

QUICKSILVER COUNTY PARK NEWS

Newsletter of the New Almaden Quicksilver County Park Association

WINTER 2001-2002

ISSUE 66

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

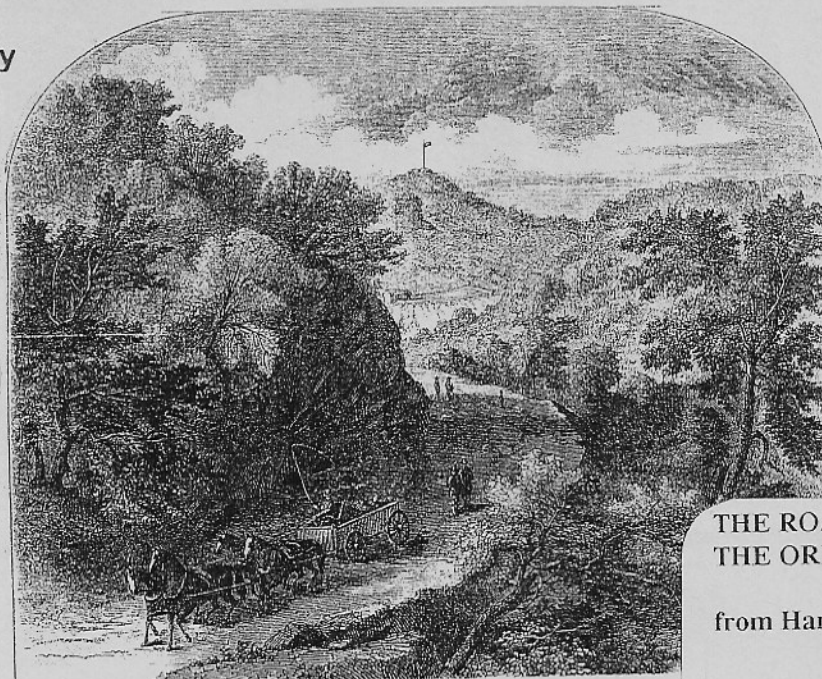
The Milkmaids and the Shooting Stars are already up in Almaden Quicksilver Park. How about a nice hike! We will soon have a parking lot on Hicks Road and the Deep Gulch Trail will be open for hiking and equestrian use. We might be calling on you to help clear the Deep Gulch Trail as we as an Association would like to adopt this trail to keep the scotch broom and the coyote brush trimmed back throughout the years.

The Museum is running along beautifully. School groups come three different days a week from September through June. Van tours are organized from April through October and the weekend attendance is fabulous.

Our Volunteer recognition event will be held in April this year. We will be presenting the history of New Almaden Quicksilver Park to the group. We could use your help with writing, performing or encouraging a good presentation at this function. Call me if you have some ideas.

Hope to see you on the trail or at the Museum.

Kitty



THE ROAD TO THE MINE, 1850
THE ORIGINAL DEEP GULCH ROAD

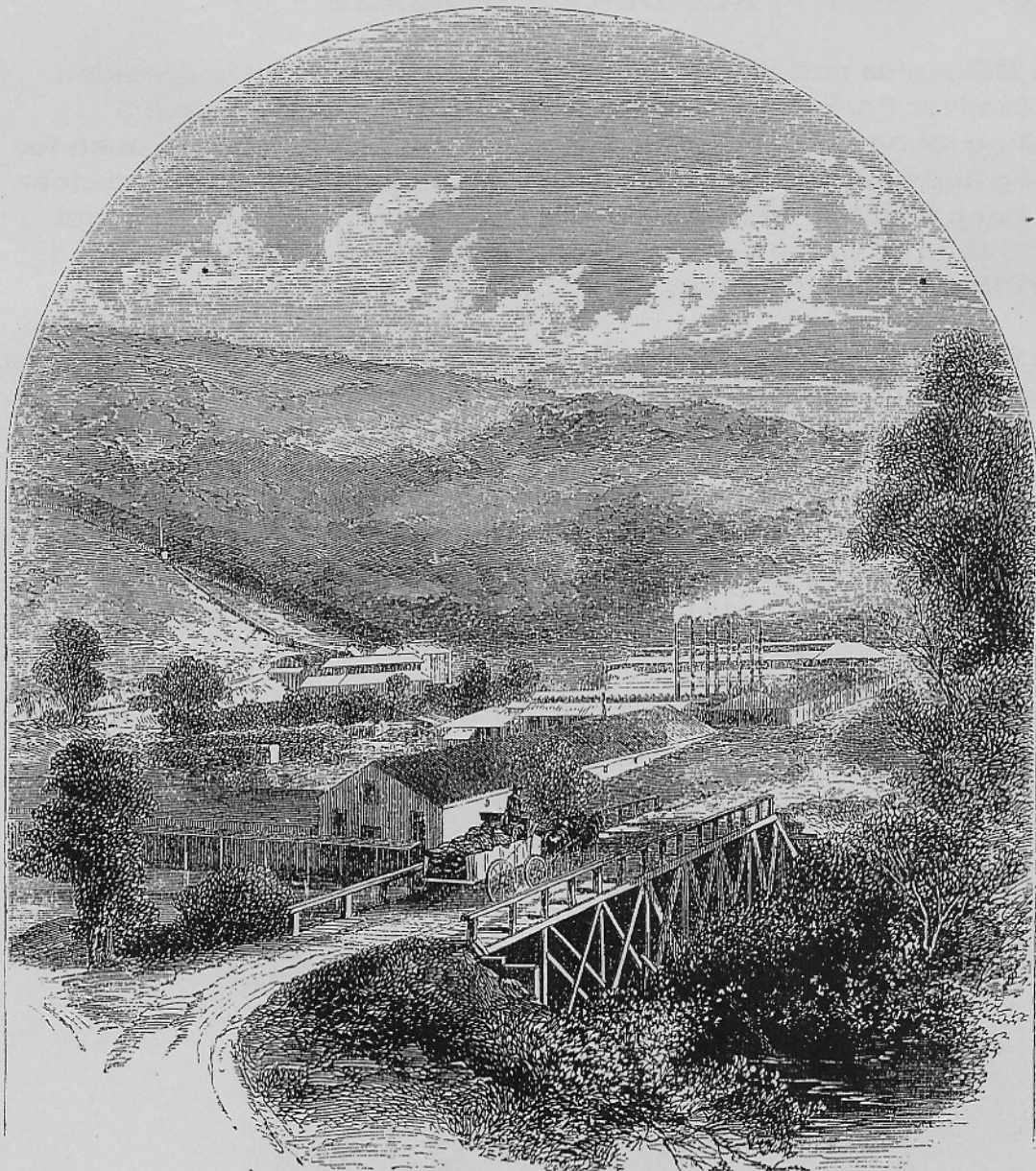
from Harpers Magazine, June 1863

HARPER'S NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

No. CLXXXV.—OCTOBER, 1865.—VOL. XXXI.

