



Cupertino Historical Society & Museum presents the **Cornerstone**

Spring 2019

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SAM LAWSON REMEMBERED

|| By **Wes Morse**, Local Historian

April 30, 2019 marks the 20th anniversary of the passing of a Cupertino legend—Sam Lawson. The Cupertino educator spent his entire career in the Cupertino Union School district, putting his stamp on curriculum, developing programs, hiring its leaders, and eventually giving his name to a middle school.

“What would Sam Lawson do?” is on a placard inside my classroom. I put it up as a reminder to all that I learned from this remarkable man. He was a man of absolute integrity and selfless dedication to his students and community. I wrote a biography about Sam so that the students of that school could learn more about its namesake. Sam deserved that much.

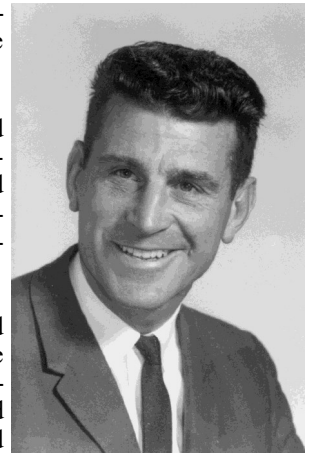
Sam was born in Windsor, California to a modest hardworking family. He grew up outdoors, riding his bike in the neighborhood, exploring the creeks, and playing on the farms of his friends. Sam’s sporting passion was baseball and throughout his life he was known to have the radio playing whenever the World Series was on—especially if it was the Yankees. Even when the San Francisco Giants came to town from New York, Sam kept his primarily allegiance to his beloved Yankees. Sam was loyal.

Sam attended San Jose State after serving in the Navy and when his dreams of playing baseball in college were dashed, he turned to wrestling—a sport he would help develop and promote on the “Westside.” Within a year of learning the sport, he became a colle-



Above: Lawson poses with the 1950 Cupertino Union School wrestling team.

gate champion. He started the wrestling program at Palo Alto High School as a student teacher. Since none of the high schools were hiring, Sam turned to the elementary schools and after a successful interview in Superintendent D.J. Sedgwick’s basement, he was hired to teach at the Cupertino Union School.



Above: Sam Lawson

As an educator, Sam instilled structure in his students; that started each day with calisthenics and the Pledge of Allegiance. He organized sports games and tournaments and found other ways to physically engage his students. □

The Turkey Trot he founded awarded an actual turkey to the winner of the 2-mile race. At Cupertino Middle School, Sam started “Cubs Cave” to get students and their families together on Friday nights. The event featured endless events and promoted a civic connection that helped the early city blossom into a community that embraced education and the “whole child.”

Sam served many years in administration and his favorite years were those spent as principal at Earl Warren Elementary school (now Jenny Strand Park in Santa Clara). When that school closed in 1975, Sam just didn’t connect to his next school so after a year he opted to teach adaptive Physical Education to students with disabilities. Sam loaded his car trunk with sports equipment and drove from school to school to engage disabled students who needed the extra support. In 1981, he retired the same way he started, engaging kids in physical activity.

I often wonder what Sam would think about the state of education in this community. Would he pride himself in the academic rigor and achievement? Would he lament the lack of emphasis on physical health and teamwork? Probably both.

But my suspicion is that Sam would also be very concerned about the academic overload of students today. He would insist that they get outside more to run and play, and to engage with nature. That is good advice for more than just the students of our community.

Wes Morse’s book on Sam Lawson is available to borrow from the museum lending library.



Cupertino Historical Society & Museum

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Cupertino Historical Society and Museum is to preserve and share Cupertino's past, strengthen the sense of community and make Cupertino history available for all.

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The Cornerstone is published quarterly by the Cupertino Historical Society, a private, non-profit organization.

BULLETIN BOARD

CHS Board of Directors Meetings

The Third Wednesday of Every Month at 4pm

Holidays: Quinlan Center Closed

May 27, 2019 - Memorial Day

Museum Hours:

Located in the Quinlan Community Center, the museum is open to the public **Wednesday through Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Admission is FREE.**

Museum Events:

Technology Exhibit Member Preview—Watch our Facebook and EventBrite Pages

April 20, 2019 Paul & Eddie's Fundraiser

May 17, 2019 Intercontinental Railroad Gala

PRESIDENTS' CORNER

Dear Friends of Cupertino Historical Society and Museum,



Happy 2019 and Happy Chinese New Year! We ended 2018 on a high note, raising almost \$6,000 in our annual fund drive. We are so grateful to everyone who was able to participate. Your support, both financially and through volunteer work, is the lifeblood of our organization. We celebrated a fruitful 2018 at our holiday party at Enzo's Italian Restaurant. We were so honored to have Mayor Steven Scharf and Council Members Liang Chao and Jon Willey in



attendance. Fabrizio Vitagliano, owner of Enzo's and CHSM Board Member, was a gracious host—we are grateful for his generosity. We also welcomed a record number of visitors to our Holiday Exhibit. Children from the Quinlan Center Preschool were delighted to make Santa crafts and hear the "Night Before Christmas" poem. We also hosted craft-making activities during the Quinlan Center Tree Lighting and Breakfast with Santa events. If you are interested in becoming involved with special events like these, please email: volunteer@cupertinohistoricalsociety.org.



As we move into 2019, I find myself reflecting on my own personal heritage. It is the year of the Pig. I turned sixty years old this year, which makes me a pig. The lunar cycle works rotates through every animal each twelve years. Every morning when I wake up, I feel I am so blessed by you and this community. We breath fresh air, in terms of environment and politics. When I look across the Pacific Ocean, I am reminded that there is no freedom in China. I feel eternally grateful to lead such an amazing Board of Directors with Jennifer Furlong,

our talented Executive Director.

