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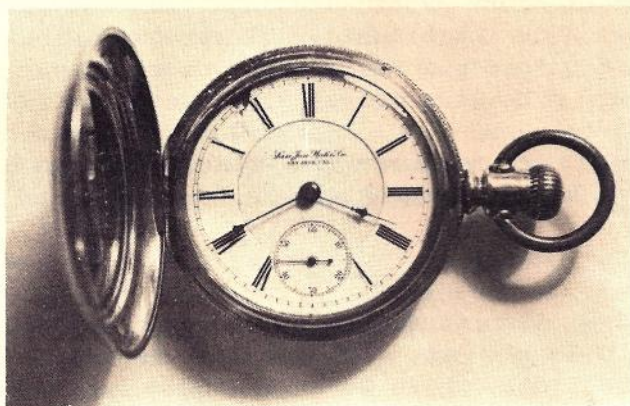
TRAILBLAZER

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

Vol. 15

November 1975

Number 4



1891 Alviso Watch Factory Product Still Ticks



WHALE BLAZERS

The departed Remillard Brick Co. on Story Road began operations on May 5, 1902. The total capacity, the largest in the state, was 82,000 bricks per day, or a total of 10 million bricks for an average season's run. Fall and winter rains curtailed operations.

Along about 1863 a young and sassy American San Jose was just out of short pants and in a jubilant mood. The city boasted 3600 inhabitants, 77 merchandising establishments, 18 hotels and restaurants, a newspaper, 9 billiard tables, 3 bowling alleys, 8 livery stables and no less than 44 saloons. An object of note was the town's six churches. As one observer wrote, "It can be seen that the Lord has one church to the devil's seven and one third."

In 1867-8 the rainfall here was high enough to give thoughts of a Noah's Ark. Unofficial records indicate over 40 inches fell while several houses left for Alviso without their owners' permission.

By 1870 Gilroy operated a brewery using local malt and hops while barreling over 1100 kegs the first thirsty year. To boot, The San Filipe Tobacco Co. was providing our country neighbors with a popular cigar. Also, two business-bent comrades went to scraping alkali off the edges of San Filipe Lake (Soap Lake) and ventured into soap production.

A verdict issued by the Commandant at Monterey in 1811 read: "The teacher has the right to correct and punish his scholars with advice, warning, and lashes in cases of necessity."

Overheard-----"Human beings make history - don't you ever take them out of it!"

....H.C.



Greatness Was Never So Humble

There were stars in the eyes of the 600 who crowded the small Alviso School assembly hall on this pleasure-giving June evening in 1925. A. P. Giannini, founder of the Bank of Italy in 1904 and titan in American finance, was to present diplomas to the school's elated graduates. Amadeo Peter Giannini who had attended the Alviso Grammar School in his youth had asked for the nostalgic assignment.

Almost every Alviso resident and the surrounding ranch population attended. Although he was the guest of honor, Giannini preferred to sit with the audience rather than take his place on the stage until his time came for the diplomas presentations. The commencement address was delivered by John Burnett the 1925 valedictorian of Santa Clara University. With the completion of informal talks by guests, Mr. Giannini stepped up to present the diplomas and also a gift to each graduate.

The photo above shows Giannini standing by the small desk at which he studied as a lad. The humble man smiled as he glanced down at the initials A. P. G. which he had carved there years before. Pictured are the four graduates: Jimmie Hiratsuka, Freida Baker, Lloyd Cesena and Dorothea Baker; Paul Dias, principal; A. P. Giannini; George Galagher, school official; Bessie McCabe, music supervisor and John Burnett.

A. P. Giannini liked "the little fellow." Guided by head and heart he labored to provide a hope for this overlooked citizen. "We never lost a penny," he often said, "on these small loans."

Born in San Jose on May 6, 1870 in an obscure lodginghouse of immigrant parents, he went on to trounce Wall Street and head the world's largest bank. Beyond a doubt Amadeo Peter was the foremost son San Jose ever produced.

.....H.C.

Capitola Beach Daze

Curt Bailey

I hope the following will bring back memories to those who enjoyed living in "The Valley of Hearts Delight" in the early 1900's and perhaps give the late comers some idea of how we managed in those days without gas guzzling autos to pollute the environment. For transportation we depended on the horse and buggy, bicycle or shanks mare.

We have read a lot lately about Santa Cruz and San Jose co-operating restoring "The Sun Tan Special" over the Santa Cruz Mountains to the sea coast. This Sun Tan Special took a scenic course through tunnels and redwood forests on its way to the beach. But these tunnels are closed now due to earth slides; so a survey is being made to see whether it is practical for the engineers to come up with a plan to by-pass these tunnels to reach the coast.

