



The Sentinel

Spring 2010

Newsletter of the San Ramon Historic Foundation

BEFORE IT WAS CALIFORNIA: The Mission Period

Continued from the Winter 2010 Issue

Mission San Jose was the closest mission to the San Ramon Valley. "Spanish outposts in the Bay Area were always somewhat precarious. Sitting on the northern tip of the empire, supplies, military order and news reached them only sporadically. The Missions of Santa Clara and San Jose were expected to provide a regular food supply."¹ The brunt of the work fell on local Indians. The Spanish colonization plans included education and Christianization of the native population, and the Spanish committed many resources to convert and train the Indians. The life they offered the Indians was to the Spanish much superior to their current life. The Indians' contributions are recognized in a cemetery not far from Mission San Jose, there is a sign which reads "Here sleep Four Thousand of the Ohlone tribe who helped the Padres build this Mission San Jose. **Sacred to their Memory.**"²

However, it must be noted that not all of the indigenous people appreciated the Spanish and the forced labor they imposed on the Indians. Converted (Neophyte) Indians were not allowed to leave the mission; the work was hard, and disease often killed many of them. Some Indians refused to go to the mission. *Cont'd on pg. 2*



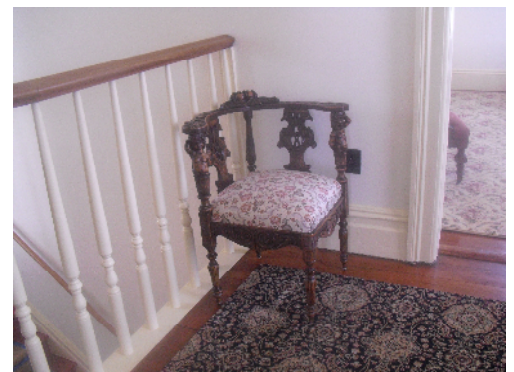
The Glass House Opens on May 15

The opening celebration for the Glass House has finally arrived. The mysterious house, very visible from the freeway and the object of much speculation will open its doors to the public as a house museum on May 15 at 1:00pm. The opening ceremony is at 1:30p.m., and the public may view the house until 4:00pm. The house museum will be open the second Saturday of each month from 10am to 2:00pm in conjunction with the Farmers Market and

the Gift Shoppe. The Shoppe will be open during the Glass House grand opening.

The Glass House was built in 1877 by David Glass. It is an Italian Victorian that has been meticulously restored inside and out. The exterior landscaping reflects plantings from the 1900 era and is based on early pictures of the house. It contains some original Glass family furniture and a painting by Anita Glass that has been restored. Additional authentic period furniture was donated by interested community members and some was purchased by the Foundation, including the master bedroom dresser, bed and wash stand.

City employees Kim Guiliano, Mary Ann Wilkman, Stephanie Herscu and Nancy Young deserve congratulations for their efforts. Thanks to all the many others, employees and volunteers, who have put many hours of research, planning and just plain muscle into seeing the dream realized.



Mission Period *Cont'd from page 1*

Jose Amador recalled his early military interactions with the Indians. He stated that “the [scouting] party invited the wild Indians and their Christian companions to come and have a feast of pinole and dried meat... the troops, civilians and the auxiliaries surrounded them and tied them up we separated 100 Christians, we baptized all the Indians (non Christian) and afterward they were shot in the back”.³ At another encounter, Amador and Agostin Bernal were injured when attempting to recover stolen horses taken from the mission. That skirmish left 20 Indians dead, 20 wounded and 16 were taken prisoner.⁴

Many Indians did adapt to mission life and gained new skills. They became carpenters, blacksmiths, tanners, weavers and soap makers. They herded cattle and sheep throughout the valley. Ramon, an Indian valley herder became the inspiration for the valley’s name. As mentioned in the Fall 2009 issue of *The Sentinel*, buildings on San Ramon Rancho, Jose Amador’s granted land, were built by Indians and skilled Indian craftsmen, and women provided necessities for the Rancho.⁵ However, Central Valley Indians continued to threaten valley settlers throughout the first half of the 19th century.

