



Saratoga Historical Foundation

PO Box 172, Saratoga CA 95071

July 2015

Honoring Saratogans—Second Annual Event

The Saratoga Historical Foundation is holding a dinner, “Honoring Saratogans” on Sunday July 26 from 4:30-6:30 PM. The event includes a BBQ dinner and music and will be held at the Saratoga Historical Park.

The event will honor Saratogans who have made significant contributions in the areas of community service, local history, and service.

This dinner is one way SHF can recognize and celebrate the contributions made by individuals from all walks of life, across a range of areas that improves the community in which we live. It is a great way to thank these people who through hard work and dedication, have significantly contributed to the community.

This year’s honorees include Henry Clarke, Rhoda Ann Porter, and Adrian Stanga. The following are just snapshots of their contributions.

Honorees

Henry Clarke, a second generation Saratogan; attended Oak Street School in Saratoga; served in World War II; and is a second generation plumber. His plumbing shop, Clarke’s Plumbing, was an icon in Saratoga for many years. He served the community of Saratoga with 35 years of volunteer fire fighting including as the fire chief and 25 years as a fire commissioner.



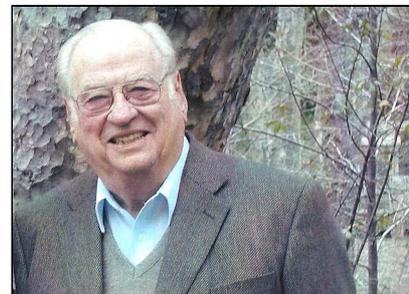
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Rhoda Ann Porter, went to Austin School and later Oak Street School in Saratoga; served in the Red Cross during WWII and was secretary to the principals of Saratoga High

School for 20 years where she was known as the “one to go to to get things done.” Rhoda and her husband raised four children and built their own adobe house!

Adrian Stanga, a World War II veteran, was a Citizen of the Year in Chico, Sunnyvale, and Saratoga. He is



known as the father of Celebrate Saratoga. He owned Adrian’s men’s clothing store in Argonaut shopping center for many years and was president of the Saratoga Chamber

of Commerce. He was in education for over 30 years as a principal in Sunnyvale.

Catering by Five

The dinner entrees include a choice of tri-tip steak, chicken legs and thighs or grilled portabello mushrooms for those desiring a vegetarian meal. Side dishes include grilled asparagus, chili corn casserole, caesar salad, garlic bread and dessert. Crunchy chips, salsa and guacamole for pre dinner munchies. Wine, ice tea, or water for beverages.

Mail Your Check Today

The Saratoga Historical Park is located at 20450 Saratoga-Los Gatos Road in Saratoga. Reservations can be made by purchasing a ticket for \$40 for SHF members; \$45 for non-members by sending your check in to Honoring Saratogans/SHF at PO Box 172, Saratoga, CA 95071. Seating is limited—send your check today. Questions, call 408-867-4311.

Executive Committee for 2015-2016



The new executive committee was voted upon by the SHF board of directors in June. Annette Stransky will be returning as president; Bob Himel, returning as vice president; and Yuchi Wang as

treasurer. We are presently seeking a recording secretary to round out the executive committee.

Executive committee positions are for a term of one year—from June to May of the following year.

Ron Hagelin is retiring as recording secretary but will remain on the board of directors. Ron has been on the board since 1998. Ron is thanked for his active role in the board and for continuing.

President's Message



Saving and preserving Saratoga's rich history whether in the form of maps, photographs, artifacts, stories or more is an important mission. It takes a lot of energy and enthusiasm.

During the next six months we'll be focusing on the following areas:

-Membership drive—reaching out to new members in various segments of Saratoga's community. Money generated

through membership dues helps pay for programs and services.

Saratoga Historical Foundation Officers

The mission of the Saratoga Historical Foundation is to preserve the unique history of Saratoga for the education and enjoyment of the community.

