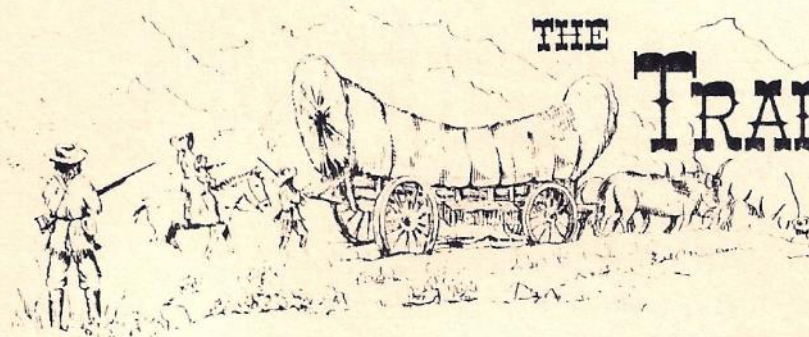




THE

TRAILBLAZER

QUARTERLY BULLETIN
OF THE CALIFORNIA PIONEERS
OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY

INCORPORATED 1875

Vol. 15

Summer 1975

Number 3



HE MARKED THE
DONNER TRAIL

WHALE BLAZERS

Tragedy befell the cattle baron, Henry Miller, when his young daughter, Augustine, was thrown from a horse which proved fatal--near Gilroy. The shock was so severe Miller suffered a nervous breakdown. Gustine in Merced County is named in her memory.

Burnt clay brick was the preferred building material as early as 1853 in San Jose by Americans. The town boasted at least five brick yards in just a few years. By the 1880's during the construction of Lick Observatory, a brick yard was provided near the telescope site.

Would you believe it? Where the Palace Hotel now stands in San Francisco was once a hunter's paradise. Also wild game was being bagged near where St. James Park is today. Progress was making inroads, however, when a fruit orchard was planted at First and Santa Clara Sts.

April 1933: The USS Constitution, the hero ship of a once-young 1812 American navy, was visiting San Francisco. San Josean Fred Dealing years before served as a first class seaman aboard the restored Man-O-War when she was a training ship during the Civil War. Dealing was marking time, hoping to tread once again the decks of the old frigate, but he lacked funds for the trip. A few of his friends heard of Dealing's plight and in no time had the old sailor on deck of Old Ironsides that once swept the seas like a meteor.

Santa Clara: Sing Kee was the weather expert of his day. Disregarding barometers, thermometers and other data, Sing Kee's only "instrument" was a pet bull frog who somehow assisted. Sing's weather forecasts were highly regarded by our valley ranchers. A daily press release by this renowned Chinese weatherman on July 12, 1912 read: "Light sou win' - noon warmer 80 or over - with evening sou win' much cooler - Dat's all today - Goo Bye."

MAIL ROUNDUP

CLYDE ARBUCKLE

Since establishment of Santa Clara County Feb. 18, 1850, this area has had at least 60 post offices. In fact, if we count (as individual offices) several that had two or more names, it had 67.

The names of these offices, once well known to residents of the county, have almost faded from history as well as from memory. So let's recall half a dozen of them just for the fun of it.

McCartysville, established No. 2, 1855, became Bank Mills on Dec. 22, 1863, and Bank Mills became Saratoga on March 13, 1865.

Bethlehem, next door neighbor of Agnew, lasted only a short time - from Jan. 9th to May 19th, 1890.

Burnett, served Burnett Township - the Coyote - Perry Station area - from April 30, 1862 to March 13, 1882. On the latter date it changed to Coyote.

DeForest had the honor of being one of the county's most remote offices. Located in rugged country some distance east of Mt. Hamilton, it took its name from a rancher named Elmer Bryan De Forest. It was a little more than a drygoods box in a ranch house, but it served the area's mail needs from May 6, 1892 to Jan. 31, 1909.

The Willow Glen area of San Jose once had mail service all its own. Its post office, located on the northeast corner of Minnesota and Cherry Aves., came into existence as Kensington Jan. 14, 1893. Two years later to the day, it changed to Willowglen (one word). Since Jan. 15, 1900, its mail delivery has come from San Jose.

Pioneer, on the Almaden Road, was established Nov. 8, 1875, with Hugh L. Downer as first postmaster. It served a large area between San Jose and New Almaden until Nov. 3, 1886, when its mail service was transferred to the San Jose Office.



