



Cupertino Historical Society & Museum
presents

the

Cornerstone

Pandemic Edition 2020

Volume 30, Issue 1

CUPERTINO WOMAN OF DISTINCTION: ELISABETH LOWE WATSON

By Donna Austin

Under a majestic oak tree near Regnart Creek, up to 1,500 people would gather for worship with the Cupertino Union Church every June during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The hostess of the event was Elizabeth Lowe Watson. She called the tree "Temple Oak;" it was the site for worship, family gatherings and family funerals.

"People loved to go there because it was so beautiful; it was like a park," local historian Yvonne Jacobson said. The oak is now reduced, wedged between a garage and a fence of a housing development, according to Jacobson. But the oak, like Watson's legacy, lives on.

Watson helped win the vote for women in California in 1911. Even before she came to California, she worked side by side with suffrage leaders such as Susan B. Anthony.

From her home in Cupertino, Watson worked arduously writing letters, sending money when she could and hosting numerous meetings at her home. She also traveled extensively, speaking and preaching on suffrage, temperance and peace issues.

Watson was also a respected spiritualist in her day, according to Jacobsen. As a child Watson had been driven around the country by her father to lecture and conduct "psychic experiences" for audiences. Jacobson said she's not sure if it was a hoax; she said that as an adult Watson was a scrupulously honest woman.

Watson came to Cupertino in 1880 from New York State to escape a gambling husband who was dwindling the family's reserves, Jacobson said. At one

time the two had nearly \$3 million in gold in the bank.

When she came to Cupertino, what money was left was limited. She purchased a small wheat farm. Watson and her son planted prune and apricot trees themselves. The orchards of "Sunnybrae" helped support her until she died in 1927.



In 1895, Watson hosted a luncheon for Susan B. Anthony and several other suffragists at Sunnybrae, where the women gave speeches for several hundred people from neighboring ranches. Watson and Anthony continued their friendship and exchanged correspondence until Anthony's death in 1906.

Watson was considered a leader in Cupertino. "Anything that needed to be done, she put herself into it," Jacobson said. She had a large lending library in her home, which she generously shared with neighbors.

Watson was one of the founding members of the Del Oro Club, the women's social group, as well as the King's Daughters, a women's Christian group.

"She was an extraordinary woman," Jacobson said.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER: A NOTE FROM SHARON BLAINE

Dear Members and Friends,

As we all adjust to social distancing, eating take-out, ZOOM meetings, longer hair, wearing masks, taking classes online, and working from home, we have learned we can adapt our lifestyles as needed. Life beginning in 2021 will be very different from the life we knew before March 2020. It will be interesting to see the changes that occur post-pandemic, as our society re-evaluates business methods, medical care, delivery services, education, workplaces, to mention just a few.

We are living and writing a new chapter in world history.

Earlier this year, we held an afternoon of music, fun, food & drinks at Paul & Eddie's, one of Cupertino's oldest establishments. The event quickly sold out. Thanks to the generosity of Amy Shott, owner of Paul & Eddie's, we raised some much-needed funds for our programs & exhibits. I would like to extend a special thank you to: Donna Austin, Dick Blaine, Jennifer Furlong, Gina Gaviglio, Sandy James, and Suzanne Morrison for your work to make this event a success.

The year 2020 is the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution guaranteeing women the right to vote. In keeping with the "Year of the Woman" theme, we installed an exhibit in the Cupertino Library highlighting "Cupertino Women Who Made Things Happen." Part one of this exhibit features Cupertino Women from 1880 – 1950. When the library re-opens, look for it on the second floor across from the reference desk.

Before closing due to COVID-19, our museum was visited by the 3 & 4-year-old children from the Parks and Recreation pre-school in Quinlan. We gave them a brief tour of our current exhibit, "Homage to the IT Revolution: 1975-1985," and Jennifer read them a couple of technology-related books. The children are always welcome guests at the museum—we adore their fresh ideas and enthusiasm! While very familiar with personal computers, cell phones, and tablets, they were quite puzzled when presented with an unfamiliar object: a rotary dial telephone. It was most interesting to watch them try to understand how to use such an object. Most had never seen or used a dial before and were shocked that there were no buttons to push! Times have changed, and I realized how very few things have dials today.

