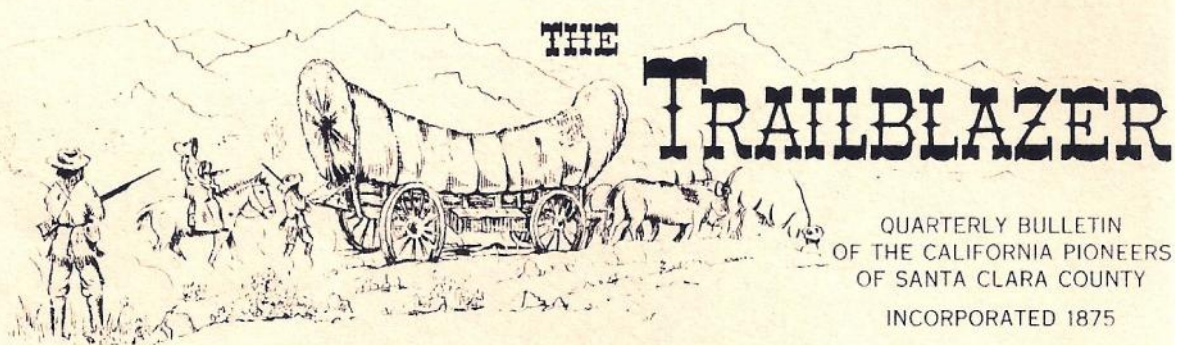




QUARTERLY BULLETIN
OF THE CALIFORNIA PIONEERS
OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY

INCORPORATED 1875

Volume 18

May 1978

Number 2



**THE CLOCK
NEL'S BUILT**

Old San Jose Post Office Of 1895

WHALE BLAZERS

June 1, 1878 San Jose Daily Herald

"A new rail track is apparently being built on Santa Clara St. with an eye for the good of carriage builders. We never saw any contrivance that looked so well adapted for the smashing and twisting of buggy wheels. Some preventive efforts should be made against this costly hazard."

July 1, 1878 San Jose Daily Herald

"Alum Rock is the place for recreation, everybody goes there. One hundred seventy buggies were at the resort Sunday."

July 5, 1878 San Jose Daily Herald

"Cook's Grove in Santa Clara accommodated over three thousand patriotic celebrants at the handsome retreat on The Alameda ---

O'Donnell's Gardens, near 10th and Williams Streets, due to a rather expensive 50 cent admission charge, found attendance somewhat disappointing ---

Live Oak Park near Guadalupe River and Park Ave. led a joyous celebration with two dance bands plus a fusillade of firecrackers, bombs, pistol and shot gun fire. A free lunch was included with the 25 cent entry charge ---."

It was also noted, "buildings in town were tastefully ornamented with our national colors ---."

San Jose, Oct. 1908 PRUNES BARRED!

"Prunes have been side-tracked in favor of peaches, apples, butter, syrup, griddle cakes and muffins, which have been given an important place on the menu of the soldiers of the U. S. Army, but not the prune!" This was the angry outcry of Mr. E. Schillingsburg, District Passenger and Freight Agent of the Southern Pacific Co.

April 1925

"Bobbed hair is held to blame for headaches. Devotees of the hair bobbing fashion are complaining of "Shingle headaches."

This is nothing more than a form of neuralgia, medical men admitted, caused by the sudden removal of hair from the tender nape of the neck which is then exposed to nippy weather."

H. C.



HOMETOWN BASEBALL

Avid baseball fans of another generation believed all roads led to a ball park. They tell when Luna Park lured up to 3000 frenzied fans the day the Spring touring Chicago White Sox were defeated by Santa Clara College eight to seven in 1914.

"Santa Clara Valley loved baseball and proved it by producing some greats in the game," says Pioneer fan Les Sheridan. Hal Chase came out of Santa Clara College in 1904, going on to become the top first basemen of all time. Then came Harry Wolters, a Bronco star who played in both the American and National Leagues from 1907 to 1917. Wolters later became a Stanford baseball coach.

