



THE CORNERSTONE

**Cupertino Historical Society
Members Newsletter**

**Volume 9 Issue 4
Summer 1999**

Developing an Exhibit

In September 1998 the museum staff undertook to plan for the 1999 exhibit. The subject of the exhibit was first to be ascertained, then a curator was hired. The development of an organized exhibit is a complex undertaking. The curator must plan in detail on paper before any objects can be identified or installed.

The 1999 exhibit will use only the collection owned by the Society. The process of choosing to do so took its impetus from the gift of the wonderful collection of vintage clothing belonging to our former Museum member Jeannie Ryder, and given to the Museum by Ham Ryder. These incredible garments span the time period from the 1890's through the 1940's. In combination with our other collection items we are assembling an exhibit that will demonstrate the living role that history can play in the community by reflecting the significant experiences of that time past. Its purpose is to interest, inform and encourage our visitors to want to know more about their City's heritage.

Exhibits must be objective and truthful, as well as tell their stories without a hint of propaganda. It is our job to make the material accurate, trustworthy and authentic.

We have hired John Handley who mounted our splendid exhibit *Toward the Golden Mountain-the History of the Chinese in the Santa Clara Valley*. Along with our registrar, Corinna Schoenfelder, we are working to identify and use our collection effectively in order to bring you a unified, accurate story of early Cupertino, an agrarian society. We are incorporating the interviews of four persons native to the West Side.

Charlie Liggett is building platforms to display our collection effectively and protect it for the future. We will be revising, rearranging and adding objects periodically.

Our aim is for you, the visitor, to stop and look at an object and associate it with some experience or information that is part of your own knowledge. Identifying with an exhibit will kindle your interest to examine it further. We want our visitors to observe, enjoy, and understand the message our exhibit is trying to convey. *To Have and To Hold: the Collection of the Cupertino Historical Society and Museum* will open in late summer.



Frances and Phil Bush Win Crest Award

Frances and Phil Bush were honored on May 17th as recipients of the **Crest Award**, the highest award given to volunteers by the City of Cupertino. Their dedication to the Cupertino Historical Society and Museum gave the impetus for this award. Each of the Bushes gives of their time and talent to work diligently on the *Traveling Trunk Outreach Program* offered to the school districts, community centers and local agencies in Cupertino and the surrounding cities. In addition each gives over 100 hours as gallery docents and does a myriad of other things for the museum.

Besides their museum hours Phil works for the West Valley Presbyterian Church and is president of the Cupertino Garden Club while Frances takes a large part in the fundraising boutique the church holds each year. Frances has also gone through all the chairs of the De Oro club, holding the office of President in 1982.

Congratulations to the Bushes for a well-deserved award!

Important Board Items, 1998/1999

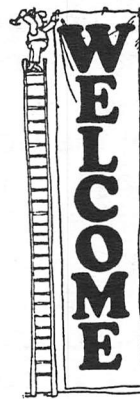
The Cupertino Historical Society after its successful fund drive now has a net gain of \$29,000 for the year ending June 1999.

Endowment Funds will be moved to the Silicon Valley Community Foundation in order to build it to the next level.

John Kolski is working with the O'Brien group on new members for the Society from the San Antonio property homeowners.

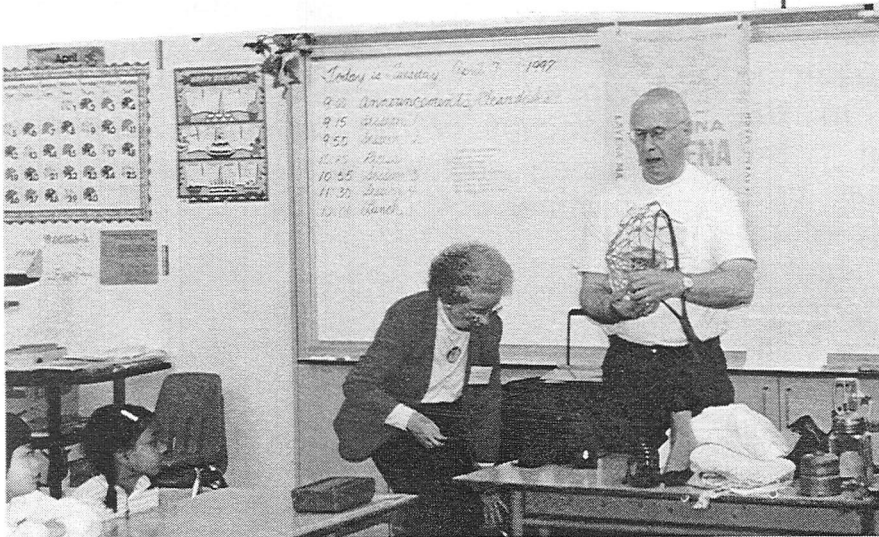
Beez Jones is preparing the Cupertino Chronicles for reprinting.

