

Alvarado Walking Tour



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Introduction

This walking tour is designed to allow the reader to walk down 4 streets in Alvarado, leading the reader along with descriptions and pictures of the different historical buildings. The tour starts at one end of Alvarado, goes down Smith Street, diverts to Vallejo Street, then down Union City Blvd, and finally ending up on Horner Street. The tour covers the core of old Alvarado as it existed for many years, before housing was built around it, starting in the late 1970's.

This walking tour came from my wanting to know more about the buildings in Alvarado. After reading local history books, I wanted to understand exactly what buildings were being referenced, and for those buildings that were gone, exactly where they were located. A number of sources were used to research the material in the tour, including books, newspapers, and oral histories.

Timothy Swenson
Museum of Local History

Acknowledgment

Thanks to Elvin "Al" Rose and Arturo Briz for their knowledge of Alvarado. Thanks to Anthony Gualco for his research into old newspaper articles on Alvarado. Photographs are from the Museum of Local History, Lupe St. Denis, the Brune family and newspapers such as the Outlook, Argus, and Chronicle.

Historic Preservation

The first edition of this walking tour was started in 2003 and released in 2005. Since that time, three different buildings have been demolished. These buildings have been kept on the Walking Tour as a reminder of the importance of historical preservation and in preserving the heritage and buildings in Union City.

Alvarado

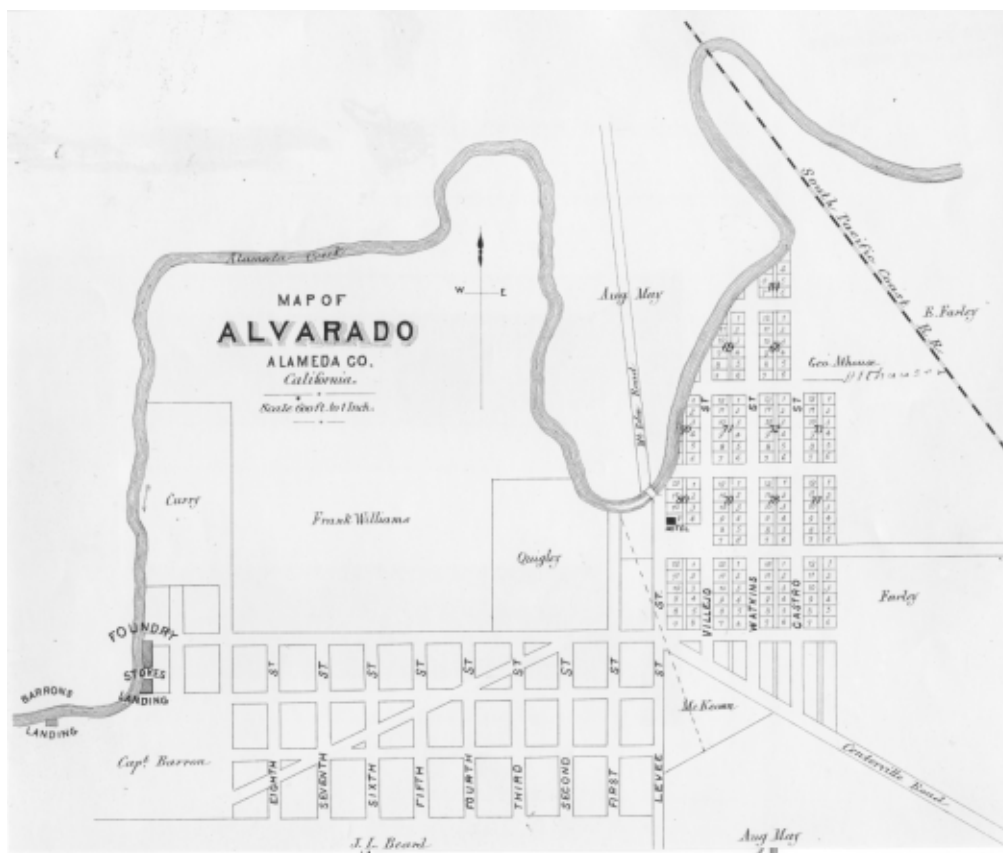
Alvarado grew from three little towns that were created next to the "devil's elbow" of Alameda Creek, in the early 1850's. John Horner first build a wharf and warehouses on what is now Veasy Street. He and his brother William laid out an eight square blocks for Union City; named after the "Union", a steamboat owned by the Horner's. Captain William Bulmer build the first store in Union City.

Henry C. Smith built two warehouses just to the east of Union City and named his settlement "New Haven" after his hometown of New Haven, Connecticut. A. M. Church built the first store in New Haven. Soon others built and settled in New Haven.