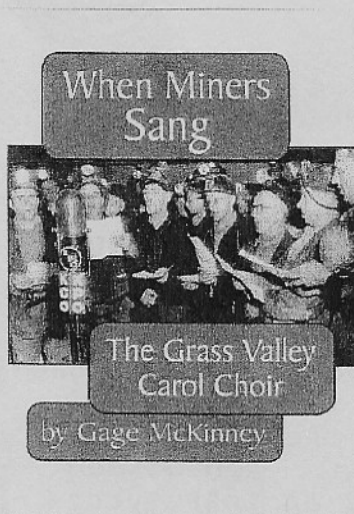
DOWN IN THE CINNABAR MINES.

A VISIT TO NEW ALMADEN IN 1865.



THE REDUCTION WORKS.

Gage McKinney to Talk on Singing Miners



Gage McKinney, author of *When Miners Sang: The Grass Valley Carol Choir*, will speak to the Sunnyvale Historical Society in the recreation building at Murphy Park, Sunnyvale Avenue at California, on Monday, February 18, at 7:30. He will speak about the singing miners of the Gold Country, some of whom joined the “iron men” at Sunnyvale’s Joshua Hendy Iron Works as America entered World War II. The program will include historic recordings of singing miners.

Gage will focus on the engineering and musical heritage of the Cornish, which combined steam engines with brass bands, pumping equipment with male voice choirs. He will talk about the Cornish families at the New Almaden quicksilver mine, who brought both their mining skills and music, and especially about the Cornish carols that they

sang every year about the mine.

Murphy Park in Sunnyvale is easily recognized by the stamp mill that stands at the corner of Sunnyvale and California avenues. The mill was one of the crushing machines used in California’s Gold Country to pulverize rocks as part of the process of extracting gold. Another part of the process required the use of mercury such as was mined at New Almaden.

The presentation is open to the public and admission is free. For more information, contact society president Jan Camp at (408) 245-6107.

Gage is a long-time member of the NAQPA board, and also the author of *A High & Holy Place: A Mining Camp Church at New Almaden*. His books are available at the New Almaden Museum, Willow Glen Books, 1330 Lincoln Avenue, San Jose, (408) 298-8141, and Memorabilia of San Jose, 250 West St. John St., San Jose, (408) 298-5711, as well as from on-line booksellers.

When Miners Sang has received praise in California and England. *Cornish World* magazine called it “one of the most important books published on Cornwall and the Cornish diaspora.” An on-line reviewer called it “a terrific book for anyone interested in Christmas music, folk music, mining history, or the history of the Cornish in Grass Valley.”

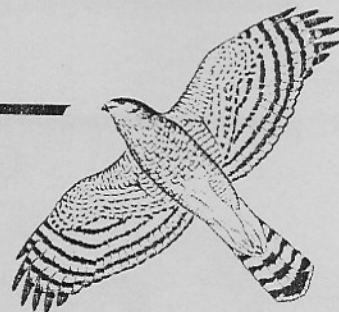


Gage



THE GRASS VALLEY CORAL CHOIR JULY 22, 2001

GUESS WHO'S COMING TO DINNER



Cooper's Hawk

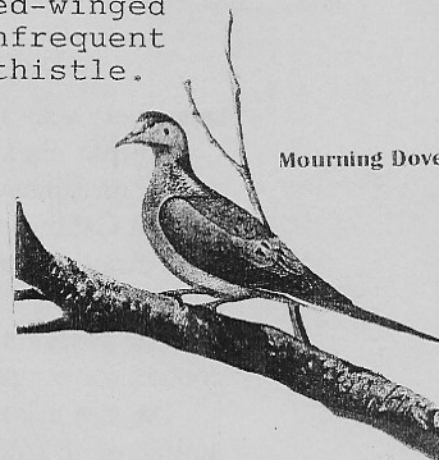
Winter is a great time to sit inside, where it's warm, and watch the comings and goings at the bird feeder. Mine has a smogasbord of tempting tidbits that attract a variety of birds. Thistle seed attracts a lot of American Goldfinches, Lesser Goldfinches and a few Pine Siskins. Black oil sunflower seed brings in House Finches, Chestnut-backed Chickadees and the perky Oak Titmouse. Safflower seed attracts the same crew and many greedy Mourning Doves. The standard mixed feed seems to be chosen most by House Sparrows, White-crowned Sparrows, a few Golden-crowned Sparrows and an occasional White-throated Sparrow. California and Spotted Towhees pick up the many seeds dropped by the others. Brewer's Blackbirds, Red-winged Blackbirds, Scrub Jays, Yellow-billed Magpies and an infrequent Steller's Jay sometimes hog all the entrees except the thistle.



California Towhee



Goldfinch



Mourning Dove

"You are what you eat!" Its true for birds too. All these small birds must think this stuff grows on trees as they stuff themselves with these high calorie treats. Every now and then these feathered fatties find out that there's no such thing as a free lunch. By stuffing themselves with all this rich bird food, they become---well, bird food themselves.

