



Sunnyvale Historical Society and Museum Association

MARCH 2009

Filmmaker Honors Echophone Founder

If you did not make it to the March General Meeting, you really missed quite an event. It began with **President Rose Kausek** presenting the Society with the Sunnyvale Chamber of Commerce's Murphy Award for Outstanding Service to the Local Community.

However, almost 100 people came to see the highlight of the evening which was the first public showing of the completed documentary by **Ben Koning** "Echo of the Future: A Tale of Sunnyvale." Ben worked for three years completely on his own compiling, writing and filming the documentary and it is, indeed, a very worthy project. The documentary chronicles the history of Arthur E. Bessey and his development of the Echophone manufactured at the Radio Shop on Sunnyvale Avenue beginning in the 1920s. In its prime, Radio Shop employed 125 workers and manufactured 150 radios a day. However, due to stiff competition at the time, Radio Shop was forced to close around 1930.



Ben Koning with the camera he used to film the documentary and the Echophone.

Ben has always been interested in camera and film work, even though by day he is an engineer at Apple, Inc. One day, while talking with his parents, Society members **Elisabeth and Johan Koning**, he asked if there was some project he could work on for the Historical Society. In 2005, his parents introduced him to **Ann Zarko**, a life long Sunnyvale resident and member of the Society whose husband worked for a time at Radio Shop. Ann lived to be 97 and provided Ben with a fountain of information. She told Ben about Jack Rowe who was the foremost historian on the Echophone, and "A Tale of Sunnyvale" was born.

Jack lived in Sunnyvale from 1960 until his death during the making of the film. He shared with Ben his entire collection of radios and the history he had gathered for almost 40 years on the Echophone. Jack, a kind, soft spoken man, was an engineer by trade and a mentor, but above all, a passionate historian of the Echophone. His passion can be summed up by a quote of Jack's from the documentary, "History is never important until it's too late."

For three years, Ben literally poured his heart and soul into the making of his 48-minute documentary. He wrote the script, found and hired the actors, musicians and narrators, scoped out filming sites, directed, filmed and finally edited the final cut of the film. He built all his own props and spent hours and hours pouring through the Historical Society archives and photographs to put the story together. He spent many hours interviewing Jack, Ann and others, and remained dedicated to accurately telling the Echophone story.

After working a full eight plus hours at his day job, Ben would come home and work until 2 or 3 a.m. putting the film together. "That's why it took three years to make this project," said Ben. "I had no crew and could not afford to rent editing facilities so I did everything myself, from the writing to the editing, out of my home or my parent's home."

Ben wanted to tell Jack's story as factually as possible and stayed true to Jack whose greatest wish was to preserve the Bessey story for the public. Thanks to Ben and his meticulous attention to history and detail, he has brought honor to Jack's wish.

The DVD is on sale at the museum's gift shop and is something you will definitely want to add to your library of Sunnyvale history. ✿

Calendar of Events

Saturday, April 4

Historical Society Garage Sale

Monday, April 6 • 7:00

Board Meeting at Heritage Park

Monday, April 20 • 7:00

Executive Board Mtg., Heritage Park

Saturday & Sunday, April 25 & 26

Spring Teas

Friday, Saturday, Sunday

May 1, 2 and 3

Spring Teas

Monday, May 4 • 7:00

Board Meeting at Heritage Park

Monday, May 18 • 7:00

Executive Board Mtg., Heritage Park

Monday, June 1

6:30 Board Meeting at Heritage Park

7:30 General Meeting, *everyone*

welcome! Showing of film on the Ohlone Indians.

Saturday and Sunday, June 6- 7

Sunnyvale Art and Wine Festival

Look for the Historical Society's booth.

