



Sunnyvale

HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND MUSEUM ASSOCIATION

September/October 2017

Newsletter

heritageparkmuseum.org

GENERAL MEETING ON HENDY IRON WORKS OF SUNNYVALE

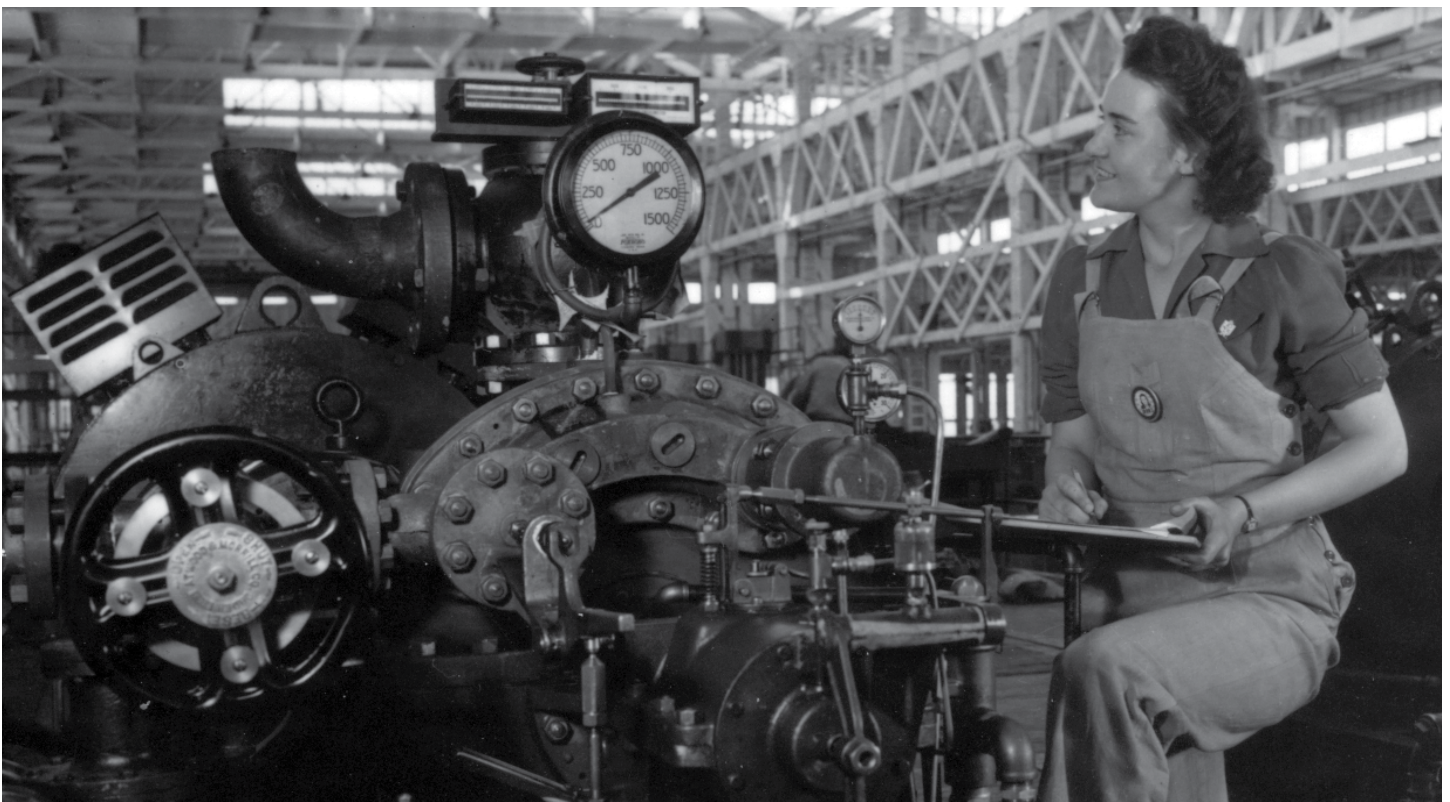
Join us on **Monday, October 9th** for an informative, historical presentation by John Chiprich, the current president of the Iron Man Museum, and Eric Thomas who will discuss the history of Hendy Iron Works from 1849 until today, accompanied by a slide presentation. This talk is free and open to the public so please invite a friend.

