

The Poppy Nymph

The sculpture "Poppy Nymph" or "Poppy Girl" by [Jo Mora](#), was originally exhibited in the Palace of Fine Arts during the [Panama-Pacific International Exposition](#) of 1915. During the 1930's, William Ford, a former resident of Niles, purchased the sculpture from the artist for the sum of \$500. Ford displayed the sculpture in the lobby of his apartment building in San Francisco. Upon his death in 1957, Ford gave the statue to John E. Kimber a longtime family friend and admirer of the statue. In 1970, Kimber in turn willed the statue to the [Jane R. Clough Memorial Library](#) in Niles.



Jo Mora Artist, Photographer, Writer and Sculptor

Jo Mora was born in Uruguay in 1876, and became a noted member of the Carmel art scene when he was commissioned to sculpt Father Junipero Serra's sarcophagus. In addition to his work as a sculptor, Mora was a skilled photographer, writer, muralist and map illustrator.

One of his sculptures is the "Poppy Nymph," a white marble statue depicting a woodland nymph with a coronet of poppies.

The Fords and Kimbers

William H. Ford and his brother Henry owned and operated a gravel pit on their property near Niles. The business was highly successful earning Ford and his family a comfortable life. Though William and his wife Helen Clough Ford moved to San Francisco, they continued to donate to various civic projects in Niles. Their donations included the building of the Jane R. Clough Memorial Library at 150 I Street--which is named in memory of Mrs. Ford's mother.

John E. Kimber, who owned the statue between 1957 and 1970, was a local farmer and businessman, and is best remembered for his poultry farm and hatchery along Mission Blvd. Alice B. Kimber said that her husband donated the statue and its wooden pedestal (which was made by a local carpenter) in remembrance of all that the Ford family gave to the community. Mrs. Kimber also donated to the library a book from her husband's personal collection. The book, *Art in California*, is a survey of American art with special reference to California painting, sculpture and architecture, past and present, particularly as those arts were represented at the Panama-Pacific Exposition.