HE MARKED THE DONNER TRAIL



When San Jose High School teacher, Peter Mark Weddell, first scanned the torturous landscape of Donner Summit, it appeared as a ruptured buzz saw. Here the Sierra grudgingly clutched secrets and faded remnants of the Emigrant Trail made famous by the hapless Donner Party. Weddell knew then what he wanted most to do; to search out and mark the true course of the evasive route. Since the majority of the survivors of the tragic group migrated to Santa Clara Valley, this further incited our super trail sleuth.

P.M., as he was often called, was 57 years old in 1920 when he plunged into the strenuous and fanatic task lasting 31 years.

When the Dutch Flat and Donner Lake Road was completed in 1864, the Emigrant Trail was discarded, left to the climatic spasms of the elevations where nature revengefully blotted out all clues and direction.

This commercial law teacher devoted his vacations and retirement to "Sherlocking" the final 16 miles of the route from Alder Creek Valley to Mary Lake on the western slope of Donner Peak. His headquarters was often Truckee where he availed himself to the recall of old timers, historical journalists, lumbermen railroad section gangs and even trappers. A fragment of a platter found by P.M. in 1923 near the summit proved

interesting and valuable because it confirmed the location of the wretched trail at that point where no trace was to be found.

On Sept. 24, 1924 he pinpointed beyond a doubt the exact course of the epic trail. He reached the 8000 foot Donner Peak, where he piled a monument of loose granite identifying the highest point on the trail. In his own words, "The wagon train of the Donner Party never reached the summit. They lost the trail on the flat just below the foot of the lake. A major portion of wagons reached the lake, the main camp of the party. The others were snowbound at Alder Creek, seven miles from the lake. It was here where the Donner family camped."

At this site, in the summer of 1922, P.M. hammered his first bold home-made sign to a huge ponderosa. By 1927 Weddell was posting as many as sixty Emigrant and Donner markers to the mile. Some still exist. His research was work he loved. He backtracked and double checked the feeble evidence he gathered through the years. He eagle-eyed snubbing scars on tree trunks and rust left by wagon rims upon granite boulders.

"No one can travel over the course," P.M. wrote

regarding the Emigrant Trail," and not be impressed by the good judgment of the guide and his knowledge of the whole complicated region."

Zestful Weddell preferred to work alone, rarely having "side-kicks." He probed valleys, streams and canyons. Weddell was a cliff hanger whenever a clue presented itself. He challenged the fury of Sierra storms, but he loved every year he contributed.

Weddell died in San Jose in 1952, the year he last hiked the trail at the age of 88. Embracing three decades, he doggedly set the record straight as to where the absolute route crossed the mighty Sierra Nevada.



Your assistant editor
treads the lonely ruts
of the old trail -

H. C.



Official Organ Of The Santa Clara County Pioneers

ESTAB. 1877 ALEX. P. MURGOTTEN, PROP.

The following copy has been selected from THE PIONEER, predecessor to THE TRAIL-BLAZER.

(Jan. 1877) **EASTERN SHIPMENTS:** During the month of December the overland shipments from San Jose amounted to 80,200 pounds, classified as follows: Mustard seed, 40,000; hops, 22,000; wine, 4,000; miscellaneous, 13,600. This is much less than the average monthly shipments from San Jose, yet it exceeds the shipments from Stockton, Oakland and Marysville combined by 29,300 pounds. The shipments this month will probably be much larger.

THE WILLOW GLEN ROAD: The formal opening of the Market Street and Willow Glen Railroad took place Saturday. A fine lunch was spread by the company at ranch of Mr. Bird, in the Willows, and about 150 persons, including the Mayor

and Common Council, Board of Supervisors and other dignitaries attended. Toasts and responses were given, and a genuine jollification was had. The road was built by Henry Craven, and is nearly two miles and a half in length, extending from Julian Street to Willow Glen. The fare is five cents to the end of the road. The officers are as follows: Calvert T. Bird, President, John Auzeais, Treas. and F. Brassy, Sec.

(Aug. 1877) A test of the artesian well in St. James Square was made by the Chief Engineer and the streamer only succeeded in lowering the water seven feet three inches, and it remained at that mark through the trial.

During the month of July the police force made 129 arrests as follows: drunks (including drunk and disorderly, 81; city and State misdemeanors, 15; barn or-

dinances, 12; petty larceny 7; battery 4; felony, 3; disturbing the peace, 1; assault with deadly weapon, 2; suspicion, 1; attempt to commit rape, 1; attempt to rob, 1. Total 129.