All the events and happenings I discussed, thus far, have already happened. We are forging new ground by moving our fundraising and educational outreach to forums like PayPal, Zoom, and Facebook. Our popular Speaker Series has moved online (register through EventBrite) our Fall event features Wes Morse discussing the life and art of Pete Emig on September 23; we have formed a Racial Justice Reading Group, which meets online; and we continue to look for ways to educate and engage our community in a post-COVID reality. It was with heavy hearts, that we decided to cancel our Student Symposium, Annual Meeting, and BBQ. The Annual BBQ, our largest fundraiser, accounts for about 30% of our operating budget each year. We NEED your support to continue to be able to offer quality programming to our community and stay fiscally sound. Please consider giving today. I hope to see you (virtually) very soon—thank you for your continued support of our organization.



Cupertino Historical Society & Museum

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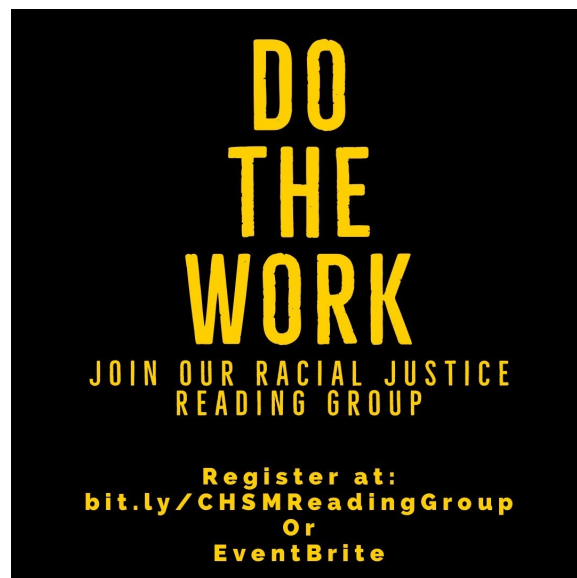
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FUN WITH THE TRAVELING TRUNK TEAM

By Sonja Cook, Traveling Trunk Coordinator

The Traveling Trunk is a great opportunity to share Cupertino history with our local school children. Third Graders study local history in the spring so seeing some of the school, farm and kitchen equipment first-hand makes life in the old days seem more real to them. Their little faces light up with amazement when they hear of what life was like here in the Valley around 1900. Houses with no running water or electricity, one room school houses, the different clothes, picking fruit the list goes on.

They are so interested in all the pictures and artifacts we bring and send the most delightful thank you notes, often with hand-drawn pictures of their favorite things.

We present at several school Discovery Days and there we also meet other interesting people over coffee and lunch breaks. They range from police officers, librarians, turtle conservationists, artists – on and on - all fun to talk to. Sometimes, we present to Senior groups. Then it is more of a sharing event because they have their stories, too, so we learn new things. We recently visited Hope Services for adult seniors and that was an especially rewarding experience. They were so attentive and interested.

Four wonderful ladies with a wealth of historical knowledge make up our Traveling Trunk Team. We go out in pairs, so the kids hear different voices and stories. If you are interested in joining this dynamic team, please reach out to Jennifer Furlong, our Executive Director at: jennifer@cupertinohistoricalsociety.org

Please note: This article was written before the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic. While we are still accepting applications for the Traveling Trunk team, all in-person presentations have been suspended for the remainder of 2020.

A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE: FUNDRAISER AT PAUL & EDDIE'S

By Jennifer Furlong, Executive Director

This Leap Day, we were honored to be invited by Amy Schott, one of the owners of the historical Paul & Eddie's Monta Vista Inn, to host our wildly popular "Trip Down Memory Lane" fundraiser. The event sold out within a week—we were thrilled with the response.