These people who played such an important role in the development of the San Ramon Valley were quickly almost eliminated. Approximately 300,000 Indians lived in California when the Europeans arrived. Within 50 years that number was down to 100,000. In Contra Costa County there were over 30,000 Indians in 1820. A cholera epidemic severely decimated the population. In 1879 the publishers, Smith and Elliott stated that “there are scarcely 50 (Indians) left in the entire county.”⁶

¹Beverly Lane “They Came First: The Tatcan, Seunen and Souyen Peoples of the San Ramon Valley.” (Museum of the San Ramon Valley, 1999), p8.

²Reginald Ray Stuart *Corridor County vol. 1.* (Amador-Livermore Valley Historical Society, 1966), pp. 29-31.

³http://www.nps.gov/history/histoy/online_Books/5_views/5views1b.htm. “A History of American Indians in California: 1769-1848.” Five Views: An Ethnic Historic Site Survey for California (American Indians) pp. 3-4.

⁴Stuart, p78.

⁵Stuart, pp. 10-11.

⁶ George Emanuels. *Ignacio Valley 1837-1970.* (Panaroma West Books, 1982), p. iv.

Abraham Lincoln: Self-made in America

The Museum of the San Ramon Valley is hosting an impressive Abraham Lincoln event from April 9 to May 7, 2010. The exhibit includes reproductions of artifacts and documents from the Abraham Lincoln Library in Springfield, Illinois. In addition to this noteworthy exhibit are a number of related events planned for spring 2010.

Civil War Re-enactment Day on April 24 is sponsored by the San Ramon Historic Foundation and the City of San Ramon and will take place at Forest Home Farms Historic Park from 10am – 4pm. Remember that Foundation members are eligible for special discounts at the door and a 10% discount in the Gift Shoppe.

Other events have preceded this publication, but there are still many special activities such as the Alamo cemetery tour on April 24 and a chocolate and champagne social April 15 to commemorate the 145th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln’s death. Other lectures and debates are also scheduled. Visit <http://www.museumsvr.org> for further information.

The City of San Ramon will host an exhibit entitled “Ladies of the Lincoln Era” from May 15 to October 10 at the Glass House at Forest Home Farms Historic Park.

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Founding Board Member Resigns

In 2001 a small group of local women saw a community need and organized to provide a fund raising foundation to support the newly acquired city property called Forest Home Farms. The 16 acre property was donated by Ruth Boone with the stipulation that it be preserved as a park for residents to enjoy.



Founding Board Members: Pat Boom, Mary Wohlers, and Doris Kinsley

Through their organizational efforts, Pat Boom, Doris Kinsley, and Mary Wohlers, who are still on the board, and the other previous members, met in Pat's kitchen and planned the future. The Foundation grew – slowly at first as they recruited board members and began small fundraising efforts.

Each member had specific abilities and background to contribute to the new board. Doris Kinsley became the second president. Her particular skill in writing and evaluating contracts reflect her career with Hope Hospice. Doris was always there as a strong woman quietly giving her counsel and making thoughtful, informed decisions.

Now after serving for nine years, Doris has submitted her resignation to the board. The board will miss Doris, and every community member should appreciate the long commitment and numerous contributions she made to improve Forest Home Farms. Fortunately, we

have not lost Doris entirely! She has agreed to remain as the Foundation Historian and has said she will still help with specific projects (like proof reading the newsletter!)

Thank you Doris for all you have done for the farm, for the community, and for the friendship you have provided to everyone on the board.

