

NAQCPA Pioneer Days

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1983

ANNUAL QUICKSILVER PARK PIONEERS DAY - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1st
The Quicksilver Park Association, in cooperation with the staff of Club Almaden, will hold its first annual Quicksilver Park Pioneers Day at Casa Grande in New Almaden on Saturday, October 1st from 1 pm to 5 pm, The purpose of the event will be to bring back and talk with some of the "old timers" who lived and worked in Englishtown, Spanishtown, or the Hacienda during the era when the mines were in operation. Miners who worked in the New Almaden Mine and members of the pioneer families who lived up on Mine Hill in Englishtown or Spanishtown, or were early settlers of the Hacienda will be our guests for a barbeque, entertainment, and tour. If you know the present whereabouts of former New Almaden miners, CCC members stationed at Almaden Quicksilver during the 1930's, or other former residents of the Hacienda, Englishtown, or Spanishtown areas, please contact Kitty Monahan at (408) 268-6541. Please join us in discovering first hand the life and times of the mining era of New Almaden. The Casa Grande is located at 21350 Almaden Road.
PO. Box 124. New Almaden, CA 95012

<https://sccparks.pastperfectonline.com/archive/76C3A035-FC58-4BC5-B8CA-084223739271>

OUR THANKS TO CASA GRANDE

The Casa Grande in New Almaden was built in 1854 and served as the home of the mine managers. Over the years, it has fallen into a state of disrepair. Today, with hard work and dedication, Terry Esplanade and Sue Kroninger are working to restore some of its former grandeur.

Terry and Sue have been especially helpful to our Association during this past year. They have graciously allowed us to use the Casa Grande for Association meetings and events, including our first annual Pioneer Day. We thank them for their kind hospitality and wish them well in their efforts to restore Casa Grande.

Current uses of the Casa Grande include the Opry House and the Down Under Bar. The Opry House presents bawdy vaudeville and melodrama Thursday thru Sunday evenings. The Down Under Bar has live music on weekend evenings. For further information or reservations for the Opry House call (408) 268-2492.

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1984

2nd ANNUAL QUICKSILVER PIONEER DAY - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13th
The Quicksilver Park Association, in cooperation with the staff of Club Almaden, will hold its second annual Quicksilver Park Association Pioneer Day at Casa Grande in New Almaden on Saturday, October 13th from 1 pm to 5 pm.

The purpose of the day will be to bring back and talk with some of the timers who lived and worked in Englishtown, Spanishtown, or the Hacienda during the era when the mines were in operation.

Miners who worked in the New Almaden mine and members of the Pioneer families who lived up on Mine Hill in Englishtown or Spanishtown, or were early settlers of the Hacienda will be our guests for a barbeque, entertainment and tour. If you know the present whereabouts of former New Almaden miners, CCC members stationed at Almaden Quicksilver during the 1930's, or other former residents of the Hacienda, Englishtown, or Spanishtown areas please contact Kitty Monahan at (408) 268-6541. Please join us in discovering first hand the life and times of the mining era of New Almaden. The Casa Grande is located at 21350 Almaden Road.

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SECOND ANNUAL PIONEER'S DAY A GREAT SUCCESS

The weather for the 2nd annual Pioneer's Day (October 13) was superb. Seventy-five pioneers gathered to tell their stories and visit the home of their past. Our Association has now compiled a list of over 100 pioneers and we have recorded their reminiscences for an oral history. A trip to Mine Hill was especially meaningful for many of the pioneers as some had not been there for thirty years or more. We were especially delighted with the presence of Milton Lanyon, co-author of Cinnabar Hills The Quicksilver Days of New Almaden. Milton autographed our own copies and told stories of his days in New Almaden.

The owner, manager and personnel at the Casa Grande were exceptionally good to us. They provided everything we needed to make the day a success They are earning themselves a bright spot in New Almaden's modern-day history.

Dutch and Nancy Mapes were our able chefs. With the assistance of Ed Lewis they produced a memorable meal. Special thanks also to Remie Pantiga who served refreshments and wore out a pair of shoes running back and forth delivering the goods.

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1985

PIONEER DAY

Our two previous Pioneer Days have been so special that the Board is planning a SPECTACULAR 3rd Annual Remembrance. On October 12, 1985 we will dedicate the

reopening of the San Cristobal Tunnel with speeches, blessings and christening of the workings. Michael Cox and workers have secured a good portion of the tunnel and developed a grand entrance. Plans are to rent two buses and shuttle everyone to the site for the celebration. The Board wishes to invite all Association members, pioneers and their families to the celebration.

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PIONEER DAY--ONE TO REMEMBER

Kitty called me a while back and said all Association Board members had to do their duty by writing an article apiece for the Newsletter. After some discussion we decided I should do one on my recollections of Pioneer Day. Not knowing exactly how to organize and write down all my happy memories, I decided to start at the very beginning and hop, skip and jump through the rest of it.

My first job occurred on Thursday before Pioneer Day when I had to pick up 150 chairs from Castellero Middle School. A steady stream of little boys dressed in black and grey and each carrying a chair reminded me of a colony of ants carrying food to their nest. In no time at all the job was accomplished, and I met Kitty and Mike and we went up the hill and unloaded and stacked the chairs behind the iron door inside the San Cristobal for safe keeping. By the time we finished it seemed like we had handled 1500 chairs instead of a mere 150

Saturday morning I got up expecting to see a gorgeous day. Instead it was overcast, cold and miserable, however, by the time I arrived in New Almaden the sun was peeking through the overcast and the day ended by being one of the loveliest of fall days. Up at the San Cristobal, all was in a state of disarray but when it was time for the first guests to begin arriving shortly after 11, chairs were set up for the dedication, picnic tables were covered with bright tablecloths, and mouth-watering aromas were filling the air,

I was in charge of the parking lot and immediately I had a problem--try as I did I couldn't unlock the lock so I could open the gate to let the buses take the passengers up the hill. "I guess I'm going to have to tell everybody they'll have to hike up", I thought to myself but luck was with me. In the nick of time Dennis Beeson arrived and deftly unlocked the gate. A big sigh of relief at this point! Patience and goodwill were shown by all those in the parking lot while they waited for the buses to make their long slow trip up and down the hill. Eventually all were on their way and as I was climbing into my friend's truck to bring up the rear I noticed a head among the cars. A few silent expletives about tardy people got me over to the head which turned out to be two people from SJSU's Channel 54 with all their equipment and hoping to cover the event. Super! They had never been to New Almaden and had gotten lost several times. I apologized for my thoughts and told them to follow us up. There I noticed a man in a blue jacket walking down the road and looking our way. I decided not to let exasperation get the best of me-- we were already one hour late so a few more delays wouldn't matter--and asked if he was planning to go

up the hill. As he was telling me that he certainly was going to participate, I recognized Father Nojia. Luck was with me again, I think.

The speakers at the dedication were exceptional--not one thought he was more important than the others so the speeches were short, to the point and so interesting.

When it came time for lunch, Norm Pope decided not to go up to the picnic area because it was too difficult. A group of strapping young men was standing nearby talking to Clyde Arbuckle so I asked them for some help with getting Norm and the wheelchair up the hill. Almost before the words were out of my mouth, "the boys", including Clyde, whisked Norm up the hill and got him seated at a table.

I could go on recalling happy memories. Instead some quotes from comments made after the event seem to summarize the day best: Our family had a wonderful time that day.. "Another memory to add to past ones of New Almaden experiences...", "My dad will fondly remember his 75th birthday and all the wonderful people...", "your combined enthusiasms are contagious...", "Your group surely knows how to put on a good party...", "It took me back to my days at Club Almaden...", "Such nice people and such a good meal...", ..your lovely and good and filling lunch...", "The grand function...", "What magnificent country!" Virginia Hammerness

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1986

4TH ANNUAL PIONEER DAY - October 11, 1986

Can we top the 3rd Pioneer Day at the San Cristobol Tunnel? Yes: The Mercury Mining Museum in New Almaden is undergoing a dramatic change. Your Association received a Stella B. Gross grant last year and we are using the entire amount to prepare the artifacts purchased by the County Parks Department.

The County Museum at Connie Perham's site will be in great shape for a terrific Pioneer Day activity on October 11, 1986. Please come and share with us the exhilaration of seeing the museum completed and prepared for opening. The Day will begin with (1) tours from 10:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M.; (2) a program featuring our honored guest, Constance Perham and our guest speaker, historian, Attorney Austin Warburton; (3) Bar-B-Que Luncheon (provided by the Association to honor you and our Pioneers) at 12:00 noon; (4) tours again after Luncheon. The complete program will be held at the Museum in New Almaden. Parking will be along the road or at the Reduction Site at the end of the block.

The County of Santa Clara Parks Department purchased the mining artifacts from Constance Perham in November 1985. The building in which they are housed was leased by the County in June 1986. These buildings are an interim housing for the Museum while a permanent museum is being built on County property at the Reduction Site within Quicksilver Park.

Construction of the permanent museum has had a major setback. The study on mercury vapors in the soil at the site is not complete and a decision on fill and capping has not been made. In the meantime, your Association has asked for financial aid from different quarters throughout the County to help off-set the cost of reorganizing and cataloguing the museum artifacts. The cost of completing the project is \$7,450.00. We had \$5,000.00 so we have asked for help on the additional \$2,450.00.

With these projects underway it seemed only fitting to hold Pioneer Day at our major project for the year. We hope you can join us. Kitty Monahan
Quicksilver Mining Museum 268-1729

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PIONEER DAY 1986

Once again our wonderful New Almaden Pioneers rose to the occasion and succeeded in turning an October day into a glorious, sunny delightful event. Mike Cox and Mickie Ryan organized the museum to outshine museums, Don Weden directed the program like a pro, and Dutch Mapes and Nancy cooked up a delicious Chicken Bar-B-Que. With the printed programs meticulously designed by Friedolin Kessler, the tables decorated with class by Peggy Melbourne and our friends directed so successfully by guide, Kay Carmody, everything was in place for a terrific guest speaker, Austin Warburton. Austin announce the special message of the day "Dedication to Constance Perham" for the untiring effort on behalf of the New Almaden-Mining Museum. He chronicled Connies' 1st interest to the area, through to her final sale of her collected artifact to the Santa Clara County Parks Department. Austin's speech was the No. 1 speech we have had at Pioneer Day and we wish we had it on tape. Many thanks to all the folks who came and to those who helped, especially Virginia Hammerness for again providing all the chairs and Eddie Lewis the Bar-B-Que equipment delivered. But we are most grateful to the Parks Department for their encouragement and for the great presentation and help by Kathy Carpenter, Reservation Chief of the Parks Department.

Margaret Teufil, who helped serve, set up and prepare the location for the day, recaps the day as such:

"The First thing I recall on Pioneer Day is the frothy beer I was serving. People wanted an ice cold beer and I was serving froth, but! Everyone was just enjoying themselves, having a good time, seeing the museum, hearing the speakers on future plans, and a delightful lunch afterwards. What more could one ask for. It was a grand day!"

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PIONEER DAY REMINICESSES:

In October, my sister, Phyllis Shawhan, and her husband HR (his full name, by the way) visited us from their home in Pleasantville, New York.

Among other activities, we took them to the Pioneer Day barbecue and program and the reopening of the refurbished Museum. Afterwards we drove them up Mine Hill as far as the reduction works. On the way they were fascinated by the various rocks and rock formations, and HR found a small especially handsome piece of serpentine -- a lovely bright green.

In the days that followed, Friedolin mounted the rock on a small block of vermilion wood to be used as a desk pen-holder. HR was to take it home as a memento of the trip. Several weeks after their return home, we received color photos of the finished piece sitting on HR's desk. Included was a letter of thanks which said in part:

"Of all the things we did -- and they were many -- I am finding, curiously, that the one which crops up most in my mind was the New Almaden trip. When I look at the serpentine in the pen stand, I remember the rust and greenish hued face of the scarred hill, the reduction works below, and the magnificent, rough mountains and valleys surrounding us all lit up by the singular sunlight of California. This is the California I remember from forty-five to fifty years ago, and deep in my heart I still love it very much."

