



# Milpitas Muse

April 2014

The Milpitas Historical Society Newsletter

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## Historical Society Meeting on April 9

The next meeting of the Milpitas Historical Society will take place at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, April 9, in the cozy Children's Activity Room of the Milpitas Library, 160 North Main Street.



The program for this meeting will be about our neighbor to the southwest, the city of Saratoga, which started out as a single sawmill on the banks of what is now Saratoga Creek, but has gone through many interesting phases to become a prosperous suburb. known

for some distinguished residents and the beautiful performance venue of Villa Montalvo, originally the home of a distinguished politician. Saratoga even shares an important event in its city life with Milpitas.

Our presenter will be distinguished San Jose writer and historian April Halberstadt, who gave us such an interesting talk about General Henry Naglee last June. She is the author of books about historic architecture, farm equipment, Willow Glen, and of course, Saratoga.

Meetings are free and all are welcome.



The Saratoga Post Office in 1894

## Show and Tell!

Our Society President, Roger Skuse, will be presenting a special Show and Tell after the program on April 9 about a patriotic and charitable fraternal order called "The Improved Order of Red Men," which dates back over 250 years and is descended from the original Sons of Liberty, who conducted the Boston Tea Party in 1773. Originally this extra talk was going to be given after the March 12 meeting, but unfortunately, there was not enough time left after the presentation.



If you or a friend or family members have any interesting family treasures or historic objects you could tell us about, we'd love to have any of you do a "show and tell" for about 5 minutes at each of our upcoming meetings. If you have any family, community, or historical treasures you could tell us about, please call President Roger Skuse at 408/262-0354 to sign up for a meeting.

## Fun Facts: Milpitas Parks

In January of this year, the National Parks Service called a Milpitas employee to find out the name of the oldest park in Milpitas. There are no records for that at city hall. However, Mort Levine, owner of the Milpitas Post and longtime resident and Milpitas Historical Society member, was able to supply the information.

It turns out that that there was a bond election in Milpitas in 1955 for building new schools and city parks. It passed and three new schools and parks were built in 1956 and opened in late 1956 or 1957. The schools and parks were adjacent. Spangler School was

built on 10 acres with a 4-acre parcel across Abbott Avenue for Starlite Park. Weller School was paired with Weller Park. Alexander Rose School was paired with Milmont Park (which is now called Foothill Park, off Roswell Drive). So there wasn't just one oldest park, there were three. But unfortunately, even three parks dating from the mid-fifties weren't old enough to impress the Parks Department.



**Foothill Park and Starlite Park**

Of course, the park named for the one of earliest Milpitas residents is Creighton Park, at Olympic Street west of South Park Victoria. Creighton Street and Creighton Park were both named after Frederick Creighton, who is credited with building the first store in Milpitas. It was located on the east side of Main St.

across from Campbell's/Smith's Corner. Creighton and his partner Tito de la Roza were the first "bankers" in Milpitas and made annual loans to local wheat farmers (at 2% interest compounded per month). Creighton opened his store around 1857 and in 1870 he sold it and moved to San Jose, where he purchased a farm. "Fred" and his store are mentioned several times in Alfred Doten's diary of his stay in Milpitas from 1858 to 1862.

### **Meet and Greet at a History-Themed Mixer**

The Milpitas Chamber of Commerce has put together a social event to introduce library staff and Milpitas Historical Society members to each other and to the community at large. This Open House will take place Wednesday, April 2, from 5:00 to 8:00 pm. Historical Society members are encouraged to wear vintage or historical outfits and to introduce themselves to new friends and tell them about what the Historical Society does. There will be hors d'oeuvres and door prizes. This event is free and open to everyone. Please RSVP to [info@milpitaschamber.com](mailto:info@milpitaschamber.com) or 408-262-2613.

### **Save Your Family's Old Home Movies**

Do you have old home movies on film or tape that you'd like to be able to see again? The California Pioneers of Santa Clara County wants to preserve your home movies and provide you DVD copies. For information, contact them at (408)317-8249.

### **Contact the Milpitas Historical Society:**

- by phone at (408) 320-9587
- by mail at 160 N. Main Street, Milpitas CA 95035
- by email at: [tmhs@milpitashistory.org](mailto:tmhs@milpitashistory.org).

The traditional Milpitas history web page is here: <http://www.milpitashistory.org/historicalsociety/society.html>  
Here's the new website for the Milpitas Historical Society: <http://milpitashistoricalsociety.org/home/index.html> , with information about the society and upcoming events.

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**Milpitas Historical Society**  
**160 North Main St.**  
**Milpitas, CA 95035**

**First Class**