Archivist Michael Griffith Retires

On July 29th Archivist Dr. Michael Griffith retired. He served as the County Archivist since the Archives opened in 2006. Through his hard work and dedication, the Archives has developed into a successful center of research and information about the government of Santa Clara County.

Two celebrations were held for Dr. Griffith as he embarked on his new journey in life. A retirement party was held on July 29th at History San Jose. A second party was hosted at

(Continued on page 2)

New Online Index: County Recorder Maps

A new index is available on the Archives’ website.

The Recorder Map Books consist of approximately 5,900 maps recorded with the county dating from circa 1850 to 1957. Recorded documents include subdivisions, surveys of property, cemetery plans, and other maps. Information on each map includes date recorded, person recorded for, and title of survey. Additional information may include notarized statement by property owner, statement by licensed surveyor, notice of approval by board of supervisors, and

(Continued on page 2)

Newest Accession: the “Cupid’s Book”

The newest accession to the Archives is a “Cupid’s Book”. This small book was given by the County Clerk, Henry A. Pfister, to newlyweds. Pfister served as the County Clerk from 1895 to 1935, and was known as “Cupid” since he issued marriage licenses. Pfister, born in 1859, graduated from Santa Clara College (now Santa Clara University), served as Mayor of San Jose for two terms, and founded San Jose’s first free library. He served as the County Clerk until his death in 1935.

This little book appears to be from the 1920s. It includes a portrait of Pfister, recipes, and advertisements for San Jose companies and products. It also includes housekeeping hints, table etiquette, and instructions for how to set a table.

The book can be viewed at the Archives during open hours.

Information on Pfister is taken from the book, “County

(Continued on page 2)
Past and Present

Archivist Michael GriffithRetires (continued)

volunteer Pat Burrow’s house on August 12th. This party was attended by the many volun-
teers who have worked at the Archives since 2007.

Dr. Griffith hopes to spend his time now conducting research on the early history of Oak-
land, CA. He is especially interested in Oakland’s first mayor, Horace Walpole Carpentier.

Dr. Griffith will be greatly missed by the many volunteers and researchers who have visited
the Archives. We all wish him well.

Trista Raezer, who served as Assistant Archivist since August 2008, is the new County Ar-
chivist.

New Online Index: County Recorder Maps (continued)

additional approvals by county or city officials. These maps are bound into 108 volumes.
The recorder map books are on loan from the County Clerk-Recorder.

Each index entry typically includes the title of the map, street names, city (if applicable),
date surveyed, date recorded, owner, surveyor and any additional notes about the map. The
Recorder Map Books are available at the County Archives. Additional information about
any map may be obtained by contacting the Archives by e-mail or phone.

This index is made available through the hard work of over 50 student volunteers from Foot-
hill College. This volunteer program was initiated by Professor Bill Ziegenhorn. The stu-
dents from his United States history classes from the last four semesters were given the op-
portunity to volunteer at a local historical organization.

This index is located at http://archives.sccgov.org

Newest Accession: the “Cupid’s Book” (continued)

Leadership: Santa Clara County Government History” by Glory Anne Laffey and Robert

Portrait of Henry A. Pfister in the
“Cupid’s Book.”

Recipes and an advertisement for a wedding
photographer from the “Cupid’s Book.”
Past and Present

Three New Collections on the Online Archive of California

Three new collection descriptions have been added to the Online Archive of California (http://www.oac.cdlib.org) by intern Lindsay Moxley, a graduate student from San Jose State University.

The Office of Public Affairs Plaque Collection consists of plaques awarded to or given by the County of Santa Clara.

The Charles R. Timpany Collection consists of personal files that belonged to County Superintendent of Schools Charles Timpany.

The Special Projects Director Pat Love Collection consists of photographs and blueprints of the Civic Center, and historic mitigation plans and photographs of the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds.

Contacting the Archives

Our address: 1875 Senter Road, San Jose, CA 95112

Directions: Please see our website at http://archives.sccgov.org.

Our phone: 408-792-1895

E-mail: Archives@rec.sccgov.org

Hours: We are open Mondays and Wednesdays, 9am to 1pm, and by appointment on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, 9am to 1pm.

Subscribing

To subscribe (or unsubscribe) to this Newsletter, please send an e-mail to: Trista.Raezer@rec.sccgov.org.
COUNTY HIGHLIGHT

County Library

The Santa Clara County Free Library was founded in July 1914 and was located in the Hall of Justice in downtown San Jose, at the corner of Market Street and St. James Street. Within six years twenty-four community branches were established. In 1922 there were 48,000 books and over 14,000 borrowers in the system. Today the Santa Clara County Library has seven branches in Campbell, Cupertino, Gilroy, Los Altos, Milpitas, Morgan Hill and Saratoga.

Three Santa Clara County Free Library bookmobiles, circa 1960s.

Interior of a bookmobile, circa 1960s.

A page from the first accession book for the Santa Clara County Free Library, 1914. The first accessioned library book was “Little Women,” by Louisa May Alcott.
Two librarians repair books at the Sunnyvale Library, 1971.