Robert (Long Bob) Meusel, who was born in San Jose in 1898, played with the N. Y. Yankees from 1920 to 1929 as an outfielder along side the immortal Babe Ruth for at least nine years, Les tells. Bob's brother Emil (Irish) Meusel, an outfielder, was with the N. Y. Giants 6 years. In 1921-1922-1923 it was the Giants against the Yankees in World Series play. "Brother against brother," says Les, "with the Giants taking the series in 1921 and 1922."

Gerald Francis (Jerry) Coleman, who is a San Jose chap, played nine years with the Yankees, from 1949 to 1957. Coleman is presently television broadcaster for the San Diego Padres.

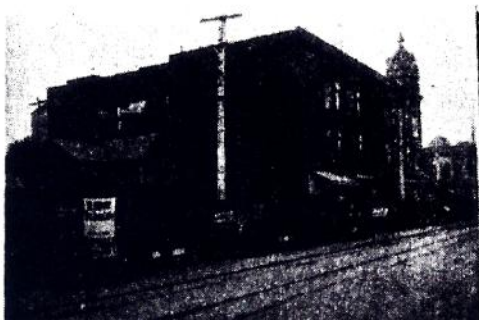
Engrossed Les recalls how an anxious rooter in 1925 desired more baseball other than just week ends. He was Ham Waggon, credited as being the father of San Jose night baseball. It was Ham who organized the staunch Twilight League. By 1926 Waggon boasted hustling evening teams like: Healds American Can, Firemen, Post Office, Shell Oil, The Unemployed Espees, Police and Wallis Tractors. Lee says all games were limited to 5 innings because the idea of lighted playing fields was still remote. You can bet then as now budding players cherished their well-oiled gloves as they talked of their double plays, heros and dreams. Today playing fields are lighted, diamonds and uniforms more dapper, but it's still, "Let's play Ball!"

H. C.

SIGHTS & SCENTS OF HALLA



MR. & MRS. HALLA, NO. FIRST ST. STORE 1909



IMPORT ARRIVAL 237-239 NO. FIRST STORE 1909



HALLA COFFEE TONNAGE FRONTS 2ND ST. STORE 1917

For a surge of aromatic nostalgia join us in a Halla Coffee Store reunion. Our principal in this "coffee break" assemblage is William M. Halla who was a prominent San Jose coffee importer and merchant for almost fifty years.

Halla was born in the State of Oaxaca, Mexico on the family coffee plantation in 1879. He came to San Jose at the age of nine.

Twelve years later in the shoestring summer of 1901 young Halla was operating his first store. The San Jose City Directory at the time lists: "William Halla, 9th and St. James Street, coffee."

William Halla, Jr. of Santa Clara relates how his ingenious father ground coffee there with a bicycle hitched to a coffee mill and how youngsters bickered to peddle the contraption.

The scents and blends of Halla's coffee prospered. In 1905 Halla moved to 237 No. First Street in the Moir Building at the corner of Devine. The forlorn building is still standing.

For several years Halla advertised his business as "The Mexican Coffee Store." Bill Halla, Jr. says, "Dad at one time was importing more green coffee than the

noted Hills Bros. Coffee Co. when a sack of Mexican green coffee weighed 150 pounds.

Halla specialized in custom batches of special blends. It was where our area's European families found their favorite roasted beans, one of the few sources in the West.

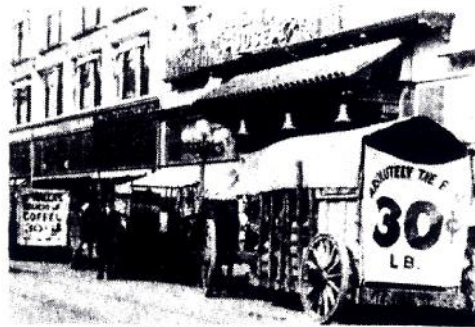
With continued growth Halla relocated to 65 South 2nd St. in 1912. He celebrated the occasion by featuring a blend labeled, "Cordelia," his wife's name. The new location increased its stock of rich exotic herbs, teas, spices and chocolate. Halla catered to a large restaurant trade from Palo Alto to Monterey. He also did a large mail order business.

