

THE THREE-FACED CLOCK

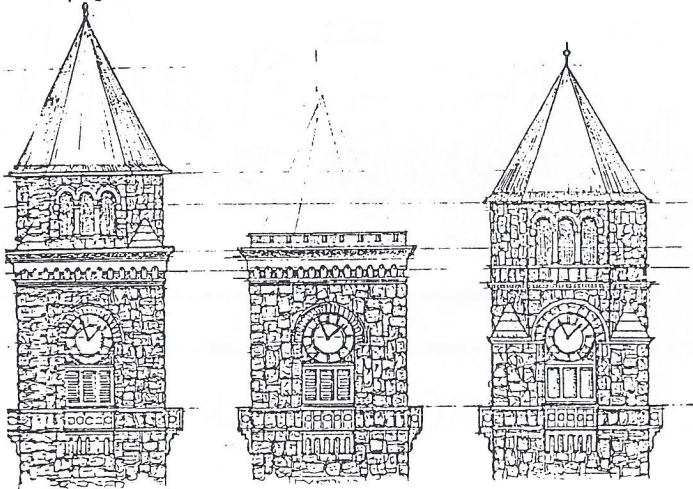
By Robert A. Johnson



*Robert A. Johnson inside the clock tower of
the San Jose Museum of Art.*

San Jose is blessed by its many antiquities and treasures of the past, not the least of which is the beautiful clock works in the tower of the present San Jose Museum of Art. This building was dedicated in 1892 to house the U.S. Post Office and later to become the San Jose City Library. About 1966, the old San Jose Hardware Store Building just east of the Museum, was torn down exposing the fact that the fourth face of this unique clock had never been installed. The author has been offended by this incongruity for some 25 years.

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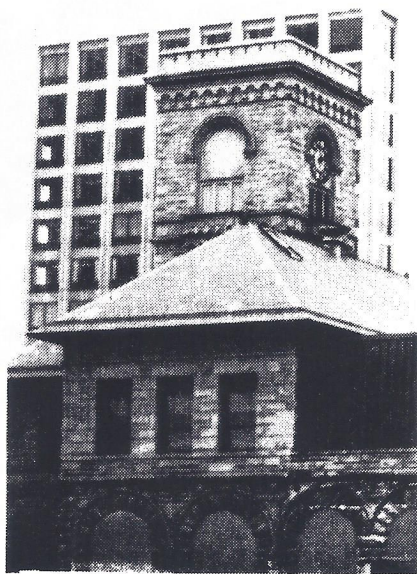
Tower design by Charles Beebe

This absence is specially noticeable now that the Fairmont Hotel and Fairmont Plaza building have full view of the clock tower. I am sure many people who value their time see the same problem. By way of review, the original clock was destroyed in the great earthquake of 1906. The roof fell in. The original roof, which was really an afterthought to the prime structure, was never replaced. This is another story in itself.

In December, 1908, a man by the name of Nels Johnson (no relation) began setting up the "new" clock in the post office tower and completed the work in February, 1909. He closed with the words, "I long for home," which was Manistee, Michigan. Nels Johnson was an utter genius. He was born on a Danish island and studied blacksmithing. After migrating to America, even though he spoke no English, he set up a machine shop in Manistee and survived a devastating fire which wiped out his investment. He rebuilt. Tinkering with clocks, he finally built some four grandfather clocks. He started competing with the big names in clockmaking--Seth Thomas and E. Howard and Co.; since he worked mostly alone, he acquired several contracts. His price was right. He finally built some 50 tower clocks, one of which landed in San Jose. One ended up as far away as India. These are not just clocks. They are works of art. Nels Johnson ended up interested in astronomy, building his own observatory and telescope, and when he passed away in 1915, he gave his equipment and library to the Manistee High School.

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The author has offered his services and that of the NAWCC (National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors) to build a fourth face for this magnificent clock. This far "City Hall" has not accepted the offer, but we will continue to call out, not "strike out". Our clock group has also recommended that the clock works be moved to the first floor where it can be viewed by the public. Cables would be used to operate the dials in the tower. Where else to inspire our engineers of the future? This clock should not be hidden! After all, it is now in an art museum.



