

Milpitas Muse

May 2023

The Milpitas Historical Society Newsletter

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Our April In-person Meeting:

A New Look at the New Almaden Mines

Our May meeting will take place at 7 pm on Wednesday, May 10, in the Multipurpose Room (Auditorium) of the Milpitas Library.

Our presenter will be long-time explorer, historian, and docent of the New Almaden Mine property, **Michael Cox**, who will share the fascinating stories, new discoveries, and his wide-ranging personal experience of the mines, which were first discovered in the 1820s by Mexican settlers.

The mine is named for a mercury mine in (old) Almadén, Spain, which had operated since at least Roman times. The term Almadén, meaning "the mine", is derived from the Arabic language.

The New Almaden mines are the oldest mines in California and were one of the most productive mercury mines in the country. The settlers discovered the mines because they noticed that the indigenous Ohlone people utilized the area for its cinnebar, the bright red mercury ore that they used in the production of paint.



Mining site at the old New Almaden Mine



Specimen of cinnabar ore from the mine

We will have social time afterwards (as we usually do after the meetings), so you can catch up with friends and find out what's going on. Masks are no longer required to enter the library, but the county still requires that no food be served at these meetings. We hope to see you there!

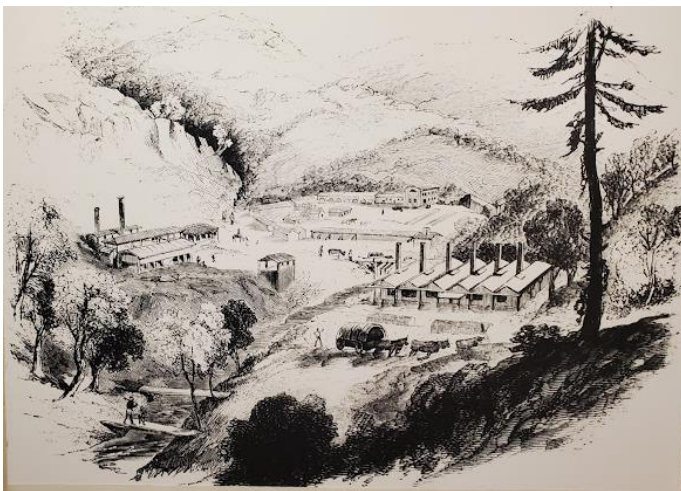
Another Milpitas Park!

The City of Milpitas plans to open its newest park, which will include a community garden, on McCandless Drive, near the newly-constructed Mabel Mattos Elementary School, some time this summer. Originally planned to be called McCandless Park, for its location, the Milpitas City Council has now voted to name it Delano Manongs Park, to honor the 1,500 Filipino-American agricultural workers, or "manongs," who participated in the Delano Grape Strike of 1965. Manong is an Ilocano (third largest language of the Philippines) word meaning older brother or uncle. This labor strike set the stage for the boycott that would lead Cesar Chavez and thousands of farmworker families to create the United Farm Workers.



Milpitas Memorial Day Celebration

On Monday, May 29, the city of Milpitas will hold its annual observance of Memorial Day starting at 9 AM, at the Memorial Plaza behind City Hall, 457 E. Calaveras Blvd., in Milpitas, featuring talks by city officials, music by a band, participation by local youth groups, and a special remembrance of those Milpitas veterans who gave their lives in service to our country.



This early etching shows the six reduction furnaces designed by the blacksmith Baker along Alamitos Creek that were completed in 1850. Water from the creek was used to condense liquid mercury from the hot furnace vapors.

Another Santa Clara County Preservation Alliance Preservation Awards Night!

In recognition of 2023 National Preservation Month, the Santa Clara County Historic Heritage Commission, the San Jose Historic Landmarks Commission, the Preservation Action Council of San Jose, the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County, and History San Jose have again this year joined together as the The Santa Clara County Preservation Alliance (SCCPA) to host an Awards Night honoring individuals and organizations who have made significant historical and cultural preservation contributions throughout Santa Clara County. SCCPA Preservation Awards Night will be held Friday, May 19, 7:00 pm (Gates open 6:45 pm) at History San Jose, 1650 Senter Rd, San Jose, CA 95112.

\$15 General Admission, Under 18 Free. You can buy tickets online here:

<https://www.preservation.org/events/sccpa-preservation-awards-night>



Milpitas Historical Society President Bill Hare speaking at last year's Awards Night

The first half hour of the evening will give guests and preservation enthusiasts an opportunity to meet, share information, exchange ideas, and get to know the

“Who’s Who” of Santa Clara County’s historical preservationists. Tables, including one for the Milpitas Historical Society, will be available for groups to display and share information. Live music and county historical movie clips will provide a pleasant ambience. The remaining 90 minutes will be a fun, celebratory time, hosted by a professional MC, of award presentations to outstanding preservationists from 17 different organizations.

The Milpitas Historical Society will honor the City of Milpitas with the Outstanding Building Restoration Award for outstanding preservation and restoration of the José Maria de Jesus Alviso Adobe. (See the April *Milpitas Muse* for how to take your own tour there.)

Additional honorees will be this month’s Milpitas Historical Society’s May meeting presenter, Michael Cox, for his work in developing the historic documentation of the New Almaden mines, and distinguished Judge Paul Bernal, who has been our speaker several times, for his leadership, development, and oversight of the Roberto Adobe and Sunol House Museum in San Jose.

The Milpitas Historical Society is a major sponsor of this event, and our Society President, Bill Hare, will be one of the presenters; we hope that more Milpitas Historical Society members will be able to join him for this most historic event.

Visit www.preservation.org/npm2023 for event details! For more information: 408-867-4311.

Our Society’s Contact Information

You can contact the Milpitas Historical Society:

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