



Volume 11

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ACHIEVEMENT

Miss Cecilia C. O'Neil one of our newer members has received many honors. The following are a few excerpts from the Biography of Cecilia O'Neil released from the National Retired Teachers Association Headquarters.

"She was graduated from San Jose State Normal June 1908. Attended University of California and Stanford.

Elementary school teacher in San Bruno. Teacher of Physical Education in San Jose High School and Supervisor of Physical Education for all San Jose Elementary Schools 1914-1932. Dean of girls and Vice Principal of San Jose High School 1932-1952. President, California Teachers Association (Bay Area) 1945-1946. President, California Retired Teachers Association 1957-1959. Vice President, National Retired Teachers Association 1958-1967. President, National Retired Teachers Association 1967-1970.

Named Teacher of the State of California 1958, Horace Mann Apple Award. Named the Honorary Member for the State of California, Delta Kappa Gamma, at the annual convention, March 27, 1968. Recipient of Resolution from the Assembly, California State Legislature May 1969. Honor: The Cecilia O'Neil Scholarship of \$1,000 to be awarded to graduate student for study at the Ethel Percy Andrus Gerontology Center at U.C.L.A.

October 1970, elected by the Alice Gem Harrison Associates to be the recipient of the President Richard M. Nixon's Proclamation of American Education Week, also recipient of the (Dwight Eisenhower) GOLD KEY, designating the TEACHER of the NATION 1970. First presentation was by a former student, Norman Mineta, Vice Mayor of the City of San Jose, on November 17, 1970 in the San Jose Auditorium. The second was held at the Wilshire Methodist Church in Los Angeles January 24, 1971."

STEVENS CREEK BOULEVARD 121 YEARS AGO!

(Our thanks to Ralph Rambo and Ed Carroll for making it possible to secure a photostatic copy of Michael Sainor's letter dated January 17, 1850. The property described fronted on Stevens Creek Road about where the present Auto Row is located. It contained 148 acres.)

Santa Clara, January 17, 1850.

Dear Brother, Friends and Neighbors:

After many months I take this opportunity of letting you know where I am and how I am and how I do.

My farm is about 50 miles south of San Francisco. Eight miles from the Embarcadero is the head of navigation on the bay, four miles from San Jose, the seat of government. It is two miles to the Mission of Santa Clara. San Jose contains a population of 4000 people and is considered quite important, being the Capitol of the State. Santa Clara is a flourishing and thriving village containing a population of 1000. Last year I opened a small farm of ten acres. You would be amused to stand here in the markets and hear them talk about sale of produce. You would never believe that the word bushel is never used. Everything goes by the pound, corn, oats, barley. Flour is 10¢, beef 10¢, butter \$1.00. Potatoes are now selling for 10 cents a pound. You will see from this that provisions are very high and where a person has all this to buy it is quite expensive. Boarding at the hotel is quite expensive running from 16 to 21 dollars a week. It is now winter, still we are enjoying the mildest weather imagineable. Many of the farmers are plowing their land and sowing wheat. I finished sowing my barley and wheat a few weeks ago. Wild oats are beginning to spring up all over the valley, and in a few weeks will furnish a rich range for cattle and hogs. We do not pretend to feed stock, Winter or Summer. Nature herself furnishing at all times a rich range for the thousands of cattle that are scattered over the valley. A common shoat will sell for 25 or 30 dollars. There are few hogs in the valley. Most of the cattle belongs to Spaniards and are very wild. The horses of this valley are greatly inferior to those in the States.

You would be delighted to be here in the Summer when the wild oats and clover cover the whole earth with one continued coat of green, giving the valley the appearance of one delightful meadow. But you must not think this charming region is lying here neglected. No, it is all claimed up. Not a single inch of land vacant. I was the first man to locate a claim in this part of the

valley. That was a little more than a year ago. I can now stand in my yard and count at least 20 houses that have been erected since that time. The land all around me in every direction has all been taken up and the whole valley is filled with Americans. Unimproved claims are selling at \$500 to \$1000. Frank arrived here in September safe and sound. Both he and Jack have good claims and are drilling wells. Mike also has a good claim.

Write to me as soon as this comes to hand. When you write direct your letters to Santa Clara, California.