Executive Committee

Annette Stransky, President

Bob Himel, Vice President

Recording Secretary, Open position

Yuchi Wang, Treasurer

Newsletter

The Saratoga Historical Foundation newsletter is produced 6X a year. If you have comments or suggestions, e-mail: annette@saratogahistory.com

The Saratoga History Museum, McWilliams House and schoolhouse are located at 20450 Saratoga-Los Gatos Road and open from 1-4 PM Friday through Sunday. Call 408-867-4311 to arrange group or docent-led tours. Be sure to visit our gift shop. Visit our website: <http://www.saratogahistory.com>.

generate funding for the new blacksmith exhibit. An estate sale will take place in August and a fund-raiser in October at Hakone Gardens.

-increasing our volunteer data base—continue to reach out to grow our volunteer base. It would be wonderful to have the museum open more than 9 hours per week but we need more museum docents. Our education program is starting to offer a program targeting the fifth grade—we need more education docents. And we always need help to produce some of our events.

- Outreach to the Indian community with a new event in October.

- create an 1860's scullery/laundry room in the McWilliams house for the education of the public

Your support is important. I hope you will help us achieve these goals.

Docent Refresher Course—A Big Success

Last month's docent refresher course for the education, museum, and student docents was deemed a big success. Historian April Halberstadt gave a brief overview of the Spanish-Mexican era of California's history with an emphasis on Saratoga. Museum Docent Director Michael Whalen provided interesting information on Saratoga also as part of the two hour class. The annual class was given high marks for the content and the food.



Annual Volunteer Appreciation Event



The annual Volunteer Appreciation Party was held July 12 with volunteers enjoying food, music, and brief speeches. Thanks to Social Director Rina Shah for

coordinating the event.

-fundraising—we have two fund-raisers planned to

Calendar at a Glance

July 10- Nov.18:	New Exhibit— Center Stage, Saratoga Theater Groups
July 15	Sinking of the Lusitania—lecture and Video by Historian Ray Cosyn
July 26	Honoring Saratogans-- dinner
August 15	Estate Sale-- Fundraiser
August 19	Great Indian Railroad—lecture and Video by Historian Ray Cosyn
Sept. 20	Exhibit Reception
Sept. 27	Mid-Autumn Festival
Oct. 18	Hakone Wine & Appetizers— Fundraiser
Oct. 24	Festival for People of India
Nov. 27	Holiday Exhibit & Open House

The Sinking of the Lusitania— 100 Years Later



The Saratoga Historical Foundation will present a free film and lecture on the “Sinking of the Lusitania” on July 15 at 7:30 PM. The event will take

place on the patio of the Saratoga History Museum at 20450 Saratoga-Los Gatos Road in Saratoga, CA. The event is free and open to the public. On May 7, 1915, the British ocean liner *RMS Lusitania*, which primarily ferried people and goods across the Atlantic Ocean between the United States and Great Britain, was torpedoed by a German U-boat and sunk. Of the 1,959 people on board, 1,198 died, including 128 Americans. The ship sank within 18 minutes. The sinking of the *Lusitania* enraged Americans and hastened the United States' entrance into World War I. An overview of the topic will be given by Historian Ray Cosyn and will be followed by a video featuring the last cruise of the eight year old ship. A question and answer period will follow.

The Great Indian Railway— One of the Largest Railways in the World— Video on August 19

The Saratoga Historical Foundation will present a free video on the Great Indian Railway on August 19 at 7:30 PM. Many are the faces, and varied are the stories, on the Great Indian Railway. Since 1853, India's railway

has been a unifying force. Not only did it physically link distant regions, it also connected the myriad of castes,

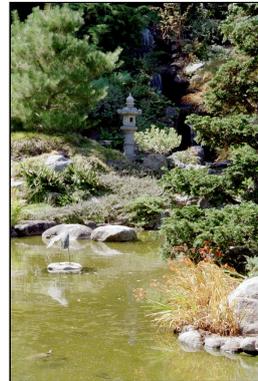


languages, and religions that comprise India. It's a rich history, riding the sumptuous

