

Milpitas Muse

March 2024

The Milpitas Historical Society Newsletter

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Our Next Meeting, March 20th, will be on the THIRD, not the second, Wednesday on the Month

The March meeting of the Milpitas Historical Society in the Milpitas Library will be held at 7 pm on Wednesday, March 20 in the auditorium of the Milpitas Library, 160 North Main Street.

Our speaker, Connie Young Yu, is a Chinese American writer, activist, historian, and lecturer. She has written and contributed to many articles and books, notably including *Profiles in Excellence: Peninsula Chinese Americans*, *Chinatown San Jose, U.S.A.*, and *Voices from the Railroad: Stories by Descendants of Chinese Railroad Workers*.

Through her work, she has uncovered forgotten or hidden facets of Chinese and Asian American history. She played a central role in getting the Angel Island Immigration Station designated a National Historic Landmark, therefore preserving the detention barracks that had Chinese poems carved on the walls. She is a member and former chairperson of the Board of Trustees of the Hakone Gardens Foundation in Saratoga, California. She is also a Trustee Emeritus Board member of the Chinese Historical Society of America.

She will be speaking to us about "The Two Chinatowns of San Jose," the fascinating story of how one so-called bustling Chinatown of San Jose was destroyed and how another, due to the kindness and empathy of a nearby landowner, rose to replace the first one.



Connie Young Yu

There will be time for questions and conversation afterwards, (as we usually do after meetings), so that 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's Installation Party on Saturday, February 24

Although, surprisingly, there were many fewer attendees than usual at our celebratory luncheon at which our officers and board for 2024 were officially installed, a wonderful time was had by all attendees, and fun and interesting conversations took place among old and new friends. After the delicious lunch provided by the staff of Giorgio's Italian Restaurant, Milpitas Mayor Carman Montano swore in this year's officers and board members.



Shown above at the installation ceremony are the Milpitas Historical Society's Board of Directors for 2024; from the left, Joseph Ehardt, Treasurer, Archives, and Educational Outreach; Carolyn Tiernan, Secretary; Mark Tiernan, Publicity; Joanne Souza, History; Bill Hare, President; Jathin Ullal, Membership; Dan Cospers, Special Events; Catherine Pelizzari, Vice-President; and Milpitas Mayor Carmen Montano swearing them in..

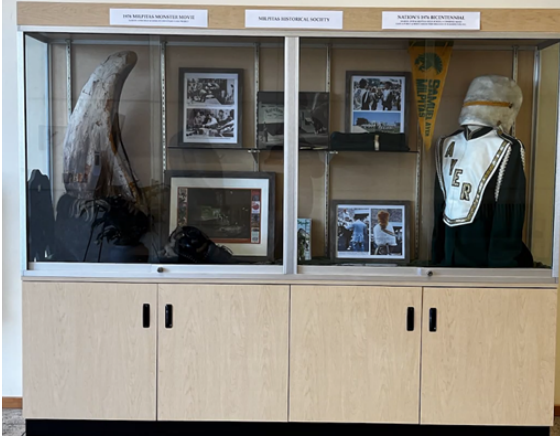
We hope that many more of our members will join us for next year's Installation Party, probably on the traditional third Thursday night!

Santa Clara County Preservation Awards

On Friday, May 17th, 7-10 pm at History San José Park, people will gather for this year's Santa Clara County Preservation Alliance (SCCPA) Awards. Stay tuned for more information as it becomes available.

The 70th Anniversary of Milpitas

January 26th, 1954 was the formation of Milpitas as an incorporated city. From the early 1850s, beginning with the California Gold Rush and following decades, it was recorded in the U. S. Census as a township.



The above exhibit in City Hall was created by the Historical Society with 1976 Bicentennial artifacts to remind people of several major social events in our history. One was the debut of the Milpitas Monster full-length movie, a high school student project that began as a 10-minute video. The other was the trip by the combined Ayer and Milpitas High Schools marching band to perform in the Nation's Bicentennial celebration in Washington, D.C.



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

The passing of several more Society members

Sadly, recent months have been marked with the passing of three more long-time members of the Society.

On November 25th, 2023, **Robert Gordon Keely** passed away after an extended bout with cancer. As a correctional officer at the Elmwood Correctional Facility, he was instrumental in the reconstruction of Leapin' Lena from a ranch utility truck back into its previous configuration as a fire truck with a volunteer fire crew that served Milpitas before the opening of the Ford Assembly Plant in 1955



An historic photo of Leapin' Lena being installed to add interest to the blank wall of the rebuilt Calaveras Fire Station (#2) at Yosemite Drive and Park Victoria Blvd.

Jean Wyatt has also passed away. She was another long-time member of the Society, and it was her husband who saved the Bicentennial Band uniforms from the trash bin and returned them to the band members who wore them, And finally, **Wanda Olinger** has passed away. Her funeral will be at Cedar Lawn on Friday, March 15th, 10=11 am.

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>

First Class