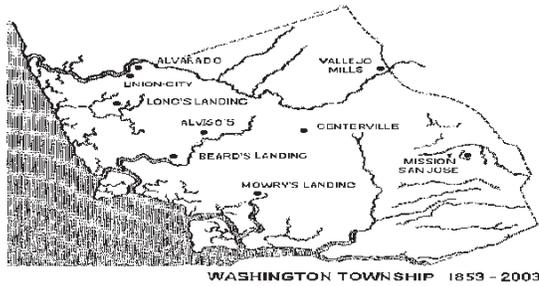


# Washington Township Historical



## MAR-APR 2015

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**MEETING DATE: MONDAY, MARCH 23 2015 TIME: 7:00 PM**

**PLACE: ALAMEDA COUNTY LIBRARY, 2400 Stevenson, 7:00 PM**

Washington Township Historical Society Editors: Gil Garza and Al Minard

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We are saddened by the loss of two great people who loved history, Don Dillon and Dottie DiFranco, their obituaries are in this newsletter. Saturday, March 14, 2015, I went to the Oakland Museum to judge junior high school documentaries for Alameda County. The winners will go to the California State competition in Rocklin, California this year. I have been judging documentaries for about eight years and it is one of the highlights of the year. I spoke in favor of the proposed development on the Matthew/Dias property on Mission Boulevard just North of the Alameda County Water plant at the Fremont City Council; the house will be saved in its current location and new homes will be built around it. At this same meeting I spoke against the new Niles gateway development on the old Hinkle property that we knew as Shuckl Cannery; I thought this project was out of character with the historic Niles area. I have included a report of attending the Conference of California Historical Societies meeting in Lompoc and I have also reported on the work we are doing on the Merger of the historic organizations in Fremont. Please note we are meeting at the Fremont Main Library on Monday, March 23, 2015 starting at 7 PM.

*Al Minard*

## GUEST SPEAKER IS BARBARA BAXTER

Fremont native Barbara Baxter worked for Alameda County Library for 30 years and now serves as a volunteer with the Local History collection.

Barbara will talk about the establishment of the Alameda County Library system and the growth of libraries in the tri-city area. The Alameda County Library was established in 1910 for the then rural areas of the County, early libraries were in homes, on porches, a repurposed church—even a chicken coop. Early photos of local libraries are on display at the Marks Center for Local and California History at the Fremont Main Library through, March 31, 2015. Come early and go upstairs to the History Room and enjoy those photos, but make sure you get down stairs to the Fukaya room by 7:00



PM, to hear Barbara talk about the early libraries here in Alameda County.

# MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

*Tri-City Voice*, March 10, 2015, **Pat Kite** writes about "Feisty Ferns". She writes about those plants that are thriving in neglected gardens. Asparagus ferns, which are not really a fern, is one of those plants, it also has red berries that attract birds. Sword Ferns are a real fern that spread by rhizomes and spores, the fronds grow from two to five feet long. She goes on to say that there are about 12,000 fern species with Maidenhair, Bird's Nest and staghorn ferns most commonly seen in stores. Ferns are propagated by spores and she says that if you are at a loss for a conversation topic, try mentioning spore exchange.

*Tri-City Voice*, March 10, 2015, **Phil Holmes** writes, "History: Centerville Circus". In June 1894, a traveling troupe came through that included a man, a woman, a little girl and a pack of dogs. The program included throwing knives and hatchets around the woman, pinning her to the board and the dogs performing a multitude of tricks. A larger troop came in August 1876 that included 30 wagons plus elephants and camels, the performance was nearly two and a half hours long. Another traveling circus came to town in September 1887, with up to 1500 people under the canvas big top, when they left town on Sunday they took up to \$2,000 of money from the Centerville residents.

*Tri-City Voice*, February 17, 2015, **Phil Holmes** writes, "Some Events of the Year 1924". P. G. & E. was surveying the area to determine how many patrons would be needed to extend the gas line to Niles, Centerville and Newark. The Alvarado sugar mill broke its record for one day's production by slicing 1,122 tons of sugar beets in a 24-hour run. In October, there was news of a fire in Mission San Jose that destroyed the Fannie Brown, Silva and Andrade homes. Old Mission San Jose had a roof leak, so residents held a fair to raise money to shingle the old landmark.

*Tri-City Voice*, February 10, 2015, **Pat Kite** writes, "Pat Kites Garden: Skunk scents". Skunk spray is made of sulphurous compounds that combine with other chemicals making the spray a sticky oily substance, which make the smell stick around for quite a while. The spray can travel more than ten feet. She wanted the neighborhood skunk to go away, so she left a night light on which helps, also not leaving pet food outside helps. If your dog does antagonize a skunk and become unpleasantly fragrant, swift action is required. Mix one quart of 3% hydrogen peroxide with ¼ cup of baking soda and one teaspoon dish detergent, mix in an open container and use immediately. The mixture is only good for about an hour, do not cover or store leftovers, wash the animal well, keeping the mixture out of its eyes and rinse with warm water. Mix left over liquid with lots of water and dispose down the drain.