The following story appeared in The Evening News of July 27, 1895:-

"What the San Joseans are doing in Camp Capitola.

Capitola Ave. resembles a street in San Jose. The place crowded with campers. San Joseans still come and go. Out of the 1600 or more summer outers at Capitola, a full third hail from San Jose or vicinity. While a large number of San Joseans either rent cottages or own one on the bluff overlooking the camp, a heavy draft is now being made on the accommodations of Hotel Capitola by the home contingent

A. H. Jarman of San Jose run over from Santa Cruz for a hasty visit to friends in Capitola.

Mesdames A. McDonald and G.C. Drew are among the guests at Hotel Capitola.

Master Francis Marten delights in the beach where he can be found at all hours with his spade and shovel.

Miss Louise Stock is among the popular San Jose young ladies now in camp.

Watkins Hyde has arrived in Capitola to the great delight of the young ladies. He is the most

popular young man in camp.

Walter Jamison is in Capitola for a week.

Tony Delmas, the cyclist, is devoting much time to his wheel.

E. T. Coopers of San Jose is spending a few days here.

Fred Frank, the young and popular Santa Clara, is enjoying seaside life immensely now at Capitola.

He has his bicycle, but other weighty matters demand so much of his time that he seldom finds opportunity to use it.

Mr. & Mrs. Otto Ziegler are among the San Joseans at Capitola.

John Manzer (my Horace Mann School principal) and wife are spending the month in camp."

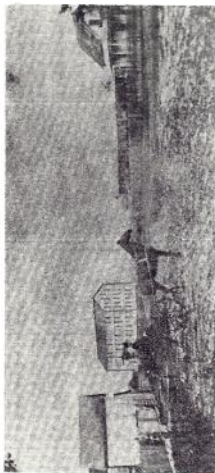
Roy Field, who was assistant registrar of voters in Santa Clara County before his retirement, invited me each year to share a week in the family cottage on the hill behind the Capitola Hotel. Roy and I would ride the red electric cars to Los Gatos, then take the Sun Tan tracks to Alma, then up the hill to the dusty San Jose-Soquel Road for the shanks mare trip the rest of the way. We managed to help ourselves to mountain apples on the way to supply the energy required to finish the trip.

Besides dipping in the surf each day we would hike down the trail from the railroad track to Fisherman's Beach, now Seabright, picking wild blackberries on the way.

The big event of the week would be taking the electric car, after dressing up with a necktie, to Santa Cruz for a day on the board walk. This included going over the big dipper in the swimming pool, a ride on the scenic railroad, and spending what nickels we had left in the nickelodeons.



The famous Capitola Resort Hotel circa 1906 burned to the ground on December 16, 1929.



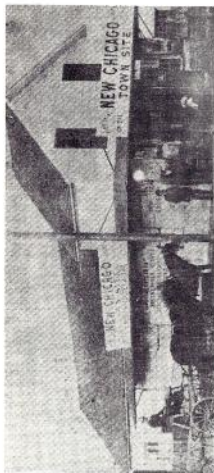
'NEW CHICAGO'

AN ALVISO DREAM CITY EPISODE

Time ran out on P. H. Wheeler. His impoverished watch factory in Otay, San Diego County ceased to tick by 1889. Spirited Wheeler did not entirely strike out, however, quick as the schemer he was, he devised other means to rekindle a depleted bank roll and in some fashion liberated a sizeable bit of a defunct watch works. With adept suddenness Wheeler cast a fascinated eye to Alviso, Calif. The well-suited bay-side community, he learned, was one of the oldest towns in bountiful Santa Clara County, being unincorporated in 1852. As early as 1849 it was predicted Alviso would become a great city and P. H. Wheeler envisioned he would be the one to make it so. Alviso had already been declared a port of entry by Congress in 1862. By 1878 the South Pacific Coast Railroad was adding to its potential. Here Wheeler's courtship began and he would name it New Chicago. Wheeler even embellished the promised land with street names befitting a teeming metropolis such as: Wabash, State, Michigan and Grand Blvd.

He had little difficulty converting prominent valley businessmen that here was a site ripe for expansion. His newspaper ads were well planned and impressive. An April 1891 ad proclaimed, "The man who makes money in real estate is the man who buys ahead of improvements, in a place where people are sure to come. The land around New Chicago is rich in productive soil, capable of producing enormous crops. Its 'back country' is also capable of supporting an enormous population, and in fact Alviso is thickly settled now. This coming summer," the ad continued, "will witness busy scenes at New Chicago. Her superb location and unrivaled advantages are worth your consideration." Lots in the venture ranged from five to two hundred dollars according to location.