Palace on Wheels through Rajasthan or the "toy train" to Darjiling, but sadly, the age of steam has died. At the Black Beauty contest, the beloved steam engines were admired for the last time. From the engineer in the steaming locomotive to the station master in the sleepy village, from the family traveling to a wedding to the commuters in the large cities, this great institution reflects the country itself. Historian Ray Cosyn will chair the event. The video will be shown at 7:30 PM on the patio of the Saratoga Historical Park at 20450 Saratoga-Los Gatos Road in Saratoga. The event is free and open to the public.

Save the Date: October 18 Fundraiser at Hakone Gardens

Docent-led tours of the beautiful Hakone Gardens, music, wine and appetizers, and a silent auction all add up to an afternoon of fun. Don't miss this fund-raiser held on October 18 from 4-6:30 PM. All funds will go towards the building of the new blacksmith exhibit on the grounds of the Saratoga Historical Park. Tickets will be \$45 for SHF members and \$50 for nonmembers.



Two Festivals Coming Up— September 27 and October 24

Mooncakes, Chinese crafts, music and more all add up to an afternoon of fun. Join us on September 27 to celebrate the Mid-Autumn Festival—on the patio of the Saratoga History museum from 2-4 PM. Free!! Sponsored by the Organization of Chinese Women, Silicon Valley Chapter

New this year—come to the Festival of India on October 24 and sample Indian food, see dancing, try crafts and more. Enjoy lectures on Saratoga history and get tours of the Saratoga Historical Park from 1-4 PM. Free!!

Estate Sale—Fundraiser on August 15

The Saratoga Historical Foundation is seeking donations of high end items to sell at an estate sale. The fundraiser for the Foundation is scheduled for August 15 from 9-3 PM at the Saratoga History Museum (20450 Saratoga-Los Gatos Road).



If you have collectibles, toys, art work, jewelry, vintage items (pre 1960), holiday decorations, antiques, Shabby chic items, ladies accessories (such

as scarves, hats, belts, hand bags), houseware goods, garden accessories, small furniture, or plants—give us a call. You can drop off items during the Museum's normal hours—Friday, Saturday or Sunday from 1-4 PM or up until August 1. Or you can call Bob Himel (415)-860-0827 or email roberthimel@att.net to arrange a pick up time.



Items that are not wanted include bedding, large pieces of furniture, clothing, shoes, books, appliances, exercise equipment, electronics items or luggage.

Don't forget to come!

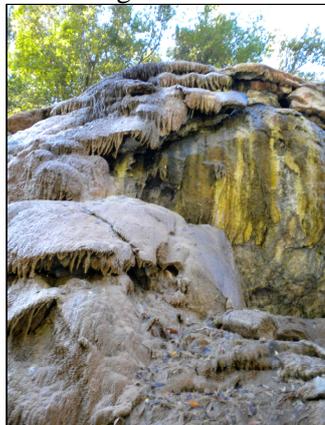
Come on by on August 15 and find a

bargain or two. And, if you can't come, monetary donations are also appreciated.

Your donation will go towards funding the outdoor blacksmith exhibit.

Soda Rock Field Trip

According to Gail Fretwell-Hugger, Cupertino Historian



and SHF member, a local curiosity is Soda Rock on Stevens Canyon Road in Cupertino. This large imposing rock, silently drips "soda water" and has done so for as long as anyone can remember. Located along the side of the road, it juts out slightly as the road leads up into the canyon. If your life insurance is paid up, you

can pull off the road, park and cup your hand to catch some of the water to taste. The water has a slight mineral taste and I can attest two weeks later, no after

effects have occurred since drinking the water! The narrow road is a popular one of residents who aggressively use their horn to remind pedestrians and tourists to watch for fast travelling traffic.

