

VOL. 42

NUMBER 1

MARCH, 2001

MARCH IS WOMEN IN HISTORY MONTH. Our speaker is Carolyn Marie Downey. She will speak on a local artist, Margaret O'Keefe and bring her recently published book on the artist.

Dear Members,

If you have a computer and access to the World Wide Web, you can punch in :<http://www.sjpl.lib.CA.US/adults/CaliforniaRoom/Pioneer.htm>. to get a list of Award Winning essays from The Santa Clara Pioneers Annual Contest. They are on file at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library in downtown San Jose in the Pioneer Room.

The oldest dated essay is from 1958 but there are undated essays which preceded it such as an essay titled, "Confederate Robbers of Santa Clara County by William J. Miller. The newest posted title is Mary Santos' "To My Children's Children," 1st prize winner in 1999. Between these two essays is a collection ranging in topics from Stanford University's founding to the Santa Clara County Humane Society; From a Californio History of San Jose to the contributions of Chinese and German immigrants to the Santa Clara Valley. There are too many topics and authors to acknowledge here, but the diversity of local topics is amazing. What they have in common is this: few would be available today, if not for the Pioneer Essay Contest.

During the last two years, we have experienced a slight decrease in the number of contributions to our contest. This keeps valuable topics of local history out of the reach of the interested public. We are trying to remedy this by increasing the monetary awards and by getting word of our contest out to more people.

Each member can help us with this project. As part of this

Trail Blazer, Mary Lou (a 1961 Essay Contest Winner on San Jose Grange) has included a copy of this year's contest information. Give it to someone you think may be interested. Write it yourself about your forbears in this valley. You belong to another history group, know a writer or a student, have a relationship with a local high school or college, or belong to a Genealogical group- if so, give them a copy of our rules.

When more people know about our contest, we get more submissions and that adds more patches to the quilt of history. If we get a large enough increase in participants, we will figure a way to give more prizes.

Eureka!

David

**CONSTANCE BRONER HEALEY KAMBISH PERHAM
March 14, 1908--January 28, 2001**

Connie was a member of the Santa Clara County Pioneers and truly a Californian. She traced her lineage on her Mother's side back to José Maria Soberanes who came to California in 1769 with Portolá. He returned in 1776 with Juan Bautista de Anza and became a permanent settler in Spanish California, owning Rancho Buenavista in Monterey in 1795.

Connie's grandmother Fabiana Soberanes was his great grand-daughter and daughter of José Ygnacio Culupso Soberanes and Maria Raymunda Castillo who had been married at Mission San Antonio and buried at the Presidio Chapel in Monterey, grand-daughter of Mariano de Jesus Soberanes and Ana Josefa Castro, married and buried at the Presidio Chapel in Monterey. Fabiana married Constant Broner, an immigrant from Switzerland at San Antonio Mission, Monterey County. Connie's Mother was born Millbrae and married James Edward Healey, son of an immigrant who had been born in Hartford, Connecticut, although he spent his youth in South San Francisco. After the couple were married in 1899 in San Mateo, they made their home in San Francisco until the 1906 earthquake when they moved to Oakland. It was there that Connie was born March 14, 1908.

Connie graduated from the University High School

in Oakland and the Children's Hospital in San Francisco as a nurse. She married Anthony Kambish in 1932 and had three children, Frank, John and Greg Kambish. She also leaves 7 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Connie Healey's father invented a water softener that was used in steam boilers at the mines in New Almaden. He often brought his wife and daughter with him when he called at the mines on his monthly visits. Connie's interest in New Almaden was started early. In 1914, 6 year old Connie was introduced to mercury, the fourth heaviest metal and the only liquid metal, by a miner who asked her to push down on it, which was impossible. She never lost her fascination for the metal.

In 1926, her parents bought the Carson Adobe in the Hacienda Region of New Almaden for a vacation cottage. Connie vowed that some day she would have a museum there. Her father died in 1940 and her mother in 1942. Connie moved her family into the adobe in 1943 and has lived there ever since. It was she, often at great sacrifice to her family, who saw the need for a museum early in the 20th Century while the mines were still operating, collected and opened the original New Almaden Museum. On June 15, 1950, she opened her New Almaden Museum. In 1953, she took Douglas Perham as a business partner in the museum and they later married.