I remain as ever, your affectionate brother,

Michael Sainor

(later changed to Sanor)

* * *

GRANDMA BASCOM

With permission of the author, Ralph Rambo, we have selected a few colorful excerpts from the Grandma Bascom story as told in his latest book "Adventure Valley" now on sale at most book stores. Doctor and Mrs. Bascom and the children came overland from Kentucky, arriving in October 1849. The following is from her own account of conditions in San Jose at that time:

"The Doctor stayed in San Francisco to buy and ship furniture and provisions. We came to Alviso in the boat and paid \$150 in fare, just for me and the children. From Alviso we came to San Jose by the Pioneer Stage, through the fearful mud and pouring rain, paying an ounce \$16) each for fare.

"I bought a burro load of wood for an ounce. Everything cost an ounce. Wheat was 75¢ a pound, eggs \$3 a dozen. A chicken cost \$3, milk \$1 a quart, butter \$1 a pound. But these prices matched all around. Doctors charged \$5 for pulling a tooth. The doctor came with our furniture. The roof leaked and he paid \$500 to get shingles put on our roof.

"People began to ask if they couldn't stay with us. Everybody had to be hospitable. The Legislature was in session and the town was more than full. The first thing I knew I had thirteen boarders--senators, representatives, ministers and teachers. Nobody who came would go away. It was as good as play to see them help me. Mr. Leek (enrolling clerk in the Legislature) was a wonderful hand to make batter-cakes, and our house was dubbed "Slapjack Hall." It stuck to us.

"The March of that winter was something to remember. People used to get swamped on the corner of First and

Santa Clara Streets. A little boy was drowned there. It was a regular trap for children.

"Did I tell you I built the first church and school house in San Jose? I did. I built it all alone, with my own hands, and the only tool I had was a good stout needle. It was the famous "Blue Tent." Mr. Blakslee bought the cloth and I cut it out. It was of blue jean and cost seventy-five cents a yard. The Presbyterian Church was organized in it and Mr. Blakslee had a school in it.

"I had a party, too, one day, and I made an elegant cake, which I was going to pass around in grand style. I began by passing it to one of the Spanish ladies, and she took the whole cake at one swoop, wrapped it up in the skirt of her gorgeous dress and said, "muchas gracias!" I was never so surprised in all my life.

"When I look back it seems to me that I never had such an intellectual feast as in old "Slapjack Hall." The gentlemen who figured as cooks in my kitchen were the most intelligent, agreeable and educated men you can imagine. I don't believe we ever again had such a choice set of folks under our roof here in San Jose. Doctor and I felt honored to entertain them.

"Yes, indeed, there never were finer people than my boarders and neighbors in '49. General Fremont and his wife were here and there were the Cooks, Hoppes, Cobbs, Jones, Branhams, Beldens, Hensleys, Williams, Bralys, Hesters, Crosbys, Murphys, Dickinsons, Hendersons, Kincaids, Campbells, Reeds, Houghtons, Tafts, Moodys, Picos, Sunols, C. T. Ryland, P. O. Minor and Dr. Cory. They all will remember it well.

"In 1852, we moved out on the Stockton ranch and bought our farm in Santa Clara, on which we built our permanent home, "Somerville Lodge." I remember we paid our head carpenter \$16 a day. The house cost us \$10,000. It would now cost us \$1,000. We bought seeds to plant in the garden, an ounce of onion seed cost us an ounce of gold! We paid \$6 each for our fruit trees. A mule cost us \$300, a horse \$400. But doctor's services were just as high priced, so we kept even."

For the Valley newcomer, Somerville Lodge was on the southern outskirts of Santa Clara and Grandma Bascom's account should endow her namesake Bascom Avenue of today with poignant memories of the past.



GENERAL VIEW OF FURNACES AND CONDENSERS, HACIENDA.

The above photograph (circa 1890) is a good picture of the main furnaces and condensers at the New Almaden mines. The quicksilver was freed from the ore by distillation. The ore was baked in the furnaces by direct contact with the fire and the quicksilver passed off in the form of vapor was conducted by iron flues into the condensers and thence into a container.

In November 1845 Captain Andres Castellero of the Mexican Army in California filed his claim for 3000 varas (yards) in each direction from the mouth of the red cave containing cinnabar along Alamitos Creek near what is now the town of New Almaden.

In 1846 Barron-Forbes & Co. gained control of the cinnabar mine by purchasing a majority of the shares of stock and formed the New Almaden Co. They began extensive mining operations immediately.