Wheeler spearheaded the undertaking to financially assist with numerous legal problems and to retrieve re-



leased watch tooling equipment from Otay, so as to anchor his proposed South Bay Utopia.

On May 25, 1891 a stock holders meeting of the now San Jose Watch Factory was held and a board of directors elected. Wheeler was supposedly in business; watch factory stock and lot sales looked promising. By September a three story wood and brick structure loomed over the marshes as released machinery from Otay was firmly set in place, with production scheduled for October. Expectations for a bustling new era ran high. The hiring of the foremost specialists in the watchmaker's art had not been overlooked. Craftsmen from Elgin, Ill. and Waltham, Mass. were recruited. The stage was set. Reports gave every assurance dividends would be paid the first year. The high regard for the watches was already established and the factory looked to run to full capacity from the start.

Somehow somber clouds gathered and the \$350,000 realized from the optimistic promotion was just not enough. The entire affair was doomed. "Main Spring" Wheeler and New Chicago's attempt to greatness faded. Disregarding a dismal defeat the San Jose Watch Factory beat long enough to produce a number of elegant timepieces; some in payment for services rendered. The distressed equipment was sold to a firm in Japan which continued to turn out watches inscribed "San Jose Watch Factory California."

The San Jose Historical Museum today safeguards five of the notable watches. Although the enterprise failed, the ill-fated factory was a phantom landmark for years, being dismantled in the mid 1920's.

The elite street names and "Broken Spring" Wheeler's 'back country' still remain, reminders vividly framed to Alviso's untimid past.

....H.C.



Anthony R. Sapena

The Sept. 6th Quarterly Luncheon was a most successful and informative one. The speaker was Father Gerald McKevitt from the University of Santa Clara. His very interesting and informative talk on the history of the University of Santa Clara was well received by the 368 members and guests present. Our Dec. 6th Luncheon Meeting promises to be another most successful one. Our 1st Vice Pres., Clyde Arbuckle, has an excellent yuletide singing group lined up for that meeting. Please keep the date in mind and make your reservations early.

Our 2nd Vice Pres., Byron Bullard, and his committee have prepared a "Who Are We" information sheet on our organization and copies will be available at the Dec. 6th luncheon. This sheet will inform prospective members and others about our organization. These sheets should assist in our recruitment of new members.

Again, remember the December 6th Quarterly Luncheon Meeting and make your reservations early. Members are encouraged to arrange to stay for the business meeting and participate in the discussion and decisions of our organization. Only in this way can your Board of Directors and Officers carry out the goals of our organization. We look forward to seeing you at Lou's Village, December 6, 1975. May every blessing be yours this season.

Look For It Here

We have repeatedly failed to honor a pioneer who revolutionized agriculture in Santa Clara Valley by successfully introducing the French prune here in 1856. He is Louis Pellier. A Pellier Memorial Orchard Park project is presently being spearheaded by two tireless historians, Leonard McKay and Jim Arbuckle. Pellier's nursery site at St. James and Terraine Sts. is Designated State Landmark #434 near where the famous prune strain was produced. Help in obtaining adjoining property has been good, but more help is vital. Contributions, however small, may be dispatched to the Trailblazer editor. What better way to transmit to future generations a faithful, and correct history of the past!

SHAPE AND BAKE: Mrs. Clyde Arbuckle resurrects a few 1904 homespun kitchen keepsakes on fruit cake baking we wish to share: "To insure good results bake fruit cake in a pasteboard corset box; 16 x 5 inches is a good size. Storekeepers are glad to give them away. It is well to choose boxes not less than two inches deep, three is better. Line the box with well greased manila paper, pour in the batter, place a well greased manila paper over the corset box and put on the lid. Place in a slow oven and bake until the cake is done through, no longer. This requires at least five hours. When baked in this way, the cake will retain the fruit flavor with no hard crust or scorched taste. Do not bake a cake weighing over 15 lbs. in an ordinary oven, unless you are so fortunate to have an old fashioned brick oven in your house."

Our last issue commented on the Mission Rose plot at the Municipal Rose Garden. A call from Mrs. M. T. Battle, a fervent rose lover in Santa Clara, says she maintains over 60 varieties of roses, among them the elegant Rose of Castile which was the splendor at Mission Santa Cruz during its padre years.

