



Milpitas Muse

April 13 Meeting: History of Saratoga

The Milpitas Historical Society's next meeting will be held at 7:00 pm on Wednesday, April 13, in the Auditorium (Multipurpose Room) of the Milpitas Library, 160 North Main Street.

Our speaker on this occasion will be Ray Cosyn, current Historian for the Saratoga History Center.



Ray Cosyn

When was Saratoga founded and what was it like to live there in the not-too-distant past? These and more questions will be answered in Ray Cosyn's presentation that traces the story of the city from the Ohlone Indians through the Spanish explorers and on into the lumber and mining times of the late 19th century and its suburbanization in the 20th century.

The Blossom Festival and the surrounding publicity that made Saratoga the center of the "Valley of the Hearts Delight" will be brought into focus. The 1920s and the unique transit system that tied this agricultural town to the outside world will come to life in this fascinating story. The period of 1950s and Saratoga's incorporation into a city, becoming the home to many in the Silicon Valley, will resonate with those who have visited this unique and historic place.

Please join us for this richly informative presentation. Meetings are free and all are welcome.



Saratoga Historical Foundation Museum

Should we have a field trip to this Saratoga Museum? At our April meeting, we can see if you want to do this.

Field Trips and More Field Trips!

The Milpitas Historical Society's field trip to San Jose's Japanese American Museum on Saturday, March 19 was a fun and informative trip for 14 of our members and friends who participated. The tour finished up with a delicious lunch at Okayama Restaurant on Sixth Street, shown in the photo below.



In case you missed the Japantown Museum field trip, another good field trip is coming up in April. This one will be a visit and tour of the Harris-Lass House Museum in Santa Clara, described in the film shown by Santa Clara County historian Bob Byrd at the Society's Installation Dinner in February.



Harris-Lass House Museum in Santa Clara

This last original farmhouse left in Santa Clara, the Harris-Lass House, is now a museum, of which the

house, gardens, and out-buildings, shown in the film, have all been beautifully restored, inside and out.

The tour will take place **Saturday, April 30, 1-2 pm**. You can sign up for this tour at our April 13th Milpitas Historical Society meeting or you can call Harriett McGuire at 408-262-7979 to sign up.

We will meet, as we did last time, behind the Red Lobster Restaurant at the Milpitas Town Center on Calaveras Blvd. This time we're planning on having a picnic lunch in the garden of the Harris-Lass house, so we'll be meeting at 11:45 am, lunch in hand, to car pool to the museum at 1889 Market St, Santa Clara, or you can meet there at noon. We can picnic and enjoy the surroundings for an hour before we start the tour.

Change of Name of New Milpitas Park

The November 2015 issue of the Milpitas Muse stated that of two new parks being planned for Milpitas, one is to be named for **Bob McGuire** (1930-2012), the first Director of Parks and Recreation for Milpitas, a longtime member of the PRCRC, and the late husband of our current Events Director Harriett McGuire.

The other, much smaller, new park was to be named for **Captain Calvin Valpey**, (1806-1880) who sailed produce from the Santa Clara Valley to San Francisco. He owned land and warehouses in Warm Springs and at Dixon Landing, Milpitas. Further research, however, revealed that his home, most of his holdings, and most of his time spent were in Warm Springs, not Milpitas.

Therefore it was decided that the new park would be named for **O. H. P (Oliver Harrison Perry) Venum**, who was a prominent farm owner and the first Justice of the Peace for Milpitas Township starting in 1861. He farmed in the eastern area of Milpitas and is believed to be buried at Laguna Cemetery.

The 1895 photo at the top of the next column, taken by famed local photographer and painter Andrew P. Hill, shows a field of mammoth pumpkins at the Venum farm on Lundy Road.



Photo courtesy of the Clyde Arbuckle Photograph collection, Martin Luther King Jr. San Jose Library

From left to right are: Fred Venum, O. H. P. Venum, Mrs. Mary Venum (his wife) and Charles Phillips. The child by the pumpkin in the foreground is Leo Venum.

Milpitas Historical Society Board Meetings

Ever wonder what the Milpitas Historical Society Board of Directors does at their meetings? If you are interested, you are welcome to attend these 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, 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@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:

<http://www.milpitashistory.org/home/index.html>

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

First Class