

QUARTERLY BULLETIN
OF THE CALIFORNIA PIONEERS
OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY
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No. 3

"WHEN HITCHING POSTS OUTLIVED THEIR USEFULNESS"

The phrase "as useless as a buggy whip on a 747 jet liner" might apply to the long accommodating hitching posts of another day. Probing 1925 the Trailblazer finds hitching posts, which served pioneers as far back as 1875, were being banned from the city streets of Sacramento.

When this was revealed, San Joseans were motivated in locating hitching posts in their own downtown area. Horses were indeed becoming scarce at the time, but hitching posts more so. San Jose's city manager Clarence R. Goodwin had not yet issued such a ban but it did create

a city-wide interest in just how many hitching posts remained in downtown San Jose.

By 1926 a "post hunt" was on by concerned lovers of our past. Among the most unusual hitches located was an ornate iron post fronting the Bank of San Jose at the northeast corner of First and Santa Clara streets. A real handcarved wooden affair was entrenched at the James A. Clayton firm on West Santa Clara street. Four bedecked stone posts, hewed at the Graystone Quarry near New Almaden in the 1890's beautified the front of the offices of Drs. Charles, Clyde and Ray Wayland on North 3rd street with other Graystone hitches finding inactivity at the Plaza Hotel on St. John street, as well as the City Store, the supermarket of its day, at the southeast corner of South Market and Post streets.

If such a law was ever contemplated to discard our hitching posts, it failed to upset the community. Some moderns believed, at the time, a hitching posts was about the most useless thing to be found on the city's streets with horses already becoming as rare as a prune picker's pay day.



WHALE BLAZERS

SAN JOSE, 1880: Union Veterans were seeking to have May 30 (Memorial Day) set aside as a legal holiday.

April 1890: The San Jose Normal School's cost of \$100,000 had passed the State Legislature. All here were jubilant including lumbermen and brick makers.

SAN JOSE, May 1892: The Santa Clara County Medical Society was sending notices to all parties who were practicing medicine or selling nostrums in violation of the Anti-Quackery Act to the effect they would be prosecuted. Also after a heated discussion, a lady was admitted to membership.

1907, ATHLETIC GOSSIP: "The game of baseball has vastly improved in the past decade," reported the San Jose Mercury and Herald. "There was a time when numerous players were given to hours of riotous living, but that time is past and gone and baseball is embraced as a pursuit by men of good habits and thrifty ways. Those who maintain a too friendly intercourse with John Barleycorn are rapidly being eliminated and forced into other walks of life."

CAMPBELL, June 1907: The W.T.C.U. was awarding prizes for the best essays on the benefits of total abstinence. The contest was open to pupils of the seventh and eighth grades and the first year of high school. First prize of \$5 was awarded Helen Marshman and a \$3 second prize to Louise Austin.

SAN JOSE, 1907: The City Council delivered a knock-out blow to prize fights in the city. A fine of \$100 or jail would be the penalty for violators including those who aided or encouraged such exhibitions.

SAN JOSE, July 1907: An ordinance which suppressed the use of slot machines went into effect. The slots operating in the city numbered 206 and were being disposed of by their owners under threat of arrest and fines.

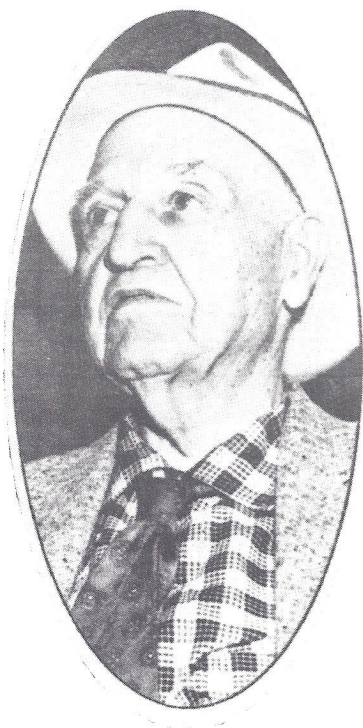
MORGAN HILL, 1909: Motorists passing this way had looked upon the community as a 20th Century robber baron who kept up the roads only to levy tribute on the unfortunate owners of automobiles. Ired motorists made known their feelings throughout the Central Coast. In good time, however, Morgan Hill upped the speed limit from eight miles an hour to 17.