You can tell when an uninvited dinner guest has shown up. When the hordes of small diners suddenly disappear, a careful search usually reveals the presence of a Cooper's Hawk or Sharp-shinned Hawk in a nearby tree. Both these accipiters are long-tailed hawks that specialize in catching other birds. They soon learn where all the bird feeders are in the neighborhood and sneak in whenever possible to dine on, not with, the usual patrons.

If you look in a field guide, you will see that these two birds appear to be almost identical. There are subtle differences, but the only one that is readily discerned is that the Cooper's has a rounded tail and the Sharp-shinned has a squared tail. Of course, 'readily discerned' requires a clear, unobstructed sighting. The plumage of both species

is pretty much the same. Variations in proportions can be difficult to ascertain. Males and females have the same coloration. There is a difference in size---sort of. Like other hawks, females are bigger than their male counterparts. A large bird is probably a female Cooper's. A very small bird is probably a male Sharp-shinned. The male Cooper's and the female Sharp-shinned are just about the same size. Unless you get a very good view, you might have to guess who came to dinner.

While we may have a hard time telling these two birds apart, the birds at the feeder recognize them immediately. They don't care which is which. They both represent the same threat. A feeder too far from brush or other escape cover is the perfect attractant for these agile, high-speed marauders. Your yard can be an exciting glimpse of nature at work when you have a combination bird feeder and bird feeder.

Golden-crowned Sparrow



Sharp-shinned Hawk



History Makers

Presented by History San José and Barnes & Noble Booksellers

... Life in the Past Lane ...

Thursday, February 28, 2002, 7:00 p.m.

Join History San José's President and CEO David Crosson and participants Jack Douglas author of *Historical Footnotes of Santa Clara Valley*, and *Historic San José, Tales of Naglee Park*; Harry Farrell author of *San José and Other Famous Places*, and the Edgar Award winning book *Swift Justice*; Pat Loomis author of *Signposts, Signposts II, A Walk Through the Past*, and *Milpitas, The Century of "Little Cornfields: 1852-1952"*; and Leonard McKay author of *Postcard History of San José*.

The informal discussion will provide insight into these authors who have written about San José's history and why they have chosen to focus on this area. After an hour-long dialogue between Crosson and the panel, the discussion will be opened up to the audience for questions.

Barnes & Noble Booksellers at the corner of Almaden Expressway and Blossom Hill Road

Admission is FREE

For more information, visit our website at

www.historysanjose.org or call (408) 287-2290

HOW SAFE ARE OUR COMPUTER ARCHIVES?

At a recent NAQCPA board meeting, I decided to explain how we protect our computer archives that have been scanned into the museum archiver. I expected the members' eyes to glaze over at this "technical" explanation. How wrong I was! (:>) Virginia and others insisted I tell all of you what is done.

Our archives materials can be lost in several ways, by fire, by being stolen, by becoming misplaced, by being loaned and forgotten. All of these are also true for those items on the computer itself. A stolen computer, one cooked in a fire, software viruses and mechanical failures are additional ways to lose our electronically archived materials. If the scanned materials are lost, we could also lose the many hundreds of hours of volunteer efforts that have gone into scanning and explaining the original archives.

We protect the computer archives in several ways: by 1) a tape backup, 2) a temporary CDR/W backup and 3) a permanent CDR backup.

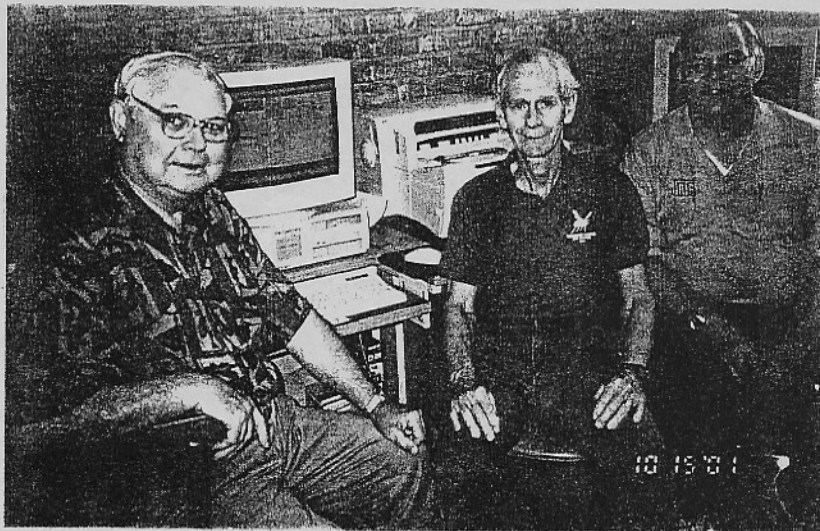
1) We take the time to do a tape back up about every other month. This process takes about 2 hours. The computer can't otherwise be used while performing this back up. During this process, we save the entire record of information on the hard drives, currently about four gigabytes of programs and data. This is done on successive tapes so that a failure of the backup process doesn't destroy the previously backed up tape information. The most recent tape is placed at the home of our President, Kitty Monahan. The second most recent tape is placed at my home and previous tapes are stored at the museum.

2) Temporary CDR/W. While we make very few changes to the program software, we are adding data files daily (400 files just since January 1) to the Museum Archiver database software. Twice each month, we copy the data files onto a CDR/W. We use rewritable CDs and alternate between two of them. Alternating is important because a computer failure during writing could destroy a previously backed up CDR/W contents. The most recent backup is stored at my home and the other at the museum.

3) Permanent CDR. Recently, when we approached the data limits of a single CDR, we created a permanent CDR called Volume 1 (2001). This Volume 1 contains all the scanned images, all the Word documents and the database table files on a single 650MB CDR. Three copies were made. One was placed in Kitty's home, a second at my home and the third is at museum office. Each time we reach the 650MB limit, we will create additional Permanent CDR volumes.

This means that, should the computer fail or be stolen, a new computer can be purchased and the files restored with a minimum of loss of our stored data. Should you have any questions about this process, please let one of us at the museum know.