Halla set out for Mexico every fall during coffee harvest. His plantation was in the district of Pochuela in Oaxaca. The harvest began in September lasting three months. The Sierra Indians came down the ribbed Pacific slopes in the southern state to pluck the prime crop. The coffee was taken on mule back to Port Angel where German and American steamers called to transport it to Hamburg and San Francisco.

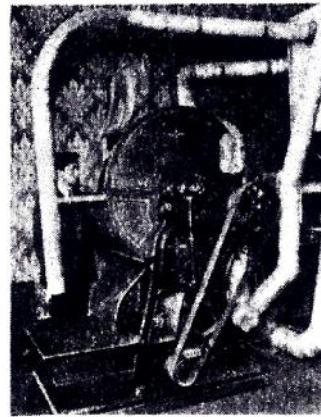
Clyde Arbuckle cites the resourcefulness of Halla who bought the sturdy Studebaker wagons from the Railway Express Co. when they converted to motor trucks. The wagons were put to more extended use on the Halla plantation.

Mr. Halla spoke Spanish and German fluently including several Indian dialects.

As our blossomed valley faded so did the memorable Halla courtship. Mr. Halla died in 1948 and his aromatic coffee store in 1956.



COFFEE SCENE SO. 2ND ST. 1917



COFFEE ROASTER-BLENDER
NO. FIRST ST. STORE 1909

THE CLOCK NEL'S BUILT

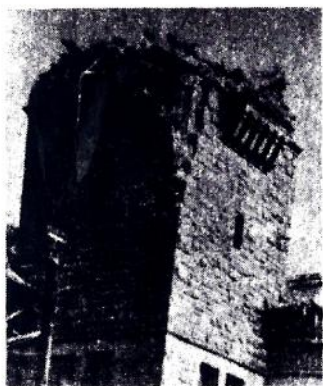
Old San Jose Post Office Of 1895



PRE-EARTHQUAKE CLOCK & STEEPLE

The brutish fury of the 1906 earthquake left a sorrowful number of ravaged structures in San Jose, among them the proud Romanesque style sandstone Post Office at Market and San Fernando Sts., completed in 1895. Grim earthquake reports rendered, "The clock and steeple of the Post Office no longer exists."

Undaunted, following weeks of laborious clean-up, action for a new tower and clock was pushed into action. Government officials who surveyed the damage judged the tower be redesigned as it appears today.



EARTHQUAKE RESULT OF 1906

Proving to be an outstanding human asset to the tower clock restitution was one Nels Johnson, creator and manufacturer of the renowned Century Tower Clocks. Johnson headed the big concern bearing his name in Manistee, Mich. He was commissioned by the government in 1908 to build and install his masterwork for the San Jose Post Office. This astonishing craftsman was 69 years of age at the time.

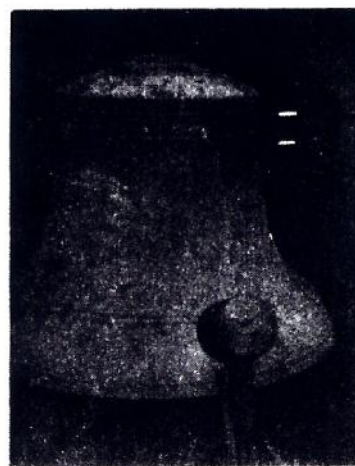
Nels was born in Den-

mark in 1838 where he mastered the fine art of blacksmithing. In 1861 he came to America plying his trade in Milwaukee; later establishing machine shops in Manistee, Mich. With inborn precision Johnson soon took to building structural tower clocks from the finest materials obtainable. His reputation spread as his clocks made him known throughout America and far off India where he directed the installation of the Century Clock "guaranteed to last a hundred years!"