Carol Kessler
MINE HILL 184

<https://sccparks.pastperfectonline.com/archive/630F5654-14E6-4544-AAAC-534939243549>

1987

GRAND OPENING MERCURY MINING MUSEUM October 10, 1987

Pioneer Day this year will be held at the Museum with an OPENING CEREMONY featuring a color guard, ribbon cutting, speaker and Bar B-Que. The Santa Clara County Parks Director, Douglas Gaynor, will be our guest speaker and stories from our Pioneers will be related.

The event will begin at 12:00 noon and conclude with tours through the Museum. Please come and share the Association's pleasure of honoring our Pioneers, and opening the Museum to the public. Parking will be along the road or at the reduction site within Quicksilver Park.

PO. Box 129, New Almaden.CA 95042

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PIONEER DAY

With a pictorial designed program front by Friedolin Kessler, all were invited to attend the Association's 5th Annual Pioneer Day on Saturday, October 10th. The cover of the

invitation was a photo reflection of customs - products - families of times past and a great piece for framing. Thank YOU Friedolin! Your best yet!

The day was a sunny fall day. Tables and decorations were in place on time by a nervous Kitty Monahan and a crew of forgot-to-getters. Mike Cox did a great job as master of ceremonies. We had many speakers who contributed their knowledge of New Almaden's history with reference of time - past, present and the future. Thank you Clyde Arbuckle, Ray Stark and many others.

Half way through the program all were invited to a special lunch of Miner's Stew and all the trimmings. Homemade dessert: put the finishing touch to a great meal. All was served by Dutch and Nancy Mapes. After lunch and a few more speakers, we had the long-awaited ribbon cutting ceremony by Kitty Monahan. The museum is now officially open.

In conclusion, this was a very special day at which to meet old friends and acquaintances and share stories and tales about this special place of ours so that its historic value will never be lost.

Hope all of you will share this special day with us next year.

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1988

Saturday, October 8, 1988. Pioneer Day, in Englishtown
During the Santa Clara County Fair volunteers will be needed to help staff the County Parks and Recreation booth. Volunteers will receive free admission to the Fair. For information and volunteering call: 268-1729 or 268-6591.

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From the money we received from dues, donations and tours we gave during the summer, we were able to put on a magnificent Pioneer Days -- feeding 150 people. Looks like Pioneer Day is here to stay -- free and fun.

PIONEER DAY 1988 by AGNES YUSEFF

Pioneer Day -- October 8 -- highlighted "Back to School" honoring the memory of our Englishtown School House On Mine Hill. We were transported To Mine Hill by a van lent for the day by the St. Anthony Parish, driven by Mike and Sandy Furnish and the thrilling rides in various trucks.

Sparkling October weather, coupled with the warmth of friendships, as over one hundred friends and neighbors enjoyed the delicious barbequed chicken and extras prepared by Nancy and Dutch Mapes. Tables, decorated by Peggy Melbourne, carried out the theme

of the day with schoolhouse centerpieces --complete even to the red apple for the teacher! Souvenir programs pictured the schoolhouse and keepsake square nails from the original building.

Speakers reminisced about mining days. Frank Kambish and Steve Saunders, Superintendent of Almaden Schools, told interesting incidents. Norman Pope's story of the moving of the schoolhouse drinking fountain to the grounds of the Randol School was read by his son, Greg Pope. Friedolin Kessler and Don N:eden shared their memories of the past while Michael Cox shed light on future prospects for Quicksilver County Park's resource center. Constance Perham introduced honored visitors -- the Delaato Family -- who are direct descendants of Andre Castillero.

Father Bob Hayes completed the program by blessing the site of the schoolhouse and everyone present. We were indeed blessed!

All who attended owe thanks to Kitty Monahan and Virginia Hammerness and their hard working committee who made our sixth annual Pioneer Day an, outstanding success. We can hardly wait for next year!

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1989

INVITATION TO PIONEER DAY

In keeping with stories handed down about the barbeques, picnics and games held at Bull Run, we invite you to recelebrate the carefree fun days at the Delores Taranga area.

On October 19, 1989 our 7th Annual PIONEER DAY will be held up on mine Hill Road at the beautiful grove area - the site of endless drilling contests - where the Delores Taranga tunnel was reopened in 1960.

We hope to recreate these events and hear stories from you and all of our Pioneers about the mystery of the name - DELORES TARANGA. Does anyone know where the name originated, when the tunnel was first opened, who lived in the house at the site and what other types of games were held in the area?

Please join us Saturday, October 14, 1989 at 11:00 a.m. at the Reduction Works at the end of the Hacienda in New Almaden. We will transport you to the site. The cost for the day including food will be \$5.00. We are so anxious to see you that we will provide transportation from your house to the Reduction Site if you need a ride, and also provide overnight accommodations if needed.

Give me a call at 268-6541 for any further information. Looking forward to enjoying a beautiful day with you.

KITTY MONAHAN

<https://sccparks.pastperfectonline.com/archive/4E5C4EDE-2E05-40D0-BC5C-104297994769>

Oldtimers recall glory days of New Almaden/Quicksilver Delores, Delores, who were you? Whoever you were and whenever you lived long ago, you would have been happy to see the fun loving group who gathered in the grounds adjacent to your tumbled down cottage. The area is a treeshaded spot about two miles up Mine Hill Road and is called Bull Run. The area was used long ago for the games and barbecues held by the mining companies and actually for bull fights. The little cottage was last occupied by the Weedon family, and later vandalized and now lies in a tumbled heap.

About 85 participants gathered there to talk of old times and how they participated in the mining companies and the activities during that era. A delicious barbecue was served under the beautiful old oak trees and bay trees.

After the barbecue, several of the oldtimers shared stories of the old mine and the people who lived there. Dorothy Rolb Mansfield said that she lived in Englishtown and drove trucks during the war.

Sylvia Climo Miller lived at her grandmother's nearby house for two years at the turn of the century. "We moved to Mr. Bullion near Mariposa in 1902 and were back in San Jose during the (1906) earthquake. I graduated from the old San Jose High School in 1918, then moved to San Francisco."

Ethel Sparachino recalled that her family had lived in this area since the 1860's. "My family came from Cornwall, England. My father and grandmother were born here in these hills. Mother was a Hodge-Bunnies. She knew everything about the area and could have told you so much about its history. I remember that we used to picnic here every Sunday by the creek."

Connie Perham, who founded the New Almaden museum in 1949, celebrated her 89th birthday at the park. She operated the private museum until 1983, when she retired. She recounted her life in the area, including the fact that she was born in Englishtown, just down the road from the day's celebration. She has lived in New Almaden since 1924 and first worked for her father's grocery store.

"One day when my son, Frank, was not quite two, I made a delivery at that home over there." She pointed to what's left of the small wooden cottage now in a heap. "I hurriedly put my baby and a dog inside the house when I saw a snake nearby. I ran over, picked up the snake and cut off its head and tail. That's the day Frank took his first steps."

That little boy is Frank Kambish, now 50. He was the last to operate a mine in this area. He recalled the contests they used to hold near the Delores Taranga tunnel to determine

who could most quickly drill four inches. He introduced Art Morrell, who also mined the Delores Taranga tunnel, and Chuck Rich, another miner.

After the official festivities, people participated in hikes around the Delores Taranga tunnel site to get better acquainted with a small part of the history.

Kitty Monahan, president of the New Almaden Quicksilver County Park Association, organized the day's events. She said she had looked forward to hearing stories from some of the pioneers and learning more of the area's history. "We did recreate the carefree, fun days we have heard about. It was a great day."

All who are associated with the Park look forward to our Pioneer Day. It has been held in many locations over the past seven years: in the grounds of the Museum, at Englishtown, by the San Cristobal mine, and the last one at Bull Run. Where next year? It will be somewhere just as exciting - wait and see.

Kay Carmady

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1990

Pioneer Day 1990

Pioneer day 1990 started out with a bang! This was the eighth of the annual events, and on Wednesday, October 10, 1990, the San Jose Mercury News printed an article by Michelle Guido which announced the celebration. This caused a quandary for the Quicksilver Board of Directors: How many people to prepare for?

When Saturday, October 13th arrived, the weather was fine and an even greater than expected number of guests was ready to ascend Mine Hill to the Powder House area. Dick Forst reported that there were 150 paid attendees, which did not include children, so the total audience was perhaps 200 (over twice the previous gatherings which may say something for the power of the press). Kitty Monahan announced before the meal that we might be short on food and those assembled seemed to accept that in good spirit. Perhaps it wouldn't have mattered because at picnics whatever food or drink available will be consumed.

During the meal, slim John Goldsworthy serenaded us with dinner music which made a pleasant interlude.

Kitty had coerced Mark Frederick, Quicksilver Park Planner, into being Master of Ceremonies. Mark told of Kitty educating him in the history of Quicksilver Park and its abundant plant growth and wildlife. He then introduced Chuck Rich, one of the last miners on the hill.

Chuck told us that his wife and he had raised a family in that area. He said that the Powder House was built with two walls because old-time dynamite was unstable and a change in the weather could set it off. He understood that the insulation between the walls was horse manure. The dynamite that Chuck used was not as touchy. Chuck did everything underground. One day he was ahead of the locomotive when an ore car came off the tracks. Everything but Chuck stopped.

OSHA condemned the mine, so Chuck and three other partners ran the operation and fed the furnace for five years. A prodigious feat! Chuck talked his wife into coming to live on the Hill. During those five years his children were born. Chuck and Ruth were the last couple to have a baby (now 28) born up on the Hill. Chuck was able to buy his house, a pickup truck and a car during that time. That was in 1964.

Next, John Slenter, member of Quicksilver Association, presented a history of explosives. Alfred Nobel invented dynamite in 1867. Before that, black powder was used. Dynamite consists of measured amounts of sawdust and nitro-glycerine. It was short tempered and so was replaced by sodium nitrate. Explosives require a fuse and a blasting cap to detonate the charge. John did not set off a charge. He explained the various patterns used in drilling the face of the mine. He demonstrated a fuse burn. Misfire is the worst problem. The miners would count and wait 45 minutes to assure that a charge was indeed a dud. Freezing was not a problem in this area. John did not know of any mishaps at this mine, but Chuck knew of a fellow who was blasted with dynamite. He bet his partner on how long he would wait. The charge went off before the challenged fellow left and he only lost his hearing in one ear. Chuck would arrange to set off the charges at quitting time, counted the blasts and did not return until the next day. Charges that did not explode were called "sleepers".

Frank Fenton, of Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation and the liaison for the Historical Heritage Commission, informed the guests that the earthquake damaged the Powder House and FE14A has approved funds to repair the vaulted brick roofing which had come down. The Historical Heritage Commission is working to preserve and protect places and things of historical value. Frank hopes that within the next year the work on the Powder House will be completed.

Next Alan La Fleur, Deputy Director Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation, explained that mitigation of the toxics issue has to be accomplished before we can proceed with developing the park. A remedial action plan should be completed by the middle of 1991, and the master plan should be done by 1992. The toxics issue must be solved before work can proceed. Alan said the community spirit in New Almaden is a real advantage for getting things accomplished in the park. A risk assessment firm is to be chosen by November; this assessment must be done in 180 days. After that a draft remedial action plan, which will take three to four months, will identify problems which must be addressed.

Susanne Wilson, Santa Clara County Supervisor, outlined the cost of purchasing the park property. This Hill attracts controversy. Balancing the relieving of mental stress against

toxicity problems in the park, Susanne finds that the serenity of the park outweighs the hazards of toxics. She stated that beginning in 1975, with the purchase of 2,465 acres from New Idria Mining and Chemical Company for \$2,000,000, until now, the county has invested a little over \$5,250,000 to purchase a total of 3,605 acres for the park. She urged us to vote YES on measure A for the establishment of a Santa Clara County Open Space Authority. She said that a two thirds majority is required for the measure to pass. Kitty Monahan introduced the Quicksilver Association Board of Directors. She explained that in April of each year trails are upgraded by the Association, that a quarterly Newsletter is published, and that Pioneer Day is sponsored by the Association. This year the Association has also undertaken the job of publishing a book written by Jimmie Schneider.

Jimmie Schneider's daughter, Jo Schneider Young, was introduced by Kitty. Jo said much of her childhood was spent on the Hill. Her father's book was 60 years in the making and it is exciting to know that it will finally be printed. Jimmie had thoroughly explored this area and knew it better than anybody else. He had been a geology-botany major at Stanford and was well equipped to write a book. Since he wanted to write about mining, he became a miner. The book is about the miners and the litigation over the mine; it will be an adjunct to Cinnabar Hills. Jimmie had a prune packing plant in San Jose where he spent five days a week. Most of the rest of the time he spent at this mine. The book was finished in the late '60's and the original publisher died before the book was printed. Now the book is soon to be printed - watch for it.