At the request of the Santa Clara County Educational Department, they broadened their collection to include California Indian artifacts. They studied the Yokuts tribe by living with them summers between 1956 and 1961 and acquired a fine collection. Most of the Indian artifacts were sold to Austen Warburton when the museum closed and remain in his collection in Santa Clara where they can be viewed.

Douglas Perham, in his 77th year, constructed a new wooden museum building for that collection. It was rented to the Santa Clara County Parks for their New Almaden Museum until they moved into the restored Casa Grande in 1998. The bulk of the contents of the Santa Clara County Museum are those that Connie had collected over the years and sold to the County when she closed her museum.

I, as well as many other teachers doing local and California History, found out about her collections and brought Santa Clara

County school children to visit her privately owned museum in the 1960's and '70's. With my busload of 50 high school Juniors and Seniors every semester for a number of years, Connie and I became good friends. She taught me many things about mercury mining and California Indians. I will never forget wallpapering the ceiling in one of her rooms on a summer day when the temperature hit 114°. Because of her determination, many adults in our county and throughout the nation know of the importance of the New Almaden Mines. I still have slides of her complete collection which I did for her in the '70's. She and I went together, in costume, to participate in part of the Bi-centennial reenactment of the Anza Trek at Mission San Antonio in 1976. On September 24, 1977, the museum was named a Bicentennial Heritage Landmark. She was also given a plaque of recognition from the Santa Clara County Historical Heritage Commission.

The Douglas Perham collection of early electronics was also saved by this couple and once was housed at Foot-hill College. This couple saved and collected fine artifacts that now are the core of three fine museum collections. She was recognized by the Santa Clara County Metallurgists also with a plaque.

In June, 1975, the New Almaden Mercury Mine finally closed and the Santa Clara County Parks bought the land for open space. This historic mine was the first mine of any kind in California and the first mercury mine in the United States. It produced more than \$70,000,000 in quicksilver. It also broke a monopoly on mercury held by the Almaden Mines in Spain. Because of this mine's mercury, the miners in the Sierra Nevada and the Comstock Lode were able to free their gold and silver from its matrix. Because of the mercury President Lincoln had funding for the North in the Civil War.

The local Capitancillos Indians mined the cinnabar ore for body paint. Andres Castellero, a Spanish soldier from Mexico recognized the cinnabar ore markings on the Indians as cinnabar in 1845 and the reason for their painful deaths. He began working the mine. Later, he leased the land to Barron Forbes of Tepic, Nayarit, Mexico who took possession and worked the mine until 1858 when the United States served an injunction which started an 18 year lawsuit. The

mine then passed into American hands.

In 1864, Samuel F. Butterworth took management of the Quicksilver Mines of New Almaden. In 1870, James B. Randol arrived as the new general manager for the bonanza years, retiring in 1892. Robert Bulmore followed him as General Agent and Pacific Coast representative for the company until 1899. At that time, production was down. The Bulmore family were the last official occupants of the Casa Grande. The price of mercury rose during World War I and production increased under the expertise of W.H. Landers. During the Depression, Mine Hill was the site of a C.C.C. Camp. Unfortunately, part of their work was to tear down all remainders of both Englishtown and Spanishtown on the hill, but guided tours will point out to you where they once were.

During World War II, the demand for mercury again increased and the mines were leased to the New Almaden Corporation under the managership of C.N. Schuette. That lasted until 1946. Even with limited production, the mine yielded a third of the mercury mined in the U.S. between 1940 and 1948. A U.S. Geological Survey concluded there is still mineable mercury in the hill that is like a gopher colony with tunnels and adits to a depth of 2,400 feet. They reported there are at least 35 miles of underground works in two square miles.

After 1952, a local group acquired the mine and worked it under the direction of Jimmie Schneider. One of the last miners was Greg Kambish, Connie's son.

Along the way, Connie was Postmaster for the village of New Almaden and kept P.O. Box 1 the rest of he life. Her Memorial Service was held at Oak Hill on Friday, February 2, 2001 and was well attended. The family asked that Memorial Contributions be given to your favorite charity.

If you would like to know more about the New Almaden Mines, do visit the museum in the restored Casa Grande and view Connie's collections or consult the following sources in the library:

Bertha Marguerite Rice, *The Women of Our Valley, Vol. 1*, 1955.