Monday, June 15 • 7:00

Executive Board Mtg., Heritage Park

Monday, July 6 • 7:00

Board Meeting, Heritage Park

Monday, July 20 • 7:00

Executive Board Mtg., Heritage Park

Monday, August 3 • 7:00

Board Meeting, Heritage Park

Monday, August 17 • 7:00

Executive Board Mtg., Heritage Park

Monday, Sept. 14 • 7:00

Board Meeting, Heritage Park

Monday, Sept. 21 • 7:00

Executive Board Mtg., Heritage Park

Monday, October 5

6:30 Board Meeting at Heritage Park

7:00 General Meeting,
everyone welcome!

Saturday, October 17

Historical Society Garage Sale
(details to follow)

Monday, October 19 • 7:00

Executive Board Mtg., Heritage Park

Monday, Nov. 2 • 7:00

Board Meeting at Heritage Park

Monday, Nov. 16 • 7:00

Executive Board Mtg., Heritage Park

Monday, Dec. 7 • 7:00

Board Meeting at Heritage Park

Monday, Dec. 21 • 7:00

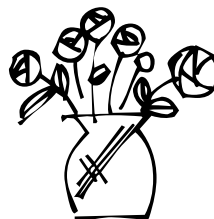
Executive Board Mtg., Heritage Park

Being A Docent Is Great Fun!

In our last newsletter we talked about how the "Word Is Out!" and that peaked the interest of **Dottie Pierce** who is a long time Sunnyvale resident and was looking for another volunteering opportunity. She wanted something that was an interesting activity, not just something to fill her time, but an activity where she could both meet people and learn something. So she picked up the telephone and called **Rosa Romano** (408-541-0915) and immediately signed up for the next docent training class on March 21 at 10:00 a.m. at the museum. She is very excited.

One of our existing and active docents, **Robert Harms**, had a wonderful experience recently when a young family visited the museum with their two small girls about 2 and 4 years of age. When the tour was completed, the father put a donation in the box. The older daughter then asked to be lifted up so she could put in the nickel she had been carrying during the tour. Not to be outdone, her younger sister asked to be lifted so she could put in the penny she had been carrying. According to Robert, "*Volunteering does have its rewarding moments.*"

Come join us as there's lots to do: conduct guided tours, be a greeter or work in our gift shop. No matter what you do, we guarantee you will have a very rewarding experience. ✨



Victorian Teas Are Back!



Our first efforts at holding Victorian Teas at the museum were such a resounding success and so many of the attendees asked when we were going to do them again, that we are pleased to announce our Spring Teas which will be held in April and May.

Something new this time will be a special presentation at the May 1, 2 and 3 teas on the history of hats by **Debbie Owens of Debbie Lyn's Costumes**. Many of you know Debbie who has always been a great supporter of the Museum and has costumed many people attending our fundraising events over the years. If you haven't been to Debbie's new store location, you must stop by for a real treat. She is now located at 822 E. Evelyn Avenue, (408) 245-8720.

Please see the special Spring Tea Insert in this newsletter and send in your reservations as soon as possible because they will sell out very rapidly. For those of you wishing to purchase tickets via MasterCard or VISA, you may make this purchase at the museum's gift shop.

Tickets are \$25 per person. Hats are not a prerequisite but, if the mood strikes you, by all means indulge your fantasy and come join us. ✨

Stunning New Exhibit

The incredibly creative volunteers in the Wednesday Night Group have put together a new exhibit in the Rotating Room on the second floor of the museum entitled "Stepping Out." The exhibit consists of two handsome tuxedos dating from 1903 to 1918. Going along with the men's threads are razors, tuxedo studs, handkerchiefs, driving goggles and the trusty old fedora. There is even a top hat and cane loaned to us by **Debbie Owens** of Debbie Lyn's Costumes.

For the women, there are exquisite dresses (some handmade) with all the accessories including handkerchiefs, violet water, gloves, handbags, scarves, ribbons, belts, jewelry, fur muffs, an opera cape and, of course, the essential elaborate hats.

The Wednesday Night Group worked extremely hard on researching these clothes and even researched where these folks might have been going dressed so beautifully. They studied cultural events that might have taken place in Sunnyvale around the turn of the century and what clubs and restaurants were in Sunnyvale during that time.

