Past and Present

New Display at the Archives

A new display of historical surveying materials is available at the Archives courtesy of the Mount Diablo Surveyors Historical Society. These materials tell the history of government surveying in California.

All government surveys in California are based off of three meridian points atop three peaks: Mount Diablo in Contra Costa County, Mount San Bernardino in San Bernardino

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Archives’ 5 Year Anniversary Event

October marks the five year anniversary of the Santa Clara County Archives!

An anniversary celebration will be held on October 21st from 5pm to 7pm at the County Archives Facility. County Archivist Trista Raezer and Chair of the Board of Supervisors Dave Cortese will speak. Historical items from the Archives will be on display and light refreshments will be served. All members of the public are invited to attend. Formal invitations will be sent in the following weeks. Please RSVP by October 14th. You can contact the Archivist with any questions about the event at (408) 792-1895 or at Trista.Raezer@ceo.sccgov.org

The County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors established an Archive Policy by Policy Resolution 04-14, dated September 14, 2004. In that resolution, the Board of Supervisors recognized “the need for a formal archive policy to insure the preservation and availability for historical and evidentiary purposes of the official papers and artifacts of the County of Santa Clara.” The resolution stated that it is “County policy to establish and maintain a Countywide Records Management program, utilizing the cooperation and support of County agencies and departments, and to identify it as a priority to enable the County to systematically control the creation, maintenance, and disposition of all County records, as well as provide a County archive

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Past and Present

New Display at the Archives (continued)

County, and Mount Peirce in Humboldt County. The Mount Diablo Meridian Point, established in 1851, is the point of reference for all surveying in Santa Clara County.

The display includes maps, surveyor chains, surveyor monuments, surveyor transits, and historical information. The display can be viewed during open hours.

Archives’ 5 Year Anniversary Event (continued)

facility for use by the public, the County organization, and any individual or organization in need of historical and evidentiary information about the County of Santa Clara.” Space for an Archives was secured in 2004. Archivist Michael Griffith was hired in April of 2006, and the 3,500 square foot Archives opened to the public in October, 2006.

The Archives had its grand opening on October 25, 2006. Speakers included former Supervisor James T. Beall, Jr., former County Executive Pete Kutras, former Clerk-Recorder Brenda Davis, the Honorable Judge Paul Bernal, former acting chair of the County Historical Heritage Commission Karen White, and State Archivist Nancy Zimmelman Lenoil.

The Archives has grown extensively since its grand opening. The Archives now houses 42 collection of historical materials and has drawn researchers from as far away as Canada, Sweden, Michigan, New Hampshire, and Idaho. Please join us as we celebrate five years of achievements.
New Volunteer Project

An exciting new volunteer project will be starting in the next few weeks at the Archives. Earlier this summer the Archives acquired the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds’ collection of historical materials and photographs. This collection is quite extensive and will take time to catalog and made available to the public. The first step will be for volunteers to catalog the nearly 100,000 photographs, negatives, and slides. The photographs will also be re-housed in archival quality polypropylene sleeves.

The Archives has two groups of volunteers: students from Foothill College and retirees who gather each Thursday morning. Other volunteers from the local community are also welcome. Examples of photographs from the Fairgrounds collection are shown below. If interested in volunteering, please contact the County Archivist at (408) 792-1895 or at Trista.Raezer@ceo.sccgov.org.

Above left: the property that was purchased to be developed into the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds, circa late 1930s.

Above right: display for Mobilgas at the first Santa Clara County Fair held in 1941.

Right: a child on a ride at the first Santa Clara County Fair in 1941.

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

NEW e-mail: Archives@ceo.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@ceo.sccgov.org. (NEW e-mail)
COUNTY HIGHLIGHT

Superior Court

In 1849, the California state constitution established a state supreme court and nine district courts, placing Santa Clara County in the 3rd district. The County also had a county court and a justice court for each township. In 1872 the judicial districts were reorganized, putting Santa Clara County in the 20th district. In 1880 the judicial courts were abolished and the Santa Clara County Superior Court was established. The Court is comprised of the following divisions: civil, criminal, family, juvenile, probate, small claims, and traffic. More history about the Court and the Old Court House can be found at http://www.scscourt.org/general_info/contact/och_history.shtml

Above: Old Court House, circa early 1960s. It was constructed from 1866 to 1868 at the cost of $200,000. A dome on top was destroyed by a fire in 1931.

Right: Old Court House, 1974.
Civil Case 2346 in the Third District Court: Charles J. Brenham et. al. v. Masonic and Odd Fellows Hall Association of San Jose, 1866.
Probate Voucher from Probate Case 4773: S. R. Allen, 1901. This voucher is for the purchase of a headstone for Allen, paid for from his estate.

Criminal Case 10187 1/2, the People of California v. Steve Wade, 1894. Wade was found guilty of seducing a young women under the promise of marriage.
From Probate Case #5802: Jane Stanford’s signed will. She was the co-founder of Stanford University.

Coroner Inquest Report for John Maurice Holmes. He was one of the two Brooke Hart kidnappers who was lynched by a mob in St. James Park in 1934. The mob broke down the doors of the County Jail to get to Holmes and his co-kidnapper Thomas Thurmond.