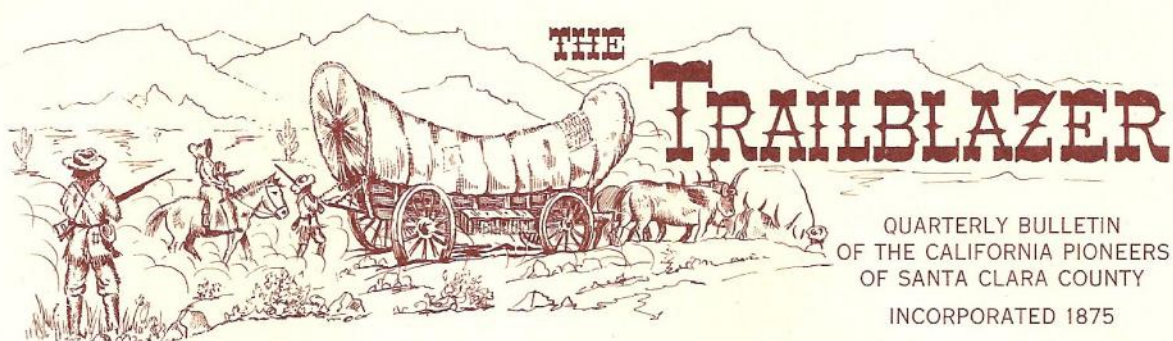


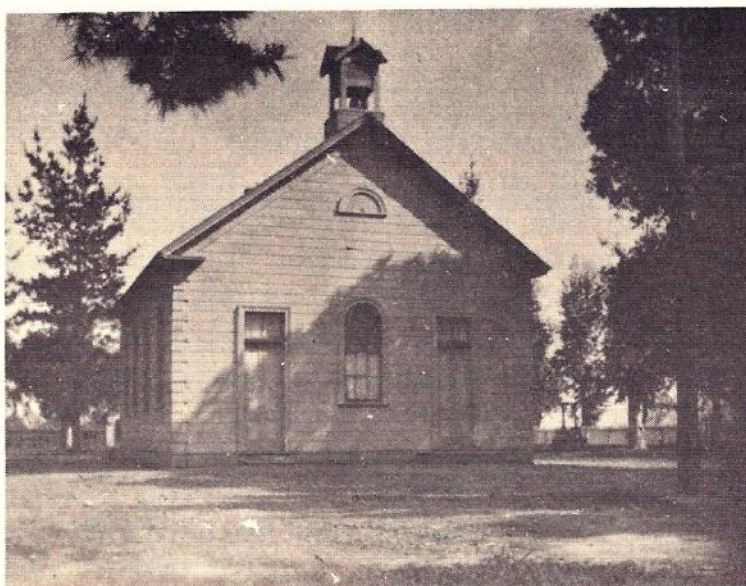


QUARTERLY BULLETIN
OF THE CALIFORNIA PIONEERS
OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY
INCORPORATED 1875

Volume 16

November 1976

Number 4



UNION SCHOOL 1873 - 1914

Robert R. Bulmore Photo 1903

UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

1863 = 1976

WHALE BLAZERS

March 1905 - San Jose Soap Works - This long established firm continued to prosper in spite of overwhelming competition. The success of the San Jose Soap Works was due to a superior product and top-notch methods used in production. Located at 523 Orchard St. (Almaden Ave.), it was established in 1876 by Ben Fisher. Toilet soaps, Castile soaps, chemical-olive soap, ammonia-borax soap, whale oil for spraying harness and laundry soap are just a few of the cleansers that kept this brisk venture bubbling. An unique output was Tisher's renowned La Belle Savon, a toilet soap, which was in demand up and down the Pacific Coast. Tisher's soap works certainly claimed the soapbox to boast of a 20,000 pound monthly yield.

San Jose - April 1905 - The Thomas Keyes Candy factory, leading wholesale, retailer in candy manufacture was located at 133 So. First St. Here rose the savory whiffs of taffy and molasses candy to the finest Parisian creams and chocolate bon bons. Orders of any size were cautiously filled and shipped in wholesale lots by rail and steamer. The manufacturing area to the rear of the plant claimed a spick-and-span steam powered operation. Tours were always welcomed by Keyes to view his heralded and successful enterprise. Toothsome samples were always offered visitors. A tempting ice cream parlor was a special and popular feature of the Keyes Candy Shop.

