



Cupertino Historical Society & Museum
presents

the

Cornerstone

Spring 2021

Volume 31, Issue 2

CUPERTINO BEGINNINGS

|| By Gail Fretwell-Hugger

The Cupertino/Monta Vista Improvement Association, a group whose history dated back to the early 1900's, was instrumental in the incorporation of Cupertino as a city. The association was composed of Cupertino and Monta Vista orchardists, ranchers and other large landholders who banded together to stem encroachment from neighboring cities who were hungrily eyeing the undeveloped land in Cupertino. The association and greenbelt zoning helped the Cupertino ranchers to preserve the rural atmosphere until around 1950 when the cities of Sunnyvale, Santa Clara and San Jose, expanding in the post World War II boom, spotted Cupertino as the ideal place for industrial and residential expansion.

Cupertino saw the three other cities moving in from all sides - even Los Altos was viewed as a threat. The city managers of Sunnyvale and San Jose began running strip annexations into the Cupertino community and quarreling among themselves over making Stevens Creek Boulevard the mutual boundary.

The Cupertino/Monta Vista Improvement Association finally determined that incorporation was the only alternative and they started to set the machinery in motion for incorporation, only to be hit with a setback. Monta Vista didn't want to be included in the incorporation. Finally, in February of 1954, the association decided to go ahead with or without Monta Vista.

A study was commissioned and on July 17, 1954 community leaders gathered in the old Cupertino Union Grammar School to hear the four alternatives: do nothing and be annexed piecemeal by other cities; organize a community service district or county service area; permit annexation as a whole community to San Jose, Sunnyvale or Santa Clara or incorporate as the City of Cupertino. The chairman of the fact-finding committee, R. Ivan Meyerholz, strongly supported incorporation. "We will lose our identity and control by annexation to another city", he warned the audience. "We would probably be represented by (only) one councilman". A petition to incorporate was filed with the County Board of

Supervisors, but even as this progressive step was being taken, Cupertino was hit again by San Jose's huge annexation of approximately 550 acres deep into the community. The annexation reached Cupertino at two locations, from Doyle Road to Highway 9 (present day De Anza Boulevard) along Bollinger Road and south to Prospect Road. Shaken Cupertino leaders charged San Jose with cutting through Cupertino's backyard to try and annex Kaiser Permanente and its large tax revenue.

The *Cupertino Courier* jumped into the fray, publishing a large cartoon, showing a street map of Cupertino and Monta Vista. The surrounding cities of San Jose, Santa Clara, Sunnyvale and Los Altos were each represented by a sinister octopus, its' tentacles reaching far into Cupertino.

Meanwhile, seven candidates filed for the five council seats to be decided in the incorporation election. They were Ralph Lindstrom, Tony Lillo, Don Bandley, Norman Nathanson, John Saich, Warner Wilson and R. Ivan Meyerholz. They all supported incorporation, pointing out the self-government advantages and the low tax rate proposed. Cupertino leaders planned a 25 cent rate per \$100 of assessed valuation, compared to Santa Clara's \$2.19, San Jose's \$1.72 and Sunnyvale's \$1.38. They argued that under this tax rate a home worth \$12,500 and assessed at \$3500 would cost in taxes \$8.75 if in Cupertino, \$76.65 in Santa Clara, \$60.20 in San Jose and \$48.30 in Sunnyvale. On Tuesday night September 27, 1955, the City of Cupertino was born as the election results that day showed a 231 to 185 vote in favor of incorporation. The new city included about four square miles and 2,000 residents. Three quarters of its land was in agricultural use and it had an assessed valuation of about \$4 million. But it was a beginning.

(A personal note - When my parents were looking for a lot to build their home on in 1947, the mortgage officer at the bank told them to buy on the east side. He felt the west side of the valley was a very poor choice and that nothing was ever going to happen out here.)

This article was originally published in "Roots," November 2001.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER: A NOTE FROM SHARON BLAINE

Hello Everyone!

I hope the year 2021 finds you in good health and looking forward to a new and much improved lifestyle. This past year has been an historic one; indeed, "one for the history books." We learned ways to adapt and be flexible, as our normal lifestyle disappeared. Now, fortunately, we have reached a time when we can see hope on the horizon. Thanks to vaccines and the continuing practice of safety protocols we are gaining the upper hand over this pandemic.