*The missing fourth face
on the clock tower.*

It would also be delightful to see a replica of the original roof put on the building using light weight materials as proposed by a young engineer, Charles Beebe. The restoration of the tower and the installation of the fourth face of the clock would be a great addition to downtown San Jose.

Pioneer member, Robert A. Johnson, was a chemical engineer to the food industry during his working years, building plants over the United States and as far away as Panama. His interest in all things mechanical made a logical special interest in clocks since they encompass almost all man's accumulated knowledge of mechanics. Shortly after retiring, he found a shoe box of clock parts that his father had stored away. He decided to put them together. They resulted in a working clock, but the tricky part was that there were two clocks in the box. He was now hooked! He joined the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors based in Columbia, Pennsylvania and the local Chapter, De Anza #94, and took several clock repair classes at Adult Education. Over the past twenty years he has collected and repaired clocks as a hobby. He attends many of the regional meetings which are held through the country. The most recent was in Dallas, Texas, and it was special since it was the 50th Anniversary of the NAWCC. The tower clock in the present Art Museum is of special interest to this clock enthusiast.



MASTER

Beyond The Sunset

Catherine Gasich
Marjorie Jenkins
Elizabeth Mahan

Ralph McKee
Frazier Reed
Wilbur C. Gwinn

On behalf of the members of the California Pioneer Society of Santa Clara County, the TRAILBLAZER extends sincere sympathy to the relatives and friends of our departed members.

Welcome New Members

James M. Arbuckle
Clarisse K. Beck
Denis Fama

Jean A. Roberts
Joan M. Rogers
Margaret L. Travis

PLEASE JOIN US FOR THE LUNCHEON ON SEPTEMBER 4th

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ON SEPTEMBER 4th

UNDER THE WEATHER

Kindly keep your officers informed as to the condition of any ill member and report any sickness or death to the chair of our SUNSHINE Committee --

Irene Johnson
445 North 15th St.
San Jose, CA 95112
(408) 275-1389



President's Message

---Miriam Clark

My first message as your new President is to thank all of the Board members for the wonderful job they have done this past year, and especially Ruth Patton for her guidance these past two years as President. A special vote of thanks also goes to retiring board member Treasurer Sara Millar for the excellent job she has done in keeping the organization's financial records in an efficient order, monitoring our income and expenses so that we did not become too generous with our funds and yet wisely used our funds to accomplish those things which were important to you and our organization to continue to encourage the preservation of our heritage in Santa Clara County.

Thanks also to Mary Wahlberg, retiring Marshall -- always willing to step in to help out in an emergency; and Sunshine Chairperson Leah Warren for keeping track of our members' health and sending cards when appropriate. A continuing thanks to those remaining on the board, and a warm welcome to our new members: David McKinney --First Vice President, Irene Johnson--Sunshine, and Robert Johnson--Audit Committee.

This month (August) the Antioch Baptist Church is celebrating 100 years of service and outreach to the community of San Jose. Dr. Harriet Arnold has graciously consented to give us an overview of their history at our September meeting. She comes highly recommended by Clyde Arbuckle. We hope you will join us.

For Luncheon Reservations for our September 4th meeting, call 554-7587 by Wednesday, September 1.

A. C. Todd, Historian and Author, Joins the Pioneers at June Luncheon

By Gage McKinney

A. C. Todd, author of **THE CORNISH MINER IN AMERICA** and other books, and an honorary member of the Pioneers, was a special guest at the June luncheon at Lou's Village. He was introduced by his long-time friend Clyde Arbuckle, who explained how he met Dr. Todd through a letter addressed to the City of San Jose more than 40 years ago. Dr. Todd told the audience that he last attended a Pioneer luncheon in the early 1960's at the DeAnza Hotel.