SAN JOSE, July, 1907: Members of the Laundry Workers Union were firm for an eight hour day. Not one of the 150 members had reported for work. "Eight hours a day in the steam consumption breeding atmosphere is all we'll work," was the sentiment.

SANTA CLARA, 1934: When the city darkened due to the shearing off of a power line pole on the Agnew-Santa Clara road, old timers recalled the nights of the 1890's when "Pop" Holmes used to light gas lamps with a torch as he rode through town and how mischievous youngsters would climb the poles to extinguish the lights after "Pop" made his rounds on horseback. - H.C.

CULT KING OF THE SANTA CRUZ MOUNTAINS

by Bill Chivers



We had the world's perfect government right here in our Santa Cruz Mountains. That's what William E. Riker claimed. He also was called "Father Riker" by his followers, but most of the people who came in contact with him thought of him as a cultist fanatic who preached saving souls and practiced swindling suckers. He called his commune Holy City, about 186 acres on the old Santa Cruz Highway, a few miles south of today's Lexington Reservoir and across Highway 17 from Redwood Estates, above Los Gatos, California.

It was in 1919 that he brought his band of 30 disciples from San Francisco to this new community. They built a collection of ramshackle buildings that housed everything from a gas station to a print shop and a

softdrink bottling works. During the 1920's and 30's it was a thriving quasi-religious roadside attraction that was a perfect stretch stop for weekend tourists on the main road to the Santa Cruz area beaches. On the sides of the highway through Holy City were large signs of Riker's philosophy. There were religious peep shows with titles like "The Legs of Queen Elizabeth" and "Temptations of the Flesh" to tempt the sinner to look. He even had a zoo and a radio station. On one side of the town lining the road were giant wooden Santa Claus statues on whose bellies were carried such inscriptions as "If you are contemplating marriage, suicide or crime, see us first."

Riker's band of disciples numbered about 300 souls in the Depression days. Most of them worked without wages but received free food, shelter and clothing, except for Riker and his wife who lived in a nice white house on a knoll overlooking the community. The men and the women lived in segregated dormitories.

If Father Riker were to expound his philosophy lessons today, he would be run out of the country. Mankind, he said, was symbolized

by the human body: Jews represented the head and Gentiles the body. Asians were the arms and blacks the legs. He believed the white man was supreme. Riker was so impressed with his ideas he ran for governor of California four times and, strange as it may seem, he did not consider himself prejudiced. In 1938 he received 170 votes, in 1942 10,004 votes and in 1946 and 1950 entered both Republican and Democratic primaries, winning 13,534 and 14,957 votes respectively.

The press was always ready to cover Riker's episodes and there were many. He never spent a day in jail, but he was accused of bigamy, reckless driving, tax evasion, fraud, breach of promise, sedition, embezzlement, grand larceny and murder. The readers loved these sensational stories and Riker thrived on the publicity.

Riker claimed to have the solution to all of mankind's problems, but he was unable to keep himself out of trouble. Just before World War II a new state highway was built which diverted the traffic around Holy City, eliminating its primary source of revenue. Desperate for another way of attracting tourists, Riker announced in late 1939 plans to rebuild the colony into a single tower, made in the form of a beautiful woman sitting on top of the Santa Cruz Mountains. The tower-woman would be as large as the Colossus of Rhodes with 12 elevators inside. Riker put the project aside, however, when in 1942 he was arrested for sedition. The FBI seized 15 cases of documents at Holy City, including letters from Riker to Hitler. There also was a pamphlet in which he described Hitler as a "second Martin Luther," freeing the people from ownership of the international bankers. He advocated seeking peace with the Germans, but not with Japan.