Art Boudreault
naqcpa@newalutaden.org



The Monday Guys
John Drew, Bob Meyer, Art Beaudreault



STAY into The PAST

**COME
AND SEE
YOUR PARK!**

April 13 and 27th

May 11th

June 8 and 22nd

July 13th

August 10 and 31st

September 7 and 21st

October 5 and 19th

**Van tours are on saturday from 9:30 till 1:30pm
Limited space, sign-up sheets are at the museum.**

For more information call 408 323 1107

CREEKS, QUARRIES and QUICKSILVER

by Jo Young

New Almaden! oft-mentioned historic town 14 miles southwest of San Jose; site of many government controversies since its beginning; subject of dozens of books and articles; prime target of study for history and geology students; but frequently neglected by valley residents. In view of the Almaden Day Celebration, an eighty-year tradition coming up September 3rd, Let's Go to New Almaden and really get acquainted.

Starting point is Los Alamitos Park at junction of Almaden and Coleman. Tree-shaded percolation ponds on left side of road are the beginning of extensive Alamitos-Calero park chain, proposed by San Jose in conjunction with Water Conservation District. Start today's tour with a quick dip and picnic breakfast on the shore. Before leaving, note gravel quarry just south of ponds. Gravel from here was shipped to San Francisco in 1906 for mammoth rebuilding project.

Across from luxurious Almaden Golf Club take Greystone Lane for a short side trip and a moment to admire the unusual gingerbread porch on the white Victorian house. Across cool, wooded Alamitos creek is igloo-shaped sandstone powder house, part of the old Goodrich (later Greystone) Quarry, founded 1875. Sandstone quarried in these hills was used in such buildings as San Jose Post Office (now Public Library) and Stanford University (1890's). S.P.'s Hillsdale Line (yes, ran beside Hillsdale Ave.) ran along here to quarry. This was the high-speed section of the line, ten to fifteen miles per! Part of steel bridge still remains over creek where road takes sharp bend. Also in the area, a legendary cave, supposed hiding place of Joaquin Murietta. Note Pfeiffer name on at least ten mailboxes. Early Pfeiffer was head quarrymaster, later owner of quarry and surrounding land. Gingerbread house also in that family.

Back on Almaden Road keep a sharp eye out for signs of tracks of South Pacific Coast Railway's line. The main line, built 1876-78, ran from Almaden to Santa Cruz; local narrow gauge line branched off at Campbell (1886). Stop a moment on McKean Road (which leads to Calero Dam) to look down at the bright red tower, site of Hillsdale Line's station. South Pacific Coast's station was further down McKean (Harry Road), after crossing Los Alamitos Creek on 500' trestle. S.P. eventually bought out Coast line (1887). All operations ceased in area in early '30's.

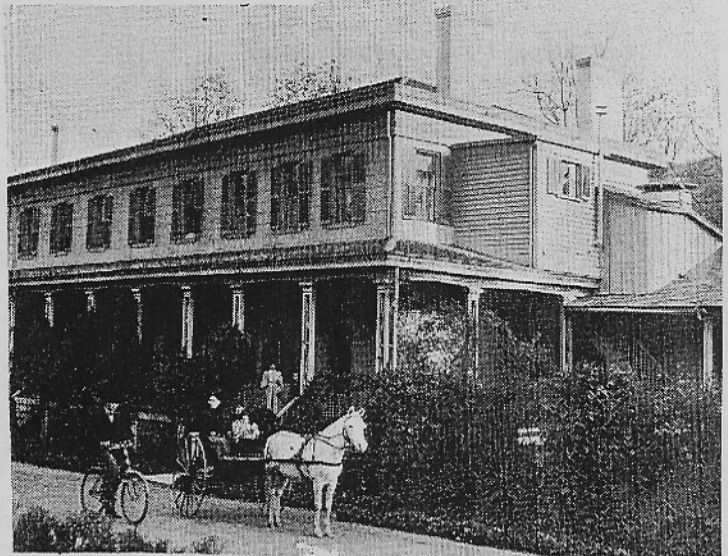
Almost to Almaden now, but if the kids are tired of sight-seeing, stop long enough to cast a few lines into the pond at Almaden Trout Farm. Poles and bait provided. You just pay for fish caught. They even clean the fish for you, a boon for the cook! Early travelers rested along this dusty horse and buggy road at such places as Eight Mile House and Last Chance, refreshment parlors abounding in liquid refreshment and slot machines.

While the kids fish, take five for a history review.

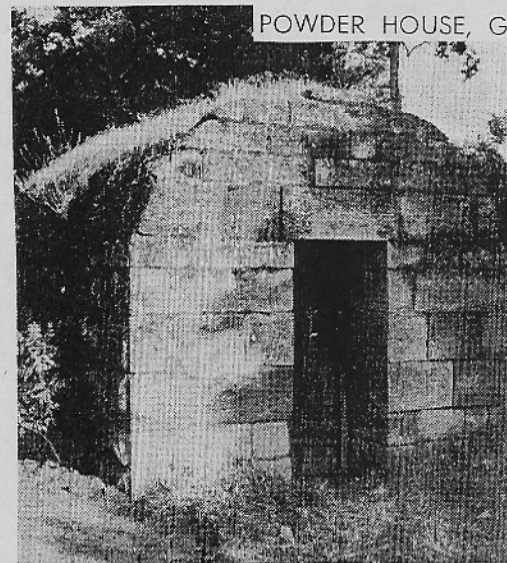
The year, 1845: Sutters was still just a sawmill; the pueblo of San Jose a few shacks and adobes along the Guadalupe; ranches of wild, long-horn cattle still the dominant economy. "Redmen" painted redder with vermilion paint led a visiting cavalryman to test some of the red ore from the sacred cave in the mountains. True to his suspicions, it proved to be cinnebar, commencing a flourishing quicksilver mining operation which is still going on, despite years of ownership squabbles, bankruptcy problems, and an attempt by President Lincoln to claim the mines for the U.S. government. Nevertheless, mining operations pro-

Let's Go! August '67 — 20

—photo courtesy Bulmore Collection



CASA GRANDE, now Club Almaden.