We have many exciting events and surprises planned for you this year. Our spring exhibit on Early Computing will open in the first weeks of March, with a private member preview event. This year we will celebrate the 150-year anniversary of the completion of continental railroad. On May 17th, the Historical Society will host a gala party in the Quinlan Center here to mark this important milestone. Events will include speakers, a film and Chinese food for you to enjoy, free of charge. Mark your calendars!

Please stop by our museum anytime you visit the Quinlan Community Center. We would love to have more community involvement. If you know someone who has an interest in history, please tell them about our thriving organization. Our Museum is small, but we have a big heart. I hope you can feel our heart beating when you stop by our museum.

We like to see new faces coming to our museum, and I wish to hear any suggestions you may have. My personal email is sun.cupertino@gmail.com or you can text me at 408-202-1080.

Thank you all and see you around.

Don Sun, President Board of Directors

LEGACY GIVING

You may have heard the term “legacy giving” but weren’t sure what it meant. Here’s a basic definition: it is simply planning to make a difference, both for yourself and for a cause that you believe in, through a charitable gift. The goal of such gifts is to “leave a legacy” that can make an impact for future generations.

Making a legacy gift in your will, also referred to as a “bequest,” is a simple way to make a gift to the Cupertino Historical Society + Museum that has lasting impact. Bequests to our organization in the form of cash, securities, and real estate or property are a significant source of support for the Museum’s exhibitions, collections, and programs. Making a legacy gift is easy: you can designate a specific dollar amount, a particular asset, a fixed percentage of your entire estate, or leave your residuary estate after providing for your loved ones. And while unrestricted gifts allow the Museum to allocate funds to the areas of greatest need, your bequest can support a specific Museum program.

No matter what you choose, your legacy gift will support the Museum’s mission, ensuring that we continue to connect people to Cupertino History, preserve community treasures, and generate creative energy for future generations. We hope that you will join many other lifetime donors to the Cupertino Historical Society and Museum continuing to support our mission through a legacy gift. For more information, please contact our Treasurer, Bill Kerr at whkerr@comcast.net.

The Almost Cupertino Stamp

By Donna Austin, Board Member

Did you know that Cupertino almost had a U.S. Stamp issued after our namesake Saint Joseph of Cupertino? When the explorer, Juan Bautista De Anza camped at our creek, he named the creek after the patron saint of his cartographer/diarist, Pedro Font. The only other city named Copertino is in Italy, where Saint Joseph of Copertino was born over 350 years ago. They pronounce their city name Copertino and they have been our sister city since 1952.

I found this article (on the right) in one of the old *Cupertino Couriers* we have in our museum collection. A group from Cupertino wanted to have a stamp issued honoring St. Joseph, the Patron Saint of Flight. They commissioned local Cupertino artist, Pete Emig, to design the black and white pen and ink drawing. Governor Pat Brown and the State Legislature gave their support for the project. Notice the rocket on the stamp flying below Saint Joseph. Eight cents was the cost of an air mail stamp in those days. The stamp request and design were sent to the U.S. Post Office Department and reviewed there.



I called the pastor of St. Joseph, Father Kimm, and he said, “That is a very interesting story that I had never heard before. Don’t get too excited, though, because I can tell you that no such stamp was ever issued. I am a stamp collector of several decades and have some knowledge of U.S. postage stamps. The design in the photo looks similar to another 8-cent air-mail stamp that was issued in 1962. My guess is that the

design was ultimately rejected, in spite of all the endorsements.” The 8-cent stamp, pictured on the left, is the air mail stamp that was issued in 1962.



Robert Meyers

July 10, 1934 - Nov. 30, 2018

In addition to serving as Mayor of Cupertino in 1976-77 and 1978-1980, Bob Meyers was President of CHSM Board of Directors. He was instrumental in working with the city to secure our museum and office in the Quinlan Center.

George Fernandez

Cupertino High School's first principal, George Fernandez, has passed away at age 95 in his Oregon home. Fernandez opened CHS in 1958 and served as the school's principal for 20 years. Fernandez grew up in Cupertino and was one of its most important civic leaders in the city's formative years.



IN MEMORIAM



Cupertino Historical Society & Museum

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BULLETIN BOARD

Upcoming CHS Board of Directors Meetings

Wednesdays: February 20, March 20, April 17, May 15 at 4 pm,
Quinlan Center Conference Room

Community Events: Wafu Ikebana Society Flower Show Sat.-Sun. March 3-4
10am-4:30pm Quinlan Community Center

MetroGnomes Barbershop Quartet Performance and Potluck, March 26, 6:30 pm
(potluck) 7:30 pm (performance), Saratoga Foothill Club

Holi Sunday, April 8 11am-4pm Memorial Park, Chamber of Commerce

History Happy Hour, April 19, 5:30-7:30 pm, Campbell Historical Museum

Paul & Eddie's CHSM Fundraiser, Saturday, April 20, 1-4 pm

"Apron Strings and Vintage Things." Exhibit through April 28, Saratoga Museum

Cherry Blossom Festival, April 28-29 10am-5pm Memorial Park Cupertino-
Toyokawa Sister City

150th Anniversary of the Transcontinental Railroad Gala, May 17, 6-8:30 pm

Sip of History Annual CHSM BBQ, June 30, Time TBD

Current resident or:



Mark Your Calendar
Paul & Eddie's Fundraiser for CHSM
Saturday, April 20, 2019 * 1 to 4 pm
Tickets \$45/Per Person Members, \$50/public
Drinks and Snacks Provided
More Info to Come ** 21 and up only

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

NOVEMBER 2018 thru JANUARY 2019

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