



# SARATOGA HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

POST OFFICE BOX 172, SARATOGA, CALIFORNIA 95071

May, 2007

Please join us for a  
**General Membership Meeting & Potluck Dinner**  
Monday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, at 6:30 PM at Immanuel Lutheran Church

**Our next Members meeting and Pot luck Dinner will be on Monday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, at 6:30 PM at the Immanuel Lutheran Church at 14103 Saratoga Avenue.**

Bring a dish to serve at least eight. A reminder from the Social Chair: only coffee, tea and water will be available. You are welcome to bring your own wine or other drinks since we do not provide them. And be sure to remember to bring your own plates and utensils. For information phone Nancy at 867-4383.

—*Nancy Anderson,*  
*social chairman*

We are very pleased to have State Archeologist Mark Hylkema for our guest speaker at the May 21 members' meeting. His presentation is on **The Ohlone Indians of the San Francisco Peninsula**, including accounts from the diaries and journals of the first European explorers.

Louise Garrod Cooper's recent death is a great loss to the Historical Foundation and the community at large, since she filled so many important roles during her 90 years. With our organization, she was following a family tradition, since her mother, Emma Stolte Garrod, was the founding secretary. Louise served many years as president of our Foundation, retiring in October of last year. The position of director emeritus was created for her.

In other community activities, Louise was president of PTAs at elementary, middle and high schools, served on the board of Los Gatos-Saratoga Joint Union High School District, where she was president for three years, and on the board of the West Valley-Mission College Foundation.

Louise leaves her husband of 66 years, George E. Cooper; daughter, Barbara; sons, William, James and David; brother, Vince, and 11 grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, May 5, in the Saratoga Foothill Club. The family has asked that memorial donations be made to the Saratoga Historical Foundation.

--*Chuck Schoppe, president*

In 1769, when members of the first Spanish expedition reached the San Francisco Bay area they encountered numerous tribal communities that lived in a bountiful landscape. Over a period of 10,000 years, tribal communities had adapted to several major environmental transitions. Archaeological research has found that tribes spread along the San Mateo and Santa Cruz County coast developed an early focus on marine resources, while neighboring tribes of the Santa Clara Valley and San Francisco Bay shore eventually transformed into more complex levels of social organization. By the time the explorers arrived, distinctive tribal boundaries and customs had developed. This presentation will provide an outline of their impressions of the native way of life. We will reflect on what it was like not too many years ago when grizzly bears and the Ohlone people were here.

Mark Hylkema is a State archaeologist with 27 years experience in California archaeology and Native American culture. He has spent considerable time among various tribal communities, particularly in central and northern California. He did his graduate research on the archaeology of the San Mateo and Santa Cruz County coast and has directed excavations throughout the greater San Francisco and Monterey Bay areas. He works full time as the Santa Cruz District Archaeologist for California State Parks, and teaches part time at Santa Clara University, University of California at Santa Cruz, De Anza College, Ohlone College and Cabrillo College. A native of Los Altos and Mountain View, he currently resides in Sunnyvale.

---Peggy Schoppe, exhibits chair

### **Our President's Message for May:**

Our annual business meeting of the Saratoga Historical Foundation will be held as part of the May members meeting on May 21<sup>st</sup>, at which time we will have the opportunity to meet and elect new Board members. We are fortunate to have some very talented people for consideration, all long-time residents of Saratoga.

Two individuals, Linda Hagelin and Bob Himel were appointed by the Board recently to fill vacancies, but must go through the electoral process. Both of them have taken on important assignments: Linda as Education Director and Bob as Treasurer. Ray Cosyn and Jim Sorden are also candidates, asking for your consideration for election. I am happy to recommend each of these talented and fine citizens of Saratoga.

Unfortunately, we have lost a very dear friend and long-time supporter of SHF with the recent passing of Louise Cooper. Louise retired from the Board last year and was later honored by the Board in being selected as the first Director Emeritus. We will miss Louise's engaging personality, her knowledge of local history, and her many contributions to the Foundation and Museum over her many years of service. Her family and friends will pay tribute to her at a memorial service May 5. ---Chuck Schoppe, president

### **Museum News from April:**

After months and months of construction, we are getting back on track with a regular Museum schedule and projects.