Kenneth M. Johnson, *The New Almaden Quicksilver Mine*,
The Talisman Press, Georgetown, CA, 1963.

Milton Lanyon & Laurence Bulmore, *Cinnabar Hills, The Quicksilver Days of New Almaden*, The Village Printers, Los Gatos, CA, 1967.

Rodman W. Paul, Editor, *Mary Hallock Foote; A Victorian Gentlewoman in the Far West*, Huntington Library, San Marino, CA, 1972.
Lyon, Mary Lou, *More Women of Santa Clara County*, 1999.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR MELITA KELLY
A Reminder for 2001

Thanks to those of you who responded so well in paying your dues on time. There are still a number of members who have not remitted their dues for 2001. Check the number after your name on the address label. Make your checks payable to the California Pioneers, include a self addressed & stamped envelope for the return of your membership card and send to:

Melita Kelly, 460 North 15th St., San Jose, CA 95112-1725

If you have questions, need applications for membership, or if you are moving and need to change your address, please call me at 408-292-2385.

We cannot guarantee that your *Trailblazer* will arrive on time if you do not notify us of address changes. We have to pay postage to have them returned to us, and more postage to send again. Delivery is also dependent upon your branch Post Office and Postman.

GONE TO THE GOLDEN HILLS

Charles Alderete

November 29, 2000

Bertram Schirle

December 22, 2000

Mary C. Hummel

January 26, 2001

Connie Perham

January 28, 2001

THE 7TH ANNUAL MORRISSEY ORAL HIST
WORKSHOP WILL BE HELD AT FORT MASON CEN
SAN FRANCISCO, MARCH 2,3,&4, 2001

This 3 day class will be instructed by Charles T. Morrissey, has taught how to do oral histories with many agencies, colleges, and hospitals over the last 20+ years. he is also the authored many professional articles about oral history techniques and applications. He is also former president of the Oral History Association and a consultant for a number of colleges. If your history group you belong to are interested, write to Elizabeth Wright, History in Progress, 1336 Green St. #2, San Francisco 94109-1944 or telephone her at 415-928-3417 or e hipeaw@sirius.com. The Registration fee is \$275 in advance. Elizabeth Wright.

MY FORGETTER

My forgetter's getting better
But my rememberer is broke
To you that may seem funny
But, to me, that is no joke

For when I'm "here" I'm wondering
If I really should be "there"
And, when I try to think it through,
I haven't got a prayer!

Oft times I walk into a room,
Say "what am I here for?"
I wrack my brain, but all in vain
A zero, is my score.

At times I put something away
Where it is safe, but, Gee!
The person it is safest from
Is, generally, me!

When shopping I may see someone
Say "Hi" and have a chat,
Then, when the person walks away
I ask myself, "who's that?"

Yes, my forgetter's getting better
While my rememberer is broke,
And it's driving me plumb crazy
And that isn't any j



CALIFORNIA PIONEERS

OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

2001 SANTA CLARA COUNTY HISTORICAL ESSAY CONTEST

\$1200 in Prize Money

First Prize \$500 Second Prize \$250 Third Prize \$150

Three Honorable Mentions of \$100 each

**OPEN TO ALL: STUDENTS
AND GENERAL PUBLIC**

SUBJECT: Santa Clara County Persons, Places, or Events

LENGTH OF ESSAY: 3,000 to 10,000 words (10-30 Pages)

FORM: Typewritten in English, double spaced, one-inch margin. Essays must be in proper folder or thoroughly stapled together.

CONTENTS: (a) Introduction or Preface (b) Table of Contents

(c) Bibliography (d) Sources, persons consulted

TITLE PAGE: Must include your NAME, ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBER

Students must include name of school and teacher.

- ★ TWO COPIES must be submitted. Those submitting one copy will be disqualified from competition. Copies will not be returned.
- ★ First Place winners must wait three years to re-enter contest.