*Tri-City Voice*, January 20, 2015, **Pat Kite** writes, "Pat Kites Garden: Orchids". She is frequently asked how to grow orchids successfully. She buys or receives an orchid and places it on her kitchen counter, where she can enjoy it. She reads the instructions, gives it some sun, a dose of water now and then and lots of compliments' and watches her beautiful orchid die. She then gives it to her neighbor who turns it into a flowering masterpiece. Chinese poet-statesman Qu-Yuan (340-278 B.C.E.) firmly stated that orchids symbolize moral virtue.

*Tri-City Voice*, January 20, 2015, **Phil Holmes** writes, "History Column: Daniel Smith Mills". Daniel crossed the plains with a group of friends to work the gold fields with little success, so came to Mission San Jose to resume his trade as a carpenter. He had a small one and one-half acre garden and orchard in addition to working as a blacksmith and wheelwright. He married Sarah Jones who had come west with the Mormons in an ox cart to Salt Lake City. He talked about being able to see San Francisco from his porch in Mission San Jose and watching them build the railroad into Irvington. Daniel observed that he had never seen a valley that equaled this one. Wheat, barley, hay, vegetables, and fruits of almost every kind grew here.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY WILL MEET AT THE FREMONT MAIN LIBRARY  
ON MONDAY, MARCH 23 AT 7:00 PM.

## OBITUARIES

Dottie DiFranco passed away on February 17, 2015. She had worked for 25 years at Bank of America and had been actively involved with PTA, Girl Scouts, Candle Lighters, Antique Club, Ardenwood, Patterson House docents, Mission Peak Heritage Foundation Board member, Beta Sigma Phi, and Red Hat Society. Her funeral was held on Wednesday, March 11 at 11 AM at Holy Spirit Catholic Church in Centerville, inurnment will be at the Italian Cemetery in Colma, California.



Don Dillon passed away on February 9, 2015, he graduated Stanford University and married his college sweetheart, Mary Ann Walker, he served in the U.S. Navy on Destroyer Escorts in WW II and Korea and then went to work for his father in the nursery business in the 1950's. He was one of the early mayors of Fremont and served as mayor for 5 years and served for 16 years as a Fremont City Council Member. He liked to be called the **"Formerly Honorable Mayor of the City of Fremont"**. He was 93 years young. His memorial service was held Saturday, March 14, at 11 AM at the Centerville Presbyterian Church.



## MAIL BAG

*Union City Historical Museum*, January 2015, Article on the Harvey Family of Alvarado and another article on Union City Pioneers.

*Alameda County Historical Society Quarterly*, January 2015, Articles on: Hayward Area Historical Society Museum an Open Book; Article on Pass the Salt Please: Harvesting the salt on the San Francisco Bay; East Bay Shoreline once bustled with Landings; and an article on: Spreading Their Wings: Victorian Women of the Ebell Society.

*Mission Peak Reporter*, Jan-Mar 2015, Articles on: A Tribute to Michiko Yee; and Allen Mayhew Shinn. Announcements of Spring Tea on April 10, 2015 presents Robert Fisher; and an announcement of the CCHS Spring Symposium in Lompoc on February 26-Mar 1, 2015

*League of Volunteers—Love Notes*, Jan-Feb. 2015; Article about 21 years for Holiday toy drive for the Tri-City, also their Sunday afternoon concerts at Thornton Junior High School on April 12, with Patrick Ball Celtic Harp and storytelling, and May 17, Laura Ellis—Cinema Sweethearts.

## MEMBERS WHO HAVE PAID THEIR DUES SINCE OUR LAST MEETING

Patty & Robert Lacy, Brian & Kathleen O'Connor, Doris & Doug Green, Patricia Kite, George, Diana, Michelle & Gretchen Roeding, Gerald & Nancy Lorigan, Pamela Lewis, Bruce Hevelin, Knute Furtado, B.J. Bunting, Al & La Vonne Minard, James & Patricia Griffin

We thank you for paying your dues in a timely manner.

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP: \$10.00 per year

PATRONS MEMBERS: \$50.00 for one year

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL CHECK TO: Washington Township Historical Society

PO BOX 3045

FREMONT, CA 94539

## MERGING OF HISTORIC ORGANIZATIONS

The Transition Committee will meet on Monday and review where we are. There are some of us that want to start fresh with a new name but then since we are a society, historical, heritage or Museum organizations, it is nearly impossible to keep them out of the new name.