The Joshua Hendy Iron Works existed from the 1850s to the late 1940s. Originally located in San Francisco, the company moved to Sunnyvale after the 1906 earthquake. It was at one time a world leader in mining technology and its equipment was used to build the Panama Canal, amongst other major projects. Hendy went on to serve many different markets during the course of its existence, but is perhaps best remembered today for its contribution to the American shipbuilding industry during World War II.

The shift in production to defense began in 1940. By the end of WWII, Hendy employed around 12,000 people with at least 10% or 1,200 female employees, making the company stand out for employing a large number of women in previously male jobs, as “Rosie the Riveters” - in effect.¹

In 1947, the Joshua Hendy Iron Works was sold to the Westinghouse Corporation. The plant was sold in 1996 to Northrop Grumman and renamed Northrop Grumman Marine Systems.

¹ Glenna Matthews, *Silicon Valley, Women, and the California Dream: Gender, Class, and Opportunity in the Twentieth Century*. Stanford University Press, 2003



Auxiliary power unit testing, unknown date

The President's Letter

By Flo Stafford with Jim Reynolds



Dear Members,

It is a time of change for our museum. CHANGE! The very concept sounds challenging. We are experiencing change in many ways at our museum: we lost our beloved Jeanine, Ruth Johnson retired from leading our school program after ten years of service, and Rosa Romano, our long-time volunteer coordinator has pulled up stakes and headed north. Change is never easy but it frequently results in improvements.

Take, for example, October 1844. That was about the time that the Murphy party discovered that the Humboldt River disappeared into the desert around Lovelock, NV. It was then that they found the old Paiute Indian "Truckee" who showed them the way across the Sierra into California. Think about the early 1960s when the Murphy house was torn down and the Historical Society was born. Think about the 1990s when a few courageous members put together the OPHIE exhibit for all to see. Think, lastly, about the early 2000s when Laura Babcock developed the plan and money to build our beautiful new museum. Each of these events involved taking on a seemingly impossible task but succeeding beyond all expectations. I am hoping that we will be up to the challenge from the current changes we are facing now and turning them into chances.

Already, there are examples that we are on track: Dina Bensen has taken on much of Rosa's volunteer coordinating job. We have introduced boxes in the office that show where things are supposed to go. Many of us have taken on a bit of what Jeanine worked on so faithfully. The office routine is beginning to get back to normal. The Board is considering new ways to fill Ruth Johnson's job. We will get through this time and, though it may not seem that way for awhile, we will come out the other side better than we were. As your President, I am committed to this endeavor and will do everything in my power to make it so.



The mission of the society is to make known to the residents of Sunnyvale and neighboring communities, the heritage of Sunnyvale through the actions of preservation, promotion, education, and coordination.



Sunnyvale Historical Society and Museum Association

570 E Remington Drive
Sunnyvale, CA 94087

Open Sundays/Tuesdays/Thursdays
12:00 pm — 4:00pm

FREE ADMISSION

President Flo Stafford

Vice President Frank Quinn

Secretary Tara Martin-Milius

Treasurer Alan Smirni

Past President Leslie Lawton

Museum Director Laura Babcock

Artifacts/Database --

Newsletter Editor Margarete Minar

Contributing Writers Katharina Woodman,
Linda Kubitz, and Margarete Minar

The Board of Directors meets
on the 3rd Monday of every month,
at the Heritage Park Museum, 7:00 p.m.

If you have a story about Sunnyvale,
please forward by the 15th of each month.
Email: sunnyvalenewsletter@gmail.com
Mail: P.O. Box 2187 • Sunnyvale, CA 94087

www.heritageparkmuseum.org
info@heritageparkmuseum.org

Remembering Jeanine

By Laura Babcock

I do not recall the exact year I met Jeanine – perhaps 25 – 30 years ago: our lives crossed paths many times over those years, through our children’s school years, Leadership Sunnysvale, Tomorrow’s Leaders Today, and then we were both former members of the Heritage Preservation Commission, so we had a lot in common. Our deep friendship began about eleven years ago when she innocently offered to “help” with our archive database and historical library a year before this museum building was constructed.