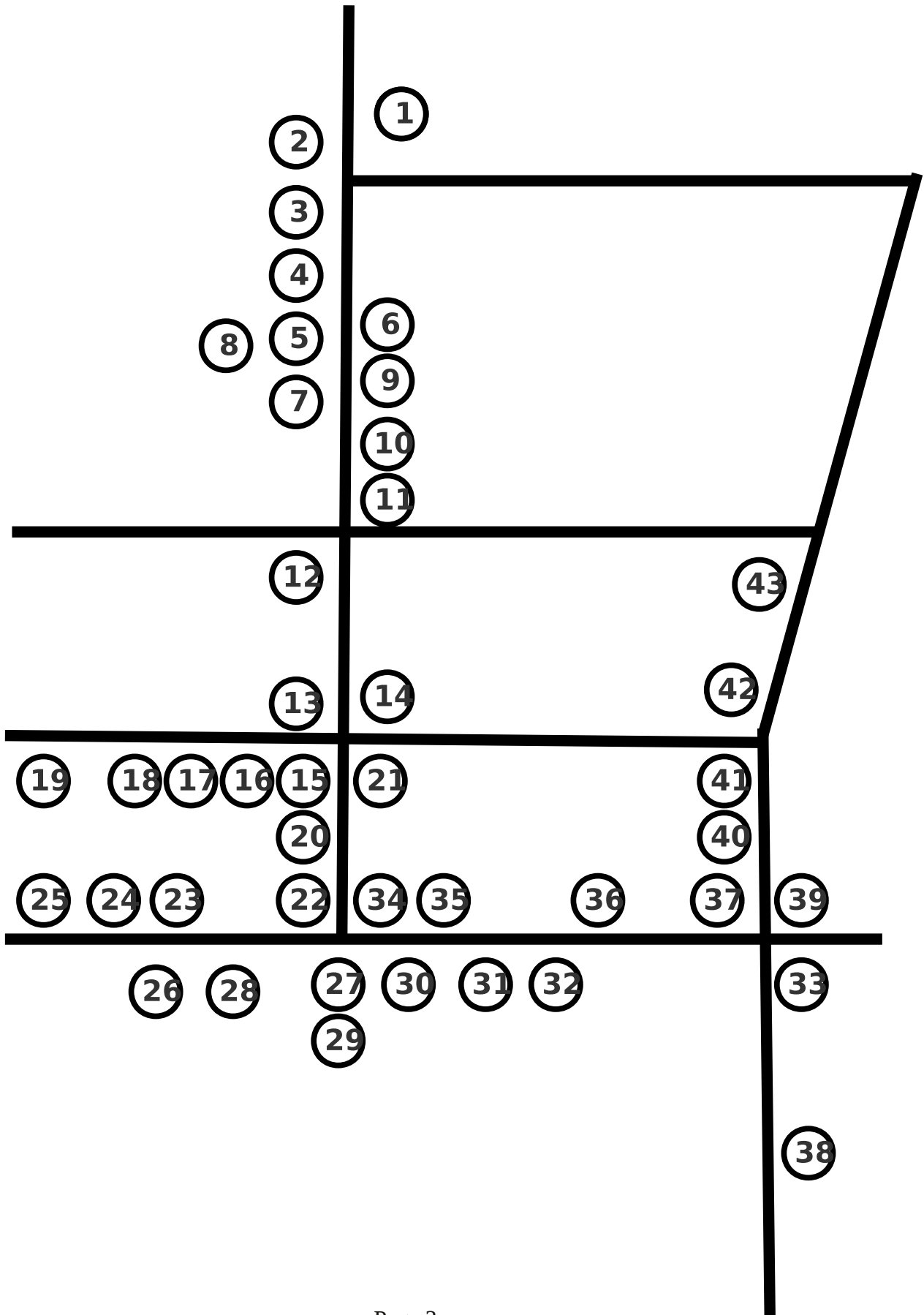
Finally, a third settlement was built just south of both Union City and New Haven, called Alvarado. It was named after the former Mexican Governor of California, Juan Bautista Alvarado. Two lawyers from San Francisco, Strode and Jones, bought land and laid out Alvarado.

Because of the large amount of produce grown in Washington Township (Fremont, Newark, Union City) was shipped to San Francisco via Union City Landing, these three little towns were considered the business center of the East Bay. When Alameda County was created in 1853, New Haven was designated the County Seat and held that position until 1856. The County Courthouse was a room in the second story store, built by A. M. Church and owned by Henry Smith. The small towns eventually merged and became known as Alvarado.

After it's early heyday, Alvarado steadily grew and acquired residents from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Chinese, Mexican, Filipino, and Japanese, all were major ethnic groups that settled in Alvarado and founded communities.