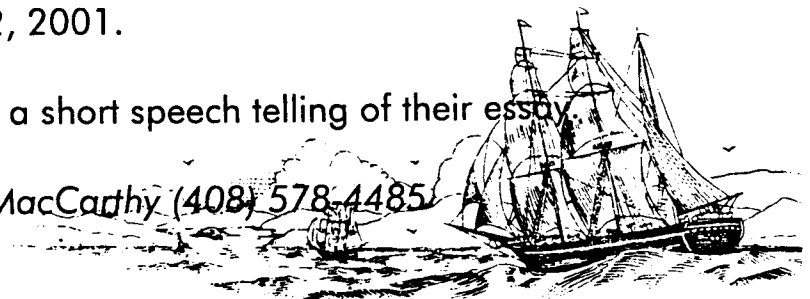
DEADLINE: April 20, 2001

Send Essay to: Campbell, Warburton Law Offices
111 West St. John Street, Suite 440
San Jose, CA 95113-1104

Winners will receive their awards at the Spring Quarterly Luncheon of the California Pioneers held at 12 noon at Lou's Village, 1465 West San Carlos Street, San Jose, CA 95126 on June 2, 2001.

The first three prize winners will make a short speech telling of their essay.

For additional copies of rules: Helen MacCarthy (408) 578-4485





Touring With The Californians

TOURING WITH THE CALIFORNIANS March, 2001

Rose Crimi Muench -- Tour Director

Marie Rider -- Phone Reservations: 251-7887 M-F a.m.

Pauline Hawkins --Treasurer: 390 No. Winchester Blvd. #7B
Santa Clara, CA 95050

Beverly Fisher -- Luncheon Registrations

REGISTRATION FOR SPRING TRIPS begins at the March 3 luncheon. Checks are preferred, or exact cash. Non-members and guests may sign up starting March 12. If you do not get a trip flyer at the luncheon meeting, please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Pauline's address above. Our pick-up point (unless otherwise indicated) is at Valley Village, 390 N. Winchester Blvd., Santa Clara, at the Dolores Street side.

THURSDAY, MARCH 22, 2001 SAN FRANCISCO FLOWER and GARDEN SHOW

Registration is now in progress. This 16th Annual Show at the Cow Palace presents an array of over 20 show gardens.

Other attractions include: seminars and demonstrations, a plants market, miniature gardens, a 30,000 plant orchid show, flower arrangement, garden fountains, garden furniture, and an exhibit of flower and garden paintings, and photographs. The delightful displays should inspire us to create our own garden projects. Bring your cameras! Food booths are available for lunch on your own. The entry fee is included in the price of the trip. Fern McLaggan will escort this trip. Rose Crimi will be on personal travel.

Leave: 9:00 A.M. Return: 4:00 P.M. Price: \$ 29

April 19 - 23, 2001 RAMONA and the MISSION TRAIL
The California Pioneers and Mary Lou Lyon's California

History Class are planning a trek to six Spanish missions, and a performance of the Ramona Pageant, bringing to life our colorful history. As we travel south, we will make stops at the Missions: San Antonio, San Miguel, La Purisima, Santa Inez, Santa Barbara, and San Gabriel. Mary Lou will draw upon her intimate knowledge of the missions in her inimitable way -- this should be enlightening and fun! The Ramona Pageant is the longest running outdoor pageant in America, having been first performed in 1923. Taken from the Helen Hunt Jackson novel, it tells the story of the bitter-sweet romance between Ramona, an 18-year old California girl, and the Indian, Alessandro -- as well as the conflicts among the Californios, the Indians, and the incoming Americans. A cast of 350 performs in an amphitheater near Hemet overlooking a five-acre natural setting. We will also have lunch and a tour of "La Hacienda," William Randolph Hearst's ranch house designed by Julia Morgan, and lunches in Solvang and a Basque restaurant in Bakersfield. Also, if the blooming time is right, we will stop at the Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve for a breath-taking view of rolling hills covered with California poppies. Cost is \$475 and \$135 single supplement. Flyers are available. *We have met our 30 person minimum, but we can take a few more registrations, depending on availability of hotel space.*

May 4 - 12, 2001 COLUMBIA RIVER CRUISE
This trip is filled, except for replacing cancellations. Call Rose Crimi, (408) 293-0896.

**TUESDAY, MAY 22, 2001 CROW CANYON GARDENS
and HISTORIC PLEASANTON**
Hidden away from Highway I-680 north of San Ramon, Crow Canyon Gardens is a unique demonstration of organic gardening producing herbs, vegetables, fruit, and flowers. Our guided tour will take us to see the plantings. An extra bonus is the display of spring flowers throughout the garden. Our included lunch at Mudd's Restaurant next door will feature fresh produce from the gardens. We will also visit the Amador Livermore Valley Historical Museum in Pleasanton.