In 1851 litigation over title to the mines began and lasted for 12 years. The U. S. Supreme Court finally reached a 4 to 3 decision, whereby the Quicksilver Mining

Co. paid the New Almaden Co. \$1,750,000 for 8580 acres of land and all improvements thereon.

In 1865 the New Almaden mines became the largest producers of quicksilver in the world. There are over 100 miles of shafts and tunnels in the property the deepest being 2,500 feet, the bottom of this shaft was 800 feet below sea level.

* * *

REMINISCING

Ruth M. Heath

At the Christmas meeting of the Santa Clara County Pioneers, Mr. Arbuckle mentioned some places of business well known in earlier days. This started me on a train of thought evolving into a game which has brought me much enjoyment.

Why don't you try it? List alphabetically all the stores you can remember which have not been in business in San Jose for the last five years.

- A- Arcade, Allen's Emporium
- B- Belloli Grocery, Bothwell Jewelry
- C- Coff Club, Curtis & Henkle Drugs
- D- Doerr's Bakery, Dixon Leather Goods
- E- Enterprise Grocery, Eagle Brewery
- F- Farmer's Union, Fisher & Pellerano
- G- Gold Nugget Creamery, Graebe's Confectionery
- H- Hunt's Bakery, Home Union Grocery
- I- Ideal Tea Co. (my father was manager years ago)
- J- Jarman's Paint Company, Jacob's Clothing
- K- Klinkert Millinery, Kocher Jewelry
- L- Lyric Theatre, Lamolle Grille
- M- Madsen Furniture, McKee Paint Co., Merry-Go-Round
- N- Nathan Dohrman Co., Nathan's Department Store
- O- Owl Drug Company, O'Brien Candy Store
- P- Prussia's Ready to Wear, Pollyanna Bakery
- Q- Quality?
- R- Ryder Jewelry, Roberts & Gross Department Store
- S- Springs Men's Furnishings, Saratoga Market
- T- T & D Theatre
- U- Unique Theatre
- V- Victory Theatre, Valley Hardware
- W- Wendt's Market, Women's Exchange
- Z- Zarccone's

This game, if played after you have gone to bed, is guaranteed to either put you to sleep or keep you awake. It works both ways for me.

* * *

LADY PIONEERS!

(The following contribution from Helen Arbuckle was taken from "The Pioneer" (forerunner of the Trailblazer) dated July 7, 1877).

"Brother Gibson said he had been tackled recently at the Pioneer picnic and on other occasions by at least a score of ladies asking why it is that the Pioneers do not allow ladies who are also Pioneers to become members of the Society. The argument was that the Old Boys were fast wearing out, liable to get sick and all that sort of thing, and that with lady members in the Society they could be better nursed and taken care of in sickness and in trouble.

Brother Daly had no objection to lady members; he never had; but he didn't believe it would work well. He mentioned several who would be sick and under the care of these nurses most of the time.

This lady membership proposition was considered by all the Old Boys present as a sort of startler, a new racket altogether, and after some more lively and amusing discussion the subject was dropped, and the meeting adjourned."

* * *

The following interesting information was received with an application for membership from Mr. Frank Tregoning: "I was born in Almaden. My father was a miner there for many years. My Uncle Henry was the engineer and my Uncle Bill Stiles was yard foreman for 35 years. Later my family moved to a ranch on Mt. Hamilton Road. My father set out the first apricot and prune trees in that district in the 1890's. He was hired by Mr. Hugh Center who owned the San Jose Electric Railway to Alum Rock Park as a powder monkey. He did the blasting to build the line through the long tunnel for the electric trains. He also blasted out the rock on the hills to build the first soda spring at Alum Rock Park. He was then hired by the county to do the blasting for the gravel for the county roads. My mother came to Almaden from England as a girl at the age of nineteen and married my father about 1888." ***

Santa Clara County had 27 post offices in 1888, some of them are almost forgotten by most of us. Following are a few old timers: Agnew(no s), Alma, Alviso, Bell's Station, Coyote, Evergreen, Frohm, Gilroy Hot Springs, Guberville, Hillsdale, Lawrence, Madrone, Mayfield, Patchin, San Felipe, Sargent and Wrights.