The Cupertino Historical Society + Museum is looking forward to being able to reopen the museum and bring a new exhibit to the community. The pandemic stalled the return of the artifacts currently on exhibit to their owner in Italy; however, the return of the Boglione Collection is now moving forward! If you are interested in working on upcoming exhibits, please join the Exhibits Committee. Committee service is open to any member in good standing. We have several opportunities open in the following committees: fundraising and development; marketing and public relations; collections and assets. Please contact Jennifer Furlong, our Executive Director, at jennifer@cupertinohistoricalsociety.org or 270-792-4927 to learn more about serving on a CHSM Committee.

Recently, five new members have joined the Board of Directors. We welcome Jason Foreman, J.R. Fruen, Phil Johnson, Neeraj Mathur, and Bruce Parsons all of whom bring new ideas with their skills and experience to our organization. Be sure to read their bios, which are included in another section of this newsletter.

We would like to offer a huge "Thank You" to those who answered our appeal for donations during 2020. Needless to say, 2020 was a difficult year to fund raise. However, we are looking forward to seeing everyone at our Annual BBQ, to be held sometime in the late summer or early Autumn.

Although our museum has been closed since March 2020, we have shifted our focus to offering online activities—among them, our Racial Justice Reading Group and upcoming Cupertino-themed Trivia Night. We've also been working with the City of Cupertino to plan and design panels detailing Cupertino History along the Steven's Creek Corridor Trail. We have additional speakers planned for this spring, including, Cupertino's David Mariani. Subscribe to our Events on EventBrite, Facebook, or via email (on our website) so that you are the first to know about and all things CHSM.

CUPERTINO HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM

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

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MELLON FOUNDATION INTERN
Jasslie Altamirano

As we enter our 55th year of bringing Cupertino's history to our community, I cannot help but reflect on the history of our organization and our community impact. Since our humble beginnings as a grass-roots organization, led by Louis Stocklmeir, that met in members' homes, to our position now as one of Cupertino's favorite museums and host of internationally recognized exhibits, I am proud. I am proud of the interest in local history our organization helps keep alive. I am proud of our newest class of Board Members who pledge to carry on our rich traditions while looking to the future. I am proud of our commitments to education and equitable representation. I am proud to serve as President of The Cupertino Historical Society + Museum.

Thank you,

CUPERTINO WOMAN OF DISTINCTION: ZOE THOMPSON

By Emily Thompson

Zoe Thompson, California artist, former president and signature member of the Society of Western Artists (SWA) will turn 100 on March 30, 2021.

Zoe was exhibited widely throughout the Bay Area in invitational, college and juried shows. Among them, the Rosecrutian Museum, University of Santa Clara, Foothill and DeAnza colleges; the Fiesta de Artes, Los Gatos; Cupertino Historical Society, Valley Fair, Kings Mountain Art Shows, the Santa Clara County Fair and many more venues. Her work was represented by Swanson's Gallery of San Francisco. Aside from the Society of Western Artists, Zoe was also a member of the Fine Arts League of Cupertino, and exhibitor at the McClellan Ranch and Historical Park.



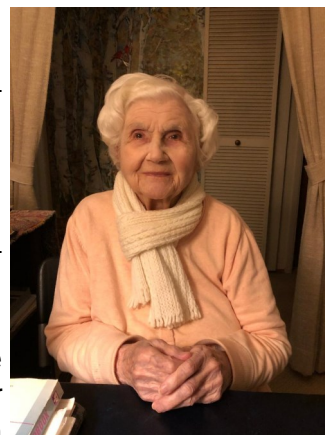
Above: Zoe Thompson visited our museum in 2019 for tea and a visit with Gail Fretwell-Hugger and Zorka Keenan.

off. She won hundreds of ribbons and awards, and was the focus of a local television documentary featuring CHSM's own Gail Hugger.

Zoe documented much of Cupertino's architectural history in her sketches and paintings, and she even sketched tools at Charlie Baer's old blacksmith forge. Zoe wrote a California history-related book of these sketches under a grant from DeAnza College. Thereby, she is a member of the National League of American Pen Women. Zoe loved reading all of her life, and her children call her google-mom because she can still elicit details on just about any topic. Zoe saw Cupertino grow from "apricots to Apple"! She says she's had an amazing life.



