



Milpitas Muse

May 2013

The Milpitas Historical Society Newsletter

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Remember the Jenny Lind

The May meeting of the Milpitas Historical Society will feature a talk by two or three members of the unofficial “Jenny Lind Gang”, the dedicated three historians who worked, researched, pushed and persisted until they had produced enough of a case that the County of Santa Clara and its Parks Department agreed that a historic marker to commemorate the victims of the 1853 Jenny Lind disaster could be erected at the Alviso Marina County Park.



Pictured, above, left to right, are the “Jenny Lind Gang,” consisting of E Clampus Vitus (a historical group with roots going back to the Gold Rush Days) member Chris McKay, historian Claire Britton Warren, and South Bay Yacht Club Commodore and Historian Russ Robinson, at the dedication of the marker on Saturday, April 18. They will be presenting the full story of the explosion on the steamship Jenny Lind that took place on April 13, 1853, took many lives, and may have changed California history. The meeting will take place at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, May 8, in the Community Room (auditorium) of the Milpitas Library, 160 N. Main Street. The public is welcome, no charge.

New Veterans’ Display at City Hall

The Milpitas Historical Society is proud to announce the mounting of a new display of local veterans’ memorabilia in honor of Memorial Day, which will be on display in the glass cases at the entry of the City Hall. The display will be there until sometime in July. Organized by MHS Historian and Past President Harriett McGuire (shown below), the display features documents, letters, photos, hardware, and other reminders of the time and skills, and in some cases the lives, that local veterans have dedicated to the service of their country.



This has been a busy time for Harriett McGuire, who was also honored at a dinner on Saturday, April 13, for her election as Milpitas 2013 Citizen of the Year, shown below with dinner host and MHS member Lou Horyza. Mayor Jose Esteves and a distinguished group of city and county officials acknowledged and gave thanks for the services of the Milpitas police officer and firefighter of the year as well.



Milpitas Street Name Stories: Remembering Those Who Died for Their Country

Speaking of honoring Milpitas veterans, in the recently opened City Hall display of veterans' memorabilia there is a list of street names in Milpitas that are marked with blue, rather than green, street signs. These blue street signs signify that the person for whom the street was named died while in the US Armed Services. The following streets are marked by these blue signs:

Burdett Way	Matthews Court
Cestarc Drive	Mattos Drive
Donah Drive	Pashote Court
Duarte Court	Perry Street
Enriquez Court	Printy Avenue
Falcato Drive	Rivera Street
Ferreira Drive	Rodrigues Avenue
Garcia Court	Rose Drive
Guerrero Court	Tice Drive
Heflin Street	Traughber Street
Horcajo Circle	Torres Avenue
Kizer Street	Vargas Court

A more complete list can be found at the beautiful little Veterans Memorial Park behind City Hall. Here stone markers with brass plaques show the names of those deceased veterans according to the wars during which they died: World War I, World War II, and Vietnam.



A fourth marker (shown in photo) lists the more recent combat sites in which American forces have participated and those Milpitas residents who perished in them.

However, not all the Milpitas veterans who died in the Armed Service have streets named after them yet. There is as yet no street named for Harold E. Boetcher, a USMC casualty of the Vietnam war nor for Stephen Dunning (Afghanistan) or Michael Mihalakis or Doonewey White (Iraq). The city is working on accomplishing these goals.

Show and Tell!

Do you or a friend or family member have any interesting family treasures or historic objects you could tell us about? If you have any such things you could share with the Society, please call President Roger Skuse at 408/262-0354 to sign up for a 5-minute presentation at a meeting.

The Milpitas Historical Society extends our sympathies to the family of our long-time member and former Board Secretary **Donna Wynn**, who passed away on April 6.

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.

Here is the new website for the Milpitas Historical Society: <http://milpitashistoricalsociety.org>. To submit articles you must be a MHS member and join the site. The traditional web page with information about Milpitas history and the Historical Society is here: <http://www.milpitashistory.org/historicalsociety/society.html> And there's a YouTube Channel with videos of tours and other historical information about Milpitas you can see here: <http://www.youtube.com/user/MilpitasHistory>

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First Class