POWDER HOUSE, Greystone Quarry

—photo courtesy Bulmore Collection

OLD PFEIFFER HOUSE near Greystone Quarry



—photo courtesy Bulmore Collection

vided employment for hundreds of people and three lively communities developed. The two larger ones, English (Cornish) and Spanish towns, were on the Hill where the many mine shafts were located. The Hill towns were finally abandoned about 1918 but the third and smallest of three, the Hacienda, still bears many interesting marks of history.

Had enough fishing? O.K., let's take a look at Almaden, an Arabic word, by the way, meaning The Mine. Round the first turn toward town, note Spanish style stucco house. Here stood Hacienda school, a two-teacher affair. Hill towns had two more schools.

Just beyond is Casa Grande, (now Club Almaden) once the elegant home of the mine manager. Beautiful gardens surrounded a lake where the pools now are. A Chinese Pavilion stood as reminder of a group of Chinese who came here to study the making of their famous cinnebar-based vermillion lacquer. Club Almaden is now a grand family swimming area, with three separate pools of different depths. Special attraction of Club Almaden is The Opry, where melodramas are enacted on weekends, complete with cheers, hisses, and tossed peanut shells.

A short drive and you'll spot the Almaden Museum on the left, a truly worthwhile stop. The Perham's, museum curators, provide a personally guided tour into the past century. Ask about the arata in the courtyard, an early ore grinder. Special features inside are the full-sized blacksmith shop, duplicating the ones which were located at each shaft on the hill, and the electronics museum. Mr. Perham, once associated with such notables as Westinghouse, Steinmetz and DeForest, has probably one of the world's most unique collections of electronic equipment. His many-roomed display is a must for the many valley residents involved in electronics industries. The museum and the two houses west of it are the town's remaining adobes. Nearly all houses on this pleasant, tree-shaded street are original Hacienda dwellings, built in the 1850's, once owned by mining company and rented for \$3-\$5 a month. Board, batten and lattice construction houses were typical cottages of the period.

The Hacienda store, a long building at the end of the street, is also partial adobe construction, built in 1848. It was also owned by mining company but was leased out and was a warehouse before becoming a store.

Mine Hill is up to the right, along a winding dirt road not too different than it was more than a hundred years ago. However, that area is all strictly private property. The mine manager has made a plea for all unauthorized visitors to stay out. Thousands of dollars damage by vandalism, and at least three major fires each year, have soured the visitor situation.

Cross the new concrete bridge where a historic marker indicates site of California's first mining operation. Area under bridge was once soda spring. Enterprising gentleman tried bottling it and sold it the world over. When it was discovered that after a few months bottles lost their fizz, the business fizzled also!

A roadside glimpse of the reclamation works may be had by taking right fork of road. This is the site of Hacienda de Beneficio or reduction works, where cinnebar ore was vaporized into quicksilver. Creek site was chosen since water was then needed in process. New methods allow hilltop reduction works . . . not only reworking of tailings, but also dredging of bedrock underneath for free quicksilver which

has permeated it, has kept this reclamation process in operation since 1864. About 20,000 flasks (76 lbs. per flask) of quicksilver have been reclaimed since then. A rich spot in 1955 gave up 18 flasks in 50 minutes! Price then—\$250 a flask. Another time about a foot of the liquid quicksilver (or mercury) was found in the bottom of an old cistern: nothing to do but bottle it up!

During W.W.I the old reduction works was torn down and the bricks roasted to obtain the precious metal which had infiltrated! The price of quicksilver has gone from \$80 in 1950 to \$485 presently.

Turning back toward town, pass St. Anthony's Church, a relative newcomer, built circa 1899. There were two churches on the hill, Methodist and Catholic. Cafe del Rio, once the Hacienda Boarding House, is now a particularly fine restaurant. Note historic marker near it, indicating this as site of first two-story hotel in California.

Pause down Bertram Ave. to read two historical markers there, and to take a look at Los Alamitos Creek. (Means the Cottonwood trees). Acequia, or water trough, ran from creek to supply fresh, clear water to townspeople. Short ways down the road come to Hacienda cemetery with hundred-year-old gravestones. County road was put through over protest of citizens about 1920. Swing across creek once more and back around to Casa Grande in time for a pleasant swim and picnic lunch on the grass.

APPETITE WHETTED? TRY SOME of THESE,
NEARLY ALL in LIBRARY

Hutchings Scenes of Wonder and Curiosity: Short on-the-scene accounts of early Almaden mining days.

New Almaden Quicksilver Mines: Johnson; All the squabbles and workings of the mines.

History of Santa Clara County: Sawyer; Colorful bandit activities in New Almaden.

Cinnebar Hills: Bulmore, Laurence and Milt Lanyon; Just out! Available only through them. Write 2221 Coastland Ave., San Jose 95125.

Or visit:

San Jose City Museum: (Fairgrounds) Talk with Laurence Bulmore in Almaden Room.

San Jose Planning Commission, City Hall: Obtain exceptional color brochure on proposed Alamitos-Calero Park Chain.

New Idria Quicksilver Mines (Near Hollister): Recently superceded New Almaden as greatest U.S. producer. Write Mr. Benton Bailey, Mgr., New Idria, Calif., for Friday appointment of above ground works.

Next month, follow us up the Guadalupe River to Guadalupe Mine area!!