**Planned Exhibits:** We will be cleaning and stabilizing the exhibits in the Museum - no more shifting items around in response to construction of one sort or another. We have already moved many items from the Museum and Resource Center into the McWilliams House, in order to show the McWilliams House Committee what we have available for furnishings.

Moving items back into their regular display places has allowed us to make more space available for research and study, so expect to see more work on historic topics in the near future.

We are moving ahead with design implementation of the Native American exhibit, and I will be meeting with two resources from Santa Clara County regarding some additional funding for design.

**Student Work:** We are having more frequent requests from students who want to help. They are working on two projects: filing the hundreds of clippings that have accumulated over the years, and second, identifying hundreds of photographs from the files of the Saratoga Citizen newspaper, published during the 1960's. Fortunately the photos were filed with a copy of the paper and the story, so writing the names on the backs of the images is fairly easy. It's a big job, and the students have been very helpful.

I recently helped judge the annual History Fair at Saratoga High School and was surprised and pleased to meet Jack Mallory there as one of the other judges. This event has three sections; writing, presentation or exhibit. Each section can send two students from the high school to the County level. Winners from the County then go on to Sacramento to participate at the state level.

Mr. Torrens commented that in general, Santa Clara County has a very poor showing in history at the state level when compared to other California counties such as Riverside. He also

commented that even participation in the annual Science Fair seems to be diminishing.

### **McWilliams House and Education programs:**

The completion of construction has allowed to go ahead full speed on furnishing the interior of the McWilliams House and on designing some appropriate education programs for our younger visitors. We have started two new committees to help with these projects since we feel the work will be substantial.

The McWilliams House Committee is chaired by Marilyn Marchetti and it has met twice. Members of this group are taking a field trip to other local house museums, gathering information regarding furnishings and beginning their research.

The Education Committee is coordinated by Linda Hagelin, supported by Ron Hagelin and Jenni Taylor. We would also like to bring Malcolm Toriumi into the group to talk about the Native Americans as soon as that exhibit is complete.

**Facilities:** We are moving ahead with clean-up in the kitchen area, trying to make that space a little more functional for exhibit preparation. In addition, we are moving all seasonal items such as the Xmas decorations and the folding chairs into the new storage building. We will also be disposing of all of the unused and unwanted items, such as the old Xmas tree.

Mildew continues to be a problem in the vault and our current solution is to just try to open the door as often as possible and keep the desiccant containers drained.

An additional small item - I have taken the plaque to the engraver for updating.

Collections. This is an area where the progress rarely shows, until you try to retrieve an item. Then you really appreciate having items boxed and accurately labeled. We are slowly moving ahead, sorting and organizing sections of the collection that are in the vault.

We spent some time on five boxes of newspapers from the mid-1920's - both the Saratoga and Los Gatos papers are included.

Since we have many duplicate copies, 10 or 12 in some cases, we will be sending some of our duplicates to other local museums for their collections.

Myrna, one of our regular volunteers, has made tremendous inroads into the piles of news clippings that were stacked in the vault. I confess that many of the clippings were discarded as not being of interest to Saratoga residents or researchers. But the Resource File is now a tremendous asset to our community.

*--April Halberstadt,, museum director*

### **Plans for Our Historical Park**

Recently the landscape architects from Design Focus, Hank Helbush and Rebecca Dye, met with us to discuss the proposed planting plan for the Historical Park. Rebecca noted that was the most difficult design that she has ever proposed, since there are so many design requirements for such a small space. But her design has met our challenges.

Before I share some of the details of the plan, I want to digress a moment and share some thoughts as a historian. As I look around the Santa Clara Valley, it becomes apparent that over the years, the residents of the West Valley have been the driving forces behind all sorts of innovation. For more than a century, the West Valley has promoted all sorts of artistic ventures as well as several technical innovations and entrepreneurial efforts.

So it should come as no surprise that a significant number of plants carry the names of local figures. The Saratoga Horticultural Research Foundation made significant contributions to the California landscape by developing and propagating native plants for the commercial market. While Saratoga cannot be characterized as a pretentious community, it is quite proud of the special achievements of its residents. And so it seems fitting that we commemorate the many individuals who have contributed so much to California by including these plants in our Historical Park.