July 11, 1912 - Luna Park was the blithesome site for the annual basket picnic put on by the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County. A special prize was awarded for the best old-time story. Frank Hamilton won by recalling how many sacks of potatoes he dug out of one hill when Mr. Hobson owned the picnic property location back in 1854. A fat ladies race proved hilarious. Ninety year old Pioneer J. W. Hines whistled a novelty tune. He also supplied and led the dance orchestra for the occasion.

July 1904 - Ad - Help Wanted - "Fifty women and girls wanted for cannery work. Good wages. Tent and grounds on easy terms. Low rates on the Interurban."

H.C.



HELLO NEIGHBOR, HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

SAN JOSE FREE PUBLIC MARKET OPENS SAT.,
MAY 25, 1913 AT THE CITY HALL PARK 5 AM - 2 PM

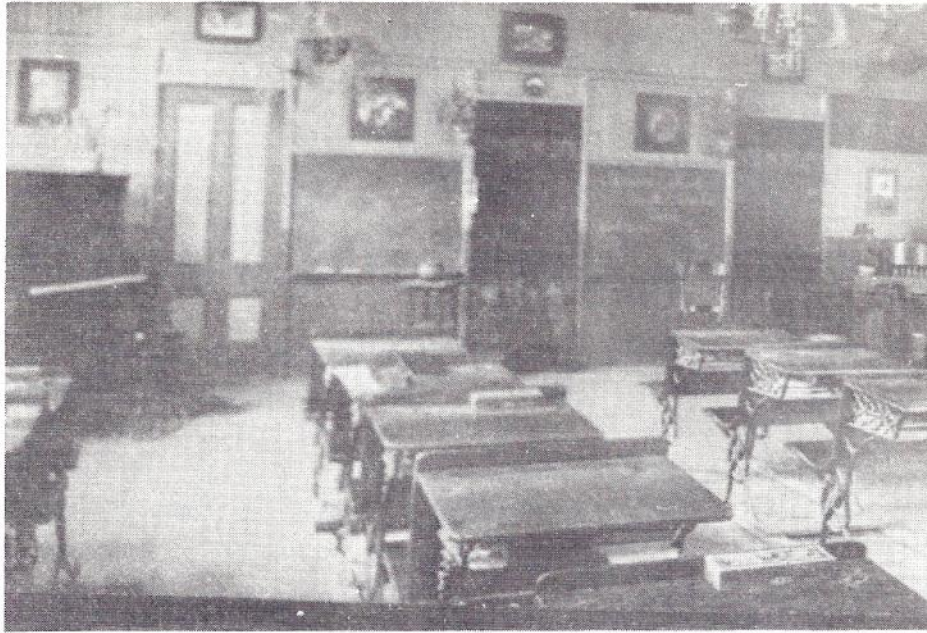
Householders turned out in great numbers this brisk spring morning, some in wagons, automobiles, others on foot with wheelbarrows and baskets, all to see what their neighborhood gardener had to transform into money.

Vincent Ritchie of Pomona Ave. was offering fresh cherries and several boxes of lettuce as his stock in trade. By 10 AM this 14 year old merchant had already netted \$2.05. Mrs. J. F. Buchannon of 330 So. 5th had an inviting display of home-made orange marmalade for which she found a ready market. E. R. Everett from the Linda Vista area backed his bountiful wagon up to the curb at 8 AM and within one hour had disposed of his stock consisting of dozens of morning fresh eggs and a quantity of dressed poultry. Dr. James Bullitt and his wagon of lemons, dried prunes, live poultry and goat cheese was a popular curb sale site. Henry Uphoff of North 21 St. had an orchard truck loaded with vegetables and potted plants and flowers. At 11 o'clock his merchandise was reduced to a half a bushel of turnips. H. G. Keesling of Hamilton Ave. brought an express wagon of potted petunias which were disposed of to eager buyers. J. F. Daniels of 354 Sunol St. had a push cart load of plump Flemish Belgian variety rabbits which went for 25¢ each.