Forest Goldsworthy told us that the miners' inch thick pasties were heated on miner's stoves - shovels with a candle supplying the heat.

Clyde Arbuckel told of his friendship with Jimmie Schneider. Clyde has been coming here since 1932. He said that this mine is the most important mine in the state of California. It broke an international monopoly held by the Rothchilds who operated the Almaden, Spain, mines with convict labor. Until New Almaden commenced operations in 1845, the Spanish mine was the main source of quicksilver in the world. The chief reduction agent for the recovery of gold and silver was quicksilver until the cyanide process was discovered in 1887. Castellero's recognition of the New Almaden mineral in 1845 gave us control of our own destiny.

Richard Wachs

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1991

PIONEER DAY IX - OCTOBER 12, 1991

The site for the ninth Pioneer Day had been inspected and prepared. Ed Lewis had done much of the work to have the area ready and accessible for the 120 people who made the hot dusty ride to the American Mine location. It was worth the trip because the glade which had been chosen was shaded and pleasant.

The menu, in keeping with the American theme of the day, included potato salad, hamburgers, hot dogs, apple pie, and ice cream. While the picnic lunch was being consumed, John Goldsworthy played the guitar and sang. The pioneers never had it so good.

While the adults were reminiscing, Ranger Chris Crockett led the children on a nature walk. The feature of the adventure was the discovery of coyote droppings.

Master of Ceremonies John Slenter announced that this ninth Pioneer Day was to honor those men who worked in the mines. He said that "Harpers New Monthly Magazine" had carried articles about New Almaden in 1863 and 1865.

Bob Clement was introduced and led those assembled on an oral nature walk. He described the trees in the grove and noted that the people who had worked in New Almaden were more interested in what was in the ground than what was on the ground. Trees were cut to fuel the furnaces and support the mine workings. As a result of such activities, 70% of California is covered with non-native bunch grasses.

The trees in the park are mostly native except around Spanishtown. Live oaks are green all year and provide acorns for animal species, such as pigs and turkeys, which have been introduced. Oaks can die from overwatering. Eucalyptus were brought here about 150 years ago and are usable as firewood but not lumber. Beetles may destroy them. Brush is normally controlled by fire, but this has not been the case in the recent past. Grass does not present a major problem because such fires do not burn hot enough to ignite trees.

During a walk in the park, animals and birds may be observed. Rattlesnakes in the park should be avoided. Generally the snakes will see people and stay away, but if surprised, they will react. There are two species of the pigs: some are European with curly tails and small heads, and some are wild pigs with large tails and big heads. Pigs are rooters and turn everything over in their search for food.

John Slenter then introduced Chuck Rich who was one of the last miners on the Hill. When New Idria Mining Company, which owned the property, decided that it could no longer work the mine profitably because, among other factors, safety and health regulations for companies with ten or more employees required large expenditures of money, Chuck and three men decided to work the mine as self-employed individuals. He said that his group worked the mine between 1964 and 1966. These were profitable years because mercury (also known as quicksilver) sold for as much as \$770 per 76 pound flask. The present price is \$110-\$115 per flask. During that period, Chuck bought his house, a truck, and got married.

It had been said by the company that twenty men were required to run the furnace, but Chuck and his three co-workers were able to do the job - incentive! Chuck believes that there is as much good ore left in the hills as has been removed. Perhaps if the price of

mercury rises to former levels, Santa Clara County could become financially sound once again.

Frank Ammerman, who had worked at the Guadalupe Mine, followed Chuck. He said that when they could see ore between the blade and the track of the bulldozer, they had a workable contact, where country rock and the ore body meet.

He learned underground mining at Rocky Point - drilling and mucking. There was rock near the entrance which let loose and required excavation before mining could be performed.

At the Providencia more drilling was necessary to provide space for larger people. Mr. Ammerman added that since those days the valley has changed: smog and houses now dominate the scene. He noted that mine lighting has changed from candlestick to carbide lamp to battery pack.

Craig Stolburg was introduced. He said the miners who worked at New Almaden had come from various countries. The carbide lamp which had been introduced about 1800 provided good lighting. It operated by dripping water into calcium carbide which produced acetylene gas which could be ignited. The miner's lamp cost one dollar in 1950 and the miners took good care of it.

It was in 1915 - 1916 that the electric lamp was invented, and it has been in use since that time.

Friedolin Kessler was the next speaker. Friedolin was the camp artist for the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) when it had a camp at New Almaden. He came from St. Louis in 1936 where the burning of soft coal for heating purposes required that street lights be turned on at noon. The valley was smog free then so Friedolin stayed here. The pits and mining tunnels were open at that time, and the CCC was located at Englishtown. The tombstones in the graveyard were of wood, but Friedolin was not a collector at that time, and he did not record the information on those markers.

On the left side of the Pioneer Day program is a reproduction of a banner (12 inches long) which is over 100 years old. It contains 38 stars and was probably made to commemorate Colorado's statehood. The banner was embroidered possibly around 1876 with machine or hand done precision.

Steven Saunder, retired superintendent of the Hacienda School, was introduced by Friedolin.

Mike Cox, a geologist who was here during the twilight days of mining, described the sealing of the mine openings after the county purchased the park. He investigated the possible toxic residues in 1989 - 1990. The only large trees in the park are those that were left standing during the mining operations. Quicksilver Mining Company looked for more ore with shallow workings at the American Mine. Later diggings were made from the 700

level to the 900 level, but the mine was flooded with water. Another tunnel was attempted, but the mine manager wrote "...Do not have tools to conquer the mountain in such a mood."

The star of the day was Mrs. Lucchese, who was born in Spanishtown in 1894, and who moved to the Hacienda when she was 8. She recalled the balmy evenings in the Hacienda when everybody went out in front and played in the Acequia and listened to strolling musicians. Eventually her family moved into San Jose where, never again, was she to experience such friendliness as she had known in New Almaden.

The next speaker, Richard Hill, talked about the restoration of the Hacienda Cemetery by the California Pioneers with a grant from the Santa Clara County Historic Heritage Commission. Mr. Hill requested information from anybody who has knowledge of people buried in the cemetery because they are doing a plot map.

Mohamed Assaf, County Parks Director, reviewed the actions the county had taken to determine the plan necessary to relocate the museum. The study started in 1984 and a meeting will be held next month to set an implementation plan.

Kitty Monahan, Association President, gave special thanks to Peggy Melbome and Dutch and Nancy Mapes for their efforts in preparing the food and tables. She noted that Ray Stark, who lived by the Day Tunnel, was celebrating his eighty first birthday. She also thanked John Atwood for the informational articles he has supplied. The center piece was raffled, and the picnickers returned to the Reduction Works area.

Dick Wachs

PIONEER DAY

October 12, 1991

The America Shaft. The mine was opened in September, 1863. The workings were plagued with hard rock and excessive water. In 1885, a steam hoisting works and pump were installed and functioned until 1888, when the underground area was subjected to great flooding, submerging the equipment and rousing the abandonment of the mine. The shaft reached a depth of 700 feet.

Master of Ceremonies John Slenter America Mine Miners Frank Kambish Chuck Rich Ray Stark and many others Entertainment John Goldsworthy
Banner Information The banner, on the left, was discovered at a flea market in New Almaden several years ago. The 38th star was added July 4, 1877 and represented the state of Colorado, admitted as a state in August, 1876.

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1992

Could you believe, we will be celebrating our 10th Annual Pioneer Day on October 10, 1992? This year we will be honoring the alumni of the National Association of Civilian Conservation Core. The alumni of the Mt. Madonna CCC at New Almaden resided in Englishtown during the 1930's. Their work and historical significance is depicted in a monument, designed and built by NAQCPA Board Member Fredolin Kessler, and will be dedicated during Pioneer Day on October 10th. Please put this date on you calendar. We will be leaving the Hacienda entrance to the Quicksilver Park at 11:00 A.M.

Transportation up and down the hill will be provided for everyone by your association. The dedication at the Monument, led by the alumni of the CCC, will be from 12:00 noon to 1:00 P.M. A Bar-B-Que luncheon will follow. All this for \$5.00 per adult! During the luncheon we will hear great stories from our pioneers and their families. If you need any further instruction for this fabulous day, please call (408)2686541.
Kitty Monahan

<https://sccparks.pastperfectonline.com/archive/A1160E02-8005-4DD6-A89D-979801720212>

We just concluded the tenth anniversary of Pioneer Day. Thanks to the help of many hard working members, the event was another marvelous success. Over 200 people enjoyed a warm fall day, great food, and a special dedication of the California Conservation Corps monument in Englishtown. If you have not seen this fine work of art created by Friedolin Kessler commemorating the work done by the Corps members, contact me and we will arrange a date to enjoy the trip together.

Pioneer Day Number Ten (or X)

Many celebrations are billed as "The first annual event of its kind", but many of them become the only event of its kind. Perhaps that is because it takes more than enthusiasm to sustain an annual observance. It takes a dedicated group of people who persevere, plan and prepare for such occasions. That is why it was with great pride that the New Almaden Quicksilver County Park Association staged its tenth annual Pioneer Day on October 10, 1992, on Church Hill in Quicksilver Park.

The theme of this year's observance was the dedication of the Camp Mt. Madonna Commemorative Monument to the Civilian Conservation Corps. The program was co-sponsored by the New Almaden Quicksilver County Park Association and alumni of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Participating groups include the presently functioning California Conservation Corps and the California Cornish Cousins. Thus it was CCC day - and if we include the pioneers from Spanishtown - Si, Si, Si!

Friedolin Kessler was the Master of Ceremonies. The program commenced with the invocation by Father Bob Hayes followed by the call to colors by Dave Mitchell and the raising of the flag by Roderick McDermott and Verna Johnson. Mark Biondich led the pledge of allegiance.

Friedolin Kessler said that when he stood by the flag pole in 1936, he would have considered it preposterous if anyone had told him he would be here 56 years later. One purpose of the CCC alumni is to erect markers and monuments so that the CCC accomplishments will be remembered. Past president of the local chapter, Rod Caldwell, initiated the idea of erecting a monument at this location after County approval. Alumnus Charles Event started the fund-raising campaign by donating a carved statue for raffle. The Santa Clara County Historic Heritage Commission granted major funding. Basic labor was performed by the California Conservation Corps.

Work started in February and was planned for 3 months; it took 8 months! Murphy's law prevailed.

Volunteers included: Rod Caldwell, Ron McDermott, and Mark Biondich (CCC alumni), Parks Department Director Doug Gaynor, Mark Fredicks and rangers. California Conservation Corps Director Joe Griffin provided basic labor with work crews. NAQCPA supported the project.

Provenzano supplied materials; Mike Cox, geologist, selected the stones; and Kitty Monahan, Elania Rivera, Mark Biondich, Mike Cox, and Ray Stark collected them. Kitty Monahan and Dutch Mapes took on the job of problem solvers. Steve Rafferty and brick layer apprentices laid bricks on steps and the pathway. To continue with the pioneer Day program, Friedolin introduced 13th District Congressman Norman Mineta who recalled visiting Judge Peckam's ranch nearby in 1939.

Jim Beale spoke in place of Dominic Cortese. Jim's brother, a geologist, introduced him to the history of the area. He has hopes for a greenbelt in this area one day soon. Supervisor Michael Honda noted that large numbers of people showed the need for such parks. He said that this is an investment in the future.

Mark Frederick, park planner, said that this is a most historic park and it was a pleasure to work on the project.

The next speaker was Frank Fenton, management analyst, who said he enjoys the diversity in the park

Ed Teresi, chairman of the Santa Clara County Historic Heritage Commission which provided major funding for the monument, asked that the alumni assemble at the monument for a picture.

Jack Douglas, SJSU archivist, enjoyed his work here from 1935 -1939. He noted that this monument was not built by a public agency. On October 21 of this year, the CCC archives were dedicated at the Wahlquist Library on the SJSU campus.

Richard Clanton, California State Department of Forestry, set the tone for the Department of Forestry. There were 33 camps under the interagency direction of the state and federal

authorities. CCC labor provided many of the facilities now used by the CDF.