The museum is housed in the old Town Hall in the downtown historic district. We will have time to see some of the 1890's homes and buildings around the museum.

Leave: 9:00 A.M. Return: 4:00 P.M. Price: \$ 39

**THURSDAY, JUNE 21, 2001 PAC BELL PARK and
BAY CRUISE**

A behind-the-scenes tour of Pac Bell Park, home of the San Francisco Giants baseball team, takes us to see: the dugout and batting cages, luxury boxes, press box, visitors lounge and the Giants' store, plus beautiful views of San Francisco and the Bay. We then ride along the Embarcadero to Pier 39. Enjoy free time and lunch on your own. Everyone will have a discount coupon book for the restaurants and shops, as well as a description of the various restaurants. From Pier 39 we will take a one-hour cruise on the Bay sailing under the Golden Gate and Bay Bridges, by Alcatraz and Angel Island, and viewing San Francisco and Pac Bell Park from the Bay.

Leave: 9:00 A.M. Return: 4:00 P.M. Price: \$ 34

**JULY 2001 BONFANTE GARDENS and the OUTLETS
MALL in GILROY
SEPTEMBER 11-14, 2001 MAMMOTH LAKES AND
YOSEMITE**

A beautiful fall ride into the Eastern Sierra takes us to Jagerhof Lodge for a three-night stay. We will explore the Five Lakes basin with visits to the rustic Twin Falls Forest Chapel, Mammoth Mountain Ski Resort, Devil's Postpile National Monument, and the Minarets. We then devote a day to a guided tour of Yosemite National Park, entering over Tioga Pass and Tuolumne Meadows. Following luncheon at the Awahnee Lodge, we will go to the Visitors' Center, the Indian Village, and the Ansel Adams Studio. Cost is **\$495** and **\$195** single supplement. This includes: motor coach transportation; three nights lodging; daily breakfasts and five lunches or dinners; evening entertainment; driver and guide tips and baggage handling. A **\$200** deposit will hold your reservation, with final payment due July 13th, 2001. No penalty for cancellation before July 13th. A minimum of 30 persons is needed to operate the tour, so register early. Brochures will be available at the March 3 luncheon.

SEPTEMBER 29 – October 11, 2001 THE ERIE CANAL

See the **Northeast** as never before on a 13-day cruising tour of Long Island Sound, the Hudson River, the Erie Canal, and the St. Lawrence Seaway -- with a bonus of fall colors! We board the *M.V. Grand Caribe* from Rhode Island. Sights along the way include: the sky-line of Manhattan with a shore excursion to • the forests and estates of the Hudson River, • a tour of West Point Academy and • FDR's Estate in Hyde Park • a passage through the Erie Barge Canal Locks • an excursion to Fort Stanwix from the French-and-Indian War era • passage through Lake Oneida and the Oswego Canal across Lake Ontario to Kingston for a visit to • Fort Henry, which was built to protect Canada from American attacks • a Paddlewheel cruise through the Thousand Islands • steaming down the St. Lawrence River through several locks to our final destination: the beautiful • City of Montreal. After a city tour of Montreal, we fly home. At press time, 7 cabins remain on the Sun Deck at **\$3895**. A female roommate is needed for a registrant at **\$3795**. A deposit of **\$500** per person will hold the cabin of your choice. You are protected by a full refund policy for cancellations before June 8, 2001. The cost includes: transfer to and from San Francisco; round trip air from San Francisco to Boston, and return from Montreal; a 12-day cruise; all meals on board; all shore excursions; all tips on-board and to the guides, drivers, and tour manager. Final payment is due June 8th, 2001. Current passports are required
Brochures are available.

ARGONAUTS TRIPS

We are invited to participate in the following trips. For details please call Margaret Allvey, (408) 997-7507.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21, 2001 MONTEREY

We spend a day in beautiful Monterey. Activities include: a short film on the history of Monterey; a guided tour of the newly refurbished Pacific House Museum; luncheon at Domenico's Restaurant on the Wharf, with wonderful food and spectacular views of Monterey Bay. Free time after lunch to wander the wharf, visit the Maritime Museum (\$2.50 admission for seniors), visit the shops, or just people w;

and enjoy the view. Bus pick-up point to be announced. Call Margaret Allvey by February 21st.

