



Milpitas Muse

January 2024

The Milpitas Historical Society Newsletter

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Wednesday, January 10th In-Person Meeting:

January's meeting in the Milpitas Library will again be held at our traditional time of 7 pm. We may alternate with afternoon meetings at some point during 2024, again to spare our older members from after-dark driving. We are trying to find the best time(s) for our members.

Our speaker is Dr. Ramon Martinez, who has been a member of the Milpitas Historical Society since 2018. He also is a current member and was the founding secretary of the La Raza Historical Society, and he is a commissioner of the Santa Clara County Historical Heritage Commission. As an undergraduate student in 1971, Ramon was an original member along with Cesar Chavez of the 1970 San Jose State University Grape Boycott Committee. Then, in the 1980s, Ramon earned his Ph. D. at the University of Southern California.



Ramon Martinez, Ph.D. Josephine Camarillo Guerrero

Dr. Martinez will present the story of Josephine Guerrero, an important Latina personage in Milpitas history. She was the first woman Assistant U.S. Postmaster for Milpitas for over three decades, a founding member of the Milpitas Planning Commission as well as the Milpitas Library Commission. For many of those years she also ran a local business, Milpitas Cleaners, which was located on Main Street.

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.

PLEASE NOTE: Because COVID remains a health risk, facial masks are recommended while in the library. Additionally the county still requires that no food be served in the Library. We hope to see you there!

Nominations: 2024 Board of Directors

Because this is a *very important meeting* at which the Milpitas Historical Society elects its Officers and Board of Directors for the coming year, we hope that **every member** will be able to join us. Here is the current list of nominees who will be voted on at this meeting:

- President: Bill Hare
- Vice President: Catherine Pelizzari
- Secretary: Carolyn Tiernan
- Treasurer: Joe Ehardt
- Hospitality: Unfilled position
- Publicity: Mark Tiernan
- History: Joanne Souza
- Special Events: Danny Cosper
- Membership: Jathin Ullal
- Archives: Joe Ehardt
- Educational Outreach Program: Joe Ehardt
- Liaison to PRCRC: Joe Ehardt

The position of Hospitality has been unfilled for several years, so if someone is interested, please contact Bill Hare to declare your willingness to serve. This position helps plan and organize the Society's Summer Barbecue, the Christmas Party, and the Installation Dinner. If the County ever lets us resume serving desserts and coffee/tea at our monthly meetings in the Library, this Board position also is responsible for that part of those events as well.

Planning the February Installation Dinner

Traditionally the Society holds the installation dinner for its new Board of Directors in the evening of the third Thursday of the month. Because the annual Christmas Party luncheon on Sunday, December 10th, was so well attended, we are investigating having the installation event on the weekend as a luncheon for several reasons. Instead of at night, when it is both dark and colder, a luncheon event would be in daylight and comparatively warmer. Additionally, holding it on a weekend almost certainly means it conflicts less with people's weekday work hours or other weekday commitments. We will soon announce by special mailing (the norm) all details of next month's special event.

Resumption of Annual Dues

With the arrival of COVID in 2020, Santa Clara County Public Health Department ordered the closure of, among other things, its public libraries. With our meeting place no longer available, the Society suspended in-person meetings for obvious reasons. Unable to temporarily provide its members with the normal monthly and special events, the Board of Directors formally suspended annual dues due to special circumstances rather than modifying its bylaws that define annual membership dues. After three years of waived dues, the Board has voted to reinstate the membership dues adopted in the Bylaws, which are:

Individual membership: \$25 per

Couples membership: \$50 per year

Institutional membership: \$50 per year

Sustaining Membership: \$100 per year

Everyone who donated funds to the Society in the recent months of 2023 will have their 2024 membership dues waived. This includes new members would recently mailed a check for annual membership dues because they did not know that 2023 dues were waived.

The Real Story Behind a Historic Photograph

By Joseph Ehardt, Docent



This historic photo is displayed on the mudroom wall between the kitchen and bathroom in the Jos  Alviso Adobe Museum. We think it was taken in the 1930s, during the Cuciz ownership, but who are the women?

Bill Hare investigated, locating the original photo in the collection of the Washington Township Museum of Local History, which is near Mission San Jos . WTMofLH also is the caretaker of the Galindo-Higuera Adobe in Warm Springs. On the back of that photo are the typed names of those women: Ernestine Ponsford, Mrs. Samuel A. Dana, and Mrs. F. Y. Chapman. The last two names clearly are their married rather than their maiden names. *But there also was a handwritten clue: Alviso-Higuera Family.*

Joe Ehardt joined the investigation to see if or how they might be connected into his existing genealogical trees for the Alvisos and the Higuera. Mrs. Samuel A. Dana is *Maria Antonia Alviso*, direct descendant of *Juan Ygnacio Alviso*, her great grandfather who also was an uncle of Milpitas' *Jos  Maria de Jesus Alviso*. Mrs. F. Y. Chapman is *Christina Margarita Alviso*, Maria's sister. Ernestine is the daughter of Christina. They are distant cousins of *Jos *.

There is more to their story. Maria and Christina's mother was *Maria Jesus del Refugio Livermore*, daughter of *Robert T. Livermore* (the town's founder who is buried in Mission San Jose) and *Maria Josefa de Jesus Higuera*, who was the daughter of *Jos  Loreto Higuera*, grantee of Rancho Los Tularcitos and his Adobe in Milpitas! New insights when we go "deep diving down a rabbit hole."

Our Society's Contact Information

You can contact the Milpitas Historical Society:

- by mail at 160 N. Main Street, Milpitas CA 95035
- by email: tmhs@milpitashistoricalsociety.org
- at our website: <http://milpitashistoricalsociety.org>
- by phone: 408-262-1776 (Bill Hare)

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First Class