Friedolin introduced the dynamic president of the Quicksilver Association, Kitty Monahan. She described an interview with the Almaden Times news editor, Dale Bryant. Dale spent most of the day with Kitty and a brief time with Friedolin. When the article appeared in the Times, it was devoted to Friedolin. Then Kitty told of the travails of the flag being stuck at the top of the flag pole and finally being rescued by a GSA cherry picker. In conclusion, Kitty announced the publication of Jimmie Schneider's book. Joe Griffin, Bay Area Director of the California Conservation Corps, introduced Corps members who were present and the community support group.

Director of the Southwest Regional National Association of the CCC Alumni, Martin Corpender, was pleased that this monument had been erected to recognize the CCC's work.

Donald Hobart, historian for that alumni group who brought Mr. Bob Pauling, a 97 year old World War 1, World War 11 and CCC veteran, as a guest. Mr Hobart closed this camp November 14, 1939.

Ray Stark presented a picture of the camp as it was to Friedolin followed by Rodney Caldwell dedicating the monument. He described projects and work performed by the CCC groups stationed at this site. He noted that the flag, which had flown over the U.S. Capitol, was obtained through the offices of Norman Mineta.

The group then ascended Church Hill for lunch. During lunch John Goldsworthy sang and accompanied himself on the guitar. While we were eating Joe Roberts, president of the California Cornish Cousins was introduced, as was Gage McKinney, also of that organization.

And so back down the hill, while fire engine sirens were screaming a warning of fire in the hills across Alamos Creek from the park. Now, it's now back to the drawing board to plan next years Pioneer Day
Richard Wachs

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1993

"Our Cornish Cousins" is the theme for the October 1993 Pioneer Day. We will be celebrating this event up in Englishtown, or as some call the location "Cornish Camp". The day will start at 11:00AM with the usual meeting at the Hacienda site of the entrance to Quicksilver Park in New Almaden. Then we will drive everyone up to the picnic area under the trees at the site of the original Methodist church. The day will be punctuated with good food, good music, great stories of the days gone by, and tours of the historic towns. The cost for the day will be our standard \$5.00 per person, collected at the foot of

the mountain and used to defray the cost of the food and drink provided. So, wear your grubbies, bring your family and friends and a good appetite and prepare to be pioneered. Pioneer Day October 9, 1993 11:00AM Meet at the Reduction Works in the Hacienda in New Almaden. For more information, call Kitty at 268-6541.

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PIONEER DAY XI

Happenings do not just happen They are the result of planning and preparation. And so it was with the eleventh annual Pioneer Day, October 9, 1993, honoring our Cornish Cousins. The Board of Directors of the New Almaden Quicksilver County Part. Association planned the event which was held at English Town (also known as "Cornish Camp").

The program was designed by Friedolin Kessler, and the set-up preparation of the area was done by Martha Hanisch, Kay Carmody, Virginia Hammerness, Ed Lewis, Nancy and Becky Mapes, and Peggy Melbourne. A caravan of trucks took the participants to English 'town; drivers were Virginia Hammerness, Peg Melbourne, and Chuck Rich. When everyone arrived, it was time for lunch - pasties, salad, saffron bread (by Virginia Hammerness), burnt almond cake, with coffee and lemonade.

Welcoming speeches were given by Kitty Monahan (President, New Almaden Quicksilver County Park Association) and Dick Chamberlain (President-elect, California Cornish Cousins)

Russell Pearce presented information on the Cornish Pump. Mining is a difficult and hazardous profession. Besides the obvious hazards of cave-ins; and lack of oxygen, underground water can defeat a mining operation, and Mr. Pearce presented information on how the Cornish Pump was used to de-water the mines and recover ore in locations which might not have been possible without the pump.

Gage McKinney then described the efforts that are being made to prepare an index of people who came from Cornwall and Wales to the United States. They moved west in increments. The Hennwoods, Jeffreys, and Bishops came from Devon, while the Jameses and Tregonings arrived from Wales. There were Jameses and Rickards who came via Australia. These people moved to mining districts in the United States in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut Wisconsin, and Michigan. They moved west to Grass Valley, Montana, and the Comstock in Nevada, There were also Irish miners and Scottish miners. The day concluded with groups led by Eddie Lewis and Rick Ray touring, English Town, and another group toured Spanish Camp, the Cora Blanca tunnel and the Rotary Furnace with Mike Cox.

Richard Wachs and Peggy Melbourne

Pioneer Day Agenda

Truck caravan to English Town (also known as "Cornish Camp")

Cornish pasty lunch Welcome: Kitty Monahan president, New Almaden Quicksilver County Park Association
Dick Chamberlain, president-elect California Cornish Cousins
The Cornish Pump: -Russell Pedro, Cornish Camp Population: -Gage McKinney
Music entertainment: *Ranger John Goldsworthy Mine Hill tours-
:English Town tour [walking) Spanish Town Tour (truck) , including the Cora Blanca Tunnel and Rotary Furnace.

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1994

Pioneer Days '94: a dynamite event

Come celebrate with us on Saturday, October 8, 1994, when we dedicate the rebuilt Powder House as the focus of our annual New Almaden Pioneer Day. The Powder House, as you may remember, is a small brick structure used to store explosives during the heyday of the mining operations. It suffered considerable damage during the 1989 earthquake. Thanks to persistence of the Parks Department and some Federal Emergency (FEMA) money, the building was returned to its pristine beauty. We'll celebrate its rebirth with a real old time miners' meal and lots of fun. Association members will receive a personal Invitation to the event in September. If you're not a member, now's a good time to fill out the form on the back of the newsletter and send it in.

Kitty Monahan, President 268-6541

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PIONEER DAY XII - A CELEBRATION

A celebration in the sun, that's what it was A hot, hot day, with a beautiful view of the valley below us and the marvelously reconstructed Powder House above us It was Pioneer Day XII on October 8 near the Victoria Shaft on Mine Hill.

About 150 people sat down to a meal of deep gulch chili served in tin cups, miners' salad, sarsaparilla (root beer), camp coffee, hunks of sourdough bread, apples right off the tree and oven fresh cookies Guests tossed their Quicksilver Park commemorative cups in the brown paper bag "placemats" after the meal as take-home gifts.

Before lunch even got under way the miners' mail came! What a surprise to see local mailman Manny Martinez drive up the hill with a really special delivery greeting from County Supervisor Michael Honda.

The communique was accepted by Parks and Rec Director, Mark Frederick. He read aloud the Board of Supervisors' resolution recognizing the restoration of the Powder House and explained about the restoration funding through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Mr. Frederick also revealed the exciting news about the

imminent acquisition of Jacques Ridge, as well as outlining the mitigation measures being taken to prepare for the relocation of the Quicksilver Museum to the old Reduction Works site.

In the best old time tradition, Father Jack LaRocca gave a warm and wonderful blessing for the Powder House and the guests.

You can't get a bunch of miners together without a lot of good mining stories. And that we had.

John Slenter, surely California's most avid amateur collector of mining memorabilia, put on his head lamp and told us everything we ever wanted to know about explosives, aided by his explosive friend, Craig Stolburg (see sidebar).

Nat to be outdone by the dynamic duo, miner Frank Kambish narrated some Powder House history and legends. Geologist Mike Cox told how his search of the Stanford archives had unearthed an 1880 drawing of the old Powder House and related some mine history. (sidebar story)

Along with good stories goes good music. Our guitar playing friend John Goldsworthy dug up some fine folk and mining songs for our enjoyment. As a small Museum fund raiser copies of an old photo and map were raffled off, as were the wonderful dynamite-stick table decorations made by John Atwood and Jeanne Carevic. Miners and their families were hard workers and so were all the folks who made this event go so smoothly.

Extraordinary thanks to the Park Rangers who hauled all the tables and benches - including some brand new ones - up to the site. They also hauled load after load of guests up the hill and back again, taking the scenic route and offering nuggets of information on the way.

The miners' grub, including the outstanding beans, was prepared by Nancy and Dutch Mopes Cookies, table setting and serving, and all the other coordination of the day were provided by the Board and assorted Association members. As always, Kitty Monahan was the hub of the wheel.

We were proud to welcome Bob Amyx, who was the first Santa Clare County Director of Parks and Recreation, and more importantly, the Director when negotiations for the Park took place. We were also happy to welcome Danielle Kelly, representing Supervisor Honda.

By far the most important person there was YOU, and we were really glad you came. Story and sidebars thanks to Dick Wachs

SIDEBARS

MINERS' TALES FROM PIONEER DAY

John Slenter's Explosive Story or Why We Have A Powder House

Black powder is what they called it, the explosive used in mining before Alfred Nobel invented dynamite in 1867.

All blasting was done with black powder but there were major problems with it. It was totally unsuited for use in wet working conditions, which was, of course, common in underground workings. It created an enormous volume of fumes and lacked the shattering power which is typical of dynamite. Additionally, it was relatively inefficient in hard ground.

Dynamite solved all these problems but brought a host of new ones with it. As originally designed, dynamite was made by the simple process of soaking a measured amount of sawdust with a measured amount of nitroglycerine. The resulting product, while safer to handle than nitroglycerine by itself, was still highly unreliable.

It was a "shod tempered" type of explosive that was prone to explode without warning or apparent cause. It was subject to freezing and intolerant of much rough handling. It was also poisonous to men and animals. A special place had to be provided for storage and new rules had to be formulated for its usage. Thus men had to be trained on how to use it.

Dynamite was generally purchased in carload lots and delivered to the mine by the manufacturer. There it was stored in specially prepared magazines (powder houses!) that were safe, waterproof, and insulated against both excessive heat and freezing. Small amounts for daily use were brought and stored in especially prepared underground magazines. These would normally hold five or ten boxes of dynamite. They were kept locked and the keys kept in possession of the shift and slope bosses who were responsible for keeping daily records of the amount used and the location of use.

Mike Cox's Tales from the Mines or Who Was James Randol?

The Powder House was known as the Victoria Powder House because of its proximity to that shaft. But actually it was built to service the Randol Shaft.

And who indeed was Mr. Randol for whom the shaft was named? Not a miner but a New Yorker with a brief education in business. The Quicksilver Mining Company of New York hired him as secretary. Then in June, 1869, Samuel Butterworth offered Mr. Randol the position of general manager of New Almaden.

He accepted and started work in 1870 at \$7,500 a year. Since he had no experience in mining, he allowed the operations to continue as they had. But he processed all the paperwork and soon realized that the mines were in poor condition. He then consulted with Samuel Christy of the University of California. Christy recommended sinking a new exploratory shaft, the work began in June 1877. Hamilton Smith and Henry Janin planned the shaft and James Pearce was mine superintendent at the time.

Survey notes from 1872 indicate that the total depth of the shaft was 205 feet. It was 4x9 feet with a 4x4 foot area for pumping. It reached the level of the Day Tunnel, 500 feet, in 1879 by hand drilling, using timbers to protect the opening.

At 800 feet they struck good ore. Shaft sinking accelerated and by 1881 the shaft was 400 feet lower. By 1882 they knew they were in a rich ore body. Between 1880 and 1896, 200,000 flasks of mercury were extracted through the Randol Shaft. If the shaft had been sunk 25 feet to the southeast they would have missed the ore body.

The Randol Shaft went down dip (a dip is the angle from horizontal of the ore body) 700 feet to a depth of 7,800 feet. This east-west stope (stope is an underground excavation) was 200 feet wide and 15 feet high. For the mines going to work meant dropping perhaps 700 feet free fall in a double-decked cage because soil creep had caused a pinch point in the shaft. It badly needed fixing but the mine was yielding too much rich ore to consider shutting it down for renovation. The furnaces could process 400 tons a day but the maximum delivery to the furnaces was only 300 tons a day. The continual need to get out more ore meant that no time could be taken out to enlarge the shaft.

In 1891 the Victoria Shaft was sunk to relieve the Randol Shaft. The Victoria Shaft was 4 x 7 feet and ultimately 600 feet deep. It was used until 1895. The Randol Shaft, at 1,340 feet, was making a maximum of 184 trips a day. With skips containing three tons of ore which was 20-30% mercury. They were averaging four trips an hour.

Randol resigned in 1892 to become superintendent of the Mirabel Mine in Lake County. He died in 1901 at the age of 68, leaving a widow Isabel and five children. He also left behind 20 years of prosperity while he was general manager at New Almaden.