Alvarado Walking Tour



Smith Street

1. Alvarado Elementary School

The first two grammar schools were housed in the homes of local residents. The third Alvarado Grammar School was built in 1878 on the site of the present elementary school. It was a two story, 4-room schoolhouse. In 1925, a new mission revival-style grammar school was built, designed by Henry H. Meyer, a well-known local architect. This school was replaced in 1959 with the present elementary school, which has since expanded with the use of portable buildings. A time capsule, created in 1925, was opened in 1959 and reopened in 1976 for the American Bicentennial.



2. DEAN Real Estate

3791 & 3789 Smith Street

The left side of this building was a beer and wine store, the right side was a barber shop. Matt Machado ran the store and Ramiro Machado was the barber. A local resident recalled that Ramiro wore thick glasses and would sometimes nick a customer. Ramiro also had two certificates on his wall, one was his barber's license and the other was a certificate of appreciation for his efforts as part of the Ground Observer Corps during WWII.



3. New Covenant Evangelical Christian Center

3801 Smith Street

This was originally a blacksmith shop run by Manuel Silva. It now houses the New Covenant Evangelical Christian Center.



4. 3821 Smith Street

Although currently empty, the most recent occupant was the Dragon House Restaurant, which opened in 2003 and moved in 2012. The building was built in the 1940's and was Ray's Market, owned by Raymino "Ray" Alvarez. In the early 1960's, it was the Union City Cafe, then the S & K Cafe. In 1976, Tung Jew purchased the building and opened the Pine Garden Restaurant, which operated until 2002. The Eastern Star restaurant was in the building from 2002 to 2003.



5. Union City Historical Museum

Alvarado Fire House

3841 Smith Street

The Union City Historical Museum is housed in the old Alvarado firehouse. The building was built in the early 1940's in sections. The garage area was built in 1943, to house two fire trucks. The front office with a second room and restroom was added in 1948. Until 1962, the Alvarado Fire Department as an all-volunteer fire department and did not need to have any living quarters for the fire fighters. Just behind the firehouse, a small building was built as a recreation room. Besides the firefighters, the wives were known to come and shoot a game of pool. The building is currently used by Union City Leisure Services for an after-school program. Between the recreation room and the firehouse, a large brick barbecue grill was built. The grill was torn down to make room for the final addition to the firehouse. This addition incorporated a kitchen, dining room, sleeping area, and a bathroom with a shower. When the City incorporated in 1959, the Alvarado firehouse was used as the first City Hall, housing all three City employees. The firehouse was closed in 1984. For a while, the building was rented out as a living space, but was vacant for many years before the Museum moved in in 2001.



6. Smith Street Convenience Market

3834 Smith Street

The building was built in 1917, by Katsusaburo and Fusa Matsumoto as a grocery store. In 1949, the safe from the store was stolen, having been dragged out of the store and later found on a private road on the Patterson ranch. The store continued operating well in the 1970's, under the son of the original owners, Ben Matsumoto. To the left of the store was a two-story building. The lower story housed the Japanese Association office and a pool hall, while the upper story was a boarding house. In 1924, the boarding house burned down.



7. Post Office

3861/3851 Smith Street

Built in 1952, the building was the Alvarado Post Office and the Alvarado Library. When the Union City Post Office was opened in 1959, the Alvarado Post Office ceased to exist and became the Alvarado Station, a branch of the Union City Post Office. The Alvarado Library was on the right-hand side of the building and remained there until 1965, when the Decoto and Alvarado libraries were merged and moved to a portable building on the campus of James Logan High School.



8. Chinatown

The general area covered from the Post Office to just past the Union City Historical Museum was known as Chinatown. It consisted of a number of small tightly-built shacks that were occupied by Chinese workers and businesses, such as a laundry, a bordello and gambling dens. The buildings were probably built in the 1860s' or 1870's. A fire raged through Chinatown in 1904, but the buildings were quickly repaired. By the 1920's the population had changed from Chinese to mostly Mexican, giving it the name "Little Tijuana." Starting in 1911, efforts were made to rid Alvarado of gambling, illegal liquor and narcotics. In 1927, Earl Warren, District Attorney for Alameda County was successful in his abatement proceedings against the owner, Edward Farley. The County removed all residents, including Wo Lee, who operated a small store. The buildings were soon burned down.



9. 3848/3850 Smith Street

In the early 1900's, this building held a saloon along with a barber shop run by Tony Mello, who lived on the second floor. Records show that Tony applied for a liquor license in 1913. In 1921, he witnessed four men trying to blow the safe in Matsumoto's store. After a gun battle with Night Marshal Andrew Anderson, the four men were able to get away. Tony Mello was active in the Alvarado Eagles, a fraternal organization, and president of the Alvarado Council No. 21, Sociedade Portuguesa da Rainha Santa Isabel (SPRSI).



