting debts near the end. On July 12, 1886 Ned made a tardy appeal for a Civil War pension but it was too late. The penitent legend maker died at the age of sixty-three, July 16 1886 in Westchester County, New York.

H. C.



Donold O. DeMers, Jr.

"Mr. Wilson, the express driver, is about the streets today and will be tomorrow, collecting such contributions as people may have to bestow for the benefit of the poor. These gifts will be distributed to those most worthy by a committee of ladies. Give him as much as you can."

The above notice was published in the San Jose Daily Herald one day before the Christmas of 1878. Now, a hundred years later, with all the changes of modern technology, we are still dependent during the holiday season on special contributions large and small to let us know that our friends, relatives, and fellow citizens care enough to share themselves and their goods with others.

By visiting an old friend, by offering food or clothing to charity, we hope that you can echo the Pioneer spirit of giving "as much as you can" this Christmas of 1978.

I wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

LAND GRANT TO LANDMARK

Frances L. Fox

The intriguing story of the Roberto Adobe, one of the valley's oldest landmarks, spans four major stages of construction at the hands of four fascinating individuals of diverse cultures. Each owner made significant architectural changes to the adobe with an unique story of its own over a 140-year period.

Roberto, a Christianized Mission Indian, built his crude one-room adobe in 1836. This simple home became the headquarters for the Rancho de los Coches, later granted to him by Governor Manuel Micheltorena.

Roberto paid his \$500 debt in 1847 by deeding his Rancho Los Coches to Antonio Sunol. The same year Sunol added three large brick rooms to the adobe and occasionally lived there until 1853 when he sold the house and fifty-five acres to Captain Stefano Splivalo who made innovative major architectural changes. The house was enlarged and a complete second story and balcony added. Next the entire structure was encased in a wooden frame concealing the brick walls which were not discovered until the recent restoration in 1973.

Over a century later, businessman John Bruzzone, purchased the property determined to preserve the deteriorating building. The unique history of the Roberto Adobe unfolded as the John Bruzzone family and skilled artisans meticulously preserved the house to its former 1870 opulence.

The house, located at 770 Lincoln Ave., is a California State Landmark, #898, and the property is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Land Grant to Landmark, a 7" x 10" deluxe cloth bound book, has more than 140 pages with a two-color title page. It includes over fifty photographs, 35 entertaining sketches by Ralph Rambo, research enlivened with anecdotes, schematic guidelines for restoration, a bibliography and index. Two rare maps and a historical poster are inserted in the back pocket binding of the book. Price \$15 plus tax can be ordered through Frances L. Fox, 1296 Yosemite Avenue, San Jose, 95126, or John Bruzzone, Pied Piper Publishers, 456 Willow Street, San Jose 95110.

BATTLE OF SANTA CLARA by Dorothy F. Regnery

The discovery of an old artillery piece on the James Rolph Ranch in 1957 by the author resulted in this diligently researched volume of the only campaign in the northern district between the Californios and the U. S. Forces during the Mexican War. For this captivating California venture write: Dorothy F. Regnery, 488 Eastridge Drive, Portola Valley, CA 94025. Limited edition is \$40; deluxe edition, also hardbound, is \$20. Each edition is plus the 6% sales tax.

E CLAMPUS VITUS RESPONDS The greybeards of Mountain Charlie Chapter No. 1850 declared it befitting to solemnize the Battle of Santa Clara of January 2, 1847 with a commemorative plaque on October 14th at El Camino and Kiely in Santa Clara. We acclaim this grand effort and turnout by the Brethren despite the condition of the royal musician, our ailing jackass.

Gears have been activated towards the salvation of another San Jose landmark. It is now the dejected and one time mansion of San Jose's first mayor of 1858, Thomas Fallon. The 130 year old structure at 175 W. St. John later became Hotel Italia where our generation remember it for its lavish take-out pot dinners for only 50 cents.

Congress is currently considering legislation designating the De Anza Trail as a National Historic Trail. Juan Bautista de Anza opened the first overland passage from Arizona to Monterey in March 1776. He explored the San Francisco Bay region and the people he brought ultimately established Mission Santa Clara in January 1777 and the founding of Pueblo de San Jose in November 1777.

Morgan Hill Home Historic The six-room frame building that was a wedding gift from Morgan Hill to his wife, the former Diana Murphy, will be listed in the National Register of Historical Places. The ranch settlement was so named in 1892 by the railroad.