An Aside About the Powder House

The Powder House is of double wall construction with the arch, or roof, less sturdy than the walls. It was designed this way so that an explosion would blow upward, not outward, in order to minimize surface damage. The double walls also were intended for insulation to maintain even temperatures for the dynamite. And what did they use for insulation? Word has it that it was manure!

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA Michael M Honda
Supervisor First District

OCTOBER 8, 1994

WHEREAS, the Loma Prieta Earthquake of 1989 caused much damage in Santa Clara County, and

WHEREAS, the historic black Powder House in Almaden Quicksilver Park was one of the many buildings damaged by the earthquake; and WHEREAS, the Powder House at the Victoria Site has been restored to its original condition: and

WHEREAS, the New Almaden Quicksilver County Park Association is celebrating the 12th Annual Pioneer Day on October 8, 1994;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that I hereby proclaim the dedication of THE 1866 POWDER HOUSE

as a part of the celebration of the 12th Annual Pioneer Day of The Almaden Quicksilver Park.

Michael Honda Supervisor, First District.

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1995

Pioneer Day-October 14, 1995

The celebration of Pioneer Day was held at what is now called Spanishtown, but it was known as Mexican Camp to those who lived there. It is located atop The Hill about 1400 feet above sea level.

John Goldsworthy provided music as the participants arrived and, because the program started about 4 p.m. in order to avoid the hot part of the day, the food was served as the people arrived. The menu included salad, beans, rice and tamales and later flan for dessert. Approximately 170 people attended.

Gage McKinney acted as master of ceremonies. He introduced Father Bob Hayes of St. Anthony's Church, who delivered the blessing asking especially that we appreciate those who had gone before us.

Mr. McKinney recalled that the cinnabar deposit at the Spanishtown location was recognized by a Mexican Army officer who was educated at the School of Mines in Mexico City. Mining began in 1845-46, and in the succeeding years more than 2500 people lived in Mexican Camp with another 1000 in Englishtown (Cornish Camp) lower on the hill.

Pioneer Day was dedicated to a man who was a member of the Quicksilver Board of Directors, Friedolin Kessler. who died on September 27, 1995. He was an artist who had lived in this area since he was with the Civilian Conservation Corps in the mid-1930's.

Kitty Monahan, President of the New Almaden Quicksilver County Park Association Board of Directors welcomed the assembled group. Kitty described the setting of Spanishtown pointing out Calero Reservoir, Almaden Reservoir, the cypress trees where the Hidalgo Cemetery was located, St. Anthony's Catholic Church beyond a knoll, the location of Loma Prieta and Twin Creeks, Mt. Umunhum and the Chinese trees of heaven.

Honored guest, Sylva Miller of San Francisco was born on The Hill 95 years ago (October 14, 1900). Mrs. Miller said she was happy to be there and recalled going to school on The Hill. She was pleased to have many of her relatives there to share the occasion.

Evelyn Romero Martinez, founder of Las Fondadores of the Pueblo de San Jose, and an eighth generation Californio, told of the difficulties Mexican families encountered living on The Hill without water or heat. The first settlers from Tepic were ranchers without mining experience. She noted that the Santa Clara Valley was then a part of Mexico and had been Hispanic for 300 years. The people raised pigs and chickens for food and had dogs for pets. They were a happy people who accepted their living conditions. This was Mexico and the people who lived at the camp were known as Californios and spoke Spanish. She noted that the land was part of the Robles-Chaboya grants, and unused property could be claimed for mineral rights although it might be another individual's land grant.

Butterworth and Randol improved and organized mining and living conditions. The people who lived at this location had to struggle to survive but made a great contribution to the advancement of the area.

Gage introduced Jorge Palacio, who in turn introduced his troupe of dancers from Overfelt High School. He requested audience participation and demonstrated how certain dances should be done. The dances were energetic and exciting, Jorge told the story of how his grandfather, a mule trainer, had won his grandmother. This was followed by another vigorous dance. The next dance featured the skilled use of machetes, and another dance told the story of a hawk and a girl. Mr. Palacio invited the audience to dance with members of the troupe and promised they would be back for first another group of dances.

Gage asked for family stories of Mine Hill by requesting somebody from the Tobar family to step forward. Arlene Tobar Jordan said the men in her family were hardworking, hard-rock miners. Her great-grandfather Hernandez was a caretaker at the El Senador mine and added that mining was a difficult endeavor at best.

While children seven years old and younger were invited to swing at a Pinata hanging from a tree, Gage stated that his forbears came from Cornwall and married into the Bernal family. Hicks Road is named for one of his ancestors.

Kitty Monahan represented Ray Stark who had worked for Jimmie Schneider at the Cora Blanca mine. One of Ray's companions, Emery, woke with a bloody nose one night so Ray went to find Jimmie in the mine. Ray had forgotten to take his lamp so instead, he lit matches to find his way and when he lit the final match, he found himself at the edge of a high ledge. Fortunately, he found Jimmie and Emery was taken to the hospital and survived. On another occasion these miners were trying to reduce cinnabar to quicksilver, but the wood they were using was wet. Mr. Schneider hired a dynamite expert to reduce the logs to usable size, but the expert had drunk too much wine; he was long on wine and short on fuses with the result that splinters flew all over but nobody was killed.

June Schneider Gilbert, daughter of Jimmie Schneider, went into childbirth labor when she was on The Hill. A man who was living at the CCC camp drove her down to a doctor. She returned to The Hill and lived with her Dad for awhile longer.

Michael Cox, geologist, lived on The Hill from 1984-85. During that time he was responsible for closing the mine openings because the county had taken possession of the park and did not want anybody to get hurt or lost in the mines. Mike lived in a trailer next to the map house. From there he was able to observe much animal activity--wild pigs, bobcats, coyotes, deer and even a sheep wandered by one day. He maintained a water trough to attract animals; one time he saw a hawk swoop down, cower a squirrel and fly off with it. A peacock visited him for a number of days but unfortunately ate some rat poison and died. The rat poison was there to ward off dusty-footed wood rats which uprooted plants Mike had growing.

Chuck Rich worked on The Hill from 1959-1971. He worked with Art Morrill and two other men. One day Chuck was operating a locomotive with loaded mine cars. The locomotive was in front of the cars and it jumped the track. Chuck was thrown into the wall and knocked unconscious but lived to tell about the incident. Chuck also told how he would start a skip to a lower level and jump on to ride the skip. After the county bought the property, an inspector was sent out to evaluate conditions. Chuck did not know the inspector and suggested they ride the skip down. The inspector was not amused. Chuck said that while he worked with the three other men, the price of mercury rose to \$770 per flask. The four men worked five years doing a job which normally required 15-20 men. Chuck was able to buy his house in Willow Glen and a truck with his profits from that period.

Helen Collins had an aunt, Isabel Victor, who lived up on The Hill. Mr. Victor would occasionally get drunk and not be able to find his way home so Isabel put out a lamp so he could locate his home. Isabel smoked a pipe and some of the women chewed tobacco.

Another relative was Fadita Rodriguez Berryessa. Squatters would not leave the Berryessa land and on one occasion, one of the Berryessa boys warned a squatter to leave the property. The squatter would not leave and Berryessa shot and killed the man, then fled to Mexico. In what appears to be retaliation, twelve men from San Jose came and took two Berryessa men who had not been involved in the incident and hanged them from an old oak tree on 10th street. Benita Berryessa's husband died right away, but the other was rescued by the Spanish people. The rescued Berryessa was eventually shot in Santa Barbara because the hanging incident caused him to walk in a strange manner and somebody was frightened by this motion. Another time, a boy and his wife were going to bed when they heard a noise under the bed, a man was there who jumped up and killed Berryessa. Although the Berryessa's had a sad history, they still survive.

The James family, left to right, William, Grandfather, John Jr., Grandmother and Mr. James' father is the baby

To conclude the program the Jorge Palacio dancers, fully adorned in feathers, returned to present several exciting dances accompanied by drums. The theme of the dances acknowledged Mother Earth and Nature.

By the time the program ended, it was dark and we carefully descended to our cars at the Hacienda parking area.

Richard Wachs

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1996

INVITATION This year, due to the work in the Park, Pioneer Day will be held at the Casa Grande. We will tour the building, hear our pioneers tell of their experiences enjoy a mining skit by the Ole Opry Players, dine on the Casa Grande Grand Lunch, and follow the history of the Civil War as it related to New Almaden and the Quicksilver Mines: You and all of your friends and family are invited to attend this our 13 th annual Pioneer Day. Saturday, October 12,1996 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Casa Grande Lunch \$5.00 For further information call Kitty 268-6541

Pioneer Day was a great success. Thanks to all who made it memorable. Each year we wonder how we can top the next year but we seem to outdo ourselves year to year. Larry and Marilyn Comstock are to be commended for their expert handling of the day and the classy presentation they brought to us. Terry Espeland was a very gracious host.

AT THE CASA GRANDE 13 th PIONEER DAY, OCTOBER 12, 1996

It seems appropriate to have held Pioneer Day on Columbus Day, the day set aside to remember the discovery of the New World. The Casa Grande, where 250 celebrants gathered, was one of the first major structures built in California. Once again John Goldworthy's music provided a pleasant background while guests visited and ate. Kitty began the program by telling the gathering that money set aside for building the new museum had been used to prepare the land on which the museum will be located, so there is a shortage of funds. The 1984 plan must be updated . All the artifacts ,however, have been catalogued.

After Paul Romero, Parks Director was introduced, Gen. Henry W. Halleck (Larry Comstock) was interviewed by Miss Marilyn Hearst (Marilyn Comstock) a reporter from the San Francisco Examiner. The General gave a brief history of the area from Andres Castillero's discovery to the beginning of the mine's full development In 1847. His connection with the mine was two-fold. In 1849 he became a founder of the law firm of Halleck, Peach and Billings. The firm was hired to represent the mining company in legal matters. Second, from 1850-1861 he held the position of general manager of the mine. He and his architect, G.T. Cummings, designed the Casa Grande, and It was built by Francis Myer, a contractor, between 1852 and 1854. General Halleck used the Casa Grande as his residence as did subsequent managers.

During Halleck's tenure, the mine produced an income of 12 million dollars. Halleck improved the recovery conditions for mercury which was most important in the recovery of precious metals in the amalgamation process. Much of the mercury used in

the Mother Lode and Comstock mining areas came from New Almaden. Another use for mercury was in percussion caps which were used during the Civil War. Fortifications at Monterey and at the Presidio in San Francisco were designed by Halleck. After the war with Mexico, Halleck was promoted to Captain and assigned Secretary of State to the military governor of California, Richard B. Mason. Halleck was appointed a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in Monterey where he helped write much of the California Constitution.

Following the Comstocks' presentation, Cherie Gavin, Norman and Love Pope's daughter, told of her childhood at Club Almaden. Mr. Pope became the owner of the facility in the early 1950's. He moved his family to the Casa Grande in 1956, and Cherie was born there in 1959. Cherie realized how special living at the Casa Grande was, when she began Hacienda School.

The Club, as the Popes called it, was busy during the summer, and for Cherie it was swim and play all day while the rest of the family had duties. There were many nooks and crannies for all the Pope children to explore.

The family lived on the third floor. One chore which the children did not like was shopping as they had to carry the groceries up three flights of stairs.

After Cherie's tale, Kitty asked if others had recollections of New Almaden to share with us.

Forest Goldsworthy was the first to respond to that offer. He cited the obituary of his great grandfather who was born in Cornwall, England in February 1815, and at the age of 15 worked in the tin and copper mines. He then moved to Wisconsin where he mined, and in 1853 came to California. He secured a job at New Almaden and sent for his wife and children in 1857. Soon after this the mine was shut down and he was placed in charge of the property. After nine years, he purchased 120 acres of land east of Los Gatos. The first religious services were held on this property in 1880. Mr. Goldsworthy headed the list of subscribers for a church with \$500.

Next to speak was Fred Hauck whose father arrived in 1915 and became the treasurer for the mining company. Both his sister and he were born in New Almaden which was considered wild country at the time. The Casa Grande had beautiful chandeliers which were used as part of a movie set in Hollywood. He told us about Maude the mule. Maude would wander the hills during lunch time and return after lunch to resume work. Jeanie Verdi spoke for her daughter, Jean Mondrigan. Their grandfather from Italy was the groundskeeper for the Casa Grande. He courted and married a pretty Mexican girl, Rose Mondrigan.