Al Minard, Gil Garza and Bruce Hevelin have been working on the By-Laws for the new organization. We have looked at several different organizations by-laws and have decided that the most comprehensive by-laws are those of the Hayward Area Historical Society, which we are using as a foundation for the new organization's by-laws. All three of us have been involved with several organizations and had problems with by-laws so we are trying to incorporate controls that make those problems less of a problem.

At this time, we are working on the idea of having a minimum of seven (7) Board Members to a maximum of eleven (11) Board members that are elected by the general membership. The Board members will then elect the president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. The Board will make all decisions regarding the running of the organization. The Board members can serve for five (5) two-year terms, but then have to take a one year break from the Board. Boards need to be freshened once in a while with new board members to keep from getting stale and continuing in the same way all of the time. We expect each of the Board members to be assigned to either serve or chair one of the 16 or so committees that we have considered. Some of the committees may have sub committees under them like the Publication Committee could have web-site, newsletter, newspaper articles, and social media under them. We expect all committees to be represented by someone elected to the Board. We are moving into the 21<sup>st</sup> century whether we like it or not so that whoever is treasurer will do all of their work on a computer program like "QuickBooks".

The name of the new organization is still undecided but several of us like "Tri-City, Heritage Society & Museum, serving Fremont, Newark and Union City". We also think the logo with mission peak in the background would be nice. We want something that when people look for it they will be able to find it with ease. While most of us like "Washington Township" in today's world this has no meaning. If you doubt this ask 20 of your neighbors where Washington Township is and see what kinds of answers you get.

Please let someone know if you really like something, have a great idea about anything related to this or really dislike something.

## Alameda County History Day Competition 2015 STATE FINALS QUALIFIERS

The following students from Fremont Unified School District have advanced to the State Competition in Rocklin, California at the William Jessup University on May 8-9, 2015. There were no entries from Newark or Union City Schools.

**Senior Individual Exhibit;** Mission San Jose High School; Helen Wang; Entry: *FDR and the New Deal*

**Senior Group Exhibit;** Mission San Jose High School; students: Isika Chawla, Angela Lu, & Lavanya Singh, Entry: *Alan Turing*

**Junior Individual Exhibit alternate;** Hopkins Junior High School; Student: Anagha Segar, Entry: *Anna Maria Merian Sibylla*

**Junior Group Exhibit;** Hopkins Junior High School; Students: Winnie Xu & Jessie Yang, Entry: *Carrie*

**Chapman Catt: Leading the Fight for Woman Suffrage Senior Group Documentaries;** Mission San Jose High School; Students: Andrew Choi, Christina Di, & Max Wu; Entry: *Park Chung Hee*

**Senior Group Documentaries;** Mission San Jose High School; Students: Medha Raman & Madeline Zheng; Entry: *Walt Disney*

**Junior Group Documentaries;** Students: Priya Talreja, Kashvi Lalgudi & Shreya Kochar; Entry: *Valentina Tershkova: Leading the Way for Women in Space*

**Senior Individual Websites;** Mission San Jose High School; Student: Katrina Cherk; Entry: *Leadership Gone Terribly Right: The Irony of J. R. Oppenheimer's Legacy*

**Senior Individual Websites;** Mission San Jose High School; Student: Julia Park; Entry: *Aaron Burr and the Impeachment Trial of Samuel Chase*

**Senior Group Websites Alternate;** Mission San Jose High School; Students: Catherine Cheng, Joyce Lee, Samantha Leong & Cydney Vicentina; Entry: *Fireside Chats: Leading a Nation Through Crises*

**Senior Individual Performance;** Mission San Jose High School; Student: Anu Asokan; Entry: *J. Robert Oppenheimer*

**Senior Individual Performance;** Mission San Jose High School; Student: Sonia Sakleshpur; Entry: *Abraham Lincoln*

**Senior Group Performance;** Mission San Jose High School; Student: Grace Dong, Lindsay Yang & Olivia Zheng; Entry: *Alice Paul and Lucy Burns*

**Senior Research Paper;** Mission San Jose High School; Student: Kylie Cheung; Entry: *Anne Boleyn: Leadership and Legacy, Lost in Translation*

**Senior Research Paper;** Mission San Jose High School; Student: Ruchika Mahapatra; Entry: *John Muir: Nature Advocate*

# CONFERENCE OF CALIFORNIA HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

Al & La Vonne Minard attended the Spring Symposium of the Conference of California Historical Societies in Lompoc (pronounced Lom POKE) California from Thursday, February 26 until Sunday, March 1, 2015. We traveled by bus to tour the Vandenberg Air Force Base, which has no airplanes assigned to it, but does have a very long runway. They launch satellites on polar routes from Vandenberg shooting them

south so that the next land mass they travel over is Antarctica.