A. C. Todd

Many of the members remembered when Dr. Todd gave a traveling group of Pioneers a tour of Coventry Cathedral. He lives in Warwickshire, England, not far from the cathedral, though his readers associate him with Cornwall, where he taught and wrote several books.

While in California Dr. Todd visited friends and gave the keynote address in Sacramento at the seventh bi-annual gathering of North American Cornish Cousins, an organization of Cornish descendants. He was also honored at a potluck dinner hosted by The New Almaden County Quicksilver Park Association.

"I can't express the excitement I experienced coming here for the first time thirty years ago," Todd told the New Almaden group. At the time of his first visit he was a Fulbright Fellow and a guest lecturer at the University of California, Berkeley. He originally went to New Almaden in the company of the late Laurence Bulmore, another long-time friend. Eventually Dr. Todd included the story of the Cornish at the quicksilver mine in his book. Since it was published **THE CORNISH MINER IN AMERICA** (D. Bradford Barton and Arthur H. Clark, Truro, Cornwall and Glendale, California, 1967) has become a collector's item with a copy selling recently for \$125.

Dr. Todd's other books about America include **THE SEARCH FOR SILVER: CORNISH MINERS IN MEXICO** (Lodenek Press, Padstow, Cornwall, 1977), and **EVER**

WESTWARD THE LAND (with David James) (Exeter University Publications, Exeter, U.K. 1986), the story of a Cornish family on the Oregon Trail in 1850. He was Resident Tutor for West Cornwall in the Department of Extra-Mural Studies of the University of Exeter from 1947 to 1969. He was a visiting professor at the University of Arizona and also had teaching assignments in South Africa and Hong Kong.

At 84, Dr. Todd continues to read, study and conduct research. He spends part of the year in Slovakia studying the development of mining in central Europe. After leaving San Jose, he stopped to visit friends and family in Arizona and Georgia. In July he returned to his home in England.



*Jane Brownnton
Corresponding
Secretary*



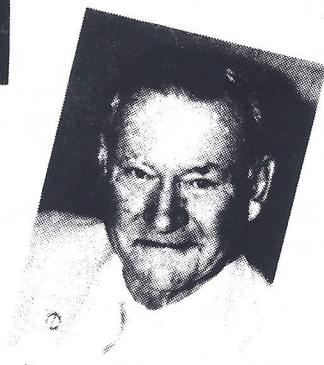
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WHALE BLAZERS

SAN JOSE, October 1883....We offer a lazy news report of the day. "John Finely was arrested for stealing a bologna sausage, was not tried yesterday for some reason or other. He will probably be tried today. Also four drunk persons and two beggars are expected to be sentenced in the morning."

SAN JOSE, 1892....The case against a Jim Smith on disturbing the peace of the Salvation Army by stealing a kiss from a pretty Army volunteer worker at a street corner meeting was dismissed. Smith promised to carry on his kissing operations in a legal and proper manner in the future.

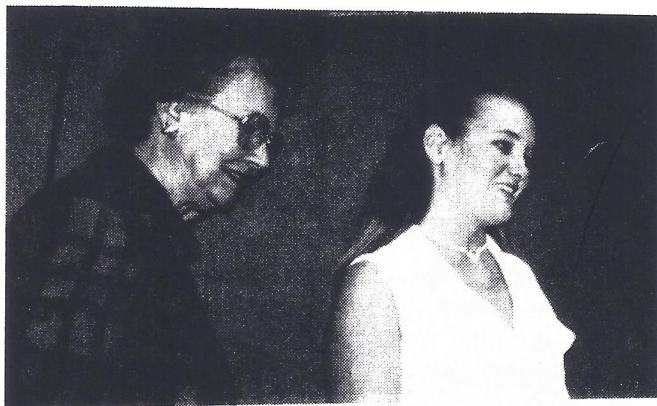
SAN JOSE, 1895...."Patronize Home Cigar Makers" was the determined voice to smokers by the California State Blue Label League. The influx of eastern cigars was trying to be halted. "A California-made cigar costs no more than the eastern article," they said. "Besides, the employment to cigar people adds to the prosperity and welfare of the state."

