



Milpitas Muse

April 2011 The Milpitas Historical Society Newsletter

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Preserve Your Precious Family Heritage!

The April meeting of the Milpitas Historical Society will feature Kathleen Orlenko, a professional conservator, who will demonstrate how to protect and preserve your family documents and photographs as well as different ways to store your family treasures. The meeting will be held at 7 pm in the Community Room of the Milpitas Library, 160 N. Main Street.

Ms Orlenko will also discuss preservation supply vendors and conservation treatment options. She began her long career as a conservator in the Conservation Office of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C and now has a private business in conservation of art on paper and of rare books and documents, and acts as consultant on preservation issues to various institutions and private collectors.



For further information on Kathleen Orlenko, and on her career and work in this field go to her web site at <http://www.orlenko.net>.

Light refreshments will follow the meeting.

New Ways to Contact the Society

The Milpitas Historical Society now has an official phone number: (408) 320-9587 and a new email address: tmhs@milpitashistory.org. Our current mailing address (as of January) is: 160 North Main Street, Milpitas CA 95035.

Our new web page offers general information on the Historical Society and its accomplishments over the years. You can visit the webpage at: <http://www.milpitashistory.org/historicalsociety/society.html>.

Shapell Trust Fund Settled

By Steve Munzel, Historical Society President

In 1990, Shapell Industries granted The Milpitas Historical Society \$100,000 to be used to restore the Alviso Adobe. In 1992, the Society used some of the money to buy a tarp to put over the leaky roof of the adobe. In 2008, the Society used more of the money to put in a special drainage system that diverts rainwater away from the adobe.

In 2005, the president of the Society signed an agreement with the city to turn over all of the Shapell Trust fund to the city when the city presented invoices for any work on the Alviso Adobe to the Society - even if restoration was unfinished. Previous presidents had refused to sign the same agreement when it was offered to them. Although no vote was taken directing him to sign the agreement and no vote to ratify it was made afterward, the Society's 2011 board of directors determined that we nevertheless should honor this commitment.



The Alviso Adobe ca. 1910

At the March 9, 2011 regular meeting, the membership voted unanimously to disburse to the city the rest of the Shapell Trust fund. The payment of \$83,392.79 will be made in November when the CD that the funds are in matures.

Santa Clara County Archives

At our last meeting, on Wednesday, March 9, Trista Raezer, Archivist for the Santa Clara County Archives, showed us the rich resources housed at the new



county archives, including such things as cattle brand registration and voting ballots of the past, as well as marriage, birth, death, property, political, and other records.

As part of the presentation, she showed us a photograph of this grand old Hall of Records building in San Jose, built in 1893 on the corner of First and St. James Streets. It also housed the offices of the county clerk, treasurer, auditor, surveyor, recorder and superintendent of schools until it was taken down in 1966 because it was not earthquake safe.

You can find more information about the Archives and its collections at <http://archives.sccgov.org>.

The current Santa Clara County Archives are now at 1875 Senter Road in San Jose (near Kelly Park).

Milpitas Street Name Stories:

Did You Know?

Dixon Landing Road, and Dixon Road, its continuation east of Highway 880, were named for Matthew Dixon, who came west for the gold rush, and in 1861 bought 600 acres of land, on both sides of the Santa Clara/Alameda county line, for his farm. The area was then known as Harrisburg. He built his house on the eastern side of the then-Mission Highway, and made a road down to the waterfront, where he and his neighbor, Captain Valpey, built rough docks for flat-bottomed, two-masted scow schooners to load hay, and grain from the Milpitas and surrounding areas. The landing was next to the former Fremont Airport.

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The last existing scow schooner, the *Alma*, is on display at the Maritime Museum in San Francisco. Built in 1891, the *Alma* was found rotting on the Alviso mud flats and rescued in 1959 and was restored in by the state park service.



The Scow Schooner *Alma*

First Class