Joe Napoli, the market master said, "We had a very good buyer turnout the first day, the best people in town. ----- Another thing is the one and two acre home sites in and near San Jose who grow fruit and vegetables much in excess to home demands with the surplus sadly going to waste. Why not send the youngsters to the Free Market with such items so they can develop a taste for business. The success of young Vincent Ritchie with his cherries and heads of lettuce could have been repeated this morning by fifty other boys and girls."

People were asked to remember the Free Market hours, Tues. and Thurs. 5 AM to 12 Noon and Sat. 5 AM to 2 PM.

H.C.



Classroom Union School Jan. 7, 1903

★ HISTORY OF THE UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT ★

1863 RUBY D. HOWES 1976

Almaden Township - 1858 - a group of parents in the area of southern Ware Road met at the ranch home of John Parker; their purpose was to hire a teacher and tutor for their children. Early settlers came soon after the gold rush to settle permanently. A few of the names were: Parker, Riggs, LaMontagne, Stanfield and Schofield. In November, 1863, an election was held to elect three of their group to make plans for a schoolhouse and to hire a teacher. This group was headed by John Parker, Major in the Almaden Militia Unit. The homeowners made public their political sentiments by naming the newly formed district in honor of the Union. They also caused Ware Avenue to be renamed Union Avenue. The teacher would be housed in the children's homes, thus receiving room and board and a modest salary; she would stay a few weeks in each home. The residents subsisted through small acreages of grain, selling of firewood to the Almaden Mine and harvesting crops from experimental orchards. Land was worth \$30 an acre.

Historical footnote: Charles LeFranc had his Almaden Winery in operation. Land owners could buy young trees and vines from the Louis Pellier Nursery in San Jose. Pierre Mirassou, son-in-law of Pellier, had estab-

lished a winery in Evergreen. The excellent fruit crops and the flourishing vineyards skyrocketed the land value to \$65 an acre.

The Civil War continued to divide Californians. The last of the Confederate bandits, John Grant, was captured in Los Gatos in January 1865.

The surprise of the '70's was the gamble G. M. Harwood seemed to be taking when he bought Lone Hill, the gravelly hill area on which to plant vines. By 1871 the 66,000 vines were doing very well.

The "old" (first school) was on sleds because, as tradition would have it, the parents could not agree just where it should be placed. It was moved a couple of times in the night. Finally it was located on the McCarthy Ranch, the present site of Leigh High School. Although the tax rate was low, each family with children had to take turns boarding the teacher. They also had to provide wood for the school stove. In 1871 the teacher was Miss Emily Rand, a recent graduate of the new San Jose Normal School. The teachers were unmarried women until early in the 1900's; needless to say, teachers lasted but a short time in Union District. Teachers often had extra duties such as trimming lamp wicks, keeping the water bucket clean, keeping the fire burning in the heating stove.

The first schoolhouse burned in 1872, necessitating the building of a new structure. The new school was located on an acre of land at the corner of Los Gatos-Almaden Road and Union Avenue. Mr. Chris Schofield, who donated the land, wrote in three provisions: (1) that the property must be used for school purposes; (2) must have a hog tight fence; (3) a well must be dug deep enough to supply sufficient quantity of sweet, cool water. A bell with a clear tone was purchased from the Southern Pacific and it rung forth from the bell tower.

1890-1892 saw the first subdivision come into the area. Several of the half and quarter section ranches were broken into smaller farms.

The We and Our Neighbors Club was organized in June of 1892. Mrs. Chris Schofield was selected president, an office she held for twenty-five years. The forming of the Club put an end to the "day at home" which had long been a tradition.

The "old" school had two front doors. The boys lined up at the right, or east, entrance, and the girls to the left. Inside, on the boys' side was a sink and a

cloakroom. On the girls' side there was no sink. The first boy in line each morning had to carry a bucket of water to the cloakroom. A small library room separated the two cloakroom areas. In later years when two teachers were hired, they taught by facing the primary desks in one direction and the desks of the older children in the other. A potbellied stove stood toward the center of the room. Outside on the grounds there was a woodshed, carriage house, two outhouses. The acre was planted in pine trees and two oak trees.

In 1901 agitation for a new schoolhouse culminated in a vote for bonds, but the issue was defeated; the voters could not agree upon the kind of facility to build.

