

Milpitas Muse

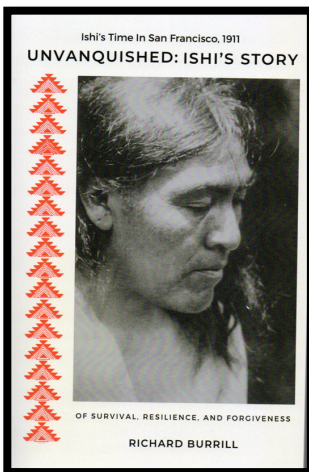
September 2023

The Milpitas Historical Society Newsletter

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Our September In-Person Meeting: Richard Burrill Speaks on Ishi, the Last Native American of his Tribe

Our September meeting will take place at 7 pm on Wednesday, September 13, in the Multipurpose Room (Auditorium) of the Milpitas Library. Please join us for this amazing talk about a new book by Richard Burrill, author of *Ishi Rediscovered* (2001), *Ishi's Untold Story in His First World* (2011-12), and *Ishi's Return Home* (2014), to name only some, and Richard is the twin brother of our longtime member Robert Burrill.



From 1854 until 1911, Ishi, the last member of the Dry Creek band of Yahi Indians, lived for fifty-seven years invisibly from Oroville residents. In August, Ushi was captured while looking for food and put into Butte County jail. The following month, Thomas Waterman of the University of California's Anthropology Department obtained Ishi's release and they came by train to San Francisco. Thus began a new episode in Ushi's life in which he would learn about the modern world and not resume his former life in the "wild" foothills of California.



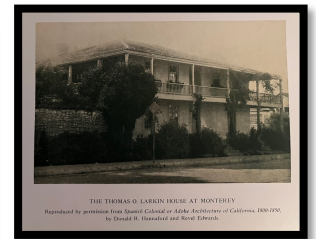
Richard Burrill

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!

Thomas Oliver Larkin Jr, The First, Last and Only United States Consul to Mexican Alta California

By Joseph Ehardt, Docent

For anyone who has come to our docent-led tour at the José Maria de Jesus Alviso Adobe or has read my companion article on the Milpitas Historical Society's website, you might recall the name of Thomas Larkin. Generally, he was a Massachusetts-born pioneer who arrived in Monterey in 1832 and was responsible for creating the Monterey Colonial architectural style of adobe buildings, of which our José Alviso Adobe is an excellent example (left).



Larkin became a successful merchant who sold any goods imaginable from a building he erected in 1835 to house his store on the ground floor and his family residence above. This building (right) still exists as part of the Monterey State Park and can be visited. Larkin's trade customers were the local Californios as well as all of the crews and passengers of the ships that visited Monterey -- trading vessels as well as U. S. Navy vessels.

From 1844 until the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848, President Tyler appointed Larkin to perform the duties of United States Consul in Alta California. For President Polk, Thomas Larkin was a confidential advisor, a role he secretly performed even after the position of Consul was eliminated when California became a United States Territory. After establishing a new home in San Francisco, Larkin represented the City at the 1849 California Constitutional Convention in Monterey and was one of the original signers of the final document.

Finally, there are several interesting historical twists in this story. It is not surprising that U.S. Consul Larkin interacted with British Vice-Consul James Alexander Forbes, but it is surprising that Forbes' wife, Marta Anna Maria Galindo, was a sister of Juana Francisca de Gracia Galindo, the wife of José Maria Alviso, and, for a while, the Forbes-Galindo family actually resided at Rancho Milpitas!

And Larkin's great uncle, Deacon John Larkin, had loaned Thomas' great grandfather's horse, Brown Beauty, to Paul Revere for his famous midnight ride warning the colonial militia of approaching British troops.



Historical Society's Picnic: A Fun Occasion!

On Saturday, August 26, the Society held its summer picnic in Murphy Park, under a grove of shady trees near Yellowstone Ave and, luckily, with beautiful weather. With the Society's eye-catching tent, delicious pot-luck food as well as catered barbecue to eat, and plenty of picnic tables for seating, members were able to enjoy a most pleasant get-together, catching up with old friends and meeting new ones.



Carolyn Tiernan, Kelly Yip-Chuan, Mark Tiernan, Dan Cosper, and Harriett McGuire enjoying the outing.



We were honored to welcome Alviso founding family member John Alviso (right) and his family, here chatting with Sacorra Grady, Stephen Nance, and Mike Pelizzari.

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
- at our website: <http://milpitashistoricalsociety.org>

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First Class