Riker's attorney was Melvin Belli, whose grandstand techniques were to make him famous. Belli's closing argument to the jury was so moving that Riker himself wept. Belli presented his client as a "pitiful and pathetic" man, guilty of many things, but not of sedition. He won acquittal on all counts. The irony of this strange case was that Belli had to sue Riker for his fees.

The post war years saw further decline in Holy City and Riker kept trying to breathe new life into his colony, but ultimately lost control and other interests took control of the properties and sold off the land to a development company.

In 1966 at the age of 94 Riker became a Roman Catholic. "I was intelligently converted," he said. On December 3, 1969 Riker died in Agnews State Hospital after spending time in other state hospitals. He is buried in the Odd Fellows Cemetery in Santa Cruz. Many people say he should have been put in Agnews sooner and his ideas buried many years before he was, but no one will deny that William E. Riker was one of Santa Clara County's most interesting characters.

EARLY RESCUE HOME FREED GIRLS FROM A LIFE OF SHAME

Only in desperation was the San Jose Rescue Home established in 1900 when the need was propelled by the San Francisco Florence Crittenton Home. "Furthermore," reported the San Jose Daily Mercury, "administrators there made it very clear that two-thirds of their cases came from Santa Clara Valley and believed a major portion of the plight could be handled with a 'home' in our midst."

Ultimately by 1902 San Jose had responded to the crisis in the election of a San Jose Rescue Home board of directors headed by the Rev. John Crawford of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. "The Rescue Home," announced the Rev. Crawford, "is open for fallen women and girls as well as those in the danger of fallen." Located on E. St. John street the facility was not directly connected with the Florence Crittenton Mission on Fountain Alley in San Jose.

The long detained Rescue Home appealed to anxious parents and friends of wayward girls to have them brought in day or night as the Home was always open where arms of love, shelter and protection would be thrown around them.

"We have had six babies already born at the Home while sheltering little ones brought in by homeless mothers. Already over 30 ill-treated women and girls have sought consolation here," reported the Rev. Crawford. He said the lives of these unfortunate had been pitiable to the extreme with little or no restraining influences since childhood.

"One poor child here," he said, "had delusions that men were trying to break into her room at night since one horrible experience years before."

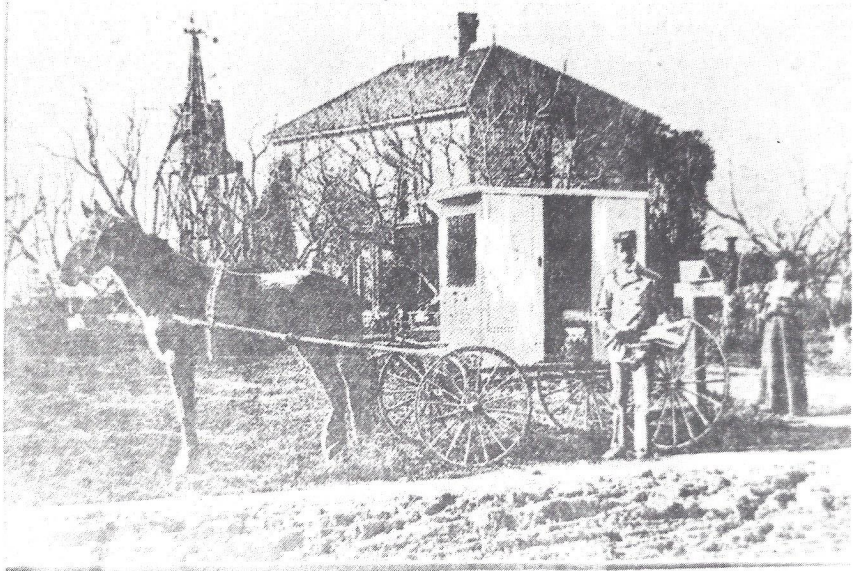
Matron of the Home was the steadfast Mrs. F.J. Griffith who was often asked, "Does the work pay?"