10. 3862 Smith Street

This was a grocery store owned by Jess Jacinto in the 1920's. It later became a bar with gambling in the back, then a restaurant, then "Little Herm's" bar, and then "Manny's Dancing" in the 1970's. More recently it was a real estate/property management office and a dental office.



11. St. Anne's Ethnic Mission

3880 Smith Street

The first St. Anne's Church, built in 1862, was a small wooden structure that sat just behind the present building, a 1926 mission revival-style building. The old wooden church was demolished in 1935. By the 1980's, St. Anne's parish had out grown the 1926 church, so in 1983 they built a third St. Anne's at the corner of Meteor and Dyer.



12. Worlds Yoga

3909 Smith Street

This building has housed a number of businesses over the years. In the 1940's and 1950's, it was a general store owned by Tony Lee, and a member of the Neighborhood Stores grocery organization. In the 1970's, it was a rattan furniture store. Most recently it housed the One Cup coffee shop, Century 21 Real Estate and now Worlds Yoga.



13. 3939 Smith Street

This 1920's prairie schoolhouse-style house was one of the homes owned by Fred Harvey, an early area merchant. It then became the house for the manager of the Holly Sugar factory, giving it the name Holly House. In the early 1970's, it was bought by the City of Union City and used as the original Holly Community Center. When the new Holly Community Center was built in 1983, the building was used as a Senior Community Center. It currently houses a number of businesses, including the Union City Chamber of Commerce. The home is owned by the Filipino Community of Alvarado and Vicinity.



14. Bronco Billy's Pizza

3940 Smith Street

This building was built in 1896 for M. H. Lyle as a general store, with Dr. Hauber on the second floor. In 1901, Fred C. Harvey purchased the building and business. In March, 1902, a 40x40 foot addition was added to the back of the building, and about 1908 the Alvarado telephone switch was installed. In 1929, the mercantile business was purchased by Sam Dinsmore, who had been clerk for F. C. Harvey since 1911. In 1946, the telephone switch was moved from the building. In 1969, after 40 years in business, and 73 years as a general store, Sam Dinsmore closed the doors a final time. In 1972, after sitting vacant, the City declared the building a hazard and ordered its demolition. Joe Betchart and Dean Beaumont purchased the building and restored it. By 1975, a hot-air balloon manufacturer and a veterinarian were located downstairs and the Cupid Adult Book store was on the second floor. In 1976, Uncle Joe's Pizza took over the lower floor and in 1996, the business was renamed to Bronco Billy's.



15. Odd Fellows Hall

NW corner of Smith and Vallejo Streets

Kitty corner from Bronco Billy's Pizza was the Odd Fellows Hall, now an empty lot. It was built in 1864 for the Odd Fellows and was used as the Armory for the Alvarado Guards, a local militia during the Civil War. On Sept. 23, 1864 the Guards held a grand opening ball which was known as the "greatest social event of the year." The building was the home of not only the Odd Fellows, but the Native Sons of the Golden West and the Ancient Order of United Workmen, all fraternal organizations. In the early 1900's, the building became the home of the Alvarado Eagles. The downstairs room of the building has been used as a dance hall and as a theater, and the upstairs room was used for the meeting of the different organizations. From 1923 to 1933, Charles Browning operated a theater in the downstairs of the building. On 1935, the Odd Fellows celebrated the lodge's 75 Anniversary. At the time, it was the oldest Odd Fellows lodge in Alameda County. In 1935, V. Naharro took over the theater operations, which sat about 327 people. In 1947, the Odd Fellows lodge consolidated with the lodge in Hayward. After many years of being abandoned, the building was torn down by the City on January 4, 1967.



Vallejo Street

16. Liston House

William Liston came to Alvarado in 1852, left a few years latter and returned in 1861. His house sat on a lot just behind the Odd Fellows Hall on Vallejo Street. He established the Brooklyn House hotel and ran it for a number of years. He joined the Alvarado Home Guard when it was established in 1864 and was also a member of the Odd Fellows. It is unknown exactly when his house was built, but it was probably built before 1861. The house existed in the early 1970's but it is unclear when it was torn down.



17. May House

30947 Vallejo Street

This home was built in 1914 for August May Jr., who was employed by the Bank of Alvarado (later the Bank of Alameda County). He started working as a clerk/teller in 1903 and eventually was promoted to bank president by 1912. He married Jeanette Decoto. The building was designed by Henry H. Meyer, a well-known local architect and brother-in-law to August May Jr.