I still remember that first day meeting in the old Murphy Park building to show her what we had to work with to exhibit at the museum when it was built. In those days, we had a 380 sq. ft. museum room, a 1200 sq. ft. workroom,

and another 1200 sq. ft. lean-to storage room. In this room with no heat, no A/C, no windows, our files had been kept in an assorted manner over the past 57 years. File boxes written in pencil with the graphite worn off in places, file cabinets holding

various photos and history clippings, boxes and boxes of artifacts in the lean-to with a leaky roof, and water coming up through the floor when it rained were some of the issues facing Jeanine. She quietly listened as we explained it all and only uttered two words repeatedly. OH MY!

But bravely she dived right in! The next 18 months of her life were spent there, wearing many layers of clothing as she searched through boxes in those cold rooms, a flashlight in one hand and her notebook in the other. By the time we needed to transport artifacts to install exhibits here in the new museum building, she had a good grip on the contents of most of them. We’d call her at the end of the day while installing exhibits

saying “Help, we have an empty shelf in the Libby’s display, what can you find in the boxes for us”? She recruited friends to help out and they became what we affectionately call our “Wednesday Nighters”.

Besides keeping our archive collections in order and on the database, she mentored numerous volunteers here, from teenagers who needed community service hours, to adults doing research, to people who just wanted to help. Doing individual research for consultants, the City, authors, or anyone who wanted to know when their home was built, she helped them all!

As we got a bit older and couldn’t always remember every detail, I could come up with part of the answer

and she did the other part. We always joked “between us we have a whole functioning brain with good memory”! Certainly not by plan, but by “life happens”, we even shared the experience of cancer treatments. We could talk about chemo infusion centers and the



Laura Babcock on the left, with Jeanine Stanek

pains of blood transfusions just as easily as the history of canneries or the Murphy Family.

As one of our volunteers mentioned this week, it is such a shame we could not bring in the historical Butcher Family house last year. If we did, we would have dedicated the new Jeanine Stanek Research Library in it last week. We will keep on trying, Jeanine, and when we do get it, the Research Library Room will have your name on it!

We shall always miss you and most importantly we shall always appreciate you and what you accomplished here! God Speed Jeanine.

Your friend,

Laura Babcock

The Museum and the State of the City

By Linda Kubitz

With a Sunnyvale Historical Society banner unfurled behind, and museum artifacts attractively arranged on a table in the foreground, the museum's booth was "well-presented" at the July 29 State of the City event held at the Civic Center. Carefully selected by SHS Board president Flo Stafford, the old-fashioned items on display, including a stereoscope with slides, a mechanical child's bank depicting a dog that tossed a penny into a barrel, a bisque-head doll, kaleidoscope, small wind-up locomotive . . . even a rug beater . . . caused heads to turn and feet to walk straight toward the booth.

The purpose of the larger event was to inform Sunnyvale citizens about the people, places, and services available to them. The museum booth fulfilled that goal . . . and more!! People of all ages stopped by to learn what the museum had to offer. Some of the visitors had heard of the museum, a few had visited it, but the majority were amazed to discover that Sunnyvale has a museum!! By the time they left the

booth, museum brochures and bookmarks in hand, numerous visitors indicated they would be visiting the museum very soon!

A large percentage of the booth visitors were recent arrivals to Sunnyvale, interested in learning the history of their town. Some, though, were natives, born and raised in Sunnyvale and living here still . . . with stories to tell! One man told us his father and grandfather owned and operated Schmiddig Dairy in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s.



*SHS Board President
Flo Stafford with
Past-President
Leslie Lawton.*

Located on Lawrence Station Road between Duane and Arques, his family's dairy was one of twenty-six dairies located on Lawrence Road during that time period. He also mentioned he had dairy artifacts to donate, and, lo and behold, he brought them to the museum the very next day!