* * *

EL DORADO

The following was submitted by one of our members, Mrs. Marie Biel Barr, whose husband came to live in San Jose with his parents in 1919. The article is about Mr. Barr's grandfather, printed in the Scott Valley Advance, Siskiyou County, 1904.

"The gold excitement of California was at its highest and Mr. Aaron Barr's adventuresome spirit could not resist the temptation which the new El Dorado offered. Accordingly he left New Orleans and took passage via the Isthmus of Panama for San Francisco, where he landed in the Spring of 1850.

"Hearing of the newly discovered mines in Northern California, he left San Francisco and came with a pack train to Yreka in May 1852. He located at the town of Hawkinsville, where he opened a trading post and began to supply the miners. His early training and keen insight into business made him successful, and in a few years he had accumulated quite a little fortune.

"In the summer of 1858 he met and wed Miss Fanny Hillburner, with whom he lived a long and happy life. Their meeting was as romantic as it was singular. He had been to Yreka on a business trip and was returning home on foot, and when near Hawkinsville met Miss Hillburner, with whom he was but slightly acquainted, who was crying piteously. On inquiring the cause of the trouble, she informed him that her people had selected for her a husband whom she did not love, and were insisting that she should marry him. Through life he was a man of quick decision of character, and at once told her he could devise a way out of this trouble, and when she eagerly inquired how, his answer was, "marry me." She consented, and they immediately returned to her home for the purpose of procuring her clothing. But these were refused, and, dressed as she was, they set out for Yreka for the purpose of being married. After procuring a license, they went in search of the judge, Hon. A. M. Rosborough, who was then holding court. A messenger was sent into court and the judge was requested to adjourn proceedings as business of great importance demanded his attention; when he was informed of its nature he smilingly said that in his opinion the occasion was of that importance that justified the adjournment of court, which he did, and they were married.

"Sudden and romantic as their marriage was, it proved a happy one. For more than forty years they lived together devoted to each other. They reared six children."

BY-LINES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Leland M. Boruck

This will be my last official communication to the general membership as my term of office will conclude shortly. I am pleased to report that during the past twelve months our membership has continued to show a slight increase despite losses through death and resignations. Regardless of inflation which has been a matter of grave concern to the Directors in the operation of the organization, our financial condition at the end of the year is most satisfactory. The attendance at the quarterly luncheon meetings has been exceptionally rewarding. The variety of tours of The Californians under the guidance of Effie Hawkins has been well received and enjoyed. The editions of The Trailblazer under the very capable editorial staff of Arthur and Marjorie Fisk and Henry Calloway have been excellent and the recipient of some well deserved commendation. And now as I vacate this office may I extend to the Directors my gratitude for honoring me with the privilege of serving two consecutive terms as President. It is an honor that will always be highly cherished by me.

* * *

Dear Mr. Fisk: In 1910 I packed a paper route via BIKE from San Jose to Saratoga while attending San Jose High School, 26 miles before breakfast. On our way out I would stop with another carrier in front of the Winchester House and make a small fire with a couple of Mercurys plus a few twigs and a bit of eucalyptus bark, warm our hands, roll a few papers and be on our way at 5 a.m. One morning in the rain the bike slipped out from under me and off went a pedal. I pumped the bike back to 729 Willis Avenue with one foot. Unbeknown to my Mother I hitched up the horse, drove to Saratoga and got back about 10 a.m. THAT DID IT! Have fun, James C. Taylor.

* * *

LOOK FOR IT HERE

Our next quarterly meeting will be held on June 5th at Lou's Village, 12 o'clock noon. An interesting program has been arranged for your entertainment. ***

The Social Club of our society meets on the 1st and 3rd Monday afternoon of each month. For further information call Mrs. Lovene Luhrman, 292-0070. ***

The gavel for the Pioneer Society, used at our quarterly meetings by the President, was hand carved from a stick of oak stove wood by Mrs. Dora Owen's father and presented to Mrs. Lovene (Skelton) Luhrman while she was

president of the society in 1953. ***

One of our former members, Miss Eva Sourisseau a third-generation member of a pioneer Santa Clara Valley family has bequeathed \$174,000 to establish an Academy for Local History at San Jose State College. A board of trustees, comprised of nine faculty members and three citizens, will direct the academy in its efforts to collect all types of source materials concerning the history of our Valley. Dr. Ted Hinckley, professor of history, has been named director. The three citizen trustees are Clyde Arbuckle, Laurence Bulmore and Theron Fox. ***

Your editor, Arthur Fisk has published his first book, "History of Valley Village." It is the history of the area between Mission Santa Clara and Stevens Creek Road. It dates back to the Mission days when it was mission land, public domain, squatter's claims, the American take over and such pioneers as John Knowles and Felix Raney. It is fully illustrated and sells for \$1.25.