18. Joyce/Scribner/Brune House

30935 Vallejo Street

This house has a number of family names attached to it. The first name associated with the home was Ivens V. Ralph, a local merchant. I. V. Ralph was born in Alvarado in 1854, owned a mercantile store, where he was once in business with Mr. Harvey as Ralph and Harvey. He was an Alvarado Grammar School Board member in 1898, helped found the Bank of Alvarado in 1902. The next owner was Mr. Ellis, one of two brothers, who moved to Alvarado in 1902. John Scribner was another owner of the house. Scribner was in business with John Ralph. In 1924, John Scribner was on the Alvarado Grammar School Board. Later, Mrs. F. W. Joyce was living there in 1948. Fred W. Joyce was the half brother of John Scribner. Fred W. Joyce also had a son, Fred W. Joyce (born 1913), so the reference could be to either father or son. Years later the home was owned by the Brune family. The house was most likely built before 1890. This has was restored in 2013 and only a section of trim was saved from the original house, which was in very bad condition.



19. John Ralph House

30829 Vallejo Street

This house was owned by John H. Ralph, a local merchant. John was born and raised in Alvarado. He worked for his uncle, I.V. Ralph, at his general store. John then bought a market in Decoto with John Olsen. Soon after that, John bought I.V. Ralphs' store, located on Levee Street (now Union City Blvd). The house was built in 1923 for John Ralph.



Back to Smith Street

20. Nauert Home

In the same fenced off lot, just west of the Odd Fellows Hall, was the home of Charles R. Nauert, the supervisor of the George Tay & Co. foundry. The home was built sometime in the 1870's. Charles's daughters, Mildren and Ossie (Heitmuller) lived in the home until the 1960's.



21. Old Alvarado Public Parking Lot

South side of Smith and Vallejo Streets

Where the parking lot is now located was the location of two older buildings. On the corner of Smith and Vallejo streets was the "White Elephant" house, a thrift store where the proceeds benefited St. Anne's Church. Prior to this, the home was owned by A. Correa, about 1909. To the west, was the Alvarado Post Office and library building. In the 1920's and 30's, Albert Norris, former Alvarado Grammar School principal, was both Postmaster and Librarian.



22. Smith Building

3995 Smith Street

This building was built in 1862 and was the Alvarado Hotel. It is the oldest commercial structure in Union City. It was later bought by the Henningsen brothers, then J. B. Peysen, then Joe Morlat, then Paul Bruhn. In 1935, the hotel was raided for illegal gambling and fined for having two punch boards. In 1947, Fernandez Parades bought and remodeled the building at a cost of \$25,000, giving it more of a Spanish look, flattening the roof and removing the wrap around porch.



Union City Boulevard

From this corner the next few buildings can be seen, looking North (right). Alameda Creek originally had a big bend that put it close to downtown Alvarado, just about where the bend in Union City Blvd is. It was the creek going through this bend that caused the annual floods in Alvarado, requiring boardwalks to be built down the streets. In 1921, concrete sidewalks were installed, in place of the older boardwalks. A bridge was built here by the Horner Brothers, as the first bridge over Alameda Creek. Union City Blvd. was originally known as the Mt. Eden Road and Levee Street.

23. Alvarado Pioneer Printing

This building was a little shack where the "Alvarado Pioneer" newspaper was printed. The newspaper was founded in 1925 by George Henry Oaks. His son, George P. Oaks, continued publishing the newspaper until 1946. George P. Oaks bought the Centerville News from Miles Smith and merged it with the Township Register, owned by Stuart Nixon, to form the News Register. The News Register later became The Argus.



24. Andrade's Garage

This garage, owned by Manuel Andrade, was in existence in 1947. They carried Standard Oil gas. The left side of the building was a grocery store, a garage bay in the middle, and the right side was a soda fountain with a saloon behind it.

MANUEL ANDRADE'S Standard Gas Station & Store



25. Alameda Creek

Alameda Creek used to flow through Alvarado and the property lines and trees still show the path of the creek.

West Union City Boulevard

In 1977, the entire west side of Union City Blvd. from Smith Street to just past Horner Street was demolished to make room for a street widening project, and a number of older historical buildings were lost.



26. Alvarado Square

30971 Union City Blvd

When Alvarado Square was built in 2007, an older building was torn down. This building was built in the 1920's for Mr. Naharro as a cobbler shop. In 1933, Frank George purchased the building and used it for his oil business, selling General Petroleum (later Mobil) products, focusing on bulk oil. The business continued on until the late 1970's. Before the building was torn down, it housed Lenee's Hair Care.



27. First County Courthouse

In the early 1850's, A. M. Church built a store in New Haven. When Alameda County was created in 1853, New Haven was selected to be the first County Seat. Henry Smith purchased the store and rented out the room on the second floor for the Courthouse. New Haven only held the County Seat for a few years, until an election moved it to San Leandro. The store burned down in 1890.