Stefanie Singer, Linda Schultz and Mathilda Sousa audited our books and found everything in order.



New Members

Ray & Eleanor Bortner
Carolyn de Vries
Greg Gotelli
Donna & Earl Harris
Mort & Elaine Levine
Joe Marchi
Betty Normandin
Willys Peck
Pearl H. Ward



Phil and Frances Bush showing our collection at a local school

President's Message

The year has flown by so quickly - perhaps because it has been a very busy and full year.

One of my greatest pleasures this year has been meeting and getting to know more of the members of the Cupertino Historical Society. As your outgoing President, I would like to express my thanks to all of you who have supported our organization. By working so hard on our fundraising events; attending the general meetings; presenting the "Traveling Trunk" in the schools and community; acting as docents in our museums; and giving so generously to our annual fund drive, you have ensured that our Society will continue to bring Cupertino history to the community.

This is also a good opportunity for me to publicly thank the members of the Board of Directors. The Directors have taken time from their very busy lives to devote extra effort on behalf of the Society. We deeply appreciate all you have done.

Three of these members will be going off the board: Kathy Nellis, who has brought her leadership skills and keen insight to board discussions and decisions; Rose-Marie Twu, who has worked hard on membership and who has always been there to help wherever there was a need; and Its Uenaka, who as our outstanding Treasurer has kept our finances in impeccable order. Thank you for serving these past years. We know we are a better organization due to your efforts.

We are very fortunate to have wonderful, dedicated staff members. Thank you Ethel and Roberta for making my term as president go smoothly and for devoting the extra time and effort necessary to make this a successful year. While continuing to catalogue our collection, Corrina Schoenfelder has also given extra time, helping with our exhibits and events. You are all invaluable to the Historical Society.

It has been a wonderful year and I know we are all looking forward to being together again at our first general meeting on September 28th.

Have a great summer! Sharon

Volunteer Notes from Roberta Zentner

The success of the tour and luncheon at the Older Estate was certainly due in a large part to all of the volunteers who made that event possible. THANKS! Please be sure to read the President's Message to learn who those volunteers were. We also were able to help out the Conference of California Societies when they met in San Jose in June for their annual meeting. Many thanks to Loretta Bassman, Gail Hugger, Louise Levy, Bob Levy, Charles Liggett, and Alice Schlim. I will be calling once again for volunteers to help out in our booth on August 14 & 15 at the Cupertino Chamber of Commerce Art and Wine Festival -- Please plan on attending that event even if you cannot volunteer. We will have many interesting books for sale.

DONATIONS

Education Program: Chateau Cupertino, Cupertino Senior Day Care, Garden Gate School, Jewish Women International.

Endowment Fund:

In Honor of Hazel Lester's 75th Birthday by Phyliss M. Ishida.

In loving Memory of Sam Lawson by Leslie and Carol Mc Dowell.

Annual Fund Drive:

Burrel Leonard, Museum Founder
Marty Mathiesen, Museum Patron
Leslie & Carol McDowell, Museum Patron
Ethel Worn, Museum Friend



Dates to Remember

July

- 3 Volunteer Meeting 9 am QCC
- 14 Board Meeting 6:30 pm QCC
- 17 Chinese Summer Festival at Kelly Park
- thru 31 Los Gatos Museum "A Journey" by artist Ruth Tunstall-Grant, 354-2646

August

- 7 Volunteer Meeting 9am QCC
- 11 Board Meeting 6:30 pm QCC
- 14/15 Art & Wine Festival at Memorial Park

September

- 4 Volunteer Meeting 9am QCC
- 8 Board Meeting 6:30 pm QCC
- 28 General Meeting 6:30 pm at QCC, Program to be announced!