REFLECTION... by Doris Kinsley

In 2000, driving past Forest Home Farms and seeing the sheep, I wondered whose property it was. Also, my granddaughters loved to see the sheep as they were “city girls” who had never seen sheep before. The next day there was an ad in the San Ramon Valley Times looking for San Ramon citizens to be on the Forest Home Farms Committee. It was uncanny and the ad called to me. I applied for the committee and was appointed. My love affair with Forest Home Farms (FHF) began.



Subsequently, the City of San Ramon abandoned the FHF Committee and a few of us began to talk about forming a Foundation to raise monies for the Farm. We gathered around Pat Boom's kitchen table and over several months started to format our ideas into what is now the San Ramon Historic Foundation. Jane Jennings wrote and presented our fledging idea to the State of California to grant Forest Home Farms and the David Glass House historic status. One month for our board meeting, we met at the San Ramon Community Center and the only room available to us was a pre-school room with very low tables and very small chairs. We hastily concluded our Foundation business that night!

I remember how difficult it was to obtain new board members; I served as president for two terms. Every fund raiser was a new idea which came to fruition. We were successful in our money-raising efforts and began to fund many grants to further Forest Home Farms and the David Glass House.

Now, in 2010, nine years later the board has grown to 9 dedicated members who meet monthly in the Boone House at Forest Home Farms. The board has willingly put on many fund raisers over the years, and individuals have put in many hours as volunteers. As I retire from the San Ramon Historic Foundation, I am proud to say I have been involved.

FOUNDATION UPDATES

The Foundation continues to expand its efforts to raise awareness and capital for improvements to Forest Home Farms Historic Park

The Foundation's annual Crab Feed was a big social and financial success. Over 200 community members joined together at the Dougherty Station Community Center for crab and all the fixings. The event was chaired by Carol Lopez who this year introduced a very successful cake auction. A special thanks to all the local bakeries who donated great cakes, cookies and pies. Mark your calendars for January 29, 2011 and be ready to enjoy another great evening.

The Victorian Tea, the Foundation's annual formal tea to honor Ruth Boone, is scheduled for September 12, 2010. The Tea has been a popular community attraction for 10 years. Two hundred attendees adorn beautiful hats, dresses and top hats for the guys. Planning has already started and the Foundation is searching for new enthusiastic committee members. What a great way to meet new friends, express your creativity and learn more about event planning. Please contact Pat Boom at 837-1048 for more information.



An Irrigation Project under the direction of Dall Barley was undertaken in March. The materials were provided by the Foundation, and the labor of dredging trenches and assembling the sprinkler system was undertaken by a group of volunteers. Thanks to all of you for your hard work. Let the planting begin!

A Donor Board hand crafted by Herman Welm has been placed in the Welcome Center just outside the Gift Shoppe. It is magnificent! Thanks to Herm for his hard work and his skill, and we look forward to seeing your name etched on it!

Sheep Shearing Day is sponsored by the city of San Ramon on May 2 from 11:00am – 3:00pm. The Foundation always supports the event by setting up a hot dog booth. Come by and say hi to our volunteers, and then take a look at the Gift Shoppe which will be open during the event.



The Gift Shoppe will open officially on April 24 for Civil War Re-enactment Day and will be open on every Saturday May 1 through October 30 from 9:00am to 1:00pm. New merchandise has arrived including toys, parasols, jewelry and more purses. There are also hats and shirts with our logo. The Gift Shoppe is looking for volunteers to be part of the sales team. Please call Pat Boom for more information at 837-1048.

CIVIL WAR RE-ENACTMENT DAY

April 24, 10am to 4pm
Forest Home Farms Historic Park

Civil War Re-enactment Day is sponsored by the Foundation and the City of San Ramon. Missing this year will be the large cannons, (a personal Yeah!) but the muskets and all the other fun activities will still be there. Walk through a living history encampment and learn about the daily life of soldiers, women and children of the Civil War era. March with soldiers, visit a field hospital or shop for old fashioned items in the Gift Shoppe. Food is available for purchase. Pre-register with the city at 925-973-3200 to get special pricing, receive a discounted admission and free admission for children under 12 if you are a member of the Foundation.