Dedication ceremonies for a bronze marker at the site of the home of the late Senator Frederick C. Franck 1159 Washington Street, Santa Clara were held March 24th. Franck served eight years on the Santa Clara Town Council, two terms in the State Assembly and the State Senate during the 1890's. Franck died in 1902. ***

Recently a plaque citing the historical significance of the old Judge Hiram Bond Ranch where Jack London started to write his famous novel "Call of the Wild" was unveiled at the main gate of the present monastery in Santa Clara. It reads: "Carmelite Monastery-Bond Ranch." Judge Hiram Bond owned the ranch 1895-1906, purchased by U. S. Senator James D. Phelan in 1913. The monastery chapel and residence buildings were consecrated in 1917 as a permanent monastery for the community of cloistered discalced carmelite nuns, in memory of Mrs. Francis Sullivan, Phelan's sister. The chapel won first prize at the 1925 Paris International Exposition, it is considered the most perfect example of Spanish renaissance ecclesiastical architecture in the new world. The residence of the nuns is known as the monastery of the infant Jesus. The converted carriage house and redwood water tower were built prior to 1860. Jack London, a frequent visitor used the ranch as the starting locale for his famous novel "The Call of the Wild" and Marshall Bond's dog for the hero of the book. Marker placed by Santa Clara Historical and Landmarks Commission." (Discalced means those who don't wear shoes.) ***

WELCOME

Congratulations to our new members: Helen C. Bliss, Olive K. Bork, Ilene Campbell, Catherine Piper Connett, Theron F. Connett, Barbara M. Cox, Richard S. Cox, Florence Curfee, Caroline Davis, Abigail Ortley Dennis, Hugh A. Edes, Mary A. Edes, Elizabeth R. Elliot, Josephine F. Hamlet, Frederick Hellings, Vivian Hellings, June Holladay, Carlos W. Jacklin, Helen Anderson Jacklin, Mary E. Jackson, Anna S. Johnson, William Noble, Mildred Noble, H. Barret Patton, Morrison Reese, Josephine Conner Reese, Mrs. Earle Rice, Claudia F. Semeit, Axel E. Speerring, Gertrude A. Speering, John R. Sullivan, Vida Triplett, Daisy D. Wolter, Evelyn Zimmerman and Charles J. Zwaal.

* * *

BEYOND THE SUNSET

Frank L. Nelson

October 7, 1886 - January 22, 1971

Levenia Lindemann

1876 - February 12, 1971

Ethel Hills Williams

September 14, 1887 - February 17, 1971

Robert A. McArthur

October 15, 1893 - February 18, 1971

Nicholas J. Caputo

August 15, 1902 - March 1, 1971

Anna R. Sanfilippo

August 30, 1895 - March 11, 1971

Kathryn H. DeVoe

1891 - March 14, 1971

Gladys H. Wright

February 10, 1896 - March 24, 1971

In behalf of the officers and members of the California Pioneer Society of Santa Clara County, the TRAIL-BLAZER extends their sincere sympathy to the relatives and friends of our departed members.

THE TRAILBLAZER

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Editor: Arthur M. Fisk, 390 N.Winchester Bv., Santa Clara

Associate Editor: Marjorie B. Fisk

Staff Artist: Ralph Rambo

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Officers for 1970-71

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 2nd Vice President Lynn L. Vermillion
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 Van Gundy, Austen D. Warburton and Howard L. Worcester.

* * *

SEND APPLICATIONS for membership to Bernice Van Gundy,
 561 Fuller Ave., San Jose, Ca. 95125.

SICKNESS and DEATHS, please notify Martha Bulmore, 2221
 Coastland Ave., San Jose, CA. 95125. Phone 264-2104.

BUS TOUR information for members of the Pioneer Society
 may be obtained from Mrs. Effie M. Hawkins, phone 295-
 2868, 9 a.m. until 12 noon Monday thru Friday.

* * *

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