Two Programs are scheduled for the fall. The balance will be announced in September.

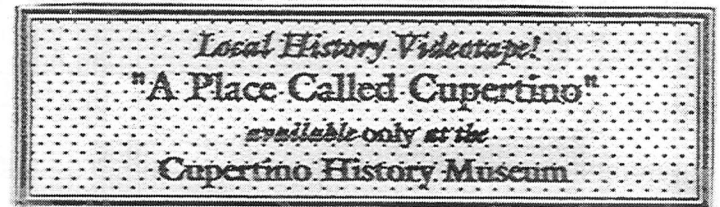
September 28, 1999-Ed Hillman, native of Cupertino now living in Scotts Valley, will show slides and give a talk on early Cupertino.

October 26, 1999-Jeanne Watson will speak on *Life in a Doll's House-The Victorian Lady*. This is a social history thus a room by room description (1860-1865) of life in a Victorian mansion.

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Janet and Bob Myers say Goodbye

Bob Myers former president of the Cupertino Historical Society, 1991-92, 1992/93 and Chairman of the Fundraising Committee in 1990 will be leaving the Cupertino area in late summer. He and his wife, Janet, are moving to Nevada City, California. Thank you for your long-time support of the Society! Bob and Janet will be missed.



And our thanks to recent renewals:

Marie Barte, David & Shirley Bates, Jim & Sandra Beck, Gordon Beckstrom, Ted Bollinger, Josephine Brown, Phil & Frances Bush, Charles & Kathleen Calhan, Opal Carle, Wendell & In Soon Carman, Dennis & Dorothy Cunningham, Kathryn Donahue, Mary Eade, George Fernandez, Cray Foley, Rosalyn Frolich, Warren & Yvonne Holt, Helen Jemin, William & Elena Kettler, John Kolski, Viola Lazaneo, Bob & Louise Levy, Charles & Kathy Liggett, Fred & Florence Lindsey, Winifred Mardesich, Bernice Midstokke, Marie Moore, Hector Picchetti, Tish Picchetti, Herb & Mae Regnart, Shirley Reynolds, Patrick & Barbara Rogers, Ham Ryder, Richard & Katherine Scanlan, Alice Schlim, Bill & Nancy Schott, Winifred Thiltgen, Steven Ting, Rose-Marie Twu, Ethel Worn, Ann Zarko, Dorothy Zeszutek.



Welcome to WOODHILLS

... former ranch of Fremont and Cora Older. Fremont Older was a famous San Francisco newspaper editor in the late 1800s and early part of this century. After this house was completed in 1914, he commuted to the city by catching a train at the bottom of the hill at Prospect and Stelling. A charismatic idealist, he was a crusader who fought hard to break the corrupt hold of business

on San Francisco. When he finally succeeded in helping to convict one of the bribe-taking officials, he worked equally hard to get him released from prison. He came to believe the jail system was not the answer to society's problems and over the years many convicts were paroled to live and work at the Woodhills ranch. Gatherings here could be an unusual mixture of the famous and the infamous.

Cora Baggerly Older was a prolific writer. She was chiefly responsible for the building of the house and gardens. She lived on here for more than 30 years after Fremont Older died in 1935. When Cora Older died, the Bank of America owned the property, and leased it to several tenants before it fell into disrepair and became a victim of vandals. The Harrises, friends of Mrs. Older's, who live just up the road, saved some bits and pieces of the house from theft. Other memorabilia is at the California Historical Society and the Bancroft Library at the University of California.

What was left of the estate came into the hands of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District as one of its first acquisitions. It had plans to tear down the decrepit shell of a house and allow the area to revert to its natural state. The Levines, then publishers of a chain of local weekly newspapers in this area, entered the picture with a desire to preserve journalistic history (and with a certain amount of innocence about the scope of the project). The arrangement was the first between private individuals and a public agency to save an historic building. In 1980, the house was listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

After two years of work, the house was finished and occupied in 1979. Although the furnishings were all gone, many of the originals were found or duplicated. The interior, as well as the exterior, resembles the original.