As the satellite goes around the earth, the

earth spins under it so that the satellite takes weather and other pictures of the earth. Apparently when the new Thor missile launcher was delivered to Vandenberg, there was a small problem with a valve that did not open automatically, so until they were able to redesign this launcher, they assigned a person to hit the valve with a hammer 45 seconds before the launch and then quickly get away from the rocket. We decided that we did not want that job.

We also toured the Allen Hancock College Public Safety training Center that teaches firemen, policemen and medical responders how to be better at their jobs. A lot like boot camp for physical fitness, but also some specialized training for unusual circumstances in real life like situations.

Friday evening we toured the Schuyler River Bottom Ranch museum and enjoyed a great barbeque dinner. We were

entertained by a musician that told a lot about the early violins/fiddles that came to California and some of the native flutes and drums that the Native American Indians used. He was able to tune a fiddle so that it would sound just like a bagpipe. The museum had a lot of old farm equipment inside and outside of the building.



We toured La Purisima Mission, which was the 11<sup>th</sup> Mission, founded on December 8, 1787 with a docent in period clothes of the Spanish soldier that



guarded the missions. This mission was destroyed in 1812 “the year of the earthquakes” and the severe rain that followed. The priest moved the location 4 miles north west and rebuilt the mission. In 1834 all of the mission land was ordered to be secularized and in 1835 it was sold for \$1,000. It was sold many more times and by 1933 when Union Oil, the owner, gave the land to the State of California, the mission was in complete ruins. The mission has been restored to its 1820 appearance by the County of Santa Barbara, The State of California, The National Park Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps. The mission is now sitting on 1,928 acres of the original 300,000 acre site and is part of the La Purisima California State Park

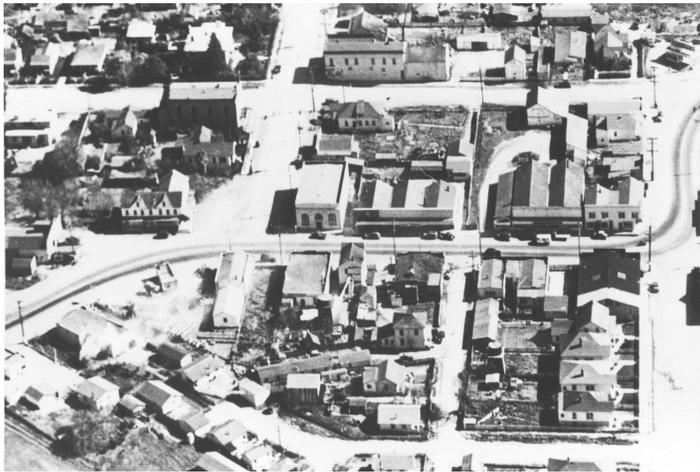
We took a walking tour of the Murals in downtown Lompoc, some of them done in one day by as many as 18 artists all working at once on the mural.

We also toured the Fabing-McKay-Spanne historical house maintained by the Lompoc Historical Society. This house museum was filled wall to wall and floor to ceiling with artifacts. What an amazing collection of hats, kitchen implements, children’s clothes, toys, and many other things. They also have a player-organ which used a paper reel like a player piano, but also allows the person to play on the keyboard while the roll is turning.



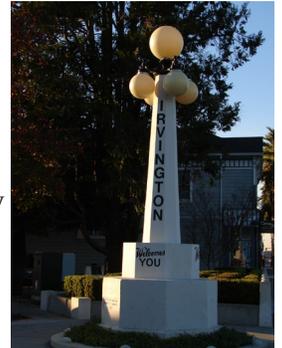
Our last dinner speaker was John Roskowski, who spoke about the Surf railroad stop just outside Lompoc on the ocean. He talked about the telegraph office, sending messages to passing trains, and the eventual demolition of the station. He also told stories about two train wrecks that happened right near the Surf station. The station also had a spur that ran into Lompoc to pick up the diatomaceous earth that is still being mined in Lompoc.

# WALKING TOURS



**Tim Swenson** will lead a FREE tour of Alvarado on Saturday, April 18, 2015 starting at 11:00 AM. Tour begins at Alvarado Elementary School parking lot. The tour will last about 1-1/2 hours and cover about 1/2 mile.

**Caroline Harris** will lead a FREE tour of Downtown Irvington on Saturday, May 16, 2015, starting at 11:00 AM. The tour will start at the Irvington marker on the corner of Bay Street and Fremont Boulevard. The tour will last about 1-1/2 hours and cover only about 1/2 mile.



**Tim Swenson** will lead a FREE tour of Centerville on Saturday, June 20, 2015, starting at 11:00 AM. The tour will begin in front of Holy Spirit Church on the corner of Central Avenue and Fremont Boulevard. The tour will last about 1-1/2 hours and cover about 1 mile. This is the first time this tour has been offered.

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**Washington Township Historical Society**  
P.O. Box 3045  
Fremont, California 94539



WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP 1853 - 2003