Initial tower clock funding by the Federal Government amounted to a paltry \$600, far below the estimated cost of the project. Thanks to exhaustive attempts by Congressman Jay O. Hayes of San Jose, arrangements were increased on April 7, 1908 to \$2000 for the present clock plus \$5000 additional towards other structural improvements.

December 17, 1908 was a day to be long remembered as town folks hitched their rigs around City Hall Park to gather in wonderment at the Post Office as the big clock arrived from Nel's shops in Manistee, Mich. The next day witnessed the arrival of the 1500-pound bell from the Meneely Foundries out of West Troy, New York, stripped of its crating. On December 20, 1908 the 3/4 ton bell was hoisted in place without incident in just one hour.

Postmaster William Hawley, who was appointed postmaster by President McKinley in 1898, was assured by Johnson, "The clock and its tones will be such as to win the admiration for all San Joseans." Optimistic Johnson further pledged, "My crew will have it striking the last hours of the dying year and the first of the new."



As promised on December 31, 1908 his handiwork was operating and striking the hour for the first time at 12 P. M. The San Jose Morning Times of January 1, 1909 reported, "Yesterday at midday the new Post Office clock announced the hour for the first time in deep resonant tones which carried and echoed throughout the entire city."

Nels Johnson originally proposed to allow the new clock to usher in the New Year, but thought best to start it at noon the day before so any readjustments, if necessary could be made in the daylight.

Johnson's Century Clock has been grinding out the hours faithfully now for over 69 years. The clock is cranked up the lofty belfry every three or four days. The clock's three faces each measure almost seven feet in diameter are composed of highly-tempered glass panes. The twelve lines representing numbers are 16 inches high. The minute marks are six inches in length. Johnson was questioned on his preference for lines rather than numerals on clocks, however, it was soon agreed the old artisan had the right idea.

Sixty-nine years is a lengthy time to be punctual and time enough to observe countless landmarks within her sight and sound, which pleaded for salvation, crumble to dust.

The venerable sandstone structure housing Johnson's creation was a Post Office until 1934, a library until 1970 and is presently the San Jose Museum of Art.

On October 22, 1972 this first Federal Building of the city was declared State Historical Landmark No. 854. Somehow the achievement of this self-educated Scandinavian must have skipped a beat when the ceremony shunned his accomplishment. Without anguish the resolute time piece keeps ticking away minutes into history, certainly a tribute to Nels Johnson who was called on to heal a towering earthquake wound of 1906.



PETER LEWIS OF SAN JOSE ART
MUSEUM STAFF WINDS
NEL'S CREATION

by Henry Calloway



Carolyn de Vries

Dear Fellow Pioneers:

One of the most rewarding of my many duties as President of the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County will be to preside at the annual history essay awards luncheon meeting. I urge each and every one of you to be present on June 3rd at Lou's Village when we once again honor those people who are contributing to the research and knowledge of our local history. Your encouragement of these scholars might well help them to decide to pursue the fascinating study of local history for a career.

As my term draws to a close, I wish to thank the Board of Directors and the general membership for making my year as your president so enjoyable. The co-operation I received at all times has meant so much to me. It has been my pleasure and privilege to serve you this past year.

* * * * *

Mrs. Karne DeMers who is a volunteer in the Westwood Elementary in Santa Clara contacted me and asked if the 5th-6th combination class could enter our historical essay contest. Although there was no category in which they could apply, a special one was arranged with rules, regulations and awards of \$15, \$10, and \$5. Special arrangements were made with the San Jose Public Library for use of the California Room of small groups accompanied by Karen and a mother to supervise.

If the results are worthy of the effort, it is hoped to make this a yearly event. I feel it may develop into one of the most important projects the Pioneers could support - that of encouraging young people to learn and identify with their community and heritage.

The winners will be our honored guests and be introduced at our June Luncheon meeting.

Lynn Vermillion, Historical Essay Chairperson

Beyond the sunset

Mazie C. Crosby,	Kenneth J. Flynn,	Elsa Jensen,
Regina M. Martin,	Jennie Mirabito,	James Morton,
	George Peterson	

TRIPS to watch for in the June Trip Brochure but are
not available until the June 3rd Pioneer Luncheon.