The drive, itself, is interesting with views of old gates made of stone, wooden bridges of yesteryear and lovely huge trees and brush. There are a few smaller rocks that can be seen weeping water—even in drought time!! Hugger notes the area above the rock was once a popular place to picnic. Hugger, whose family has lived in Cupertino since the 1800s, has many interesting stories to tell about Cupertino history. For more information about hot springs, you can read "*The Hot Springs of California*" by Fred S. Cook or *The Mineral Springs of Santa Clara County* book by Ian Sanders. The Mineral Springs book is carried in the SHF gift shop.

Learn About Native American Cultures of California

Interested in learning more about native American cultures of California? Professor Mark Hylkema is offering an evening class beginning September 23 at Foothill College. The class, Anthropology 20, is offered Wednesday from 5-9:30 PM in Room 3102. You can enroll on-line at www.foothill.edu/registration.

National Charity League Partners With the Saratoga Historical Foundation

The National Charity League, a mother-daughter organization that supports over 29 non-profit groups has added the Saratoga Historical Foundation to their list. NCL will be provide two mother-daughter teams each month to be docents at the museum. They have also committed to supporting the Blossom Festival.

New Museum Docent

Jeannie Nguyen recently became a new museum docent



after seeing an announcement on the city of Saratoga's website. Jeannie works in high tech and has two sons. One son recently graduated from West Point and the other was deployed overseas. Be sure to say hello to Jeannie!

In Memorium

Margaret Seagraves, Dorothy Stamper, Dave Pitman and wife Donna

Vernon Pick: Famous Uranium Millionaire— Author Seeking



Information!

Walden West has been in the news lately. It is the former residence of Vernon Pick, uranium king. But that's not what prompted this article!

Action Requested

Joshua Ostergaard is writing a book about Vernon Pick and is looking to talk to residents who might have information about Pick when he lived here in the 1955-1965 time period. If you have information, you can contact Joshua directly at osteo234@umn.edu. Or you can wait until he comes to Saratoga in the August timeframe when he'll give a presentation on Vernon Pick! No firm date yet on when he'll be here. But if you're interested in meeting him, just send an e-mail to info@saratogahistory.com.

A Little About Vernon Pick

During the height of the nuclear arms race between the Soviet Union and the United States, Saratoga was



home to one of the nation's most famous uranium millionaires. With fortune in hand, Pick purchased an historic cottage in 1955 on an 800-acre site in California's Santa Cruz Mountains. In honor of his hero Thoreau, he named the place Walden West. There, he built an electronics and

geology lab where he employed 20 scientists. Saratoga appealed to Pick and his wife because of the natural beauty of redwood country, and also due to its proximity to Stanford University. Over the next several years he operated Pick Enterprises, an umbrella company which included a mineral prospecting division, the entire airport at nearby Salinas, and a scientific laboratory for developing "peaceful" applications of atomic energy and technology.

How Do You Keep Your Garden Beautiful in Time of Drought????



SHF member Joan Bose has come up with a colorful and creative solution for adding color to her garden without using water! Painted wooden and plastic spoons that put an updated spin and answer to the nursery rhyme, "Mary, Mary Quite Contrary, How Does Your Garden Grow?"

New Big Basin Street Directory!!!



Handsome new directories are popping up along Big Basin Way to make it easier to find your favorite store or service. And, yes, those buildings not on Big Basin Way such as the museum and BookGoRound are also included!!

The Legend Lives On

Saratoga was the typical rowdy lumber town in the 1850s. According to one Saratoga legend, a house on the corner of Saratoga and Herriman Avenues was the location where it was said men with money would disappear after entering the house. Bones were discovered in the 1950s near that location believed to belong to the missing men. According to Willys Peck who wrote about the discovery of the bones, "legend has it that most of the murders which took place in this mysterious place never reached the coroner's scrutiny!"

New Exhibit Opens: Center Stage—The History of Saratoga Theater



A new exhibit opens July 10 at the Saratoga History Museum--- "Center Stage—The History of Saratoga Theater." The exhibit will run until November 18.