In 1903 the San Jose Railway extended its electric car line to Saratoga with a car stop on National Avenue, with a convenient horse hitch and bicycle parking area. However, enterprising business men were furnishing weekly delivery to the area. The Farmers Union of Campbell sent a wagon out weekly to take and deliver orders. Pierce Grocery in Los Gatos and Mr. Holland from East San Jose also delivered.

In 1913 the District was 50 years old and progress was in the air. A bond election for a new school had just been passed. An auditorium was to be upstairs for community use. In 1910 We and Our Neighbors Club built a clubhouse on the corner of Union Avenue and Los Gatos-Almaden Road with a "life long" lease from Mrs. Sophia La-Montagne. The building was donated by Mrs. Maria Schofield. The Club is still very active.

Harwood Road, so short and straight, was built by the County as an indication of the Mt. Diablo Meridian line; the road lies directly north and south. Blossom Hill Road was built in the 1930's; each of the landowners having deeded certain lands to the county. Memories of early settlers recall that not all the landowners wanted to cooperate. Water, always a problem in this part of the valley, was piped in by the San Jose Water Company in 1921. Most of the farmers had their own wells, but the four dry years of 1918 to 1921 had proven that water must be imported. The Freyschlag family sold their Lone Hill Winery to the H. A. Mirassou family in 1916. With the building of the New Almaden School in 1938 attendance at Union dropped off. Many children went to the new school; this nearly caused the two teacher school to lose one of its staff members.

In 1946 a survey of the District was conducted by

Ernest Kump Company, an architectural firm of San Francisco, to determine the potential of the District and future building needs. They found the area to be primarily agricultural and determined that it would not be unreasonable to expect an enrollment of 500 students in the next 20 years. And so entered the "bedroom community." The Union School was started as a K-8 school. Parker School housed the primary grades separately in 1953.

In 1956 Mr. Berkeley Mathews was appointed Superintendent of the District, just at the beginning of the housing boom. He faced the tremendous task of planning and construction of new buildings, the acquisition of professional staff and the development of curriculum. At first he worked with a very small staff. A major exigence from the beginning was the development of communication with the community and the staff. He retired in 1972.

Today, in 1975, the enrollment of students is 8,200 with a staff of about 600. Mr. Arthur Doornbos is now District Superintendent and there are 17 schools in the District. The Administration Center was built on the site of the "old school" in 1963. Additional land for it was purchased from the Downing family. Our whole area has changed from fruit growing and other crops to housing development. Land prices have boomed. We are proud to be in the Campbell Union High School District.

In 1963 a committee of interested citizens planned a Centenary celebration of the formation of the District. The issue of Curriculum Newsletter reviewed the highlights of the development of the School District, its traditions and philosophy. This history is based on that newsletter.



"Old School" 1914

Ruby D. Howes, whose grandfather bought land in the area in 1860, is proud to have a school of Union District named for her. --Editor



Clyde Arbuckle

WORK WELL DONE

During the past quarter, our society lost two of its most distinguished members--Arthur M. Fisk and Dr. Earl E. Rhoads. Both personified the old saying that "immortality is the work that lives on after you're gone."

As founding editor of The Trailblazer and member of the San Jose Historic Landmarks Commission, "Art" gathered a great volume of historical data on Santa Clara County. As one of our directors, he gently prodded his fellow directors to do likewise, reminding them, "We're going to press pretty soon; you'd better get that story in."

Dr. Rhoads, also a member of the Landmarks Commission, specialized in that stretch of pioneer overland route known as the Donner Trail. He began this work alone in the mid-1940's, but soon joined Professor P. M. Weddell who had been marking the trail since 1921.

Dr. Rhoads continued the trail marking task long after Weddell's death in 1952.

The California Pioneers of Santa Clara County will long honor both of these men for doing so much to preserve our state's historical heritage for posterity.



*Merry Christmas & Happy New Year
To All Our Readers*

Pioneers: This is what your Membership means!

Heading the needs of preservation and restoration the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County contributed over \$600 towards structural repairs to the José Peña Adobe in Santa Clara in 1974. This State Registered Landmark, built in the 1790's as an Indian dwelling, is now fondly embraced by the Santa Clara Women's Club.