Ralph Rambo comes up with this flea market conquest: a 1921 Christmas check-currency envelope. "Your taste is so good - and mine isn't you see. Will you please buy yourself a present from me? (signed) Aunt Sadie." Aunt Sadie being none other than Mrs. Sarah Winchester who was

gifting her niece, Mrs. S. L. Ruthnauff of Burlingame, California. Aunt Sadie was the affectionate name the family had for Mrs. Winchester.

TOUR WITH THE CALIFORNIANS

Death Valley and Wild Flowers Joshua tree forests and desert blooms exploding with miles of colored brushstrokes. All beautifully still and scenic April 1 through April 5, 1979
Details at the Dec. 2nd Luncheon

Experience Hawaii Oahu and Kauai Begin this trip with a call right now Make ready for this lush tropical holiday April 18-26, 1979 A few spaces left. Deposit of \$125 holds your reservation Balance due March 1, 1979

Spectacular Alaska September 1979 You'll see Alaska close up by Air - Train - Motorcoach & Cruise Ship More about this treasure chest at our Spring Luncheon

Hop aboard with Barbara Johnson and Alice Vetterle

FOR TOUR RESERVATIONS: Call Ruth Gross at 294-9830 between 9 AM and noon Monday through Friday ONLY. When confirmed, make check payable to "The Californians" and mail to The Californians, 100 Serena Way, Santa Clara, CA 95051.

Thanks to almost a hundred and fifty concerned students, the Metropolitan Adult Education History Class taught by Mr. Clyde Arbuckle is alive and well, despite invasion of Prop. 13. To insure the existence of this desired class, they formed the Argonaut Historical Society on a dues cost basis. This popular class on local and western history convenes every Wednesday evening at seven PM at Edward Markham Jr. High School on Cottle Ave., San Jose. The Society meets in the Little Theater. You are welcome to come and participate in this slide and oral history social.

Welcome New Members

Lyda Andersen	Mabel Janzen	George Shannon
Louise Bodenheim	Boyd Johnson	Alice Sheldon
Charles Catania	Ethel Johnson	Patricia Staats
Charlotte Clark	Vivian Johnson	Albert Tognazzini
Mary E. Clifford	Rose Joseph	Clarence Walker
Francis Crofut	Mona Keesling	Helen Walker
Laura Crofut	Glen Landis	Cosby Ida Weber
Meda F. Erickson	Virginia Landis	Louise Wetzel
Charles Espinosa	Dorothy McLean	Lena Willoughby
Marie Espinosa	Berget Metzger	M. G. Willoughby
Aldo Ferrero	Fred J. Metzger	Edith Young
Lorraine Ferrero	Clarence Montague	Alyce Yturriaga
Mildred Gentile	Evelyn Montague	Henry Yturriaga
Dorothy Gesell	Marion O'Connell	Louis Zaro
Margaret Gleason	Anamae Pereira	Margaret Zaro
Edward Humphreys	James Rogers	Phyllis Zimmerman
Leona Humphreys	Jean Rogers	William Zimmerman
	Catherine Shannon	



Beyond the sunset

Ann Archambeault	John N. De Rose	Frances Schwalenberg
Cecille Benoit	Virginia Mayne	Edna L. Vanderhave.
Emil Danielson	Margaret Russo	Clarence B. Walker

CHRISTMAS BOOKORAMA

Our Dec. 2 Luncheon will feature an interesting collection of regional history publications by our own area authors.

TO BE ON SALE AT THIS TIME!

May we suggest you tie a Christmas ribbon around one or more of these informative volumes to give - to keep - to enjoy.

DUES for 1978 become past due after Dec. 31, 1978. Please respond. You're too nice to lose. Dues for 1979 are now payable (\$3.00 each). Call or write: Financial Secretary John Clark, 1900 Emory St., San Jose, CA 95126. Phone 294-3176.

The Financial Secretary and his helpers will be collecting the 1979 dues at the Luncheon.

HONOR TO ALL MEMBERS 85 OR OLDER: A special table will be arranged for you at our Dec. 2nd Luncheon. Surprise too! Please notify Francis Fox at 293-1879.

SEASON'S
GREETINGS

DEC. 2nd.

IS TO BE OUR

Holiday **LUNCHEON**
CALL 247-6606

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DOORS OPEN AT 10:30 LUNCHEON AT 12.

AT LOU'S VILLAGE

ATTENTION!

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SICKNESS and DEATHS: Please notify Frances Fox at 1296
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