"Most emphatically it does and please remember all are some mother's girls. Every girl turned to a virtuous life is an immense danger taken out of your boy's pathway. Many of our girls return to their homes with the blessing of their families. Some marry. One attractive 'graduate' here left to become a nun," said Mrs. Griffith, widow of a Superior Court judge from Amador County.

The San Jose Rescue Home also made it known they were overly indebted to the clergy of the valley who had supported their work by their sympathy and financial assistance. The Ladies Guild of San Jose and the Needlework Guild of Cupertino as well as the Union Sunday School of Gilroy, business houses, citizens, farmers and householders near and far were applauded.

417,000 MILE MAIL CARRIER

Henry Calloway



This is John W. "Jack" Haynes, San Jose rural mail carrier, fronting his ranch on Lundy avenue near Hostetter road in 1903. Mrs. Haynes is on the right. This northern realm of the city was on Jack's 28-mile daily mail run then known as Route A. The mail wagon shown was built by Haynes himself at a time when his salary amounted to just \$500 a year and was required to furnish his own horse and conveyance.

The water tower at the back of the house was once a wine vat picked up by Jack when wineries were being affected by a severe blight. The Haynes homestead has since left the fleeting scene, however, a scattered few tilted tanks, less their windmills, were pleading for leniency when the Trailblazer went to press.

Last April, almost within spitting distance of our nostalgic zone, the South Bay's largest postal facility opened. This sprawling \$43 million complex commands 33 acres, once part of Haynes' rural free delivery domain.

For years old timers remembered Jack and his one-cylinder Brush automobile which he used after he retired his horse and wagon. The loud contraption was motivated by a chain drive to the rear wheels. He sat on one seat placed in the middle of the machine. In 1916 his now motorized 28-mile route was doubled to 54 miles per day and 600 stops compared to the 125 he had handled during his wagon

reign.

At times, weather permitting, Jack would take to his bicycle when his route reached his ranch as most of his mail had been delivered at this point. Near Alviso flood waters often caused trouble but he was always able to get his car through the situation even when it was over the running boards.

Being one of the oldest carriers in point of service it was only fitting that Jack Haynes should want to organize the California Rural Letter Carriers Association in 1903. This was said to have been the second organization of its kind in the county, New York claiming charter number one. Jack had been secretary of his organization for 14 years and in 1933 at the state convention, held in San Jose, was elected president emeritus.

On his retirement in 1934 he had been president of the Northern California branch of the association.

For an average of 306 days a year for 18 years Haynes traveled 54 miles a day and for 14 years previous to this hacked out 28 miles per day. This should total 417,384 miles. At 64 "Jack" Haynes was well remembered by his colleagues, near and far, with a retirement banquet at the Fior d'Italia Grill in San Jose. His head table "seat of honor" was appropriately a decorative bale of hay.

THE LYNN VERMILLION MEMORIAL ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Helen MacCarthy, Chairperson

First Award of \$500 to Jerry Ifft of Palo Alto for his "The Era of Dirigibles at Moffett Field."

Second Award of \$250 to Joan B. Barriga of Los Altos for her "Mary Bennett: The Black Knight's Lady."

Third Award of \$125 to Chuck Myer of Gilroy for his "As Time Goes By" (Relates to Gilroy's old city hall clock.)

Three Honorable Mentions of \$25 each were awarded to area high school students: Barbara Martin for her "Early Transportation Systems of San Jose", Yuka Nishino for "The San Jose State College Anti-War Riots of November, '1967," and Bobyn Sadler for "City Center Ballet of San Jose." All three winners are San Jose residents. Martin attends Willow Glen High School while Nishino and Sadler are students at Leland High School.

Congratulations all!

ARE YOU MOVING? PLEASE LET US KNOW

A phone call to Mary Wahlberg at (408) 374-5776 is a quick way to take care of this or you can write her c/o California Pioneers, P.O. Box 8208, San Jose, CA 95155.