Guests were given a crisp \$1 bill to decorate and staple to the interior (wall, ceiling, etc.). Popular bar lore says that Paul & Eddie didn't want anyone who had fallen on hard times to not have money to buy a beer, so the dollars are always there for patrons. Guests were also treated to the down home sounds of Paul & Eddie, of no relation to the original owners, in between stories. Donna Austin, Board Member, was an excellent emcee.

All of the proceeds from this event, which raised almost \$3000, will go to educational programming. We are so grateful to our friends at Paul & Eddie's for hosting us and providing such yummy nibbles. Photos are continued on the following page.



PAUL & EDDIE'S CONTINUED



PETE EMIG AND “THE HUMAN TOUCH”

By Wes Morse, Local Historian



Above: Pete Emig and his family.

Citizens of Cupertino had something to look forward to each week as they opened the Cupertino Courier—Pete Emig’s illustrative biographies that he called “The Human Touch. Pete completed nearly 200 of these panels prior to his untimely death. They still exist, although they have been largely hidden from view for many years now. Those who are old enough to remember them, remember them fondly. The premise of the panels was quite simple—average citizens of Cupertino matter, and their efforts to build a city should be celebrated. He featured local educators, businessmen, leading women, and even the little league umpire. Pete also took time to reflect back on the city’s early history, from its Native American roots to Spanish exploration to the complaints of Elisha Stephens (“too durned crowded”). You can see most of these (and some of his other works) in a book I put together that can be purchased through the Cupertino Historical Society.

Pete immigrated from Germany in the years after World War I. After stops in West Virginia, Michigan, and Texas, he headed to



Above: Emig with his postage stamp design.

Cupertino where his wife Joan took an elementary school job in Mountain View. Her teaching career permitted Pete the freedom to pursue his art and his passion for local history. Pete was among the founders of the Cupertino Historical Society, The Fine Arts Commission, and even attempted to put St. Joseph on a U.S. Postage stamp. While he was unsuccessful with the stamp, he did help get an Air Force plane named after the city. Cupertino, a new and vibrant city, was effectively a “blank canvass” for someone with tremendous energy.

Pete suffered a heart attack on the evening of March 10, 1966 at age 55. His last illustrative panel ran next to his obituary a week later. It is safe to say that he would have gone on to do many more projects to showcase his adopted city.

When taken together, these illustrative panels tell a compelling story of early Cupertino. The book also features a biography of Pete’s life and his path to Cupertino. The epigraph of the book reads: “The great use of life is to spend it for something that will outlast it.” My hope is to honor that quote by making Pete Emig’s work available to the citizen’s of Cupertino again.

Wes Morse’s Beautiful Hardcover Book, Pete Emig: A Human Touch is available for Purchase from the Cupertino Historical Society + Museum for \$50. Order online at

<http://bit.ly/morsebookorder>

or by mailing the included form (on the back cover) with a check or credit card number.

CHSM SPEAKER SERIES

**PETE EMIG AND THE HUMAN TOUCH:
CUPERTINO THROUGH THE EYES OF AN ARTIST**

FEATURING LOCAL HISTORIAN WES MORSE AND JOHN EMIG

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ONE-THIRD OF U.S. MUSEUMS MAY NOT SURVIVE THE YEAR, SURVEY FINDS

By Neda Ulaby, Reporter, Arts Desk NPR

Museums seem like immortal places, with their august countenances and treasured holdings. Even in our TikTok era of diminishing attention spans, they draw more than 850 million visitors a year in the U.S., according to the American Alliance of Museums.

But the coronavirus was not impressed, and the effects of the pandemic-related shutdown on the country's museums have been dire, says AAM President and CEO Laura Lott. In a survey released Wednesday of 760 museum directors, 33% of them said there was either a "significant risk" of closing permanently by next fall or that they didn't know if their institutions would survive.

"There's a large public perception that museums rely on government support, when the reality is they get only a quarter of their funding from the government," Lott tells NPR.

Ticket and gift shop sales, school trips and museum events are primary sources of funding, she says, "most of which went to zero overnight when they were all shuttered."