Above: Thompson at her easel in 1934.



Above: Artist, Zoe Thompson

Mrs. Thompson was married to her husband, Joe, for 55 years and he would often accompany her to her art events, shows and meetings. Joe and Zoe had eight children, all educated in the Cupertino School System. She is the grandmother of eight and great-grandmother of five. An amazingly talented, energetic and productive woman, Zoe is excited to turn 100 years old this year.

Let's celebrate this great lady of Cupertino!

If you would like to send her a birthday card, Zoe Thompson's address is: 18841 Arata Way Cupertino CA 95014.

THE "FABULOUS FIVE:" MEET OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS

Jason Foreman



Hello, my name is Jason Foreman and I'm glad to be joining you all! I'm a 4th generation resident of Cupertino and as such I've grown up hearing plenty of stories about the small little farm town that no longer is, I'm excited to have this opportunity to learn a bit more and help further the mission of the CHSM! I've spent my whole life working for non-profits so it is an interesting experience to now be

on the Board of one!

I've had a lifelong interest and long been a student of all subjects of history and by extension literature as well for the perspective they bring us on past ways of living, thinking, and being. Some of my favorite books include: You Can't Win, The Road, Beggars of Life, and in Dubious Battle...among countless others.

When it was safe to do so, I enjoyed traveling extensively through California and Nevada with special attention paid to Gold Country, ghost-towns, ruins, and overlooks, and little towns by the side of the road too tough to die. California's Central Valley, the sights and the history behind the farming efforts and labor organizing, are of particular interest as well. We are fortunate to live in a state and community with a history that is so diverse.

I have been involved in Youth Development and Early Childhood programs for nearly the last 15 years in different capacities. I currently work as an infant educator and am fortunate to be able to work with different organizations to present to audiences around the country on topics of inclusion and infant toddler development.

In my off hours I usually can be found exploring one of Cupertino's beautiful parks with my son, curled up with a good book, or out in the backyard restoring furniture or hammering together some kind of project!

JR Fruen



J.R. is a third-generation Cupertino resident. As someone who has lived through significant changes in Cupertino, he is eager to document and share the history of the city so that it can make the best decisions for its future.

J.R.'s Cupertino story begins with his grandparents, who moved to the Valley of Heart's Delight in the aftermath of the Second World War. They bought a home in then-unincorporated Santa Clara County in 1952 and got to vote on Cupertino's incorporation just a few years later. The family has remained in the Cupertino community ever since.

J.R. is a graduate of Lynbrook High School (1998), and UCLA (summa cum laude, 2002). He studied abroad at the Università degli Studi di Padova in Padua, Italy, focusing on history, economics, and political science. He is fluent in Italian and German. Following a career in luxury retail management, he returned to academia to pursue a law degree at Santa Clara University School of Law. He is now an attorney in private practice here in Cupertino.

J.R. is eager to share his professional and academic skills for the betterment of the Cupertino Historical Society and Museum. He is a charter member of the Silicon Valley Rainbow Rotary Club, a board member of the Cupertino-Cupertino Sister City Association, and a co-founder of social equity and housing advocacy organization Cupertino for All. He lives with his husband, Clifton Der Bing, a licensed clinical psychologist.

Phil Johnson



Phil received a BA in Political Science from San Jose State and an MBA from Pepperdine University. He moved to Cupertino in 1976. His Civic activities started with serving on the then Architecture Approval Committee, moving on to a brief stint on the Plan-

**ARE YOU INTERESTED IN LEARNING
MORE ABOUT BOARD SERVICE?**

Contact the Chair of Our Board Development Committee, Darryl
Stow at Darryl_s@pacbell.net TODAY!

MEET OUR NEWEST BOARD MEMBERS (CONTINUED)

ning Commission and then onto the City Council for 9 years (1980-1989). He was Mayor from 1985-1986. He has held Leadership positions with the NorthWest YMCA, Cupertino Rotary, Cupertino Education Endowment Foundation and the Cupertino Chamber of Commerce.