NEWS 'BOUT MEMBERS

Your Trailblazer staff spent an interesting morning recently interviewing a very pleasant and intelligent lady said to be one of the oldest living persons born in Los Gatos. She is Mrs. Edna Curtis, a spry 93 year old Pioneer member and the oldest attendee of the Los Gatos Methodist Church. She related many interesting stories of her girlhood days in and around Los Gatos.

Her maiden name was Roberts. Her father had the local meat market, and would also deliver meat to ranches and homes in the Santa Cruz Mountains with his horse-drawn meat wagon. Mrs. Curtis' brothers were well known around Los Gatos. One of them, Herbert Roberts, was the first cashier for the First National Bank in town. Her husband, Floyd Curtis, had various businesses in Los Gatos, one being the first bus service from Los Gatos to San Jose with a stop in Campbell from 1915 to 1918; then in that year his brother, George, extended the service to Santa Cruz, using a nine and a twelve passenger Ford. They sold the business in 1920 to the Peerless Stage Company.

Floyd and his brother Paul (Los Gatos Mayor 1936-1940) had a hardware store in the 1920's and later started a tract of homes on a new street called Olive Avenue where he also had a service station. Mrs. Curtis said that like many other people, they lost most everything in the great Depression. Mrs. Curtis now resides with her daughter, Eleanor Robison, in Willow Glen where she just enjoyed the first visit of her 13th great-grandchild.

Bravo! to our Mardi Bennett on her delightful publication "Images of Long Ago" relating to a folksome century aimed at Los Gatos, Saratoga and Monte Sereno. Among its cookie jar items it takes off on our Myrtle Cox. "When my grandfather, Daniel, planned to marry Grandmother Sarah Kenyon, about 20 years his junior, he wanted their first house to be spick and span," tells Myrtle, "so he told his bride-to-be how he was going to glue cheesecloth to the interior walls and put newspaper up inside to keep out drafts. After a minute's thought Grandmother said, "That's fine, Daniel, but be sure to put the newspaper right side up so I can read it when I'm doing my housework."

Heartwarming Earl Wilson is a gent with many interests, one being a little backyard chicken raising. Recently a lady insisted that Earl provide her with a real crowing rooster, seldom heard or allowed nowadays. None the less Earl complied. The last we heard the rooster was still providing the lady her "cock-a-doodle-do" refrains.

NEWS UP DATE

The County Recorder has announced the openings of two satellite recorder offices in the Campbell and Milpitas Libraries to assist in providing certified copies of birth, marriage and death certificates and other official record indexes.

NEW EXHIBIT AT THE PERALTA ADOBE

Thanks to a grant from the Questors Foundation, a portion of the adobe interior has been restored to approximately its appearance c. 1810-1820. Two walls have been replastered and whitewashed. The Santa Clara County Woodcarvers Association is making reproduction furniture: a chest, benches and repisa (or shelf shrine). The exhibit will be completed by October, 1987. For tours of the Peralta Adobe contact the San Jose Historical Museum at 287-2290.

HISTORIC PHARMACY PROJECT GOOD MEDICINE

At the turn of the century 18 pharmacies were located in the four block area surrounding Market and Santa Clara streets in downtown San Jose. Last November San Jose pharmacist Joe Morrell and other local pharmacists founded the Santa Clara County Historical Pharmacy Association, a non-profit organization devoted to the history of pharmacy in the Santa Clara Valley.

As its initial project, this Historical Pharmacy group is working with the San Jose Historical Museum to construct a replica of a turn-of-the-century pharmacy on the museum ground. The building will provide exhibit space for the reconstruction of the interior of our bygone drugstore era, gallery space for displays relating to the history and practice of pharmaceutical science and office space to accommodate the on-going activities of the Historical Pharmacy Association. Currently they are raising funds to purchase a complete set of cabinets from the interior of an 1890's pharmacy of the Fresno Historical Society.

Interested in learning more about the Historical Pharmacy Association and its activities? Contact Joe Morrell at 377-5668 or Larry Melot, association president, at 629-9052.