I do not know of another garden in the Bay Area, or anywhere else, that will have a botanical

garden celebrating as many local residents. While certain gardens such as Luther Burbank's leap to mind, they are devoted to one individual rather than to the community. So taking a longer view of the botanic contributions of Saratogans, let me review some of the challenges of the plan and then go over some of the plants that have been proposed for our garden.

### **Our Challenges to our Landscape Designer:**

1. Financial constraints: We wanted a plan that we could accomplish without massive investment in new structures and grading. The price tag of our last proposal was about \$.5 million as I recall. We wanted a plan that could be installed in increments, as funding and manpower becomes available.

2. We wanted plantings that respected the historic nature of the three structures. This was a difficult challenge since each of the buildings is from a distinctly different era and each era has its own typical landscape plants. This is also a challenge since the scale and character of the three buildings is so different. The McWilliams house is a tiny, Gold Rush era cottage while the Book-Go-Round is a distinctive community structure.

3. We wanted to have the existing trees and plants at the site evaluated and considered.

4. We wanted to have the three distinct structures at the site "pulled together" so the park site looks like an integrated whole, rather than chopped up.

5. We have to consider the needs of active children as well as visitors who may be using wheelchairs or walkers.

6. We wanted a plan that considers the values of the Saratoga community, whose residents appreciate their native plants and understand the importance of using drought-tolerant materials.

7. We wanted to celebrate the botanic contributions of the Saratoga Horticultural Research Foundation as well as other local luminaries.

**The Planting Plan:** So here is how the landscape designer addressed those challenges:

1. The plan uses the existing layout of the traffic areas and nearly all of the existing grading. There may need to be some minor work to correct a drainage problem behind the Book-Go-Round. But all of the existing paths and gathering areas will be maintained and improved.

2. The plantings in front of the McWilliams House will be old-fashioned favorites including roses that Mrs. McWilliams favored. The plantings proposed in front of the Book-Go-round will be camellias, emphasizing flowers and reddish foliage. This will help to warm and lighten the gray and somewhat oppressive cinder block facade.

3. The debate about the trees has taken several months. So to the best of my knowledge, here is an overview of where we are at this time. We will be removing two damaged redwoods and two damaged ornamental cherries. We are leaving two other redwoods, three mature oaks, one magnolia, two deodar and two Italian cypress. We are adding seven arbutus marina, one new magnolia and one ginkgo.

4. The site will achieve overall integrity by adding three types of plants throughout the site to establish a theme. In addition, most of the plant materials chosen feature red bark, red or bronze colored foliage and flowers, creating a much warmer overall look for the site. The three types of plants are a small tree (arbutus marina) a shrub (arctostaphylos, a variety of manzanita) and a ground cover.

5. We have already installed ADA access to the McWilliams House and will improve the existing gathering areas at the site.

6. and 7. The designer has selected many plants that are native to our area and were introduced and marketed by the Saratoga Horticultural Research Foundation. The planting list includes Ginkgo "Saratoga", a pelargonium (geranium) first developed by the Great Lakes Nursery on Saratoga Avenue and named for Joan Fontaine, as well as a selection of ceanothus (mountain lilac) named for Ray Hartman, Joyce Coulter,

Louis Edmunds and Julia Phelps. We are trying to locate a source for the salvia named for Louis Saso and a rose named for Olivia De Havilland.

Other features of our new garden includes new signage for the park and its buildings as well as a sign commemorating the achievement of Saratoga Hort. The planting plan is in the review stage. We have a copy at the Museum so you can review and make comments. Your feedback is important before we begin to present this plan to the Commissions, the City Council and the other residents of Saratoga.

At this time there is no timetable for any of the formal reviews.