28. California State Historical Landmark

This California State Historical Landmark designates the location of the first County Courthouse of Alameda County. The plaque was erected on June 6, 1953, with Joseph Knowland, for whom Knowland Park in Oakland is named for, presiding. The tablet was provided by the California State Park Commission and the base was provided by Alameda County Parlors of the Native Sons and Daughters Golden West. The writing on the plaque is as follows:

"Site first Court House where Alameda County government began, June 6, 1853. Officials met in two-story wooden building erected by Henry C. Smith and A. M. Church as mercantile store. Seat of Government moved to San Leandro in 1855, following vote of people of county in December, 1854"



29. Bank of Alvarado

At the end of Smith Street was the first building for the Bank of Alvarado. The bank was founded in 1906, by I. V. Ralph with F. B. Granger as Vice President and F. P. Hellwig as Treasurer. The first bank cashier was August May Jr., who later became the bank president. In 1910, the name was changed to Bank of Alameda County and branches were opened outside of Alvarado. In 1913, robbers hit the bank. To help their getaway, they cut the town's phone lines, the telegraph line, and the Fire Department alarm. They tried to blow the safe, but the explosion just jammed the door. A small piece of the door shot out a window and damaged the roof of an adjacent building. In 1920, the bank was robbed again by four men. Thomas Foley shot and seriously wounded August May Jr, who was partially paralyzed on his right side.



30. Manuel August Bar and Barber Shop

This was a brick building housing a saloon. Like most saloons, there was a pool table and a barber's chair. The saloon sold wine, liquor, and beer for five cents a mug. The building later housed the "Half Way House" restaurant, specializing in Mexican Food, owned by Natividad Saucedo. In 1935, the Half Way House was fined for having two illegal slot machines.



31. Shoe Repair Shop

This was a two story building with a cobbler shop downstairs and living quarters upstairs, owned by Manuel Sequerria. The building burned down in 1900, along with the Hellwig Meat Market, but was rebuilt. (No Photo)



32. Alvarado Meat Market

This building was originally owned by the Hellwig Meat Market Company. The firm was started in 1864 by Phillip Hellwig, who came from Germany in 1856. His two sons, Frederick and George, took over the business upon their father's death in 1901. In 1900, the building burned, so the Hellwigs had it rebuilt using brick. Over the years the retail store transitioned to the Alvarado Meat Market. Hellwig sold the retail location and in 1957, Hing Chan sold the market to Quan Yut.





This picture above shows Alvarado circa 1930-40. Levee Street runs through town as Highway 17. The Highway turns left at Horner and continues to Fremont. The picture below shows Alvarado as it appears today.



33. Alvarado Theater

The Alvarado Theater was known for showing Spanish language films. In 1947, it and the building next door, were owned by Edward Naharro. The building next door housed a doughnut shop with an ice cream fountain, and was run by Frank Gutierrez.



East Union City Boulevard

34. Central Bank Building

This building was erected in 1926 for the Bank of Alameda County. In 1938, the bank was purchased by Central Bank, which was later purchased by First Western Bank in 1954. In 1957, the bank was robbed of \$35,000. In the early 1960's, the bank branch closed. Over the years the building has been a dance club (the Copacabana in the late 1970's owned by Natividad Saucedo), and Spanish, Indian and Salvadoran restaurants.



35. 31018 - 31030 Union City Boulevard

This small block of store fronts has been around since the 1920's. Various tenants have been a pool hall, a grocery store, an antique store, a couple of barber shops, and an appliance store. About the middle of the building was the location of the Alvarado Methodist Church, built in 1860. The church ran low in membership and was sold to become a saloon. The saloon was burned in 1900 along with a few other buildings next to it.



36. Old Alvarado Plaza

31080 Union City Blvd.

The current building is less than 20 years old, but was designed to look much older. The section of the property fronting Union City Blvd was the location of the Ralph store, which was built in 1877. I. V. Ralph was in business with Fred C. Harvey by 1896, when they applied for a liquor license. Mr. Harvey later bought the store which is now Bronco Billy's, and left the business with I.V. Ralph. John Ralph (I.V. nephew) purchased the business in 1910. Mr. Scribner soon joined with Ralph, but by 1924, he left the business. John Ralph closed his store in 1950.



37. United Market Liquor Store

31090 Union City Blvd.

Sitting on the corner of Union City Blvd. and Horner Street, was the Hotel Chantecler, built in the 1870's. The first floor was a saloon and the hotel rooms were on the second floor. Much later, Mr. Priego moved his market from across the street to this building, and it has housed a market ever since. The hotel rooms were converted into a residence. Despite the building's stucco exterior, the clapboard siding on one side shows what the building used to look like.



Horner Street

Looking down Horner Street from the corner with Union City Blvd., is the next building on the tour, the tour will then turn left (East) and go up Horner Street.