Santa Cruz 19th Annual

Antique Show

Civic Auditorium and Sales

Aug. 10, 11, 12, 13, 1967

Snack Bar

Daily Noon-10 p.m. — Sun. 'til 6 — Donation \$1.00

Sponsored by Santa Cruz YWCA

Let's Go! August '67 — 21

Poems and impressions of Mine Hill's chimney by the students of Mike Boulland's Fourth Grade at Baldwin Elementary School, Oak Grove School District

The Chimney
Is our history.
We love our chimney
As much as our history.
Don't let it fall
Keep it standing tall.
Please do not distroy our history
Save it's glory

Tommy Urban

Grandpa take me to the Chimney

Grandpa take me the Chimney
So you won't go away

Grandpa take me to the Chimney
To see the mist on the ground

Grandpa take me the Chimney
We'll stay there all day

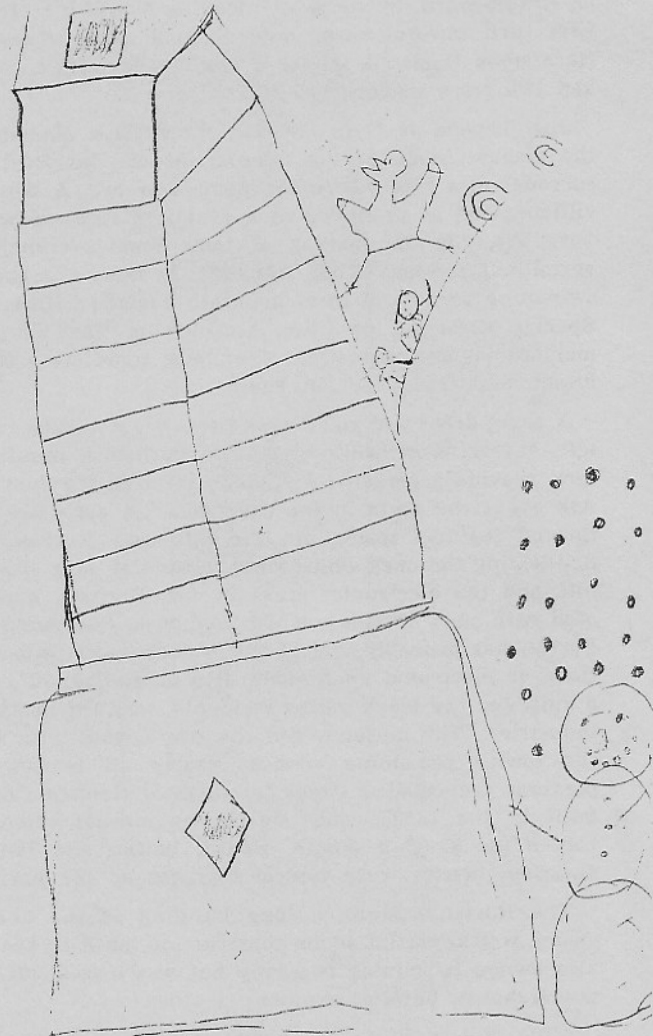
Grandpa take me to the Chimney
I'll walk you round and round

Grandpa take me to the Chimney
So we can to play

Grandpa take me to the Chimney
To love me all aroud

So please Grandpa take me to the Chimney
So our lives don't go away

By,
Kylie Cruz, and Miyuki Navarrete



CHIMMNEYS

New Almaden, New Almaden where the kids go to play.

New Almaden, New Almaden where the chimmneys stands tall today.

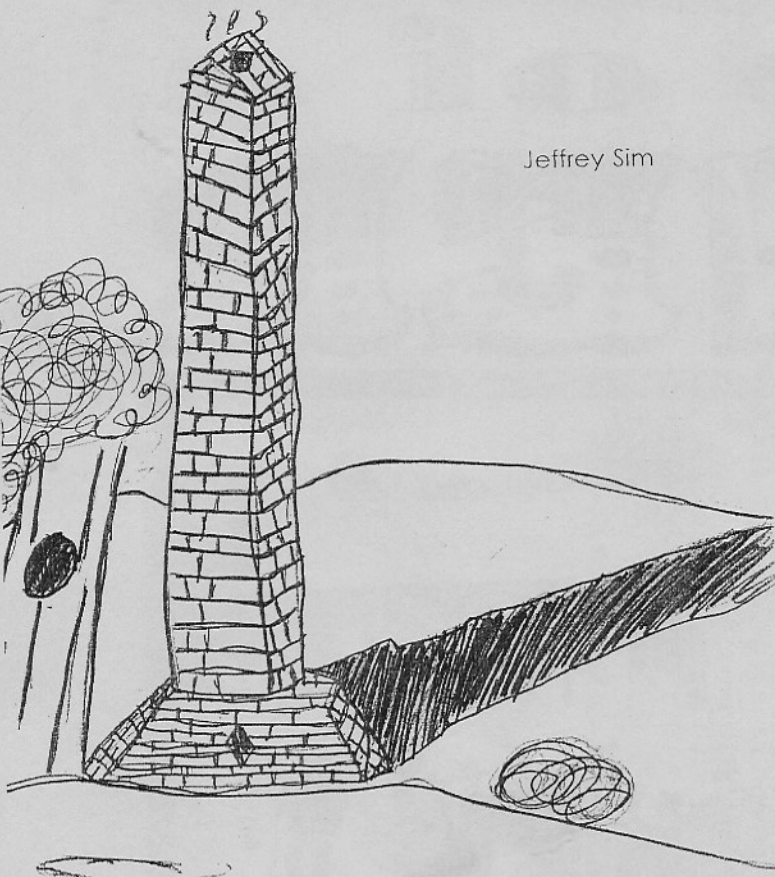
New Almaden, New Almaden chimmneys covered with snow.

New Almaden, New Almaden chimmneys just stay.