Starting with Villa Montalvo and Senator Phelan, the exhibit highlights the various theater groups from 1912 to the present.

The exhibit includes

Theatre of the Glade and Dorothea Johnston (photo above); the careers of Lilian Fontaine locally and Joan Fontaine and Olivia deHavilland and other local Saratogans who went on to start in film and Broadway.

Some theater groups began in a church such as Saratoga Federated Drama Group then segued into Saratoga Drama Group and then into South Bay Musical Theater.

A reception will be held September 20 at the Museum to celebrate this exciting new exhibit.

On the Street Where You Live

Terrace Court, located just off Saratoga-Sunnyvale Road



received its name from "The Terrace." The Terrace was originally a home for "rest and recuperation" in the 1920s. The home was run from 1928-

1972 by Mary Grunsky. Saratoga had several such homes. Toyon Lodge was originally built by a hotelier in the 1930s as a convalescent home until purchased by Gene Mancini who changed it into an inn.

Origin of the Name Orchard Road

In 1951 a move was made to re-name Orchard Road in Saratoga. Orchard Road was originally named for the many orchards that once lined Saratoga Avenue and the surrounding area. The road had had the moniker of Orchard Road for 15 years until one day, according to petitioners living on the street, Woodlawn Avenue signs appeared by County workers replacing Orchard Road signs. A petition was signed and the name Orchard Road was restored.

Korla Pandit—Godfather of Exotica



Korla Pandit (September 16, 1921 – October 2, 1998), born John Roland Redd, was a musician, composer, pianist, organist and television pioneer. He was known as the Godfather of Exotica.

He lived in Saratoga during the 1950s on McCoy Road where he commuted and worked in television.

He was a man of many

names and talent. During the mid-1940s, as Juan Rolando, he played the organ on the Los Angeles radio station KMPC, and he performed in various supper clubs and lounges. He also was heard on Jubilee, the program of black jazz and swing bands transcribed by the Special Services of the War Department for airing to WWII servicemen overseas.

In 1944, he married Disney artist Beryl June DeBeeson, and the two reinvented his image, eventually replacing "Juan Rolando" with "Korla Pandit" and fabricating a romantic history for him as a baby born in New Delhi, India to a Brahmin priest and a French opera singer, who traveled from India via England, finally arriving in the United States.

In 1948, while performing Korla met television pioneer Klaus Landsberg who offered Korla his own 15-minute daily television show with the stipulation that he would also provide musical accompaniment for Time for Beany, Bob Clampett's popular puppet show

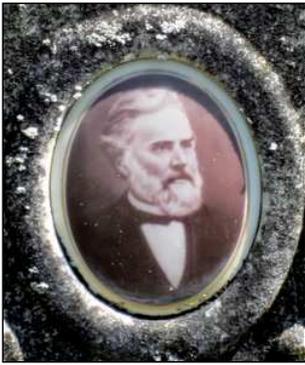
Korla Pandit's Adventures In Music was first telecast on Los Angeles station KTLA in February 1949, and viewers soon became familiar with the musical opening, "The Magnetic Theme." Landsberg insisted that Korla not speak but instead simply gaze dreamily into the camera as he played the Hammond organ and Steinway grand piano, often simultaneously. Following Klaus's directorial and contractual stipulations, Pandit became an overnight star and one of early television's pioneering musical artists.

In 1951, Pandit left KTLA in a deal with Louis D. Snader of Snader Telescriptions, resulting in short films which gave Pandit a national TV audience. However, problems with contract negotiations prompted Snader to replace Pandit with Liberace by 1953, which launched the pianist to fame. Pandit then did a show on San Francisco's KGO-TV in 1956.

Mt. Bielawski—

What is the Origin of the Name?

Mount Bielawski or Mount Bielewski is located in the Santa Cruz Mountains of California, near the San



Francisco Bay Area.

In the early 1860s the members of the JD Whitney field survey named the highest point on the mountain range above Saratoga, Mount Bielawski.

Captain Casimir Bielawski, the namesake, was captain of engineers in the Austrian army.