The small forlorn and abandoned Hacienda Cemetery on the east bank of Arroya de los Alamitos in New Almaden was acquired by our concerned group in 1974. Long an object of vandalism and the ravages of time, it now offers a tidy and peaceful sanctuary shrouded among oak, laurel and memorable uplands. We are overly grateful to unsparing Boy Scout groups and kind hearted merchants who contributed time and material to this long overdue restoration program. Our hallowed memorial to early day quicksilver miners will be maintained by this organization.

A mammoth task taken on by involved citizens was the restoration of the Luis Maria Peralta Adobe in San Jose in 1975-76. Built in about 1804 it is the oldest building in San Jose which is on the National Register of Historical Places on a state level and a California Historical Landmark. Your Pioneers assisted with the salvation of this venerable adobe with a \$1000 contribution.

This year the Pioneers generously aided another planned memorial, the Pellier Park Project. This reserve will soon blossom forth near the corners of San Pedro and Terraine Sts. It was in this area where Louis Pellier and his brothers, Pierre and Jean, introduced the French prune in 1856-57. Your Pioneer commitment to this noble venture was \$5000. Once the Pellier nursery called the City Gardens, this tribute site is already a State Registered Landmark.

We need you! Perpetuation pleads for us all!

Look For It Here

CALLING ALL MEMBERS 85 OR OLDER A special table is being reserved for you at our December Luncheon. Please call Eleanor M. Bullard at 734-0481.

Dues of \$3.00 each for 1976 become past due after Dec. 31, 1976. Check your ID card to avoid loss of membership. Call or write the Fin. Sec., Byron Bullard, 1085 Tasman Dr. Sp. 404, Sunnyvale, CA 94086 or phone 734-0481

TOUR RESERVATIONS are made at the Quarterly meetings or by phone calls to Ruth Gross at 294-9830 between the hours of 9 and 12 Monday through Friday. After confirmation by Ruth that space is available, THEN send checks, payable to "The Californians" to 100 Serena Way, Santa Clara, CA 95051. Trip brochures are available through Ruth Gross.

To encourage membership the San Jose Historial Museum Association is offering as a gift, the history portion of Eugene T. Sawyer's History of Santa Clara County. This outstanding 310 page indexed edition is a wealth of historical information and is presented with each family membership of \$15 or more. This book is not available in the bookstores. Contact: San Jose Historical Museum Association, 635 Phelan Ave., San Jose, CA 95112, or phone 287-2290 for further information.



Beyond the sunset

Jane M. Arena
 Nellie M. Edmiston
 Arthur M. Fisk
 Minnie Jorgensen
 Edna Lake
 Joseph D. Medeiros
 D. Earl Rhoads

RESERVATIONS FOR OUR LUNCHEON MEETINGS

For the DEC. 4th Meeting PHONE
247-6606

THIS IS A 24 HOUR - 7 DAY WEEK SERVICE

*Available the day the Trailblazer is mailed until
the day of the Meeting.* IT IS IMPORTANT WE
KNOW THE EXACT NUMBER OF RESERVATIONS SO
LOU'S VILLAGE CAN PROPERLY PROVIDE FOR YOU.

Please Make Reservations Five Days Before Meeting.

**AN INTERESTING CHRISTMAS PROGRAM IS BILLED. DON'T MISS IT!
IF YOU MUST CANCEL...CALL THIS SAME NUMBER**

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.

Welcome New Members

Ginger Armstrong
Robert T. Armstrong
Jean Barton
Eulah H. Blaine
Franklin Blaine
Gloria de Vargas Bush
Virginia B. Castor
Gladys Channing
Dominic Cirone
Lucille Cirone
Marie Conaccio
Beth Davis
Barbara A. Dwyer
Evernia R. Grant
Teresa A. Hetzner
Meta Huber

Norman Huber
Mary M. Jukov
Susie Ann Keough
Lucille Margason
Omar K. Margason
Regina M. Martin
Leila G. Mason
Daisy (Sue) McKinney
Theresa F. Napolitano
Bryan (Jack) Palmer
Margaret Palmer
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APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP - ADDRESS CHANGE: To Rupert
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SICKNESS and DEATHS: Please notify Eleanor M. Bullard,
1085 Tasman Dr., Sunnyvale CA 94086 Phone 734-0481