*—April Halberstadt,, museum director*

## **Historic Saratoga**

Over the last several months there has been a low level, background debate about the meaning of the State Historic Plaque located on the Memorial Arch in Blaney Plaza and Saratoga's designation as State Landmark #435. The discussion has been precipitated by recent plans to put historic plaques on various structures in the Saratoga Village. There has been ongoing discussion about which buildings are historic and which are not, and the criteria that was used to select them. There has also been ongoing discussion regarding the accuracy of the historic information that is available. The source frequently cited for information of the selected sites is Saratoga's Heritage, the booklet that lists the buildings in Saratoga's preservation survey. The survey was published by the City of Saratoga in 1993. Another contemporary source of information has been the old map of the historic walking tour of the Village, printed by the Saratoga Historical Foundation. Both the survey and the map rely heavily on information published in the Florence Cunningham history, a book that was organized by Frances Fox after the death of Florence.

In order to clarify some of these critical issues, in 2004 the Planning Department of Saratoga requested a copy of Saratoga's 1949 application to become a state landmark. We now have a complete copy of that application at the Museum for reference, and I would encourage all the

Board members to review it. The application was filed in 1949 by historian William Abeloe and includes 62 pages of information. The application notes that since Saratoga is unincorporated, there could be no "permission from the property owner" when filing the application. So the application was coordinated through the Saratoga Chamber of Commerce with a two-week petition campaign. Twelve petitions were placed in various stores and the Saratoga Observer also published a coupon. This effort resulted in 285 names of which 226 were Saratoga residents. The petitions were then filed with the California State Chamber of Commerce in San Francisco to validate the application.

This early effort to create a list of state landmarks came as a result of the centennial anniversary of California statehood. The Saratoga application was addressed to the State Park commissioner and was approved by a five person committee. The California list eventually included 770 important sites. The Saratoga application included copies of Saratoga Observer newspaper columns "Our First Hundred Years" written by Florence Cunningham between March and December of 1948. In addition, the application includes copies of snapshots of Saratoga's most important landmarks as compiled by a three person committee, Florence Cunningham, William Abeloe and Joseph Long.

The snapshots are keyed to a map and list 29 sites. Of the 29 sites listed in the application, the structures once located at sixteen of the sites have been completely demolished. These include structures such as the paper mills, Congress Hall, Maclay's mill, Campbell's mill, the original Mrs. Brown home, the Congregational church, Kane's Hall, Temperance Hall, and the home of William Haun, among others. Of the remaining 13 buildings and sites, nearly all have either been relocated or substantially modified. This second list includes the Methodist Church and James McWilliams House. A number of important structures that we would currently consider historic were not listed in the 1949 application - for example the Federated Church and the Foothill Club, Saratoga Bank building and the old Sacred Heart Church.

There are two critical items to note regarding the

1949 application that would be important in a historic site application today. First, there are no boundaries specified. Second, there are no authoritative references or documentation mentioned or included. For example, there are no references or citations to any of the early published histories, and by 1949 there were at least five for Santa Clara County that are now considered standard works. In the early 1990's, the Saratoga Historic Preservation Commission amended the list of local landmark structures and added a number of new buildings. The amended list was published in 1993. The applications for these sites are on file at Saratoga City Hall, but once again, substantive documentation on the history of each of the structures is missing. Frequently the little information that is given is in error. The bibliography for the published list, the Saratoga Heritage book, cites only three sources; books by Florence Cunningham, R. V. Garrod and Sara Boutelle.

In my opinion, Saratoga is an historic area. But a lot of work remains to be done to be able to substantiate that claim.

*--April Halberstadt,, museum director*

## **Can You Give Three Hours a Month? (Reprinted from our last issue)**

Last March when I wrote to you, the SHF membership, asking for new docents, I stated:

*"With just 20 dedicated, loyal, and long-time volunteer docents, we are able to open our museum only three afternoons a week. We need more docents to ensure that we can keep our doors open to the public and share our history."*

**Ask any docent why they volunteer at the museum. You'll hear comments such as:**

**"I like talking to visitors about Saratoga."**

**"I meet such nice people."**

**"I can learn more about Saratoga history."**

**"People are so thankful to see our museum."**

**"I like the social contact. It keeps me active."**

If you can spend one three-hour shift per month at the museum, please call our Docent Coordinator, Jenni Taylor at 741-5807 and offer the gift of your time. It's a great way to way to appreciate Saratoga and make new friends.

*--Peggy Schoppe, volunteer coordinator*

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