Leave: 8:45 A.M. Return: 4:45 P.M. Price: \$ 50

SATURDAY, APRIL 28, 2001

NEW ALMADEN MUSEUM and CEMETERY

Meet at Casa Grande at 9:45 A.M. We will have a walking tour from New Almaden to the Cemetery (1.6 miles.) Dick Hill will show us the restoration work and tell us some of the history. We return to the Casa Grande for a brown bag lunch (or at the Community Center if it rains) and a tour of the New Almaden Museum. Kitty Monahan will be our guide.

SUNDAY, OCT. 7, 2001 SAN FRANCISCO FLEET WEEK

S.S. Jeremiah O'Brien Liberty Ship tour, including morning refreshments, lunch, Big Band dancing, Blue Angels fly-over, and open house on other Navy ships in the harbor. Car-pool transportation. Price: \$100.

THE SAN FRANCISCO CONSERVATORY IN GOLDEN GATE PARK by **Leonard McKay, Historian** which is in need of repair since a windstorm some years back took many of the glass panes out, was originally intended for our area according to James Lick's niece who wrote *The Generous Miser* in 1967: "Early in the 1860's, James Lick ordered a replica of the Kew Gardens Conservatory. He had been greatly impressed with the Conservatory when he had visited London as a young man. The model, built by Lord and Burnham in Irvington, New York was dismantled, packed in heavy wooden crates, and shipped to him via Cape Horn. He had the crates stored on the Homestead property (downtown) in San Jose with the intention of giving the Conservatory to the City of San Jose. However, an article in a San Jose paper by editor J.J. Owen, criticizing James' manner of dress, displeased him and he left the crates un-opened. Eventually, after his death, the Conservatory was left to the Society of California Pioneers, which allowed a group of public spirited men to purchase it for \$12,000 and to erect it in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park, for \$15,000. James Lick was a great benefactor and a very important Californian. At one time, he owned all of the Knox Block in downtown San Jose, his beautiful estate and mill in the Agnews area, and all of Catalina Island.

**2001 OFFICERS CALIFORNIA
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OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY**

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95111- 2032 408-298-5711

Mary Lou Lyon- Editor

879 Lily Ave, Cupertino, CA
95014-4261 408-253-9514

DEADLINE- for June Trailblazer

May Day, 2001

Audit Committee -Hal Messimer

18950 Sara Park Circle
Saratoga, CA 95070-4177
408-253-3888

Audit Committee -Bob Johnson

Parliamentarian -Irene Johnson

445 North 15th St., San Jose, CA
95112-1726 408-275-1389

Sunshine -Beverly J. Fisher-

Robert G. Fisher-

3435 Yuba Av. San Jose, CA
95117-2966 408-241-0224

Marshall -Carol Arnoldy

1342 Prevost Street, San Jose, CA
95125-1754 408-298-9043

Nominating Committee Chair

Evelyn Ucovich 408-287-8413
416 Millpond Dr.,
San Jose, CA 95125-1431

* * * * *

The Californians-Tours

Rose Crimi Muench

1289 Martin St.
San Jose, CA 95126-2628
408-293-0896

The Californians -Reservations

Marie Rider-251-7887

The Californians Treasurer

Pauline Hawkins,

390 N. Winchester, 7B
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408-984-0904

* * * * *

Hacienda Cemetery & Jackson

Ranch Richard Hill & Bud Amaral

10393 Doris Ct. 6001 Vera Cruz Dr.
San Jose, CA San Jose, CA
95127-3013 95120-4864
408-258-3449 408-268-4078

* * * * *

P.O. BOX 8208 SAN JOSE CA 95155
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

PIONEER LUNCHEON

SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 2000

AT NOON LOU'S VILLAGE

*Carolyn Marie Downey
on Local artist
Margaret O'Keefe*

554-7587

RICHARD M & NANCYHILL L
10393 DORIS C+
SAN JOSE, CA
95127-3013

STUFFED BREAST OF CHICKEN

WITH

MUSHROOMS & WILD RICE

SEASONAL VEGETABLES

CHOCOLATE CAKE & COFFEE

RESERVATIONS

BEFORE

WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 28, 2001

\$15.50

WINE AVAILABLE BY THE GLASS

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION U.S. POSTAGE PAID CUPERTINO, CA 95014 PERMIT NO. 543