He was a Polish refugee and a patriot with an excellent service record. He came to the US in 1853 and worked for the US Land Office for 45 years. Because his work was held in high regard, the mountain was named after him.

Sign of the Times---Classy New Sign at the Saratoga Historical Park

The Saratoga Historical Park has a new sign out front of the museum. Our thanks to Public Works Director John Cherbonne for this great sign!



Origin of the Expression: Break a Leg



With a new exhibit at the museum covering the history of theater groups in Saratoga—we pause to examine a commonly used wish: “to break a leg.” The expression reflects a theatrical superstition in which wishing a person “good luck” is considered bad luck. The expression is also sometimes used outside the

theater.

Another theory claims that the “break a leg” phrase has Greek origins. In the time of Ancient Greece, people didn’t applaud. Instead, they stomped for their

appreciation and if they stomped long enough, they would break a leg.

Or, some would have it that the term originated during Elizabethan times when, instead of applause the audience would bang their chairs on the ground—and if they liked it enough, the leg of the chair would break.

In the early days of ballet, companies used animals on stage. And, every time an animal loosened its bowels on stage, someone from the audience would yell, “Merde!” to warn the dancers.

Early Day California Bank Notes

Shortly after the close of the American Revolution,



Boston whalers and other ships hunting the prized sea otter began navigating in California waters.

Merchant ships from

several nations followed. At the time, Spanish-owned California was a bucolic place sparsely populated with Franciscan missions and families who lived on government land grants called ranchos.

After Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1822, more than 500 new grants were authorized. A few of these land grants were enormous parcels and some were smaller, but all were grazing lands for thousands of cattle. There was no industry to speak of, and farming outside of mission properties was limited to home gardens and private orchards.

The ranchos traded their hides, which became known as “California bank notes” at an average price of \$1.50 to \$2.50 each, plus rendered beef tallow, for the miscellaneous goods carried in the holds of the merchant ships. French, English and American vessels brought calico, muslin, furniture, tableware, and other items. Ships flying the Mexican flag took hides in payment for fancy embroidered men’s suits, satin shoes, cloaks, riding saddles, sugar, and goat skins made to cover the legs while riding in the rain.



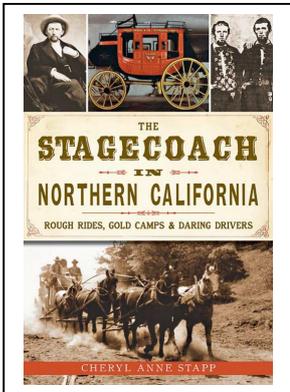
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The Stagecoach in Northern California Rough Rides, Gold Camps & Daring Drivers—new book



New England stagemen followed thousands of bedazzled gold rushers out west in 1849, carving out the first public overland transportation routes in California. Daring drivers like Hank Monk navigated treacherous terrain, while entrepreneurs such as James Birch, Jared Crandall and Louis McLane founded

stagecoach companies traveling from Stockton to the Oregon border and over the formidable Sierra Nevada. Stagecoaches hauling gold from isolated mines to big-city safes were easy targets for highwaymen like Black Bart. Road accidents could end in disaster—coaches even tumbled down mountainsides. Journey back with author Cheryl Anne Stapp to an era before the railroad and automobile arrived and discover the wild history of stagecoach travel in California. The book can be purchased at a book store or on-line.

New Donation of Azule Seltzer Springs Bottles

Two pristine Azule Springs bottles were recently donated to the museum. Bubbling soda water was discovered by Arthur Caldwell in the 1870s. LR Mills bought the property from Caldwell and changed the name of the property from Caldwell Springs to Mills Pacific Seltzer Springs. Mills marketed the popular mineral water under the trade name of Azule Seltzer Springs. The medicinal properties of the water cured just



about everything whether you drank the water or bathed in it. The resort remained small and never achieved the same popularity or size of Pacific Congress Springs which was located one mile north.