(Jan. 1879) **USEFUL HINTS** The lady who wishes to gain strength and reduce stoutness must eat meat and beef tea, no hominy, groats or cream. She can drink claret, but no ale or beer, and if she can take exercise enough to digest her food, she may hope to gain strength.

Two men last week at the Aptos Beach washed out the black sand \$180 and the Santa Cruz Courier says the heavy surf of the week past has uncovered large quantities of paying sand.

(Feb. 1879) Tramps are insolent as ever and fearful that they might find a job, and hide behind a bar room stove to keep work from

finding them.

It takes a canoe to cross any of our streets after a rain.

Ad. Sauerkraut! Stall No. 6 Central Market, 2000 lbs. now available in kegs 5 to 15 gals.

Ad. Eastern, California & Alviso oysters served in every style at Elitch's. Come by soon.

Ad. Levy sells Brussels carpet - sewed and put down at a \$1 a yard. That's hard to beat!

There will be a meeting of the Associated Veterans of the Mexican War on Sat. March 1, 1879.

The printers of San Francisco will picnic at San Jose on Sat. April 6.

The tax payers union are in favor of postponing the building of a main sewer.



Anthony R. Sapena

I am taking this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to the Board of Directors for giving me the honor and privilege of serving as President of our fine organization. It is a time when I look back at the many outstanding accomplishments of our outgoing President, O. I. (Oskey) Schmaelzle. His leadership, sincerity, and dedication to our organization, and what it stands for have left a record of accomplishments that will be most difficult to surpass. It has been an honor and a privilege for me to have had the opportunity of knowing him and working with him. I know that I speak for the Board of Directors and the members of our organization when I say, "Thank you very much, Oskey, for a job well done."

I am taking this opportunity to thank our outgoing Financial Secretary, Curtis S. Bailey, for the many years of service and dedication to our organization. A special thank you to our Trailblazer Editor, Henry J. Calloway, and Associate Editor, Laura Calloway, for the outstanding Trailblazer that we look forward to receiving each quarter. I know it takes many hours, and much effort on your part to put out such an outstanding publication. A special thank you to Bernice Van Gundy for her many years of service and dedication to our organization.

The Board of Directors is composed of sincere, dedicated, hard-working people. They represent the membership of our organization. They are the ones who "keep the wheels turning." Four new members have been elected to our board this year: Mrs. Carolyn De Vries, Charles Sullivan, Alexander Gauger, and Rupert Moore. Welcome aboard. Our new Program Chairman is our First Vice President, Clyde Arbuckle. He has a most interesting program for our September 6 membership luncheon, including a speaker on the history of the University of Santa Clara. I am looking forward to seeing you there. Let's set a new attendance record.

All applications and address changes shall now be directed to Rupert Moore, Membership Chairman, 1530 Emory Ave., San Jose, CA 95126. This also applies to misdirected Trailblazers.

LOOK FOR IT HERE

Well, landmarks are continually keeping their appointments with the wreckers. Proud Lincoln School had the gumption to last 101 years. The 1869 Fredricksburg Brewery, the Spring Building of 1869 and everybody's trading stop, the Home Union (1891), had their hides torn to bits for making faces at progress.

A school has been named in memory of James Butterworth Randol, general manager of the New Almaden Mines from 1870 to 1892. Under his critical and precise supervision the mines prospered while improving the welfare of the mining population. Past Pioneer President Laurence Bulmore and Mrs. Bulmore, who also served on our Board of Directors, presented the Randol School a magnificent framed portrait of Mr. Randol at the festive dedication ceremonies on May 27. Mr. Bulmore's father, Robert, succeeded Mr. Randol as general agent and coast representative for the company.

Your Trailblazer editors were ardent railroad buffs for about 30 minutes on June 23rd when the steam-powered red, white and blue Freedom Train paused to take on water at Truckee. The local fire dept. did the honors. Water tanks once provided such service but have long ago left the rail landscape. This was the first trans-Sierra crossing by a steam locomotive in 17 years. Diesel fleets now do the job. Here was one of the premiere Southern Pacific locomotives once hauling such name trains as the Coast Daylight, Sunset Limited, Lark, Shasta Daylight and Cascade. The engine was enroute east to link up with the historical rail museum which will travel the country during the Bicentennial year. The S. P. trains were hailed widely as "the most beautiful engines in the world."