July 1-4, 1978 Mammoth Lakes Area

August 15-18, 1978 Lagune Festival - Plus - Plus!

September 22 - October 8, 1978 Pueblos - Southern
 Arizona and New Mexico

RESERVATIONS for these trips may be made at the
 June 3rd Luncheon (NOT BEFORE). After the Luncheon, res-
 ervations are made by calling Ruth Gross at 294-9830.
 She is usually available to take your reservations Monday
 through Friday from 9 am to 12 noon ONLY. Please do not
 call her at other times. After confirmation by Ruth that
 space is available, then send your check payable to "The
 Californians" to 100 Serena Way, Santa Clara, CA 95051.
 Trip brochures are available by contacting Ruth Gross.

Welcome New Members

Angeline Aiello	Myron F. Davis	Vivian Moody
Alice Armstrong	Doris Davison	Ruth Powers
Rose Baglione	George Davison	Leona Moore
Ernest Berryessa	Villa M. Emley	Barbara Nunes
Marie Berryessa	Archie Finney	Edward Nunes
Laura Blockie	Juanita Finney	Margaret Petersen
Anne Brown	Dorothy Freeman	Thusnelda Poppe
Maynard R. Brown	John T. Freeman	Marion Ratto
Ruth A. Butcher	Norma Gwinn	Leah S. Rhodes
Adeline G. Cable	Wilbur Gwinn	Evelyn Rianda
Caroline Canfield	A. E. Hansford	Richard Rimple
Estelle Carbone	Marie Hansford	Grace Robertson
Katherine Cardoza	Lucille Holmquist	Custer Rudder
Angela Cusimano	Marie J. Howes	Esther Scott
Anthony Cusimano	Cliff B. Hunter	Kathryn Shambrook
Irene Cusimano	Jeffrey Hunter	Della Erta Simoni
Madeline Cusimano	Sylvia Jacobson	Ruth Stechelin
Sal Cusimano	Dolores E. Lowry	Karen E. Wagner
Vincent Cusimano	Margaret Lozito	Kim Wagner
Frances Daugherty	Sebastian Lozito	Mildred Wagner
Vernon Daugherty	Henry Luedemann	Vernon Welch
Genevieve Davis	Lenore Luedemann	Wilma Welch
Helen Davis	Doreen Magud	Olenna Williams
Homer W. Davis		Lillian Zaknich

JUNE 3rd. IS OUR ..LUNCHEON DATE

All Members ARE REQUESTED TO CALL

247-6606

FOR RESERVATIONS... *Lou's Village..*

IF YOU MUST CANCEL, CALL THIS SAME NUMBER

This is a 7 Day Week 24 Hour Answering Service

DOORS OPEN AT 10:30..... LUNCHEON AT 12

AN OPEN LETTER TO OUR MEMBERSHIP

The quarterly luncheon meetings are an important and joyful feature of your membership in the Pioneers. However, it has come to the attention of the Board of Directors that the March quarterly luncheon meeting was marred by discourtesy from a few of our members. As all of you are aware our luncheon meetings attract a large crowd and Lou's Village begins to fill up long before the 12:00 lunch. Since the waitresses must set up for the meal, sometimes long after many people have already arrived, it is requested that you give them every courtesy and do not set up chairs so that the legs are extending into the aisles. Also, we would like to suggest that you meet your friends in the parking lot and then all come in together so that it will not be necessary to hold places for such a long time. When our newer members arrive early and find so many seats being held, it does not encourage them to return. We know that all of you will try to create a more pleasant and friendly atmosphere at the June Luncheon.

The doors at Lou's Village will not be open until 10:30 am on June 3rd.

Thank you,
Your Board of Directors

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

ADDRESS CORRECTION
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1085 Tasman Dr. #404, Sunnyvale, CA 94086 Phone 734-0481