



Milpitas Muse

November 2023

The Milpitas Historical

Society Newsletter

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Wednesday, November 8th In-Person Meeting:

November's meeting in the Milpitas Library will again be held at 7 pm, because the speaker was scheduled for that time some months ago. We may return to afternoon meetings for the first few months of 2024, again to spare our older members from after-dark driving. Let us know what you prefer at our website (p.2).

Our speaker, Kerry Perkins, is the Supervisor of the Campbell Museums for the City of Campbell, and she will tell the surprisingly interesting stories of how Campbell was founded and developed, starting as a Mexican land grant and later bought and developed by a settler family, the Campbells, from back east. Benjamin Campbell's struggles to develop his various enterprises and maintain control of his property, as it grew into a post office, a railroad depot and a town are fascinating, as well as some other surprising events that occurred in Campbell. Please join us on Wednesday to hear about another city in the Santa Clara Valley about which we have a lot to learn!



Kerry Perkins

We will have social time afterwards (as we usually do after 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!

Milpitas Historical Society at Pumpkins in the Park



The surprise appearance of the Milpitas Monster, stealing his creator Bob Burrill's hat (left) and the newly decorated Rolling Jail (right) were both big hits at this year's Halloween celebration on October 28 at Cardoza Park.

Stories of Milpitas Parks: Delano Manongs Park

By Joseph Ehardt, Docent

Milpitas has many parks named for pioneer people such as Frederick Creighton Park, named for an Englishman who migrated to Milpitas in 1855 and opened one of its first stores, and John Sinnott Park, named for an Irishman who came to California not to mine gold but to farm its fertile land. And there are numerous parks with place names such as Hillcrest Park, Foothill Park, and Hidden Lake Park.

Milpitas also has a park that combines both conventions: Sunnyhills Albert Augustine Jr. Memorial Park, which honors the first racially integrated Milpitas housing development in the United States as well as one of its African-American leaders.

Last month the City formally opened Delano Manongs Park adjacent to Mabel Mattos Elementary School on McCandless Drive. This park memorializes the California Central Valley town of Delano, which became nationally famous during the 1965 strike of Filipino and Mexican agricultural workers against the town's table grape growers.

A bit of history

The arrival of Filipino immigrants began in the 1920s and 1930s, but they faced racial discrimination, so the principal opportunity for work was in the agricultural fields of the West, and especially in California. That work was strenuous, workers were underpaid, and living conditions were substandard at best and typically much worse.

By the spring of 1965, the situation was desperate, having reached the point where not working (hence no pay) held more promise than continuing to work in conditions tantamount to indentured servitude. The Manongs (a respectful term for referring to elder Filipinos) went on strike in Coachella Valley, south of Delano, because they were being paid less than Mexican *braceros* doing similar work.

The strike leader of the Manongs was Larry Itliong, the chief organizer in Delano for the AFL-CIO AWOC (the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee). The strike moved to Delano on September 8, 1965, and a week later the NFWA (National Farm Workers Association led by Dolores Huerta and Caesar Chavez) joined the Manongs.

The strike gained national attention with the vocal support of U. S. Senator and future Presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy, social activist priests and others who produced relentless public pressure to settle in favor of the strikers. Even the powerful Teamsters Union entered the scene, maneuvering to get the table grape growers to agree to a union contract with them instead of the so-called Communist coalition of AWOC and NFWA that would merge to form the United Farm Workers or UFW labor union. With persistence, the UFW won the strike for better pay and living conditions for its members.

The new park is a wonderful community space

Delano Manongs Park provides many (perhaps the most in Milpitas) play spaces for children, including some rather hi-tech games that direct the children on how to actively play the game. The park also contains a community garden in which residents can grow food in raised growing beds that includes a few ADA plots. Also available are several covered areas to picnic.



A sophisticated piece of play equipment enjoyed by kids who jump to numbers that are randomly called out by the machine.

Losing a Treasured Member: Norma Bravo



Norma Bravo recently passed away, and she was preceded in 2015 by her husband, Vic. Norma was born on November 30, 1928, and she lived most of her long life in Milpitas. During that time, she raised four sons: Victor, Steve, Mark and Christopher.

She will be sorely missed by members of the Milpitas Historical Society and all of her family friends.

Our Society's Contact Information

You can contact the Milpitas Historical Society:

- by mail at 160 N. Main Street, Milpitas CA 95035
- by email at tmhs@milpitashistoricalsociety.org
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First Class