The exhibit is really quite stunning and the Wednesday night volunteers should be applauded for their many hours of work. The group consists of **Jeanine Stanek, Zita Melton, Tony Moreno, Marsha Lewis and Jacquie and Mike Coggiola**, with special help from **Arlene Goetze, Don Holthaus, Mary Hildago, Manuela Rodrigues, and Felix Balga** who provided some artifacts and historical information. **Monte Stamper, Carol Haywood, Chiyo Winters, Sue Su, Jonathan Yeung and Jenny Lee** spent countless hours going through more than 200 boxes to find artifacts to display. When you see the exhibit, you will appreciate that it obviously was a labor of love coordinated by all the above members.

The display will run through April and May. Don't miss it! ✨



President's Letter

Dear Fellow Members:

Congratulations to all Sunnyvale Historical Society and Museum Team Members. We were awarded the Sunnyvale Chamber of Commerce "Service to the Community" award at the 44th Annual Murphy Awards on February 28. We are very proud to have the work of the membership recognized by the Chamber.

We have several upcoming events that you won't want to miss. Our **Garage Sale is on April 4. (Please note that this is a date change).**

Due to popular demand, we are going to bring back our Victorian Teas this Spring on **April 25 and 26, and May 1, 2, 3.**

Many thanks to **Ben Koning** for presenting his wonderful film, "Echo of the Future: A Tale of Sunnyvale" at our General Meeting that was attended by approximately 100 people. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the presentation.

A reminder: If you have not already renewed your membership for 2009, please do so as soon as possible so you can continue to receive the newsletter and enjoy your membership discount at the museum's gift shop. If your dues are not received within the next month or so, your name will be removed from our database and you will no longer receive the newsletter and will not know what is going on at our museum. There is so much exciting stuff coming up that you will not want to miss a thing, so please consider renewing your membership.

Rose Kausek, President



Welcome
New Members

**Rafhee Shaik Abdul
Rita Curbow
Gloria Green
Patricia A. Heffron
Harriet B. Rowe
Robert Shouse
Karen Stotlemeyer
Mary Yoshida**

SHS Wins Murphy Award

There is no higher honor than to be recognized by your own community. On February 28, the Sunnyvale Historical Society and Museum Association was honored by the Sunnyvale Chamber of Commerce with its Murphy Award for Outstanding Service to the Local Community. Our president, Rose Kausek, received the award on behalf of the museum, the Historical Society and all of our members.

Rose showed off the award at the general meeting on March 2 and was greeted with a loud round of applause. Congratulations to all our members and on behalf of all of us, thank you to the Sunnyvale Chamber of Commerce for this outstanding recognition. ✱



Delicious Catered Dinner



At our grand opening last September, we sold raffle tickets for a catered dinner for eight to be held at our museum. The winner was **Dianne McKenna**, who just by chance is a major donor to the museum. What a fitting way for us to be able to say thank you for your continuing support. The dinner gathering was held on March 14 and a grand time was had by all. In attendance were (l to r) *Bob Lawson, Ann Hines, Regis and Dianne McKenna, Ralph and Laura Babcock, Don Hines and Margaret Lawson*. The festivities began with champagne and hors d'oeuvres followed by an elegant sit down five-course meal with an entrée of Mission Fig Filet Mignon and ending with a tasting of dessert wines. ✱



Remembering Sunnyvale 100 Years Ago

Post Master Cornell turned on all the spring locks and locked himself out of the Post Office, just to see how much trouble it would be to get in again. Result of the experiment—a smashed back door!

The cost of doing laundry advertisement: 35¢ per dozen pieces rough washing; 75¢ per dozen pieces washing and ironing. All work first class. Laundry may be left at California Market. (Mrs. Senora Smith, McKinley Avenue near Pastoria Avenue).

Submitted by Chiyo Winters

GARAGE SALE DATE CHANGE

Please note that the date of the garage sale is now April 4 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. The address is 795 South Wolfe Road in Sunnyvale. The contact person is **Jed Cyr** at (408) 749-0170. Any donations will be gladly accepted as all proceeds go to the Sunnyvale Historical Society. We would like the donations to be received at Jed's home the day **before** the event; Friday, April 3. Please bring items pre-priced.



