



Milpitas Muse

June 2016

The Milpitas Historical Society Newsletter

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June Meeting – Milpitas Home Movie!

The Milpitas Historical Society's next meeting is on Wednesday, June 8 at 7:00 pm in the Auditorium (Multipurpose Room) of the Milpitas Library, 160 North Main Street.

This time we will be honored by the presence of former Milpitas Mayor and Milpitas Veteran of the Year Denny Weisgerber, who will give a brief introduction to a film he narrates called "Milpitas Home Movie," put together by the Milpitas Chamber of Commerce in 2014 and made up of shots and movies of Milpitas as it was in the 1950s.



The Kozy Kitchen, a 1950s style diner central to old downtown that was run by original Milpitas families

Please join us for this nostalgic and informative look at the city that you might have once known. Meetings are free and all are welcome.

Working for a Milpitas History Museum

At the May 11 general meeting of the Milpitas Historical Society, President Mark Tiernan asked for a motion to donate \$6,879.33 (money from the 2011 Great Mall fashion show fund-raiser and from the sale of the Ford Galaxy) that had been reserved for the Milpitas Community Museum (MCM). The Board had previously voted to do so, but Mark felt that, ethically, he needed a vote from the membership as well.

Some members did not know enough, or indeed anything, about the MCM, so it was decided that more

information must be provided in order that an informed vote can be taken. So here is the background.

The Milpitas Community Museum (MCM) was incorporated in 2013 and is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. The mission of the Milpitas Community Museum is to encourage interest in and knowledge of our shared heritage among the citizens of Milpitas and to provide a place to educate students and the public through exhibiting collections of cultural resources.

This place would function as a resource center and museum where Milpitas Historical Society could display and store items of historical value related to Milpitas.

The majority of the founding board members of MCM have been directors and officers of the Historical Society, including Mabel Mattos. At present, there are three MCM board members who are also Society board members: Steve Munzel, Mark Tiernan, and Harriett McGuire. Other MCM board members are active in the community in other areas, and all have deep roots and valuable knowledge that enable them to focus on working with the city and raising funds to achieve the goal of establishing a physical home for Milpitas History.

One location that would be an excellent site for a Milpitas Community Museum would be the empty lot just north of the Milpitas Library (pictured below).



This parcel is caught up in the California redevelopment agency situation (the RDAs were disbanded by the Legislature, which also ordered assets to be put on the auction block to recapture money). The focus of the MCM board right now is applying as much political pressure as possible to get this land parcel released back to the City.

A separate organization, Protect Our Park, is also working specifically to have this parcel acquired for the purpose of establishing a city park and museum there.

It is hoped that at the June meeting, this information will enable members to understand (1) why the Society is donating funds that were advertised and raised specifically for the MCM, (2) that this is a good way to achieve the joint goals of the MCM and the Milpitas Historical Society, and (3) that it is time to proceed with an authorizing vote for this donation.

Milpitas International BBQ

Once again the Historical Society's Rolling Jail from the 1960s (a popular photo opportunity) and Milpitas books and memorabilia were successful at the Milpitas International BBQ in raising over \$600 for the Society. Shown below are Society members Catherine Pelizzari, Joe Ehardt, Kraig Bunnell and Dan Cosper staffing the Milpitas Historical Society booth at the BBQ on May 21 (and sheltering from the rain!).



Field Trip to Agnews Museum

The Milpitas Historical Society took another field trip on Friday, May 20, to the Agnews Historic Cemetery & Museum at 1250 Hope Street in Santa Clara, which is located in a former Visitors Center building that was moved to the site of the hospital's cemetery in 1995, after the hospital closed. Now it is restored and furnished with displays, photos, and artifacts from the hospital's long history.

Our Society's Annual "Historical Tour"

The Milpitas Historical Society's annual historical community tour will be held on Saturday, June 25th. This year we'll save tour members the trouble of driving around individually by providing a Royal Coach bus to carry people to the places we'll visit and learn about. Tour maps and brochures will be available at the pickup point outside Entrance 4 of the Great Mall for those who would rather drive themselves.

9:30 am Participants will meet just inside Entrance 4 (Food Court) of the Great Mall at the Society's exhibit of Milpitas historical items. Joseph Ehardt will explain some of its interesting contents and how those items relate to early as well as more recent Milpitas History.

10:00 am Participants board the bus to travel north on old Main Street, with docents identifying historically significant buildings along the route and stop near the Milpitas Library (with its incorporated façade of the 1916 Milpitas Grammar School) so they can talk about the site of a possible future Milpitas Park.

10:45 am Participants will again board the bus to the historic Jose Alviso Adobe Park, site of the Californio era Rancho Milpitas, with its now restored old main building, its water tower, historic farm implements, and its key outbuildings including the apricot cutting shed reflecting part of the early 20th century use of this land.

11:30 am Participants will re-board the bus to travel to the Silva Apricot Ranch on Piedmont Road where we will learn how apricots are processed at this last remaining apricot orchard in our city (with an opportunity to buy fresh local apricots at their peak).

12:30 pm The bus will take participants back to Entrance 4 area of the Great Mall where their cars are parked.

Those who wish can finish up the tour at the Big Dog Winery at 4545 Felter Road, (directly up Calaveras Blvd. into the beautiful eastern foothills overlooking Milpitas), where they can experience delicious wine tasting (at \$10 for 5 varieties), enjoy the snacks or lunch they bring, and chat with fellow docents, Milpitas residents, and visitors.

Information about the tour's locations and times will be sent again to Society members in mid-June and will be available to everyone else through announcements in the *Milpitas Post*, *Tri-City Voice*, and *Berryessa Sun*. The tour is free and open to all.

Historical Society's Summer Vacation

The Milpitas Historical Society is taking its usual summer vacation, so there will be no Society meetings or newsletters in July or August.

Members are invited to our traditional summer picnic, which this year will be held again in August. A notice will be sent out to all members giving date, time, and place as soon as the exact date is settled.

Milpitas Historical Society Board Meetings

If you are interested, you are welcome to attend the Milpitas Historical Society Board meetings, which are held on the first Wednesday of the month (except July and August) at 1:30 pm in Group Study Room A in the Milpitas Library. The next meeting is Wednesday, June 1.

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@milpitashistoricalsociety.org

Here's the new website for the Milpitas Historical Society: <http://milpitashistoricalsociety.org>, with information about the society and upcoming events. The traditional Milpitas history web page is here: www.milpitashistory.org/home/index.html
You can contact President Mark Tiernan at 408-582-3782.