A reply from Ferndale, Calif. informs the Trailblazer concerning the old fire "hand pumper" once the pride of San Jose Volunteers. We learn the old apparatus has long left the Humboldt County city. George Waldner of Ferndale says Norman Clough, the former fire chief there, believes the pumper was sold to Hollywood around 1920. It was purchased from San Jose in the late 1800's, taken to San Rafael for tests and shipped by boat to Eureka and back to Ferndale. We thank Mr. Waldner for the information along with a photo of the old "squelcher" showing Ferndale's turn-of-the-century volunteers alertly standing by.

HOLIDAY GREETINGS

AND MAY THE SEASON BRING YOU EVERY HAPPINESS

A delightful garden party at the home of Mrs. Melita Oden the Saratoga Historian Foundation recently honored a cherished charter member, Mrs. Emma Garrod. Mrs. Garrod who will be 93 years in November is a Foundation Board member and has been its recording secretary since 1960. This amazing lady has just authored a book, "One Life, Mine."

CALLING ALL MEMBERS 85 OR OLDER A special table is being reserved for you at our December Luncheon. Please call Byron Bullard at 734-0481 before Nov. 25th or Ruth Heath after this date at 241-4436.

An Apple for the teacher: Inez Getchell comes up with an interesting bit of recall: "A lovely association!" she writes, "Three of my Gardner School sixth graders are in our Pioneer Social Club with me. They are: Edith Covert Young, Alice Covert and Annie Peters. All three are in their seventies and I'm in the eighties. Nothing could be nicer." Thank you, Inez. You are forever counting your blessings.

By vote of your Board of Directors at the Aug. 11th Board Meeting, it was so ordered to drop from membership any person whose dues are in arrears one year.

Barbara Johnsen hops aboard as the chairperson heading our Tour Committee. Happy Trails, Barbara.

A healthy turn out witnessed the Dr. Warburton Doctor's Office dedication at the San Jose Historical Museum on Sunday, Oct. 12. The one time familiar Santa Clara wood-awning office, laboratory and waiting room now offers the visitor a captivating exhibit of surgical equipment and the art of healing of another day. Office visiting hours: daily 10 to 4:30.

At our stimulating Sept. meet Father Gerald M. McKevitt, S.J., asst. professor of research at the University of Santa Clara unleashed a host of historic tidbits regarding the school's 1851 beginning. To name a few: "Santa Clara is the only mission to alone become a college and university. Shipping a pre-fabricated school via Cape Horn was considered but rejected, favoring a crude structure endowed with dirt floors, rough stools and tables and a leaking smoky stove. Here ambled 16 students, 2 steadfast faculty members and \$160 in the treasury. Where a bountiful mission orchard once held forth and students helped harvest is the site where the Broncos now attempt to score touchdowns."

Welcome New Members

Frances Berryessa
Dora Bogetti
John Bruzzone
Julie Bruzzone
Lillian Burt
Mary Della Maggiore
Loretta I. Dewing
Theresa C. Dinapoli
Mary R. Dunham
Esther L. Gierdal
Mary F. Gray
Mary Frances Gurkovich
Mildred M. Hanna
Eunice Huss
Barbara Johnsen
Elizabeth C. Krauss
Florence Luhisen

Oliver Kenton Morton
Pauline K. Morton
C. R. (Bob) Nelson
Helen Nelson
Charlotte L. Nick
Olive L. Seal
Esau Shimizu
Kay Shimizu
Lynn D. Smith
Mildred Smith
Notia Smith
Ann Spinelli
Esther L. Steele
Dorothy Swanson
Helen Wilson
Clyde C. Welch
Marjorie Welch

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.

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



Beyond the sunset

Dec. 30, 1889 -	Mamie Dalis	- Dec. 27, 1974
-----	Frank E. Pascoe	- Jan. 8, 1975
Dec. 15, 1895 -	Margaret E. Knacke	- May 25, 1975
June 14, 1894 -	Mabel L. Spalding	- July 13, 1975
Sept. 12, 1888 -	Marie Moore	- Aug. 6, 1975
Aug. 8, 1896 -	Hilda C. Fischer	- Aug. 15, 1975
-----	Mary D. Ferry	- Aug. 16, 1975
Dec. 21, 1900 -	Joseph M. Kottinger	- Aug. 21, 1975
May 3, 1900 -	Bernice R. Barr	- Sept. 17, 1975
Sept. 16, 1896 -	Hobart M. Royce	- Oct. 8, 1975
May 20, 1892 -	Juanita Roth	- Oct. 19, 1975

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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