When Joe Tobar was 18 years old, he worked during summer vacation driving a flat bed truck. He explored the mine during the winter months; at the deepest part it was not uncommon to see a stream. World War II caused the price of mercury to skyrocket, but the men had to enter the service and missed the benefits of improved mining conditions.

Chuck Rich, one of the last miners to work on the Hill, mined from 1959 to 1976 and made enough money to buy his house, a Chevy truck and Plymouth car. He also told of riding a skip down the shaft in the San Cristobal tunnel.

Mike Cox, resident geologist, told of an adventure in the 1970's in which he and his brother explored the mine in order to reach the Day Tunnel level at 800 feet. They were almost caught by a Ranger. After the County bought the property, Mike convinced the right people that he should be in charge of sealing the mine openings because "it takes a thief to catch a thief".

Kitty introduced Terry Espeland, present owner of the Casa Grande. He said that when he acquired the building it needed painting and cleaning. It was run as a restaurant but now it is used for special events only.

The final part of the day was spent touring the Casa Grande including the Opry House, the vault where the flasks of mercury were stored and the third floor which housed the living quarters.

Dick Wachs

Pioneer Day 1996 Through the Eyes of the Merchant

Pioneer Day 1996, in the grand dame of New Almaden, the Casa Grande. I was back in the merchant business again and enjoying every minute of it. Years ago, I owned a ski shop in the mountains and loved the enthusiasm of ski customers. I had the same feeling when we opened our little museum gift shop - one picnic table - at Pioneer Day. It felt like being docent for a day in the New Almaden Museum combined with setting up a table at a swap meet for historic artifacts. It's hard to say who was more enthusiastic - the merchants or the customers.

We did a payday kind of business, selling posters, books, pins, maps as fast as we could say "paper or plastic", and selling completely out of the New Almaden T-shirts. The special fun of it was swapping history with people who love Almaden; people who had lived or worked here or had just learned to love it through hikes, rides, recent discovery visits or visits years ago. We browsed the books together looking for a specific memory; we listened to "remember whens" as families and friends gathered around the table to reminisce and buy souvenirs.

Helping out at the Museum Gift Shop Table was "General Henry W. Halleck," as Larry Comstock was later called when he and wife Marilyn acted out an interview between Halleck, former mine manager and builder of the Casa Grande, and an imaginary reporter with the famous name of Miss Hearst.

The Museum Gift Shop Table was a gathering point for many members of the Pope family, owners of the Casa Grande when it was a resort known as Club Almaden. It was delightful to eavesdrop on stories of their escapades growing up in this unusual home, as they waited their turn to step to the mike or lead groups on tours of the house.

Business in our little shop was brisk till nearly the end of the day. Then we packed our few remaining items in boxes, loaded them in the truck headed back to the Museum, and slipped into the house to catch the last tour with the Popes, with present owner Terry Espeland, and all the ghosts of mine managers, engineers and miners, of families, visitors and workers who have been part of this amazing house for over a hundred years.

What a great day to be a merchant in New Almaden.

Jo Schneider Young

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1997

Come to a Pioneer Day

Fit for a Queen Empress

Diamond Jubilee Day, 1897 -- It was the greatest day in the greatest year in the history of the largest Empire ever known. It was the sixtieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's coronation. The celebrations began on remote Pacific islands and in townships in New Zealand and Australia. Festivities followed the sun around the globe, in Hong Kong and Rangoon, across the Indian subcontinent, among sweltering African rain forests, on Malta and Gibraltar, throughout Britain, across the Canadian prairies. The processions through the streets of London included Rajput princes and Dyak headhunters, Cypriots in fezzes and Chinese in conical straw hats. There were gentlemen riding, with mustaches and steel-blue eyes, and Indian lancers jangling, and Australia troopers marching in formation. And when it was evening in London, and as the Queen Empress herself was writing in her journal, "truly marvellous" and "deeply touching," the celebration was continuing on the hill at New Almaden.

Jubilee Day was a holiday at New Almaden and a day of celebration for the inhabitants of the English-speaking camp there. The vast majority of them were Cornish miners and their families and most of the others, including a Scottish engineer, some Irish miners and blacksmiths and an English apothecary, all had loyalties to the Queen. Many of them had pledged their alliance to their adopted land and so were no longer British subjects, but they were bound to Victoria no less by bonds of heritage and pride. On Jubilee Day they celebrated, cheered and sang along with that quarter of the world's population that was British.

One hundred years have passed, the subjugation of one people by another has become abhorrent, the British Empire has been discredited and dismantled. Yet the style and splendor of the Pax Britannia still holds a place in our imaginations. The celebration of Jubilee Day has become part of the history and legend of the place that the Quicksilver Mining Company liked to call "Englishtown."

We will celebrate Jubilee Day again - one hundred years later - at Pioneer Day on Saturday, October 11, with a picnic on the hill at the Victoria Shaft. The Union Jack will

fly beside the Stars and Stripes. We will hear "The Charge of the Light Brigade," enjoy the music of Elgar's "Land of Hope and Glory," and stand to sing "God Save the Queen."

If you are sufficiently intrepid, wear Victorian dress, as the miners and their wives would have done. Keep a stiff upper lip. Come prepared for good food and a good time. To join in the Jubilee arrive at the Hacienda (Main) entrance to the park at 11:00 a.m., when trucks and vans will begin taking people up on the hill. The last truck ascends the hill at noon, so don't be late. Trucks will begin bringing people down about 2:30 p.m. The cost per adult is \$8.00 and \$4.00 for children under twelve. (L6 per adult if paid in sterling). This will be a celebration to remember for the next hundred years. Until then, cheerio.

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Pioneer Day, Saturday, October 11

Walk in the Steps of Mr. Bulmore as You Remember the Queen Empress

One hundred years ago at New Almaden there must have been plenty of enthusiasm for celebrating Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Labor and management could agree on the importance of honoring the Queen on the sixtieth anniversary of her coronation. Up on the hill at English Camp the six hundred residents were nearly all British subjects or former British subjects. They were primarily Cornish miners living beside a few Irish miners, some Englishmen and a Scottish engineer. Down in the Hacienda the mine manager himself was a native Londoner.

Robert Bulmore, the last managing agent of the Quicksilver Mining Company, was thoroughly British. He was a veteran of the British army who had served during one of its most horrendous campaigns, the Indian Mutiny of 1857. He had served in the civil service as an assayer in the Calcutta Mint. He came to California to work in the San Francisco office of the Commercial Bank of India and from there he found his way to New Almaden. In all probability he was the leader of the 1897 celebration at the mine and the Cornish, English and Scots were right behind him. Even the Irish celebrated out of admiration for the person, if not the empire, of the Queen.

All we know of their celebration is that the company granted a holiday, that there was a potluck picnic with singing and instrumental music, and that it probably lasted until after dark. Diligent research (by NAQCPA board member Jeannie Carevic) has failed to uncover any additional details about the event on Mine Hill, but it has revealed that people throughout Santa Clara Valley were riveted by the reports of "England's week of glorious pageantry." The San Jose Mercury was filled with stories and sketches from London describing the mass celebration, the impassable streets, the splendor of empire. Stories chronicled Victoria's life - twenty-one years a maid, twenty-two years a wife, thirty-six years a widow, and sixty years Queen Empress. Additional stories speculated about her health, her possible abdication (she never did) and the American reaction. What the accounts failed to convey was a sense of the mass celebration that on Jubilee Day was taking place all around the globe, wherever the sun rose on British people.

Next month we will re-capture the enthusiasm of the great jubilee. At Pioneer Day on Saturday, October 11, we'll have a picnic on the hill at the Victoria Shaft. The Union Jack will fly beside the Stars and Stripes.

We will hear "The Charge of the Light Brigade," enjoy the music of Elgar's "Land of Hope and Glory," and stand to sing "God Save the Queen." Some of us may wear Victorian dress, as the miners and their wives would have done. Some of us will walk a little more erect that day, remembering the dignified bearing of Robert Bulmore, or even of the Lords and Ladies who attended the Queen. We'll all come prepared for good food and a good time.

To join in the Jubilee arrive at the Hacienda (Main) entrance to the park at 10:00 am, when trucks and vans will begin taking people up on the hill. The last truck ascends the hill at 11:30, so don't be late. Trucks will begin bringing people down about 2:30 p.m. The cost per adult is \$8.00 and \$4.00 for children under twelve (6 pounds per adult if paid in sterling. We'll have a celebration to remember for the next hundred years.

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14TH ANNUAL PIONEER DAY, OCTOBER 11, 1997

John Slenter was master of ceremonies for this annual event which was held at the Casa Grande for the second consecutive year. It was planned to be held at the Victoria Shaft to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, but rain during the week made the road impassable.

Dave Wolf, Methodist minister, delivered the invocation honoring those who came here to mine. He reflected on Queen Victoria.

John Goldsworthy was thanked for the music and Nancy and Dutch Mapes for the food they prepared for the occasion. John Slenter introduced Gage McKinney who told us how the 60th Anniversary of Queen Victoria's reign was celebrated around the world of the British Empire in 1897. Cornish miners at New Almaden took part in that event. The Empire no longer exists as it once did, but it was a major civilizing force in the world and continues to be a strong ally of the United Nations.

Jo Schneider Young, dressed as Queen Victoria, was next on the program. The Queen told of the books which were for sale here.

Ross Pearce told of Robert Bulmore who held various capacities with the Quicksilver Mining Co. during 1878 to 1899. J.B. Randol, living in San Francisco while managing the mine, depended on Bulmore for information.

Paul Romero, Santa Clara Parks Director, told of the activities of the Parks Department. He explained how the sale of the Casa Grande by Terry Espeland to the County had been successfully completed. The museum will be located in this building.

Mr. Slenter introduced Omar Mararsot. He first visited this area in about 1920. Omar joined the Civilian Conservation Corp in 1933. There were 136 CCC camps in California.

Kitty Monahan, in a few words, explained how Plan D for the location of Pioneer Day evaporated. Rain on Friday made it impossible to use the Victoria Shaft. Kitty presented Courtney Gavin who sold the raffle tickets and conducted the raffle.

John Faull and family arrived here in 1876 to mine up on the Hill. His grandson, John, is president of the Cornish Cousins who will have a gathering here in May. Jo Young introduced John Drew. John Drew's grandfather was the last superintendent of the mine. A table of Drews represented the family at the celebration. Paul Chegnin recalled an airplane crash near the CCC Camp. John Tobar recalled how hard his father worked in the mine. He finally got a job drilling and made good wages.

Cherie Pope Gavin was a member of the last family to live in the Casa Grande and was delighted that the County had purchased the Casa Grande. Mike Cox explained that mining removes material from the earth which cannot be replaced. It is important to recycle as much as possible. Mining is a one way process. Gage McKinney told us he had been interviewed on BBC regarding this event which was the only commemoration of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee and they were pleased that the United States would recognize this occasion.

The day closed with the singing of "God Save The Queen."
Dick Wachs


Gage's remarks for Pioneer Day

Diamond Jubilee Day, 1897 - It was the greatest day in the greatest year in the history of the largest Empire ever known. It was the sixtieth anniversary of Queen Victoria's coronation. The celebrations began on remote Pacific islands and in townships in New Zealand and Australia. Festivities followed the sun around the globe, in Hong Kong and Rangoon, across the Indian subcontinent, among sweltering African rain forests, on Malta and Gibraltar, throughout Britain, across the Canadian prairies. The processions through the streets of London included Rajput princes and Dyak headhunters, Cypriots in fezzes and Chinese in conical straw hats. There were gentlemen riding, with mustaches and steel-blue eyes, and Indian lancers jangling, and Australia troopers marching in formation. A member of the American delegation, especially sent to London by President McKinley, reported, "I was close to the Queen and saw her eyes suffused with tears. It was this wonderful combination of monarch and woman which has made her sixty years' reign so phenomenal." And after her Majesty dried her eyes and returned to her palace, she sat to write in her journal, "truly marvelous" and "deeply touching." And about that hour, on the other side of the world, the celebration was continuing on the hill at New Almaden.