Book Review

Recollections. Early Life in the San Ramon Valley

as related by Prof. James Dale Smith Headmaster, Livermore College

The lengthy title of the newest addition to the Gift Shoppe at Forest Home Farms book rack is actually a collection of news articles edited by G. B. Drummond. James Smith was raised in the San Ramon Valley, having arrived as a child in 1850. James knew everyone and his experiences with many still familiar names make for a very good read.

As a child he ate his first peach at the home of Joshua March. He described how Seth Lewelling brought the first cherry trees into San Lorenzo. He was chased by a grizzly bear and described the band of mustangs that roamed from Marsh Creek to Bay Point. The abundant game he described and the redwood trees in Moraga Valley all give a vivid picture of another era.

And as he grew up and received his education, he met and interacted with more people. He became a teacher and for one year taught the Glass and Harlan children and boarded with both families. He bought property from Bollinger. His tales go on and on, and the reader comes to know not only the land but the nature of the settlers James knew.

To purchase a copy of **Recollections**, visit the Gift Shoppe at Forest Home Farms which is open on Saturdays from 9:00am to 1:00pm, May 1 through October and during special events such as the Civil Re-enactment Day and Sheep Shearing. It is located in the same building as the Welcome Center.

San Ramon Historic Foundation Auxiliary

Recently Dall Barley, SRHF Vice President, conducted the first meeting of the SRHF Auxiliary formed to involve more community members who have specific interests to pursue and who wish to support the Foundation's goal of preserving and protecting our historical buildings and landscapes. Auxiliary positions still open include Management of Event Supplies, Coordinator of Construction Projects and Co-chair of the Victorian Tea, or you may apply to be a member of any committee. Call Dall Barley at 828-735-7855 or email him at dall.barley@sbcglobal.net for more information. Dall has list of potential volunteers who are emailed when a project is identified that needs volunteer assistance. You can decide whether that project is right for you and email him.

Or perhaps you prefer volunteering at events. The Foundation sponsors a number of San Ramon events and co-sponsors some with the city. Again there is variety. One event not mentioned elsewhere in the newsletter is the Pioneer Picnic scheduled for late September. It is a casual potluck attended by invitation only. Those invitations go out only to long-time residents who are descendants of San Ramon Valley pioneers. Volunteers who help that day get to hear tales of riding through the valley by horse, fixing tractors with Travis Boone in his machine shop, visiting with Ruth Boone on her porch, and what it was like to attend a one room school house.

Or perhaps you enjoy the retail business and would like to become a member of our sales team at the Gift Shoppe. There is always changing merchandise, and the sales team is important in deciding what merchandise to purchase. It is a place to see your neighbors who come to the Farmers Market or meet new people who come into the shop and chat.

Please remember that the Foundation is non-profit and however you decide to participate, proceeds from all events benefit Forest Home Farms Historic Park and the education programs and events sponsored by the city or our Foundation.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR SPRING 2010

April 9 - May 7: *Abraham Lincoln: Self-made in America* at the Museum of San Ramon Valley
Visit their website for other events www.museumsv.org

April 24, 10:00am – 4:00pm: Civil War Re-enactment Day at Forest Home Farms Historic Park
Gift Shoppe is open.

May 1, 9:00am - 1:00pm: Farmers Market opens for the season.
Gift Shoppe is open every Saturday morning also.

May 2, 11:00am - 3:00pm: Sheep Shearing Day.
Gift Shoppe is open.

May 15, 1:00pm - 4:00pm: Grand Opening of the Glass House; ribbon cutting at 1:30pm
Gift Shoppe is open during the Grand Opening.

May 15 – October 10: *Ladies of Lincoln's Era* at the Glass House. Open second Saturday of each month in conjunction with the Farmers Market and the Gift Shoppe

Visit <http://www.SRHF.org> for more information regarding Foundation events