Your TRAILBLAZER is grateful to Carl Heintze for contributing his computer skills toward our publication. Gracias, Carl.



Beyond The Sunset

Hilda A. Beecroft

Glenn Coil

Byron K. Bullard

Vivian C. Cortese

C. Kelly Canelo, M.D.

Lillian J. Murphey

Duncan Oneal

Alyce Walker

William H. Warburton



President's Message

Edward Allegetti

On July 13th the new board of directors met for the first time. Are you interested in learning about some of the new projects they are working on? Hopefully so because we are excited and want your support!

The following committees were formed to help implement our goals:

1. Publication Committee: to select essays of past Historical Essay Contest winners for publication as one book. Mrs. Helen MacCarthy is chairman.

2. Awards Committee: to select one member of the Society to receive the Pioneer Award for outstanding contributions to the community and up to three Honorary Members who have contributed to the community by historical or charity work. Mr. James O'Connor is chairman.

3. Painting Committee: to recommend the best course of action concerning the restoration of the Society's oil paintings which are being displayed at the San Jose Historical Museum. Among these works are Hill and Cooper. Donations are needed! Mr. Leonard McKay is chairman.

4. Youth Committee: to encourage younger people to join and to organize special activities for them. Remember anyone who is 18 or older (the ancestor does not need to be a member) is eligible. David McKinney, chairman of the Historical Heritage Commission of Santa Clara County, is chairman.

If you have any comments, suggestions, questions or want to serve on a committee, please write to the appropriate chairman or to me at the post office box. We do need your support.

Please remember Miss Alice Vetterle and Mrs. Mary Simas, who are ill, in your prayers.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Jacqueline Chelonis	Dolores E. Miller	Marguerite A. Sheehan
Emily C. German	Ruby Schultz	Frederick D. Southard
Anne H. Hootman	William C. Schultz	William J. Sullivan
Millie Le Juez		Nancy (Lynn) Waite



Touring With The Californians

HELP! PLEASE, WON'T SOMEONE VOLUNTEER?

We are in desperate need of someone to take phone reservations. Our long faithful Ruth Gross has retired. This phone connection is vital to our continuing with our trips. Hours can be adjusted to suit the individual and there is a small remuneration monthly. PLEASE call Barbara at (408) 356-0251. URGENT!

Sept. 23 CARMEL/PACIFIC GROVE 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. On the edge of magnificently scenic Highway 1 enjoy a luncheon to match the view at the "Frog House," also more time is promised for scanning Carmel plus activity watching.

Oct. 8-16 MISSISSIPPI RIVER CRUISE Hurry on this! Accommodations still available but selection is limited. Ask for special brochure and plan now to join us on this historic studded waterway.

Dec. 30-Jan. 3 NEW YEAR'S IN SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS This five day holiday starts at the elegant St. Anthony Intercontinental and Y.O. Hilton Resort, Mexican Fiesta, Wildlife Safari Tour, visit the L.B.J. Ranch and Johnson City. Detailed itinerary on this pleasant New Year experience.

For the above three trips call Barbara Johnson at (408) 356-0251 any day between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m. A waiting list is essential to all trips to cover cancellations. So please let us know if you are interested in joining us. We would like to put your name on the waiting list if the trip is filled at the time of your call.

1988 trips on the "Drawing Boards" include Death Valley in March, New Mexico in May and Australia in October.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP LIST GROWS

The recent reminders about Life Memberships have met with good response and we are pleased to announce we now have a total of 155 members in that category. As single members there are 95 and as couples 30.

Don't forget that these memberships are always available and cost only \$60 for singles and \$100 for a married couple. If you need more information, call Mary Wahlberg at (408) 377-5776.

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Sat. Sept. 5th

Pioneer Luncheon

PROGRAM
DAVID MCKINNEY
Chairman of the
Historical Heritage
Commission
of
Santa Clara
County

Menu:
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VEGETABLES - TOSSED SALAD
DESSERT - COFFEE

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Staff Artist - Ralph Rambo

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