SAN FRANCISCO, 1856....The widest street in town was named for James Van Ness, the mayor of San Francisco in 1856. After his term as mayor, he became a farmer in San Luis Obispo. He ended his political career as state senator in 1871.

SAN FRANCISCO....Mary A. Kezar gave \$100,000. to the city in 1923 to build a sport stadium which was named after her. Located in Golden Gate Park, it was completed in 1926.

JUNE, 1923....Lick Observatory was to be supplied with electric power. Twenty-four miles of wire and ten miles of construction were required to supply the current to this mountain top.

AMADOR COUNTY claims a hamlet called Irishtown which is seven miles out of Jackson. It was considered an important stopping place for venturous Irish on their way to the Southern mines. Today it is an official State Landmark #38.



Helen MacCarthy and Amanda Earl

The annual essay winners were announced at out luncheon on June 5, 1993, by Historian and Essay Chair, Helen MacCarthy.

First prize of \$500.00 was awarded to Chuck Meyer, for his essay on Hecker Pass - A Historical Adventure.

Second prize of \$250.00 was awarded to Amanda Earl for her essay on Mission Santa Clara de Asis.

Third prize of \$125.00 was awarded to Jeremy Braithwaite for his essay on Lee Jones - Pioneer Photographer.

Sixteen essays were received. Copies of each are available in the California Room of the San Jose Public Library.



Jeremy Braithwaite



Chuck Meyer



Touring With The Californians

NEW: One day trips in October, November and December which we think you will enjoy. Sign up at the September 4th Pioneers luncheon....Don't miss out on all the fun!!!

COMING IN THE SPRING OF 1994 ...

Eight days cruising around the Hawaiian Islands. Spend your days on the Islands and your nights on the water. — Pack and unpack just once! Details will be available at the December luncheon.

After the quarterly luncheons, flyers may be obtained by sending a stamped, self-addressed, legal size envelope to:

THE CALIFORNIANS
800 Blossom Hill Road #362
Los Gatos, CA 95032.

The Indians, who were in California first, are among the last on the prosperity charts.

The 1930's...When the 'Fliver-boob' was a serious menace, so called by the American Automobile Association. He was the 'boob' who dashed up to a mudpuddle near the curb sending mud and water all over one, just to hear women scream. Then there was the muffler explosion hound; you recall him and his 'hot rod' of the times. He was the 'kook' who rushed up and down the street creating muffler explosions via his muffler. The brake burner was another hound who made up this 'explosive clan'.

MEMBERSHIP --- SHARE IT!

If every current member brought in just one new person, we could boast a membership of over 2,000. Every member is encouraged to bring in new people, relatives, friends or neighbors who are interested in history and who qualify. Requirements for membership are as follows:

ACTIVE: Residents of California for 50 years or more; or descendant of California resident of 50 years or more. (Shall be 18 years of age or more.)

ASSOCIATE: Anyone whose spouse is a member. (May become Active upon attaining 50 year residence in California.)

The application process is an easy one. Fill out an application, have an endorsement and send it along with \$11.00 (\$4.00 admission fee and \$7.00 annual dues) to California Pioneers of Santa Clara County Membership Chairman, P. O. Box 8208, San Jose, CA 95155.

Application forms are always available at the luncheons or may be obtained by mail from the above address. If you need questions answered, please call Membership Chairperson, Tommy Warren at (408) 241-8942.



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PIONEER LUNCHEON

Sat.
SEPT. 4,
1993
LOU'S VILLAGE
'HIGH NOON'

MENU
ROAST
BEEF
POTATOES-Vegete-
TOSSED SALAD,
ICE CREAM
BEVERAGE \$11.00

PROGRAM *Speaker.... Harriet Arnold, Ph.D*

Please
Call... **554-7587** For Reservations
24 HOUR SERVICE *Please CALL by Wed. Prior to LUNCHEON*