Another visitor was the descendant of a Donner Party survivor, the great, great grandson of Nancy Graves. He was well informed about both the Donner Party and the Stevens-Townsend-Murphy Party, comparing the great success of the Murphy group and its superior planning, preparation, and leadership, to the disaster that was the Donner Party. I have to admit I felt more than a little civic pride in our Sunnyvale Murphys!

I had the privilege of helping at the booth that morning, greeting many Sunnyvale citizens. From a volunteer's standpoint, it was a lovely way to meet many of the citizens whose town I share. From a museum docent's viewpoint, I found it a wonderful opportunity to share with others the genuine Sunnyvale treasure that is our Heritage Park Museum.

You never know who comes in and why

By Katharina Woodman

All of the docents at the museum are familiar with the astonished look on people's faces when they first come in and the often-heard exclamation, "I had no idea this was here!" (And, often enough on their way out, "This is fantastic!"). Imagine our own surprise, though, when one Sunday we greeted two ladies who, utterly independent of one another, came in to do some research for the books they were writing!

The first visitor came all the way from Stockton to check out the museum's resources. She is writing a historical novel, featuring Virginia Reed as the heroine. Virginia and her family were members of the fateful Donner Party, most of whom perished in the attempt to cross the Sierra Nevada. John Murphy, Martin Murphy Jr.'s brother, met sixteen-year-old Virginia in San José, and they married in spite of her father's opposition and Martin Sr.'s misgivings about John marrying out of the Catholic faith. We supplied the author with the biographical notes we have of John Murphy (thanks to historical researcher, museum volunteer Allen Rountree) and the extensive family tree. Whilst she didn't find any information she didn't already have, we were able to point out a few more resources she might check. Our visitor was very happy with the books she found in the museum store, and she came away with an armful of them, including *The Martin Murphy Family Saga*.

The second author had actually already finished her book, a memoir of growing up in the orchards of Sunnyvale (*Missing People*, to be published soon), and came by – from Berkeley – with a friend to see what we had to offer on the history of the orchards. We had an animated conversation about vanishing orchards (the two of them loved the photo exhibit upstairs) and books written about farm life in this area. These two ladies likewise were thrilled with the variety of books the museum store carries on the subject and bought several.

Afternoons like that are my favorite at the museum, when visitors get engaged with the docent, ask a lot of questions, and have a lively interest in what we have to show. There was another group that same day, a family with their 101-year-old matriarch, who delighted specifically in the kitchen display. "Oh, I used to work with THAT!", "Do you remember the old ice box we had? You had to watch closely for the ice melting, or otherwise your kitchen was under water, and what a mess to clean up!", were some of the reminiscences.

That very day, seeing that it was the hottest day of the month, we'd had bets on how many visitors we might get and why. There were two theories: either nobody comes because it is just simply too hot to go out, or we have a swarm of people without air conditioning in their homes to spend a cool afternoon.... We lost on both bets! Most of the guests we welcomed had actually looked up the museum as a resource and left very happy after their tour – and not just because of the air conditioning!



What is this and where is it?



Murphy Park, named after Martin Murphy, Jr, is located on the north side of the train tracks, off of California Street at N Sunnyvale Avenue. This 5-stamp Hendy Stamp Mill was restored and placed at the park in 1996. Manufactured in 1918 by Hendy Iron Works, the stamp mill was made for use in the mining of gold, silver, and copper by crushing ore to particles the size of sand. The pulverized ore was sifted by a special screen placed across the front of the mortar so the precious metal could be retrieved. The stamp battery was activated by rotating the pulley wheel. Each stamp weighed 1,000 pounds and dropped 8 inches 100 times per minute for a total weight of 100,000 pounds per minute per stamp.

Proposed Blue Cube exhibit

Who knew those four words would stir up a multitude of memories in this valley! The response to our request for former employees who worked in the building to contribute has been outstanding. With the amount of knowledge and expertise available on the subject, we plan to take two steps backwards and evaluate just how large and extensive this exhibit should be.

To all of you who have called or emailed, please bear with us as we go through this process over the next couple of months. Full planning of details will commence in January.