He currently works in the Hospitality Industry and his office is in Town Center just across the street from City Hall. He lives in Saratoga with his wife, 2 kids, a cat, and a beloved dog and 15 chickens. (not to mention the 25 turkeys and 12 deer that sleep in his backyard).

Neeraj Mathur

Neeraj moved to Cupertino, CA from New Jersey in 2018, with his wife Savita, 20-year-old and 15-year-old sons Kush and Vansh. Kush is attending the University of California,



Berkeley majoring in Computer Science and Vansh is a freshman at Cupertino High School.

Neeraj is passionate about contributing to the efforts to increase students' learning opportunities and enhance their academic

achievement. As a family, they have been involved in elevating students' education through multiple channels.

After moving to Cupertino, Neeraj and his family continued the community engagement by participating in Cupertino's Sister Cities program and had the privilege of being selected as one of the host families to host a middle school student from Hsinchu, Taiwan. Vansh subsequently travelled to Hsinchu as part of this program and experienced, according to him, the "best time of his life", as he furthered his appreciation of culture and community and drew parallels between Cupertino and Hsinchu lifestyles.

Neeraj and his family have gained many invaluable opportunities and learning experiences in Cupertino, and it has been their family's passion to continue contributing to the local community to ensure that everyone can share those same experiences. As a Board Member at Cupertino Historical Society + Museum, Neeraj is partic-

ularly excited about assisting in strengthening the sense of community at Cupertino and an opportunity to share Cupertino's history and educational resources with students, scholars, and the public.

Bruce Parsons

I was born and raised in the Chicago area, where I lived until 1957. My Bachelor's Degree is from Stanford in Industrial Engineering.

I worked at local electronics

firms in production, production control, engineering, account/project/program management, partner, and owner from 1962 to 2020. I was employed by Ampex, Fairchild Semiconductor, Fairchild Instrumentation, GTE Sylvania, Applied Technology, Signetics/Philips, LSI Logic, Pacific InterConnections (owner), Champion Research (co-owner), Advanced Micro Assembly, US Export Authority, and co-owner of the following companies: Probe Array, Renewable Energy & Power, and LED Lites USA. As a recent retiree, I've been looking for ways to give back to my community.



I've been involved in various Cupertino community organizations for 45 years: NW YMCA, San Jose Metro YMCA, International Y's Men's Service Club, Hoover PTA, Friends of the Library, Registrar of Voters, Optimists, Rotary, Neighborhood Watch, Save Hoover Park, Depress HW 85 Committee, etc.

I have been married to my wife, Pat, for 55 years, we have two sons, three grand-kids, and a lab named Augie.

CUPERTINO HISTORICAL
SOCIETY + MUSEUM

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EXHIBITS, AND FUNDRAISING. MUST BE A
SOCIETY MEMBER**
IN GOOD STANDING TO SERVE.
Info & register:
jennifer@cupertinohistoricalsociety.org



Cupertino Historical Society & Museum

Quinlan Community Center

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Cupertino, CA 95014

Telephone: (408)973-1495

E-mail: information@cupertinohistoricalsociety.org

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BULLETIN BOARD

Upcoming Board of Directors Meetings

March 15, April 19, May 17 (Meetings are held the third Monday 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, March 24 at 7 pm.
Register on EventBrite

Speaker Event: An Evening with David Mariani, Wednesday, April 14 at 7 pm. Register on EventBrite

Game Night: Cupertino Trivia Night, Saturday, May 22 at 7 pm. Register on Eventbrite

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

Museum Hours:

The Museum is CLOSED until further notice.

Current resident or:

7:00 PM SATURDAY MAY 22

CUPERTINO-THEMED TRIVIA NIGHT

PRIZES FOR TOP THREE TEAMS

Free to Attend—Advanced Registration Required
\$10 Suggested Donation Per Team
On Zoom
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CUPERTINO HISTORICAL SOCIETY + MUSEUM

COMMITTEE MEMBERS NEEDED

JOIN A COMMITTEE GIVE BACK

Support our city museum and learn about museum work. We have openings in Event Planning, Marketing/PR, Exhibits, and Fundraising. Must be a Society Member in good standing to serve.

Info & register:
jennifer@cupertinohistoricalsociety.org