The institutions surveyed ranged from aquariums to botanical gardens to science centers. More than 40% of them were history museums, historic houses and historical societies, while art museums represented less than 25%.

Their annual budgets ranged from less than \$50,000 to more than \$10 million, but according to AAM, the vast majority — 87% — said they had only 12 months or less of financial operating reserves, with 56 percent having less than six months left to cover operations.

"Museums support 726,000 direct and indirect jobs and contribute \$50 billion each year to the economy. Of the museums able to reopen, over 40% plan to do so with reduced staff and will need to spend additional funds to ensure their ability to reopen safely," AAM said in a statement.

Most museums are loath to sell even parts of their collection — after all, Lott points out, that's why they exist. And sometimes they're not allowed to.

A shuttered Oregon motor sports museum, World of

Speed, announced its permanent closure earlier this year and said on its website that all assets and funds would be distributed to nonprofit museums and schools over the next several months, as required by Oregon law. "Perhaps the museum's greatest accomplishment was the opportunity it provided high school students to learn the skills needed to work in the automotive industry," the website said. "What a thrill it was to see these students grow and move onto fulfilling careers after graduation."

Most of the museums surveyed made a point of providing educational resources to students during the lockdown. But those are precisely the kind of services that will need to be cut in the budget crunch ahead, according to almost two-thirds of museum directors.

A majority of museums that took part in the AAM survey will have reopened by the end of July, Lott says. They provide respite from the cares of the world, inspiration and a sense of community identity, she observes. "But when they're gone," she says, "they won't be easily replaced."

This article was reprinted with permission from the author and NPR.org.

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CONSIDER MAKING A GIFT TODAY.

Sp Adobe Spark

Documenting Cupertino During COVID-19

By Jennifer Furlong, Executive Director

As the city's historical society and one of the oldest in the region, the Cupertino Historical Society + Museum has been collecting and archiving items that document our community's past since 1966. Our collection includes more than 5,000 tools, graphics, books, artifacts, and other historical materials.

That brings us to the present--we are currently living through a historically notable time! We need your help to document what is going on in your homes, at your jobs, and in the community. We want to hear your story. We want to know how you and your family are experiencing the current pandemic and "new normal" of life in the Bay Area.

Here are some examples of what we're looking for:

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------|
| ■ Writings | ■ Drawings |
| ■ Poetry or Journals | ■ Paintings |
| ■ Signage | ■ Photos |
| ■ Other forms of Art | ■ Objects |
| ■ Short Videos | ■ Masks |

Please stay safe when documenting these historic times. Do not put yourself in danger when capturing photos or videos.

Please take the time to read and respond to each of the fields in our online form. Please note, that items cannot be considered unless the form is filled with the necessary information.

Future researchers, visitors, and Cupertino residents will have you to thank for sharing a part of your lives with them as they work to understand this time in history.

We hope, one day, to be able to mount an exhibit highlighting how we lived during the time of COVID. If you have questions, would like to submit larger file sizes or would like to arrange donation of a COVID-related object to our collection, please email our Executive Director at: jennifer@cupertinohistoricalsociety.org.

Link to Online Submission Form:
bit.ly/CupertinoCOVID19

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January through September 1, 2020

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We would like to say a special "Thank You" to our Donors during these challenging times.

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BULLETIN BOARD

Upcoming Board of Directors Meetings

September 16, October 21, November 18 (Meetings are held the third Wednesday of the month at 4 pm on Zoom). To receive an invitation, please email Jennifer Furlong at jennifer@cupertinohistoricalsociety.org

Upcoming Events

Racial Justice Reading Group, Wednesday, August 26 and October 7 at 7 pm. Register on EventBrite

Speaker Event: Wes Morse on Pete Emig, Wednesday, September 23 at 7 pm. Register on EventBrite

For the most up-to-date event listings, follow us on [EventBrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com) (search for "Cupertino Historical Society" and subscribe) or Like us on Facebook.

Museum Hours:

The Museum is CLOSED until further notice.

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Cupertino Throw Blanket	\$50		
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