38. Old Presbyterian Church

4214 Horner Street

The first Presbyterian Church of Alvarado, organized by Mrs. Charlotte Cornell, was built in 1860. The first pastor was Rev. William Brier, who was also the pastor of the Centerville Presbyterian Church. The present building was built in 1902. A number of pioneer families were members of the church, including the McKeown, Logan, Granger, and Jung families. In 1952, the church building was sold and it became the Church of God in Christ.



39. J & G Glass

3992 Horner Street

This building was originally built as a garage sometime before 1925. In the 1940's, it was a Signal Oil gas station and repair shop, owned by Manuel Machado. In July, 1948, a truck and trailer missed the left turn from Union City Blvd. to Horner Street and rolled over into the front of the garage, injuring two persons.



40. Jacinto House

3971 Horner Street

This was the home of the Jacinto family, who owned the market next door. Jessie was also a Washington Township Sanitary Commissioner and Chief Observer of the Alvarado Observation Post for the Fourth Fighter Command during WWII. His son, Jessie Jr., played baseball for the St. Louis Browns of the American League, in 1946, as a shortstop. He was acquired by the Big Springs Broncs of Lubbock, Texas, in 1953. This building was torn down in 2005.



41. Filipino Advocates for Justice

3961 Horner Street

This building was originally a market owned by the Jacinto Family, who moved their business from Smith Street to this building. It was an IGA associated market in 1957. The Jacinto's sold the business in the late 1980's. The building was later a Kress market, a camera repair shop, a day spa, and a place for yoga.



42. Shell Station

Antone Santos owned this gas station, built in the 1920's, along with the Silver Dollar next door. A Brune would marry into the family and it became the Brune Shell station. In 2002, this building was torn down.



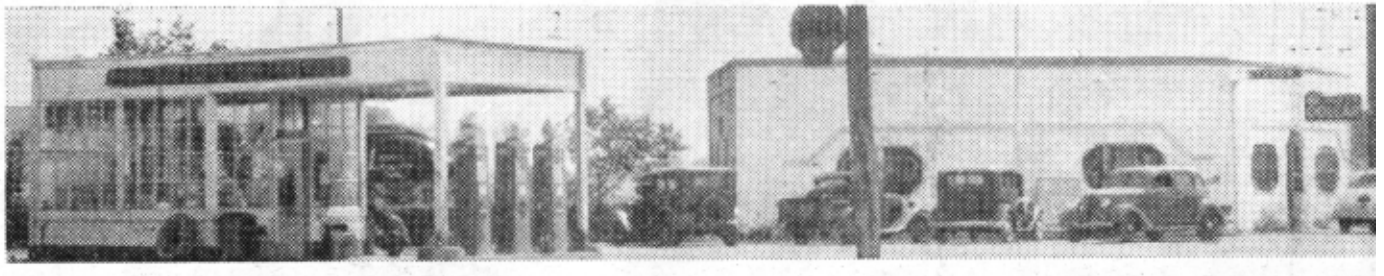
43. Silver Dollar Cafe

31150 Horner Street

Built in the 1930's, this bar has always been called the Silver Dollar. The flagpole between the Silver Dollar and the Shell Station was originally from the 1878 Alvarado Grammar School and was put there by Antone Santos. He rescued the flagpole when the grammar school was torn down. The flagpole has since been moved to the Union City Historical Museum. A headline from 1947 mentions Ed Martinez and Davilla and Cordoba. Ed Martinez worked at the Shell station, but did not own it. Davilla was related to the Santos family and worked at the Silver Dollar, along with Cordoba.



ED MARTINEZ' Shell Station---and SILVER DOLLAR Cafe of Davilla& Cordoba



This Walking Tour has been presented by the Museum of Local History.

The Mission of the Museum of Local History is to preserve Southern Alameda County memories, documents, artifacts and structures from the past and to share them with present and future generations.

