

# Milpitas Muse

January 2013

The Milpitas Historical Society Newsletter

Volume XXXIV No. 1

## What's Happening with the Alviso Adobe?

If you've been wondering, you'll be able to satisfy your curiosity at the January meeting of the Milpitas Historical Society, on Wednesday, January 9, 7:00 pm.



**Alviso Adobe undergoing renovations last fall**


City Manager Tom Williams and Project Manager Michael Boitnott will give a PowerPoint presentation describing the steps that have been taken and the improvements that have been made in the surrounding park as well as to the outbuildings and the main house.

## Alviso Adobe History

The first story of the Alviso Adobe, which is located near the intersection of Piedmont Road and Calaveras Road, was built some time before 1841 by José Maria de Jesus Alviso, who had been granted title to the land on which it stands by the governor of Alta California, José Castro, on September 23, 1835.

Alviso raised cattle on the extensive land and also grew crops. Near the time when Alviso died, in 1853, the second story we still see was built. Later, in 1858, Juana Galindo Alviso, widow of José Maria, married José Urridias, who as manager of the rancho, gradually sold off acreage as needed for cash. Their daughter, Maria de Los Angeles Alviso Sepulveda, inherited the adobe and the land immediately surrounding it.

She and her husband, Bartolo Sepulveda, sold more of the land and eventually the property was acquired by the Cuciz family about 1922. The Cuciz family planted orchards of fruit trees, built a water tank house, a barn (partly constructed of timbers salvaged from three now-vanished adobes that once stood south of the main house), a carriage shed, a drying shed, a power generator, and other improvements. The Cuciz family sold the property to the Calvary Assembly of God Church in the early 1980s. The adobe remained inhabited from the time it was built until it became city property - perhaps the oldest continuously inhabited adobe home in California. The City of Milpitas acquired the adobe in 1996. The house is now on the National Register of Historic Places.

**Special Note:** This month our meeting will **not** be held in the Community Room (Auditorium) of the Milpitas Library, but in the Library's cozy **Children's Activity Room** in the children's wing. We will set up signs to show you the way. 

## Slate of Officers and Directors for 2013

At the November meeting, the Nominating Committee announced the following slate of candidates for Officers and Directors for 2013:

### Officers

*President:* Roger Skuse  
*Vice President:* Catherine Pelizzari  
*Secretary:* Lela Ehardt  
*Treasurer:* Kraig Bunnell

### Directors:

*Archives and Landmarks:* Steve Munzel  
*Historian:* Harriett McGuire  
*Hospitality:* Joanne Souza  
*Membership:* Mabel Mattos  
*Publicity:* Ann Zeise  
*Special Events:* Thelma Bridges  
*Newsletter:* Catherine Pelizzari  
*Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources*  
*Commission Liaison:* Steve Munzel

The election of Officers and Directors will be held at the January meeting.

## Milpitas Historical Society Christmas Party

The Society's annual Christmas party was held on December 9 at the home of Kim Parker and Peter Morales, often referred to as the Belshaw House. The event was a great success; probably more people attended than ever before. Great food and good fun were had by all.



Suzanne Jones, Mike Pelizzari, Jean Wyatt, Bob and Margaret Kruse, Lou Horyza and Ann Zeise enjoy the delicious pot luck treats everyone provided



Norma Bravo, Mavid McClay, and Mabel Mattos have a cozy kitchen chat at the party

This gracious home that was the site of our party was originally built by the Belshaw family before the 1920s.

Over the years, as the family grew in size, the original house was enlarged until it reached the present grand size. Kim Parker purchased the home and acreage in the early 1990's. She carefully restored it and renamed it "Last Word Ranch."



Bob Keely (far right) and his Bobcats provided joyful music

## February Installation Dinner

Instead of a regular meeting in February, the Society will hold its Installation Dinner at Summit Pointe Golf Course Restaurant on Thursday, February 22. Judge Paul Bernal, President of the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County, will be the keynote speaker, and Milpitas Mayor Jose Esteves will administer the oath of office.

## Milpitas Historical Society Contact Information

You can 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).

Our new web page offers general information on the Historical Society and its accomplishments:

<http://www.milpitashistory.org/historicalociety/society.html>

**Happy 2013 to All! And don't forget to renew your membership to the Milpitas Historical Society on the enclosed form!**

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

**First Class**