Laura Babcock, Museum Director

Holiday exhibit

Our special holiday exhibit this year will be something new. We plan to showcase a “collection of collections”. Over the years, many of our volunteers and visitors have offered the loan of their collection of items special to them, so this one is for you who have done just that. If you have a small to medium collection of holiday themed objects, please call us. Or better yet, send an email with a few photos. We would like to highlight your collection of what makes your holiday special. A collection of vintage ornaments, holiday postcards, nutcrackers, miniature carousels, Victorian fans, wooden spool toys, vintage brooches, thimble Santas, sleigh bells... what is your treasure that you will be willing to share and show for this season? The exhibit would be on display from the end of October to January 2nd.

Send photos and description to:
info@heritageparkmuseum.org or call 408-749-0220



Welcome, New Members!

Lauren Castle - Walking through the neighborhood one day, Lauren saw the sign for the museum and followed it. Unfortunately, it was not open that day, but she came back, took a tour and visited the museum store, where she signed up for membership. Lauren says the displays are beautifully done, and she specifically likes the mural room. She has lived both on Taaffe and Frances Streets in the Heritage District and found it fascinating to see the materials we have on that area in the museum. Lauren has been living in Sunnyvale since 1969.

Bruce Peterson - Bruce is continuing the legacy of his father, Keith, in supporting the Historical Society by being a member. Kay and Keith Peterson were very involved in the museum, sponsoring the kitchen display when it was installed. After Keith's recent passing, Bruce got in touch with Museum Director Laura about donating books that his mother had collected. He is looking forward to our newsletters so he can stay in touch.

Kris Sheridan - Curious about some street names in the city (Mathilda, Mary, etc.), Kris checked in at the library to see if they could enlighten her about the story behind the names. There, she was directed to the Historical Society, and a visit to the museum gave Kris all the information about the street names and much more. Recently, she dropped in to the museum store to purchase some greeting cards with Sunnyvale motifs to send to the brand-new pastor at the Presbyterian Church, who arrived here from Chicago. - Good use of our merchandise, Kris! Kris was a Sunnyvale resident for 20-odd years and now lives in Los Altos.

Board of the Sunnyvale Historical Society and Museum Association



2017-2018

Back row, left to right:

Jim Reynolds; Janice Havey; Bert Oey; Linda Kubitz; Leslie Lawton, Past President; Margaret Lawson, Museum Store Manager; Allan Smirni, Treasurer.

Front row:

Frank Quinn, VP of Programs; Flo Stafford, President; Laura Babcock, Museum Director; Tara Martin-Milius, Secretary.

We thank you for all of your work and dedication!

Interested in volunteering?

The Sunnyvale Historical Society is looking for someone who would be willing to serve as the coordinator for our school program serving local third grade students. The program takes place in our Sunnyvale Heritage Park Museum and is all set up and ready to go. We need a person as liaison with the teachers and to schedule docents for the program. Training and support will be provided. Experience working with children would be helpful.

For more information please call: (408) 736-1665 or (408) 738-2482.

October

- Mon/9 Columbus Day
- Mon/9 General Meeting - Everyone welcome
Presentation on Hendy Iron Works
- Thurs/28 Volunteer recognition social

November

- Sun/1 New holiday exhibit opens
- Mon/21 Board Meeting
- Thurs/23 Museum is closed on Thanksgiving

December

- Dec 2, 3 Holiday teas
- Dec 9, 10 Holiday teas



Do you like the new look of the newsletter or have comments about something you've read? Reach out to the newsletter team at: sunnyvalenewsletter@gmail.com. We'd love to hear from you! We also love to hear stories of people's memories of growing up in Sunnyvale. Send us a paragraph or two by our next deadline of November 15th. If you have any photos that go with your story, we can make a digital copy and return your originals. Help us keep Sunnyvale's history alive!




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and Museum Association**

570 E Remington Drive, Sunnyvale, CA 94087
Mail: P.O. Box 2187 • Sunnyvale, CA 94087
email: Info@HeritageParkMuseum.org
408-749-0220 HeritageParkMuseum.org

Museum & Museum Store Hours:
Sunday, Tuesday & Thursday 12 pm to 4 pm

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