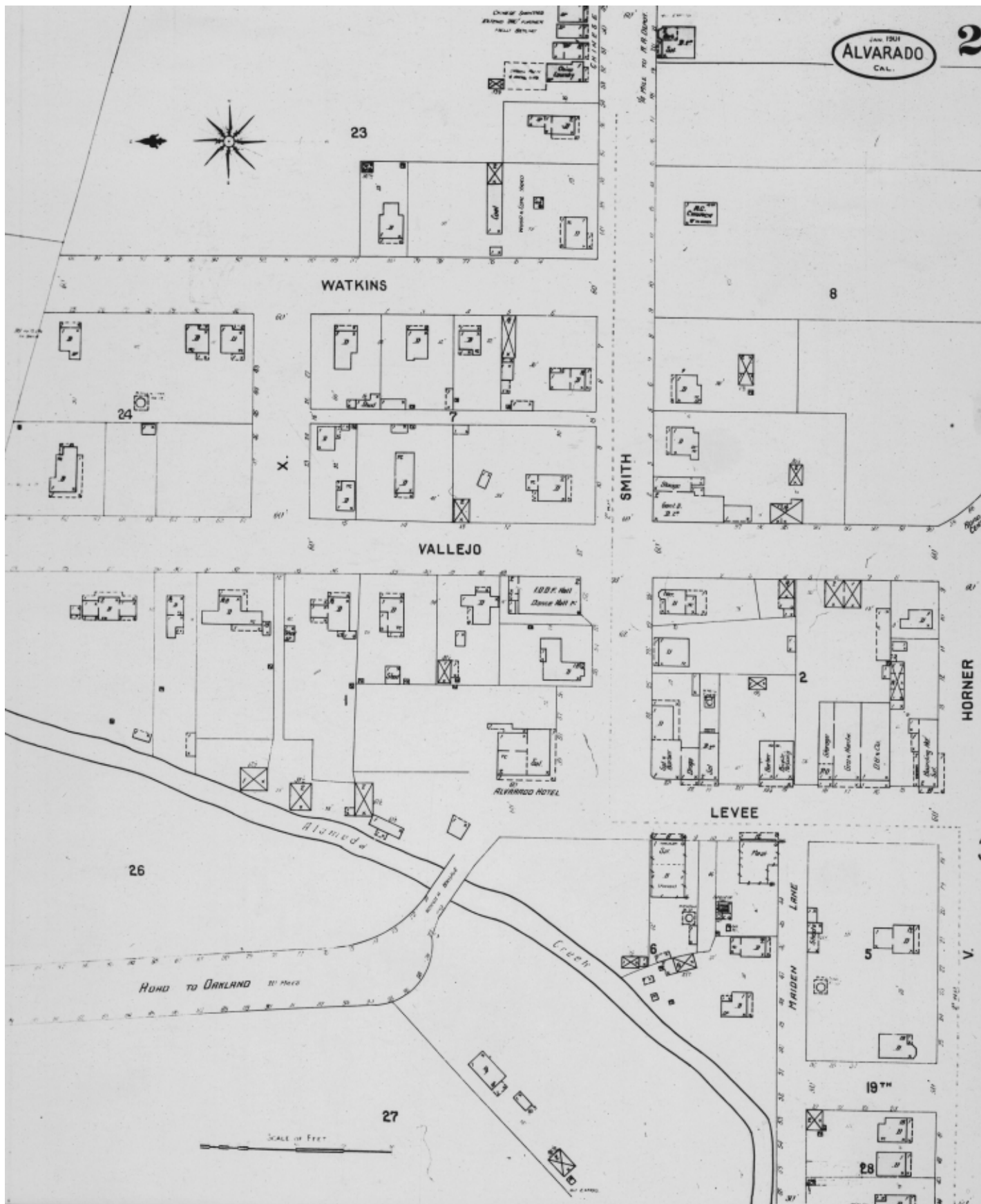
The Museum maintains a large collection of artifacts, including books, photographs, documents, and maps, documenting the history of Fremont, Newark and Union City. From these archives, five books have been published, nationally. Museum authors contribute articles to local newspapers and web sites. The Museum is expanding our programs for students learning local history.

The Museum welcomes all to come and visit. The Museum is always interested in volunteers that wish to help the Museum with it's Mission. Of course, the Museum is always interested in new members.

Come visit the Museum:

Museum of Local History
190 Anza Street
Fremont, CA 94539

www.museumoflocalhistory.org



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map - January 1901

Historical Papers on Union City

Downloadable from the Museum of Local History

Alvarado Elementary - History Report

History of the Alvarado School District and Alvarado Elementary School, from 1850 to about 1965.

Alvarado in 1850

A detailed history of Alvarado (Union City & New Haven) from its beginning in 1850 until 1870. Includes descriptions of Alvarado from contemporary personal letters.

Charles S. Eigenbrodt - Civil War Hero

Charles Eigenbrodt was a Civil War hero from Alvarado. Charles was also a County Supervisor before he volunteered for war.

Crash of Flight 615

The crash of United Airlines flight 615 in 1951 in the hills above Union City, remains one of California's worst air disasters.

Early Families of Union City

Details notable persons, and their families, of Union City from the 1850's until about the 1940's.

Homes of Vallejo Street

From 1860 on, the west side of Vallejo Street, in Union City, was the place to own a home. This paper documents the homes and their well-known owners.

Looking Back--Early Glimpses of Union City

Originally published by the City of Union City in 1978, this history book has been digitized and made publically available.

Scandinavian Oystermen of Alvarado

The commercial oyster industry in the San Francisco Bay area started in 1869 with the importation of eastern oysters and the establishment of oyster beds on the bay.

Two Courthouses

In-depth analysis of two pictures of the Alameda County Courthouse in Alvarado.