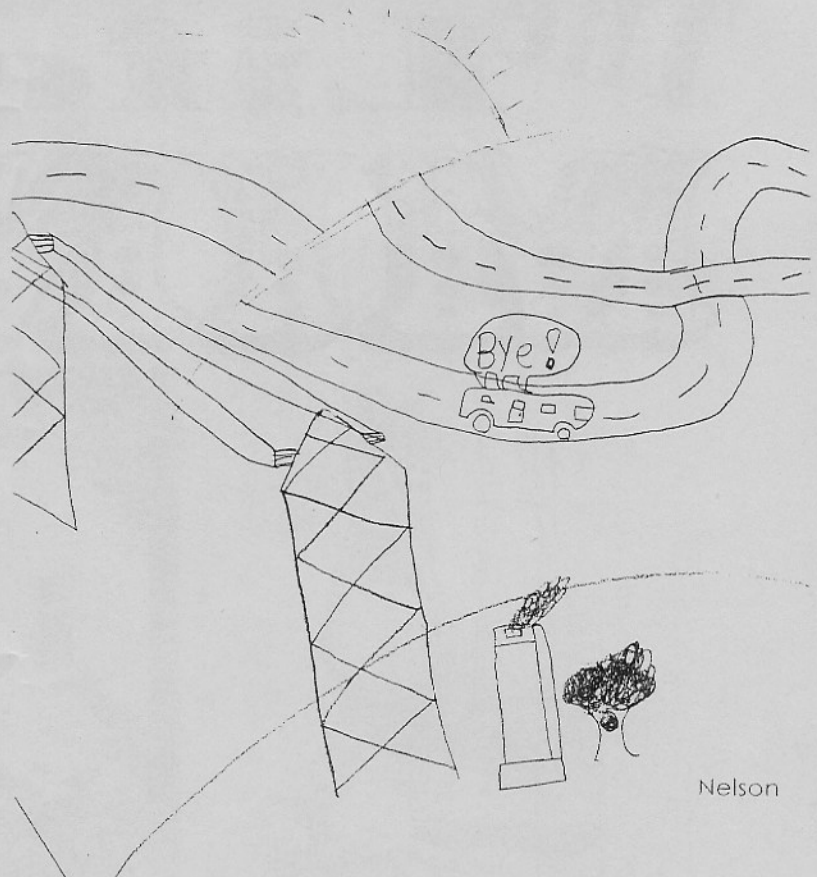
I wish that you would run away to an other place.

New Almaden, New Almaden chimmneys please don't go. (smashed)

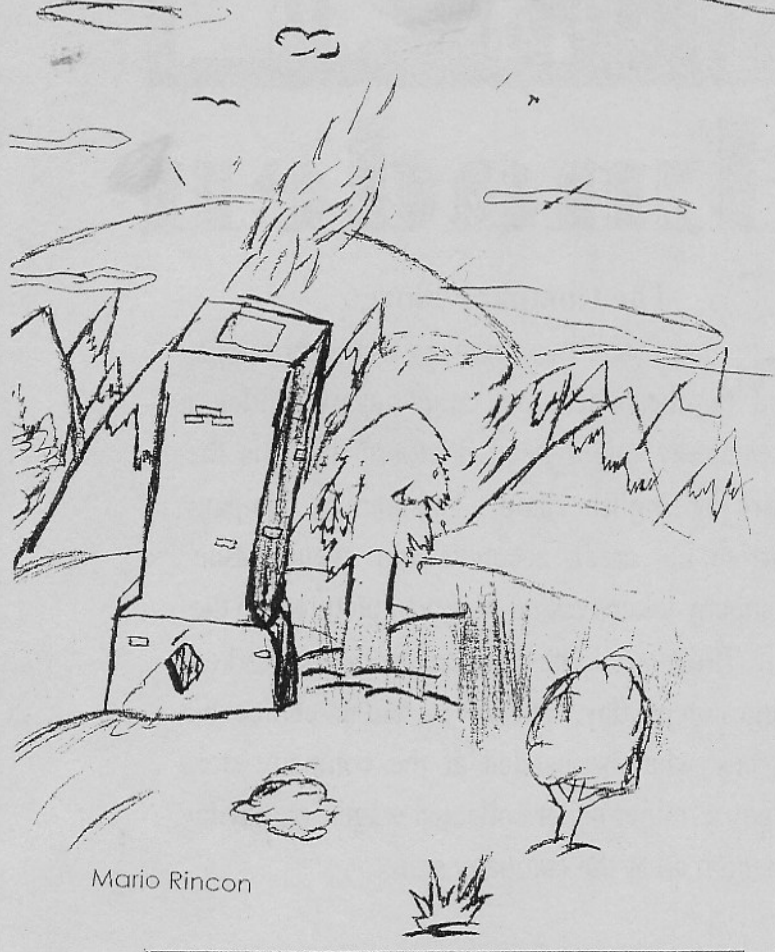
By: Vashti Maachah Brown.