The grounds were also restored. Original plants of pampas grass, pyracantha and oleander were 50 years overgrown, and native oaks, baccharis and poison oak (Mrs. Older's quote: "The crop that never fails") were everywhere.

The adobe pool house, swimming pool and rose garden area below have not been restored. The pool house is now the residence of Jeffry Harris, who was born there, and his wife, Jennifer Lyon. The Open Space District filled in the pool for safety, and the formal rose garden has succumbed to neglect. Be sure to see the photos of the rose garden as it once was when concerts were performed on the stage and guests swam in the pool and wandered among the hundreds of flowers. Perhaps some day...



Our hosts - Elaine and Mort Levine



*Mr. and Mrs. John Giovanola and
Mr. and Mrs. Stuart Smith*

A SPRING SATURDAY A WOODHILLS

Saturday, May 1st, turned out to be one of those perfect spring days. The sky was clear and blue, the temperature was perfect, the bugs seemed to have disappeared, and the wisteria and roses were in full bloom-their scent drifted gently over the back lawn. This was the setting for our very successful fund-raiser at **WOODHILLS**, the former Fremont Older estate. Thanks to the generosity of our hosts, Mort and Elaine Levine, and of Hanson Permanente Cement Company our guests were treated to a delicious buffet luncheon and tours of the house and the gardens.

While Kathleen Peters efficiently handled the reservations, Debbie Newman took care of publicity. Phil Bush and Jim Limberatos worked on the grounds at the estate, helping prepare for our event. Dev Rendler rounded up his family members to shuttle guests up to **WOODHILLS**.

As guests arrived at the home, they were greeted by Sharon Blaine and Stefanie Singer. Then they passed under the flowering wisteria to the rear lawn. There they found Winkie Hill's delightful decorations and table settings. Luncheon featured a delicious buffet which had been prepared by Barbara Rogers, Nicol Lea, Cynthia Lee, Kathy Liggett, Corinna Schoenfelder, and Ethel Worn. Florence Lindsey and her committee of outstanding "dessert fabricators" provided a large variety of cakes and cookies. During lunch Donna Harris,

who had been a personal friend of Cora Older, circulated among the tables reading from Mrs. Older's diaries about life at **WOODHILLS** and answering questions. Thanks to neighbor, Betty Normandin, parking was no problem.

Frances Bush had carefully prepared the docents. As guests toured the house, Donna Austin, Audrey Butcher, Frances Dietz, Carolyn de Vries, Alice Schlim, Corinna Schoenfelder, and Frances Bush pointed out interesting features and offered historical information.

Outside, the guests were able to leisurely stroll through the gardens and enjoy the sights and scents provided by Master Gardener, Elaine Levine. Helping all day, stepping in wherever they saw a need, were Phil Bush, Charles Liggett, Ham Ryder, and Rose-Marie Twu.

Due to the efforts of this wonderful group of people, **A SPRING SATURDAY AT WOODHILLS**, will be remembered as a very special event in the history of the Cupertino Historical Society. Thank you all, so very much.



Lunch in the garden

**THE CORNERSTONE IS PUBLISHED
QUARTERLY BY
THE CUPERTINO HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

The Society is a private non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of the history of Cupertino and the surrounding region. It operates a main museum in the Quinlan Community Center, along with a satellite museum at Vallco Fashion Park on Stevens Creek Blvd. Museum hours are 10-4pm, Wednesday thru Saturday. The Vallco site is open Tuesday and Saturday Noon-3pm. Admission is free and the public is invited. General meetings are held the 4th Tuesday of the month and are preceded by a potluck dinner. For additional information call 973-1495.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sharon Blaine, President
Beez Jones, Vice President
Itsuo Uenaka, Treasurer
Gail Hugger, Secretary

Trustees: John Kolski, Kathy Nellis, Charles Newman, Karen Parsons, Devereaux Rendler, Stefanie Singer, Rose-Marie Twu

MUSEUM STAFF

Ethel S. Worn, Director
Roberta Zentner, Volunteer Coordinator

CUPERTINO HISTORICAL MUSEUM
Quinlan Community Center
10185 N. Stelling Road
Cupertino, CA 95014
408-973-1495 (FAX 973-8049)

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at the Cupertino Museum!**