We would appreciate any assistance in setting up and helping the day of the garage sale. Please contact Jed for further details. Thanks. ✿

City Seeks Members for Boards, Commissions

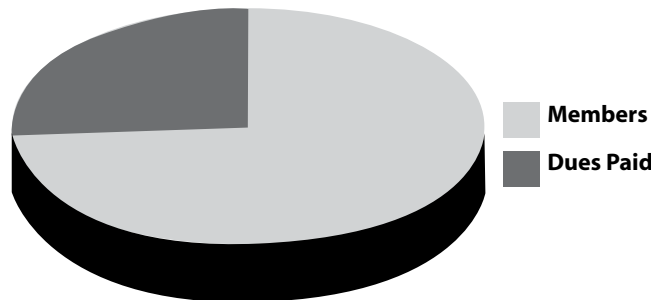
Applications are being accepted by the City of Sunnyvale Boards and Commissions including the Heritage Preservation Commission. Applications can be downloaded from www.boardsandcommissions.inSunnyvale.com or by calling the Office of the City Clerk at 408-730-2716. General eligibility requirements include Sunnyvale residency and voter registration. Applications must be received by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 17, 2009 in order to be considered by the Council for current and upcoming openings. ✿



Membership Dues

We are now in the third month of the year and I would like to point out that this year's dues payments are behind schedule. As can be seen in the graph, only about 25% of our members have paid their dues on time for this year.

2009 Payment Progress



On time means that the payments should have been received no later than February as the membership year runs from January 1 to December 31.

For those members who don't recall if their payment has been sent, please look at the address label on your newsletter:

- "2008" means your dues payment has not been received for this year.
- "2009" indicates you have paid and are up to date.
- "Life" means you are a lifetime member and don't have to pay your dues but donations are always welcome.
- "Courtesy" or "Outreach" means you receive the newsletter complements of the museum's Board. Your donations are also very much appreciated.

Thank you.

Johan Koning, Treasurer

Help Needed for Events Planning

As you know, word is spreading that the museum is *the* place to hold your event, whether it be a wedding, reception, dinner event, birthday celebration, open house, etc. **Barbara Johnson** is coordinating the events but needs some extra assistance as we become busier. We are looking for someone with good organizational and planning skills who enjoys working with the public, caterers, and the like. If you are interested, please call **Barbara** at 408-73802707 or **Rosa Romano** at 408-541-0915. ✿





Become a Member!

Please consider the contributor or lifetime option!

Each one,



Reach one!

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

E-mail? _____ Phone _____

Your membership options:

- individual \$30
- family \$50
- contributor \$75 or more
- business or organization \$125
- business or organization lifetime \$1,500
- senior individual \$25
- senior family \$40
- lifetime \$600 or more

Number of **new** SHS friends I enrolled: (circle) 1 2 3 4
more? _____

Please return to: SHS • POB 61301 • Sunnyvale, CA 94088



P. O. Box 61301
Sunnyvale, CA 94088

To Our Readers:

If you have a story about Sunnyvale, please forward by the **15th of each month** to:

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Sunnyvale, CA 94087

408-737-2176 (fax)

weproduce@aol.com (e-mail)

This newsletter is published for Historical Society members and friends.

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Secretary Jodi Gordon

Treasurer Johan Koning

Museum Director Laura Babcock

Artifacts/Database Jeanine Stanek

Layout/Design barbcards Illustrations

Museum location and hours:

Sunnyvale Community Center

550 E. Remington Drive

Sunnyvale, CA 94088 • 408-749-0220

Tuesdays, Thursdays, Sundays

12:00 p.m. — 4:00 p.m.

FREE ADMISSION

Board of Directors meet on the first

Monday of each month at the

Heritage Park Museum, 7:30 p.m.

www.heritageparkmuseum.org

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