

Milpitas Muse

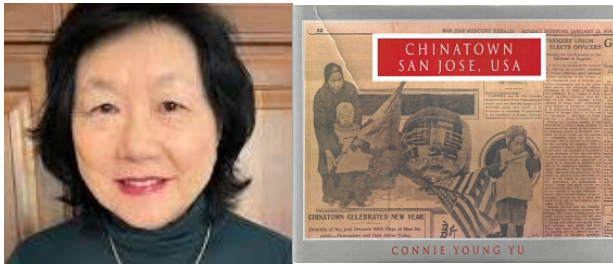
May 2024

The Milpitas Historical Society Newsletter

Volume XXXV, No 4

A Recap of the March Meeting Presentation

Our speaker in March was Connie Young Yu, a Chinese-American writer, activist, historian, and lecturer who has written and contributed to many articles and books, but her presentation focussed on the content in her book entitled, *Chinatown San Jose, U.S.A.*



Connie Young Yu

She spoke about “The Chinatowns of San Jose” of which historically there were five.

Originally there was the *First Market Street Chinatown* (1866-1870), which was destroyed by fire, most likely due to arson inspired by Anti-Chinese prejudice.

It was replaced by the *Vine Street Chinatown* (1870-1872), which was located near the Guadalupe River, but that site was unsuitable because it was prone to frequent flooding.

The *Second Market Street Chinatown* (1872-1887) was the rebirth of the original Chinatown, but this too was destroyed by arson about 15 years later in an attempt to permanently push the Chinese elsewhere in San Jose or out altogether.

Then there was the *Woolen Mills Chinatown* (1887-1902), which was in an industrial section of San Jose and therefore deemed a more acceptable location to those of Anti-Chinese sentiment, but that site also failed.

Lastly, a German-American by the name of John Heinlen offered about 5 acres of his property (which became known as *Heinlenville*) to the Chinese community on which it could rebuild what would be the last Chinatown in San Jose.

In 1999, the California Department of Transportation collaborated with the Chinese Historical & Cultural Project, which performed an archaeological excavation of historic Heinlenville to recover any still-existing buried artifacts and hopefully to determine what had actually occurred in the 1887 fire that turned the Second Market Street Chinatown into ashes.

Our Next Meeting will be on Wednesday May 8th, at 7PM, our regular day and time.

Reclaiming History: Digging to Chinatown.

The May meeting of the Milpitas Historical Society will be held in the Milpitas Library auditorium at 160 North Main Street.

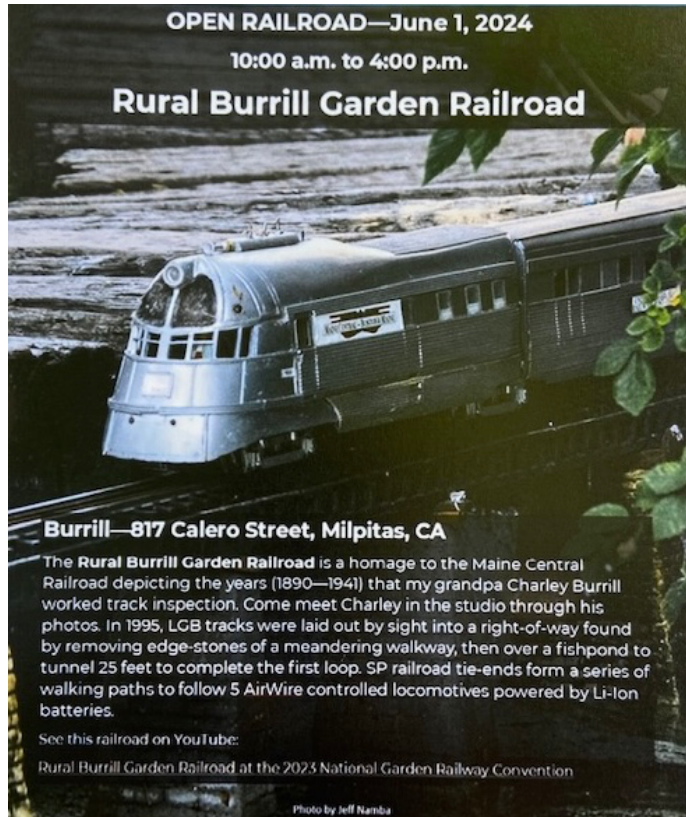
The Society is honored to be presenting Connie Young Yu’s 2016 documentary film that recorded the archaeological excavation of historic San Jose Chinatown before construction would eradicate its remains forever.



Please join us for viewing an excellent portrayal of reclaiming and preserving some of San Jose’s Chinese history from the dustbin that includes conversations with some of the people who had lived there.

There will be time for our own conversation afterward, as we usually do at meetings, so that you can catch up with friends and find out what’s going on. We hope to see you there!

Scale-Model Railroad Event in Milpitas in June!



Our own Society member Robert Burrill has hand-built a scale model of a passenger train that celebrates his grandfather's work for the Maine Central Railroad. The model train shown above will be running on Robert's tracks in his backyard!

NOTE: 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.

A Descendant of a Milpitas Pioneer Passes Away



Joseph Raymond Madruga passed away on March 29th, 2024, and services were held on April 26th at St. John the Baptist Church. He was born December 4th, 1941, a week before the attack on Pearl Harbor. His parents were Raymond Madruga and

Marie Henriques. "Joe" grew up in Milpitas, went to Bellarmine, and then to Santa Clara University.

Raymond ran the family business, the Madruga Iron Works, on property in Milpitas that was originally owned by his grandfather, and he also was a member of the first Milpitas Planning Commission beginning in 1954 and serving into the 1960s.

Joseph married Mary Anne Ahearn in 1963, after which he enlisted in the United States Army as a commissioned officer. After retiring as a Major in the Army, Joe returned to Milpitas and assumed a role in the family business, working with his father Raymond and brother James until he took over the business in 1969. Eventually he passed on the business (which by then had been moved to Tracy) to his children, but he remained active in it for years.

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>
- by land-line at 1-408-262-1776 (Bill Hare)

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First Class