

QUICKSILVER COUNTY PARK NEWS

Newsletter of the New Almaden Quicksilver County Park Association

WINTER 2001

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

An era for New Almaden came to an end with the death of Constance Perham. We are so grateful to her for the effort she put in throughout her life to save the history of New Almaden. Your Association would like to remember her by installing a plaque next to her picture in the Museum. If you have some thoughts, memorabilia or stories about Connie, we would love to publish those.

The Quicksilver Park is looking beautiful. Be sure to check it out during the Spring. The wildflowers are great. We have an e-mail site now, if you would like to join, send a message to: newalmaden-subscribe@yahoogroups.com and check the web site at

<http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/newalmaden>

We will put events on the site so you can check out interesting hikes, trail work and wildflower walks. The Calero Park Unit put 2 nice covers at the Hacienda entrance so you can relax after a nice walk or ride.

The computer at the museum is up and running. We will need help scanning the archive materials and entering them into our data base. Art Boudreault will educate us to the fine points of our new data base. Call me if you can help!

Kitty Monahan (408) 268-6541



CONSTANCE B. PERHAM

Connie Perham, age 92, retired founder and curator of the "Original New Almaden Mercury Mining Museum" died January 28, 2001 in Los Gatos at a local nursing facility.

Being the great-great granddaughter of one of California's "los Fundadores", Mariano Soberanes, she inherited the desire and knowledge to preserve the works of her ancestors and took advantage of the opportunities arising to further her desires.

As a young girl she used to accompany her father on trips to the mines of New Almaden. On one occasion in 1914 one of the miners said to Constance, "Put your hand in this liquid." "I can't," she replied. The man laughed and explained, "You can't because mercury is the fourth heaviest metal and the only one that remains in a liquid state after refining." It was then that her keen interest in the history of New Almaden began to take form. In 1926 her parents, James E. Healy and Adelaide E. Healy, purchased the Carson House adobe for a vacation home. During this time, Constance began the diligent collection of artifacts from the mines, hoping one day to establish a museum. In November of 1949, the dream came true when the Original New Almaden Museum opened its doors.

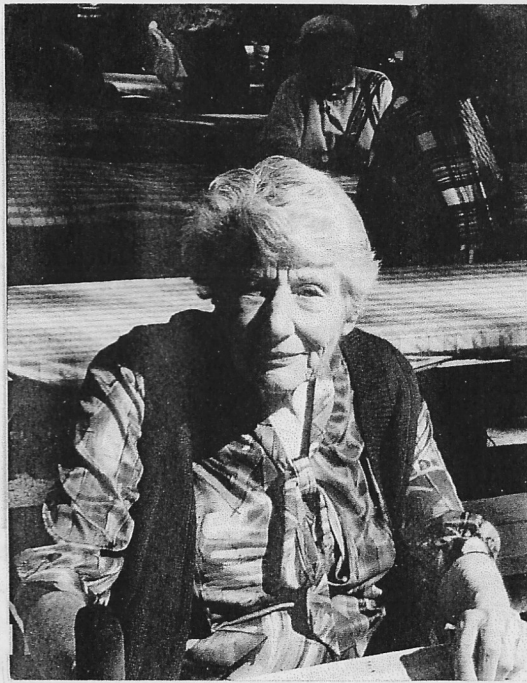
With unwavering dedication and perseverance together with her late husband, Douglas A. Perham, she expanded her collection into a world class mercury mining museum and research facility. She worked tirelessly to bring to New Almaden the recognition it so rightfully deserves.

In 1984, Constance retired and sold her museum artifacts to the County of Santa Clara. Her collection is proudly preserved and displayed today in New Almaden's historic Casa Grande.

Constance is survived by her three sons, Frank, John and Gregory Kambish and their spouses. She also leaves 7 loving grandchildren and several great grandchildren.

Constance was a very civic-minded woman and has long been identified with numerous organizations such as the San Jose Coin Club, the Pioneers of Santa Clara County, the New Almaden Historical Society, the New Almaden Community Club, Inc. (past president) and the New Almaden Quicksilver County Park Association.





CONSTANCE PERHAM
1908-2001



Connie with Major Giles
at closing of the air force station
at Mt. Unumhum, 1980



Connie, honored guest,
at the 1986 Pioneer Day
celebration with Don Weden,
master of ceremonies.