TOURS: For reservations call Ruth Gross, 294-9830 between 9 AM and noon, Monday through Friday.

LUNCHEON CANCELLATION If you must cancel your luncheon reservation, phone 241-4436 or 294-1786

Our organization is growing; so is attendance at the quarterly luncheons. The June 7th Centennial meet attracted 478 related members and guests. This included all of the then living former Pioneer presidents; -- Allan Lindsay, Lovene Luhrman, Austen Warburton, Minnie Clark, Alice Vetterle, Laurence Bulmore, Leland Boruck, Lynn Vermillion, and Dr. C. Kelly Canelo.

The San Jose Junior League firmly entrenched in our heritage and its preservation have contributed \$15,000 for two unique permanent outdoor show cases for the Peralta Adobe Complex. The elegant kiosks will measure 7 feet in height and 4 feet square. The displays will dramatically depict Hispanic life styles of our early pueblo days in a setting to match. Ralph Rambo, artist-historian is contributing his talents to this generous undertaking.

"Mayor" and Museum Director, Don DeMers Jr. of Pioneer Town at Kelly Park, has announced the completion of the foundations for the Empire Firehouse and the Coyote Post Office. How about a visit to your museum to linger and tap a surging slice of yesterday? Ground breaking for the replica of Bank of Italy by the Bank of America is scheduled shortly.

Mrs. Fremont Older donated rose cuttings from 18 of California's 21 Missions to the Municipal Rose Garden prior to its dedication in 1937. Eleanor Vennum, our flower authority says, "although tenderly pampered, few remain." Sturdy survivors faithfully bloom in the Old Rose plot at the N. E. corner of the garden.

PLEASE do not overlook the handsome hardbound well-illustrated Memorial Edition of our Society's beginnings. Indeed, a gem to read and own. Available at the luncheon on September 6th, or you may write Lynn Vermillion, 2176 Cherrystone Dr., San Jose, CA 95128. (\$7.50 post paid)

DUES NOTICE: Our mailing address for dues (\$3 per year) is now Donald Tustin, Financial Secretary, P. O. Box 8208, San Jose, CA 95155.
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Welcome New Members

Alice E. Blair	Anthony T. Langone
Floyd W. Blair	Florence M. Lehmann
Naomi Bosque	Marie M. McCully
Delbert J. Bradley	Marie McKenzie
Gertrude Bradley	Lucille McKenzie
Ruth Payne Bradley	Elda Beth McLean
Edna M. Branch	Ann Meridier
Jane Bullock	Armand L. Meridier
Antone J. Chimenti	Ethel L. Mitchell
Geraldine V. Chimenti	Margaret R. Morgan
Alice V. Cornelius	Erile D. Null
Blanche M. Curtis	James Albert O'Connor
Patrina J. Dias	Mary Scimeca
Adaline Gagliasso	Gladys H. Smith
Mardi Gualtieri	Timothy K. Smith
Fred Hargesheimer	Inez Stelling
Roberta Hargesheimer	Angela Vicari
Mae Marr Hughes	Antone E. Vicari
Helen H. Iwasaki	Edith Helen Vicari
Ruth A. Johnson	Alma Weaver
Hazel J. Kellogg	Ralph Weaver
Nancy Kynaston	Edna Wiggins
Mary LaMarra	Mildred Wyatt
Angie Langone	Erma E. Young

Our SOCIAL CLUB meets at the Town Park Towers, at 60 North 3rd St., on the 1st and 3rd Mondays of each month. For further information call Lovene Luhrman, 292-0070



Beyond the sunset

Aug. 8, 1904 -	Cline Pearce	- May 13, 1975
May 10, 1889 -	Andrew J. Roll	- May 15, 1975
Jan. 23, 1894 -	Leland Miller Boruck	- June 12, 1975
May 28, 1888 -	Grace L. Herold	- July 16, 1975
Sept. 2, 1892 -	Muriel H. Lester	- July 29, 1975
IN MEMORIAM - This issue is dedicated to Leland M. Boruck Past President 1971-1973.		

P. O. BOX 8208
SAN JOSE, CALIF. 95155

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cial Secretary, P.O. Box 8208, San Jose, CA 95155

APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP - ADDRESS CHANGE: To Rupert
Moore, 1530 Emory Ave., San Jose, CA 95126

SICKNESS and DEATHS: Please notify Ruth M. Heath, 390
N. Winchester Blvd., 3-3G, Santa Clara, CA 95050
Phone 241-4436