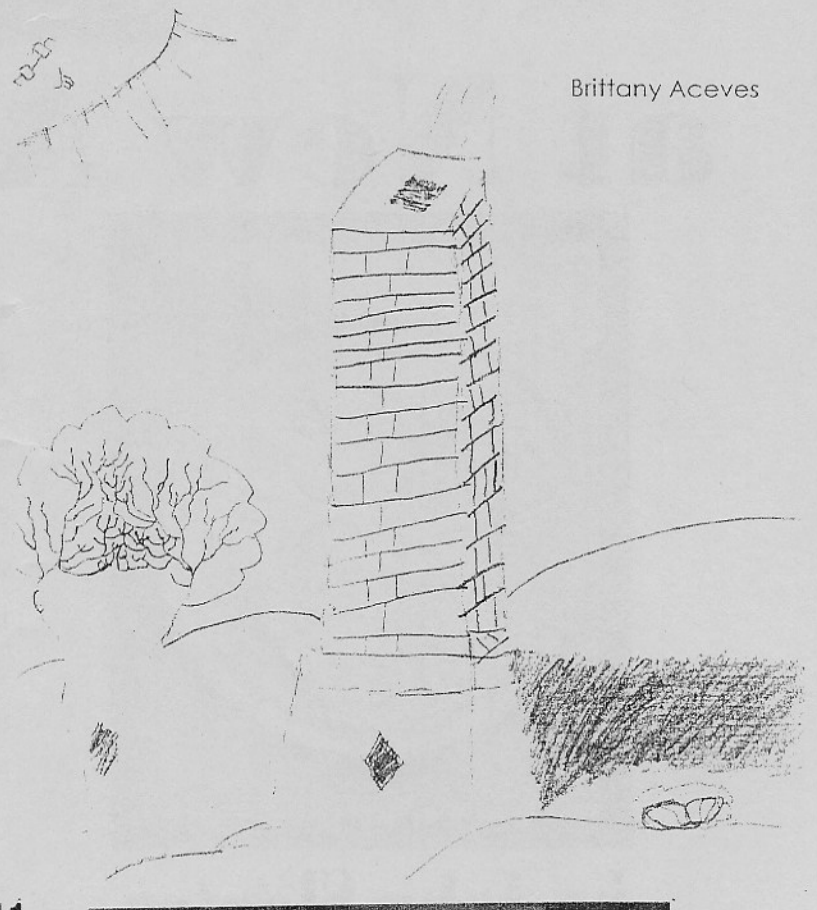
Jeffrey Sim



Nelson

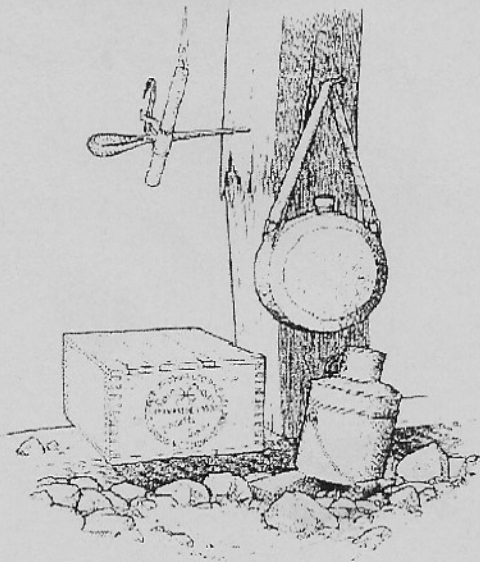


Mario Rincon



Brittany Aceves

The Life of a MINER



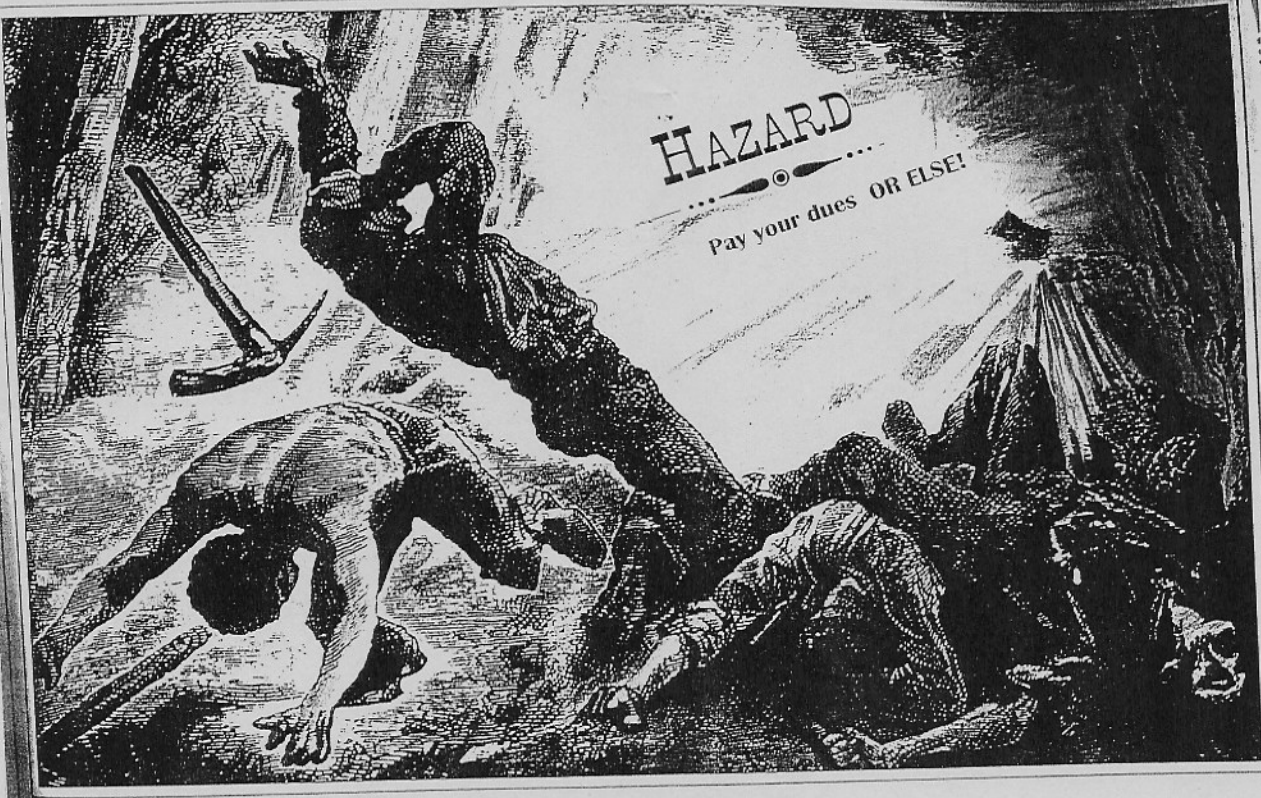
at New Almaden



The Company Store

Here, there were two company stores for miners and families where they could buy everything a community might need. Pictured above is the store in English camp. The mining company carried no credit accounts but would issue company tokens called Boletos, pictured to the left. These would be deducted from the workers wages on payday. The miner had no choice but to buy what he needed at the company store. Many a miner never collected wages on payday, owing it all to the company store.

by John Slenter



NEW ALMADEN
 QUICKSILVER COUNTY
 PARK ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 124, New Almaden, CA 95042

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

Date: _____ Membership: new _____ renewal _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (area code: _____) _____

Dues: \$10 per year per household, tax deductible \$ _____

Additional tax deductible contribution \$ _____

Total amount enclosed \$ _____

Checks may be made payable to "Quicksilver Park Assn."

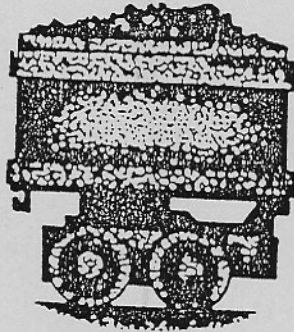


NEW ALMADEN
QUICKSILVER COUNTY
PARK ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 124, New Almaden, CA 95042

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ORGANIZATION
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NEW ALMADEN
QUICKSILVER



COUNTY PARK
ASSOCIATION