We don't know very much about the celebration on Mine Hill, but we know the man at the head of it. Robert Bulmore, the last managing agent of the Quicksilver Mining

Company, was thoroughly British. He had held a commission in the British army and had served during one of its most horrendous campaigns, the Indian Mutiny of 1857. He had served in the civil service as an assayer in the Calcutta Mint. He came to California to work in the San Francisco office of the Commercial Bank of India and from there he found his way to New Almaden in 1878. He worked as cashier under J. B. Randol and eventually succeeded him as mine manager.

He presided in all likelihood at the Jubilee Day celebration, and those who lived in the Hacienda and the Spanish-speaking camp and especially the English-speaking camp joined with him. The inhabitants of the English Camp were primarily Cornish miners and their families, but there were also Scottish engineers, some Irish miners and blacksmiths and an English apothecary -- all proud of their Queen. Many of them had pledged their alliance to their adopted land and so were no longer British subjects, but they were bound to Victoria no less by bonds of heritage and pride. On Jubilee Day they celebrated, cheered and sang along with that quarter of the world's population that was British.

It's easy to understand why the New Almadeners were proud. Most of us are old enough to remember the Empire as it was represented on classroom maps. Looking at any world that pre-dated the Second World War it was impossible not to be impressed by the great expanses (colored in pink on the map I remember) that designated the British possessions. The Empire was global and it was as tremendous in mass as it was in  heritage and tradition. The origin of the greatest empire the world has ever known, like the forms of it, was random. It initially developed out of the Norman desire for a foothold in Europe, out of a great maritime tradition and explorers. Its mercantile aspect developed under the venerable old trading companies, the East Indian Company, the Hudson Bay Company and others. It took strength, especially in the nineteenth century, from the Evangelical movement that sought to educate and uplift, and from the wealth, vigor and inventiveness of industrial Britain. It had a succession of disparate prophets, from Jeremy Bentham and Tennyson to Disraeli and Cardinal Newman, who excited the instincts of the people for space and power and sacrifice. It was a force for profit and power, but the Empire also saw itself as a civilizing force that brought justice, the rule of law, the rights of individuals. Wherever there was polo and cricket, there also was "fair play"; wherever a magistrate judged between people, there also was the common law; wherever English was spoken, there also were the rights of men and women.

"So their pride was understandable," writes the historian Jan Morris, "as they contemplated their possessions that summer [of 1897]. It was a world of their own that they commanded, stamped to their patterns and set in motion by their will." [Jan Morris, *Pax Britannica*, 1987, p. 522]. Nehru of India wrote, "Are we to complain of the cyclone that uproots us and hurls us about, or the cold wind that makes us shiver? The British . . . represented mighty forces which they themselves hardly realized." [Quoted in Morris, *Farewell the Trumpets*, p 559].

In the fullness of time, of course, the Empire died, and one might convincingly argue that it died in 1965 with Winston Churchill, its last great defender. It died in a blaze of glory that was truly Britain's finest hour. For more than two years, before the United States entered the war, the British were the sole defenders of freedom against the terrors of Nazism and the rise of militarism in the Pacific. What had been partially exhausted in the years of 1914-1918 was fully exhausted in winning the second, greater war, and at the end Britain had to be rebuilt along with Germany and the rest of Europe. The British people, an island people who had for more than three centuries made the force of their ideas felt around the world, at last returned to their island. At from their island, and as part of the North Atlantic alliance and the European Community, they continue to exercise the influence of a great nation and our special ally. And the language and the culture that they gave to people around the world, to all the inhabitants of New Almaden, and all of us here today, continues to be a cause for celebration. So we can all say as Americans, and with sincerity and admiration, God save the Queen!

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1998

President's Message

The nicest day of the year so far for me was PIONEER DAY and DEDICATION of the marvelous museum on October 17, 1998. The work of the many volunteers and staff of the Santa Clara County parks and Recreation Department made the day exceptional. I felt the past come to life as women in period dress wandered around singing to us, a preacher, Gage McKinney, told us stories of Methodist life on the hill, Capt. Halleck and Mrs. Halleck (Larry and Marilyn Comstock) recounted days at the Casa Grande, and the docents escorted visitors throughout the museum. Outside, the wagon rides were a trip, the miners (Mike Cox and John Slenter) at the park entrance gave a great explanation of discovering mercury and St. Anthony's Church, celebrating its 100th year, was a special treat. Peggy and Kay did a yeoman's job escorting folks on the wagons while Mike Boulland toured the historic houses on the main street. There were key chains to be had, books to buy, t-shirts to wear and first day cancellations of the dedication. All of these are at the museum if you did not make it to the dedication and would like something. Thanks to all members who made this day a memorable one.

REMINISCING ON PIONEER DAY '98

This is my first contribution to the NAQCPA newsletter, and I hope it is not my last. In future letters I plan to tell you what a great group of volunteers you are and ask you for even more help in the museum, but this note is about Dedication Day.

On Dedication Day I had been working for the County Parks at the museum for less than a month. The only part of the festivities that I had been looking forward to was the mining demonstration by Mike Cox and John Slenter -- well I am a geologist. And I did love the mining demonstration. I missed John's part, but Mike Cox communicated to everyone the excitement of mining, especially when he found cinnabar and beads of

quicksilver in his panning demonstration. Behind me, I heard The Director of Parks and Recreation -- Paul Romero -- say "We have to do this more often."

Getting ready for the dedication turned out to be a lot of fun. I got to see both of my bosses, Jim O'Connor and Robin Schaut, down on their hands and knees scrubbing the ranger boot marks off the floor of the Mine Manager's Office. I got to help John Drew and John Slentor put out the fires we started in the kerosene lanterns when we tried to see if we could get them to work. I got to hear about, but luckily not participate in Anne Warnes' ironing of all the red white and blue buntings that hung on the Casa Grande. And I got to help Virginia Hammerness hang and stuff Mrs. Randol's dress. We had to use an amazing array of hangers, paperclips, and an unbent picture display rack to keep her from looking like she had a deformed hip, or was a serious flirt. After seeing all the very hard work that went into preparing for the dedication, when I came out of the museum onto the lawn and saw the community gathered around, listening and smiling in the warm sun, the happy coincidence of the warmth of community pride and the warmth of that Indian summer day is my favorite memory of the day.

by ROBBIE LAMONS

FROM THE AUDIENCE;

It was such a beautiful California day as the crowd gathered at the grounds of the Casa Grande. Chairs were set in a sort of amphitheater with the stage set full of dignitaries and important people. It didn't take long for all the seats to be filled and others gathered standing around on the grass. It was very colorful. There were young, there were old and all in between.

There were speeches, not too long and to the point.

It was good to hear the thanks and acknowledgement that the County gave to Kitty Monahan and her host of volunteers for the contribution they had made.

FROM THE WAGON:

What fun to clamber up the steep steps to the bed of the wagon which was covered in a layer of golden straw. What fun to look down on the backs of the matched team of beautiful horses - half Morgan and half Percheron. The wagon quickly filled up with up to fourteen persons for the ride down to the Hacienda entrance to the park where Mike Cox was giving his super demonstration of panning for gold. There were two wagons pulled by the horses which shuttled people back and forth all afternoon. It was fascinating to see the instant response of the teams to the commands of the driver. It was fascinating to clickity-clack down Almaden Road in front of the old little houses and realize that this was the way the people used to travel. The joyful looks on the faces of the riders in the wagon portrayed what a thrill it was for them.

All in all it was a splendid day. There were activities for everyone - not to speak of the beautiful museum which, I think, was dedicated in fine style.

Kay Carmody

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2000

Pioneer Day was a great success. Dr. Ron Wong gave a very interesting account of Chinese Sam and his descendants. Jeannie Carevic's explanation of vermilion was exceptional. Circuit rider, preacher Gage McKinney, came in on his horse to begin the day with an invocation. The day was glorious.

Pioneer Day 2000 Larry Comstock

Pioneer Day 2000 had the general theme "The Chinese at New Almaden," and was held at the site of English Town. The attendance was approximately 120 people and the day was clear and warm.

The Master of Ceremonies was Larry Comstock and he and Kitty Monahan arranged the program. John Goldsworthy and Dennis Moran supplied music. The flag raising was organized by Ron Caldwell of the California Conservation Corps and the Pledge of Allegiance was led by Captain "Buck Ace" (Jack Douglas) in the uniform of the US Army circa 1935. The trumpet call was played by Matt Wong of Boy Scout Troop 75.

The invocation was held by the "Reverend Edward Hazen" (Gage McKinney) in his dress as a Methodist circuit rider of the 1860's. The reverend arrived on horse back and gave an inspiring invocation. Welcome talks were given by Kitty and John Redding of the Parks and Recreation Commission. The Chinese lunch was prepared by a group led by Nancy Mapes. After lunch, Dennis Moran played and sang a musical skit "Cow Patties."

The main presentation was by Dr. Ronald Wong dressed as in the attached photograph of "Chinese Sam" with broom and pail. Dr. Wong spoke of his great grandfather "Chinese Sam" -Hi Loy Wong. Chinese Sam worked in the New Almaden mines hiring the Mexican miners. He was fluent in Spanish and English. The talk was of great interest and was made even more so by Dr. Wong's costume. Dr. Wong is a pediatric dentist practicing in Los Angeles. Dr. Wong was accompanied by his daughter and two grandchildren.

Jennie Carevic gave a presentation on the cinnabar art form practiced in China and for which New Almaden was a source of the ore. Jeannie's summary follows this article.

Chuck Rich spoke of his experiences of working in the mines in the years after World War II. A raffle was held by Martha Hanish and Peggy Melbourne. Marilyn Comstock, Ilka McKinney and Jeannie Carevic dressed as Chinese ladies and ran the sales booth. A photograph of the three ladies is attached. The Pioneer day was a great success and thank's to all who helped make it so.

Larry Comstock

<https://sccparks.pastperfectonline.com/archive/1B89981C-8C39-4098-8012-794120252730>

2001

LOOKING FORWARD TO PIONEER DAY?

SAVE: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13,2001 , 11 A.M.TO 2P.M. DAY TUNNEL
DEDICATION

NEW ALMADEN QUICKSILVER PARK. MEET AT THE HACIENDA ENTRANCE
FOR A SHUTTLE UP TO THE SPOT.

The Day/ Tunnel, designed by Sherman Day and completed in the 1860s, was reopened
in 1947 by the New Almaden Corporation to search for economic underground ore.

<https://sccparks.pastperfectonline.com/archive/9250E36D-5C55-443D-A743-998672355451>

2003

SPRING 2003 ISSUE 71 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The wildflower book is ready for printing and Art Boudreault has found a printer. It will
be a beautiful guide to the flowers in Almaden Quicksilver County Park. It will be ready
for Pioneer Day in October and you could get one then. The information for the Senador
plaque is prepared and Robin Schout, Interpretive Program Supervisor for Santa Clara
County Parks and Recreation, will design it and have it constructed for display at Pioneer
Day. Keep October 11 clear for the dedication at the Senador Mine. Invitations will be
coming in September.

<https://sccparks.pastperfectonline.com/archive/8AABC6E1-9AB9-4C61-8EEC-282826744234>

2004

The Blacksmith Shop is looking fantastic. David Miller, a volunteer, has been building a
floor for all of the blacksmith equipment so that it will be level. We will be calling for
help to put the artifacts of the blacksmithy in the building for a nice public display. An
Eagle Scout, Tolly Powell, has organized a group of scouts and their parents to work on
the garden in front of the Blacksmith Shop. They have graded the land , dug a water line
and prepared for an oak tree. All will be ready for our fantastic Pioneer Day.

Please save October 9, 2004 for our dedication of the Blacksmith Shop and the 150th
Anniversary of the Casa Grande. You will be receiving a special invitation.

Kitty (408) 268- 6541

<https://sccparks.pastperfectonline.com/archive/5FCD4D18-E59E-4142-A809-364153114946>

FALL 2004ISSUE 77

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Pioneer day was a terrific success. The blacksmith shop looked terrific and the blacksmithy, Chuck Ferrier, displayed his wares magnificently while Dwight Summers the horseshoer, did a fine job explaining the feet of Sonny SixFeathers and Freedom, the neighborhood horses.

The Blacksmith Shop, so well built by David Miller, a volunteer, who was not even able to be here on this special Pioneer Day, was the center of attraction. The Eagle Scout, Tolly Powell, worked very hard preparing the patio area for the Pioneers to gather and salute the flag. Tolly received his Eagle Badge for the project. Come and see the fine display for yourself.

All the Board members prepared the day so well. Jeanne and Marilyn raised a great deal of funds for the Association through the wonderful raffle prizes. Nancy Mapes and Co. fixed a delicious meal and John Slenter acted as Master of Ceremonies for the day. Peggy created the table center pieces and Virginia was the photographer. Mike Boulland, Gage Mckinney and Art Boudreault gave exciting tours of the Casa Grande and grounds while John Atwood was the parking coordinator extraordinaire. Thanks to all of you and Bob Meyer for helping the Association putting together a GREAT DAY.
Kitty (408) 268- 6541

BLACKSMITHING AT THE NEW ALMADEN QUICKSILVER MINING COMPANY

This article is based on the talk given by Art Boudreault at Pioneer Day, 2004. Blacksmith shops were very important to the miners in New Almaden. According to Connie Perham, each mine shaft area had its own shop, and there was one at the Hacienda Mine Works as well. In looking through our archives we found several facts about the shops and the people who operated them.

Our earliest written evidence of blacksmithing comes from the description of a line drawing, "This early etching shows the six reduction furnaces designed by blacksmith Baker along Alamitos Creek that were completed in 1850. Water from the creek was used to condense liquid mercury from the hot furnace vapors."

It was difficult working next to the creek. C. E. Hawley describes a huge rain storm this way. "Nov 27th, 1864: A stern-wheel steamboat could navigate anywhere about the planilla yesterday. One blacksmith rushed out as a torrent broke into the shop and called vociferously for picks and shovels or a lifeboat. Some half dozen houses were blown down and several unroofed. More will meet the same fate tonight for it blows a hurricane." The problems weren't confined to the Hacienda. He also said, -At the village near the America Mine the blacksmith shop at San Pedro. no fires could be kept yesterday. It was the heaviest fall of rain I ever saw."

In order to make a hot enough fire, a special coal was used. In 1865 James Butterworth ordered 7 tons of coal for the shop. N. D. Arnot, the mine superintendent, ordered ten tons of blacksmith coal on March 13th 1865, "which we shall want at once."

-The boiler and blacksmith's shop was there [Hacienda] (and 1,255 feet long that year). James Champion was in charge with 14 whites, etc. and 10 Chinese. Lower wages were paid than elsewhere in California". In August of 1875 a fire really devastated the Hacienda and reducing plant. In addition, the Almaden Hotel, Adobe Hotel and blacksmith's [shop] burned, but the waterwheel was saved. The company placed a \$1,000 reward [about one year's salary for most workers] in order to apprehend the arsonist. The company also purchased a fire engine and installed hydrants at the Hacienda.

By 1880, the blacksmith shop at the Hacienda Mine Works was located near the entrance to the mine works area and adjacent to the merge of Deep Gulch Creek and Los Alamitos Creek.

From the map made by Henning Jennings in 1879, the blacksmith shop, the carpenter shop and the machine shop were contiguous. At the southern end of the buildings, a huge waterwheel drove the shaft to which various machine were attached for power. A fifteen-inch water pipe brought the water from a dam on the creek. The blacksmith shop was located near the entrance to the mine works area and adjacent to the merge of Deep Gulch Creek and Los Alamitos Creek.

In 1884, Hennen Jennings, the superintendent and agent of the Quicksilver Mining Company, appropriated 250 miners' inches of water from the Alamitos Creek. (A miners' inch is about 400 cubic feet per minute.) The water was diverted to a dam located 1,340 feet from the Hacienda Tunnel. The water was then carried to a tank one-half mile down the creek. "A fourteen inch pipe took water out of this tank and carried it to an overshot waterwheel located at the old blacksmith shop. After being used to propel this waterwheel, the water was carried along near the Almaden Road to a point just below the Hacienda School. After leaving the waterwheel, the water was used for domestic purposes, for watering of the livestock and for beautification." The water flowed through a ditch called the acequia, on the east side of Almaden Road The water then flowed through the acequia and returned to the creek after the school house near Bertram Road. J. B. Randol, the mine manager from 1870 to 1982, recognized the value of company-sponsored training. He established technical schools on the hill as well as at the Hacienda. Instruction was given in plain cooking, sewing, carpentry, and blacksmith work. The daily course of instruction was limited to two hours for five days in each week, Saturday being allowed as a holiday. He offered a series of prizes to stimulate the youngsters. In the cooking class, prizes were offered for the best loaf of bread, \$5; best roast, \$4 best steak, \$3; best chops, \$2; best rice pudding, \$2; best beans, Mexican style, \$1. In the dressmaking, blacksmithing, carpentry and mason-work class prizes of \$10 were offered and additional prizes of \$10 were offered for punctuality, good behavior and continued attendance. Several committees distributed prizes after a careful inspection of the work done by the pupils, the age of the pupil having been taken in consideration. "Altogether the work done by the pupils is very creditable, considering their age and the short term of instruction, and some pupils have shown much intelligence and great aptitude."

Among the items that the students learned were "Heating and shaping iron, making bolts, staples, devises, hooks; welding; making links, tempering steel, drilling holes, making washers, and tapping nuts." The Blacksmith school enrolled twenty one pupils, (largest of the schools), and all were present at the end of the term." They were paid \$15.75 for their efforts in addition to the prizes for excellence, attendance etc.

One item in constant demand was the candleholder. This is described as follows: "The miner's candleholder usually consisted of an iron rod, 1/4 inch square, twisted into a looped handle at one end with a longer point at the other end. On one side near the center was a spring-clip thimble for securely holding the candles. Opposite the clip, rising at right angles to the rod, was a hook. All early one-piece devices were hammered out of a single rod by a blacksmith."

So far, we have on record the names of these blacksmiths: Teodoro Aceves, Phillip Bluett, M Broedel, William Bunney, John Henry Drew, John Edwards Charles Eslick, Edward Fowler, Nicholas John Grey, Nicholas Grey, William Grey, John and James Harry, sons of James Harry, William Henderson, Charles Higgins, James Job, Philip H Ralph, Norman Ramsey, John A Rhodes, James Rogers, George Rouse, George Smoot, Elisha Trengove, William Varcoe (?), Edward Wale, Mrs. D. Whelan and Charles A Wright.

Blacksmith shop almost a reality Dream becomes a reality

If you build it they will come Volunteer effort adds Blacksmith Shop to Almaden Quicksilver Mining Museum "Without the volunteers there would not be a Blacksmith Shop at the museum. "-Kitty Monahan

By Jeanne C. Lewis Staff Writer

Something exciting is happening at the Almaden Quicksilver Mining Museum. Planned for three years, the blacksmith shop is becoming a reality. The New Almaden Quicksilver County Park Association [NAQCPA) in a group volunteer endeavor have renovated the old carriage house building and now are in the process of arranging the artifacts and finishing the landscaping. They also raised all the necessary funds to create the new mining exhibit.

The carriage house operated at Casa Grande from 1856, storing the coaches and equipment needed for the Quicksilver manager's transportation. There were two blacksmith shops in operation during the mining hey-day. One was El Vespero ("evening prayer"), the site of the jail, and now known as house #10 on the New Almaden Walking Tour. The Blacksmith Shop was to the rear of the building attending the oxen, cows and equine. The other was located at the Hacienda near the Randol Shaft.

The carriage house, neglected for years, was in a state of disrepair. The first project NAQCPA members undertook was a clean up the area which had been used for storage. Mike Boulland and Damion Pantiga secured a new roof on the structure. Sean Teague, a graduate of Leland High School, built the large doors to earn his Eagle Scout badge, enlisting the assistance of his father and friends. Volunteers installed six by six beams to reinforce the original rustic structure. Chuck Ferrier created the old-world hinges and

hasps for closure to the massive entry doors. Other members supported the gateway and completed the exacting install.

"Without the volunteers there would not be a Blacksmith Shop at the museum," Kitty Monahan, President of NAQCPA, remarked. "They worked hard and did it all. The association [NAQCPA] financed it with generous donations as we went along. If it wasn't for them, all the artifacts would still be in storage and the carriage house in shambles." Blacksmith equipment was collected and donated for years to the Quicksilver Mining Museum. Many of the artifacts were from the original Mining Museum managed and owned by Connie Perham at the Carson adobe on Almaden Road. Perham was a lifelong collector and had the foresight to collect the rusted equipment and documents from the Almaden Quicksilver Mines realizing their historic value. Perham even had a blacksmith area in the museum she operated from 1949 to 1983. In 1984, Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department purchased the memorabilia from Perham.
Blacksmith/Lewis

David Miller, NAQCPA member, worked many morning hours, shoring up the building, leveling the floor, replacing the aged windows, and arranging the heavy anvils, bellows, tongs and forges in an attractive display. And it was on a need to know basis Miller relates. He knew zilch about blacksmithing, before he began the endeavor.

"I was hiking and stopped by the museum one day and met Kitty," Miller said as he wiped his brow in the hot morning sun. -And the next thing I know I'm doing this. My wife works and I'm retired so I like to keep busy."

The large entrance to the shop needed to be landscaped and Tolle Powell volunteered to earn his Eagle Scout badge. Powell organized Dale Buurma, Isaac Tysanner and their parents to assist. Even the scout leader came to help. The enterprising high school freshman raised funds from the Elk's Club.-Powell and his team designed the area, graded the land, prepared a trench for irrigation, planted an oak tree and layered decomposed granite on the outside entrance to the Blacksmith Shop.

"I came to the museum in the seventh grade," Dale Buurma said preparing the ground with a rake after a fracas ensued regarding a black widow spider found in the corner of the building. -So when I heard about this happening, I had to come back.- Miller has arranged the inside of the blacksmith shop in remembrance of another time. An aging yellow advertisement from the 1850's boasts bellows for \$6 and wheel tightners for \$7. An old wagon that was resting on Alamos Creek shoreline sits to one side of the building. Chains, wagon wheels and saws hang from the wooden fence. Miller digs a hole for a hitching post. You can almost visualize horses waiting to be shod.

The flood of activity continues and because of the NAQCPA volunteers; a lot of sweat equity, ingenuity, donations and the desire to leave a historical exhibit for future generations, the blacksmith shop is becoming a reality at the Almaden Quicksilver Mining Museum. It will open sometime in October for public viewing.

<https://sccparks.pastperfectonline.com/archive/AF983AAC-98AB-4160-BCED-673182933400>

2006: Spanishtown:

<http://www.newalmden.org/AQSPark/PioneerDay06/PioneerDay06-1.html>

2007: Santa Isabel Shafthouse Dedication:

<http://www.newalmden.org/AQSPark/SantaIsabel/SantaIsabelDedication-2.html>

2008: Wood Road sign:

<http://www.newalmden.org/AQSPark/PioneerDay08/PioneerDay08.html>

2009: English Camp Map House:

<http://www.newalmden.org/PioneerDay09/PioneerDay09.html>

2010: Reopening of the Casa Grande:

<http://www.newalmden.org/AQSPark/CasaGrande/PioneerDay10.html>

2011: Hacienda Mining Display Outdoor Museum:

<http://www.newalmden.org/AQSPark/PioneerDay2011/OutdoorMuseum11.html>

2012: Incline Railroad Sign:

<http://www.newalmden.org/AQSPark/PioneerDay12/InclineRailway.html>

2013: Hacienda Mining Display Outdoor Museum – Cornish Miners

<http://www.newalmden.org/AQSPark/PioneerDay13/OutdoorMuseum.html>

2014: Rossi Retort Dedication at the Rotary Furnace Site

<http://www.newalmden.org/AQSPark/PioneerDay14/RossiRetort.html>

2015: Bell Tower Dedication at the Hacienda Site:

<http://www.newalmden.org/PioneerDay15/BellTower.html>

2016: Casa Grande Pathway and Memorial Bench Dedication:

<http://www.newalmden.org/PioneerDay16/PioneerDay.html>

2017: Hacienda Mining Display Outdoor Museum – 35th Anniversary of NAQCPA

<https://tinyurl.com/ymwekuud>

2018: Hacienda Mining Display Outdoor Museum – Interpretive Sign Restoration

<https://tinyurl.com/2p83mmnv>

2019: Casa Grande, wagon restoration and Estaban Tunnel at the Blacksmith Shop

<https://tinyurl.com/y6lm5vb5>

2020, 2021: Cancelled due to COVID restrictions and staff shortages.