



NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM

Celebrating the history of Fremont, Newark and Union City

190 Anza Street, Fremont, CA 94539 — (510) 623-7907 —
www.museumoflocalhistory.org — info@museumoflocalhistory.org

President's Message

Welcome to the first FULL LENGTH newsletter from our museum since the Summer of 2021. Thank you to one of our summer interns, Ananya Gupta who did the initial work to get this publication running again.

An archive of all of our print and email newsletters and updates since 2014 is available on our website at:
<https://museumoflocalhistory.org/newsletter/>.

As we head into fall, look for opportunities to join us for Doors Open, our final walking tour of the year, and Las Posadas just before December 25th.

Please note that we need more volunteers every single week here at the museum. What are your talents and skills? Bring your ideas and interests to the table by becoming a regular on Wednesday, Fridays or on our open weekends.

Look for our next newsletter installment in December 2026 or January 2027 and keep an eye on the Tri-City Voice - sometimes we get a little room in that great, weekly publication. Stay up to date by subscribing to our emails, and always check our website for the most current information.

Thanks for being a part of our
Tri-City History community!

Kelsey Camello, *President*

Highlights from 2026



Happy 70th
Birthday to
the City of
Fremont!
(January)

Mission San
Jose Rotary
Visits Rancho
Higuera Park.
(March)



Fremont Fire Crew
from Station #4
Returns 1954
Plaque to 190
Anza Street.
(May)

Happy 250th
Birthday to America
at the Downtown
Event Center!
(July)



MUSEUM GENERAL INFO

This is the official newsletter of the Washington Township Museum of Local History. The Museum is a non-profit organization whose mission is to preserve Southern Alameda County memories, documents, artifacts, and structures from the past and share them with present and future generations.

Board of Directors:

Kelsey Camello, President
 Patty Lacy, Vice President
 Gerry Curry, Treasurer
 Tim Swenson, Secretary
 Marjory Begley,
 Member at Large
 Alan Nagy,
 Member at Large
 Stuart Guedon,
 Member at Large
 Barbara Baxter,
 Alternate Member
 Matthew Jorgens,
 Alternate Memb.

Board Meetings:

Jan/Mar/May/July/Sept/Nov
 2nd Tuesday, 6pm

Museum Hours:

EVERY WED & FRI 10am-4pm
 2nd Sat and Sunday 10am-4pm
 & 4th Sunday 10am-4pm
 - or by appointment

Museum Exhibits

Existing Exhibits: We have a 1946 aerial of Niles, including the Schuckl Cannery, Main Street, and California Nursery. This aerial also shows the path of Alameda Creek before it was leveed. This was donated by the Bank of the West in 2021. We also have been given a mosaic created by Alice Ebright that depicts the F. E. Booth Cannery. The cannery was located in the Centerville area. Some of the other mosaics that Ebright did are on the walls in other areas of the museum. The new mosaic was donated by the Fremont Chamber of Commerce in 2024.

New Exhibits Coming: Almost complete is an exhibit focusing on the first inhabitants of the Tri-City Area - The Ohlone people, as well as an exhibit featuring information about Fire Station #4 (what our museum building functioned as before it became a museum). Also, look for our exhibit on earthquakes - 1868, 1906, and 1989.



Exhibit on the
Ohlone People



1946 Aerial of Niles

Tri-City Voice History Series

Looking for a fun way to learn more about the history of Fremont, Newark, and Union City? Our mothly columns in the Tri-City Voice offer fascinating stories about the people, places, and events that have shaped our community. Since 2021, the series has explored local history through Tri-City History Queries, Tri-City History in Photographs, Tri-City History - Street Names, and Tri-City History (A-Z) in Photographs. From the origins of familiar street names and historic buildings to rare photographs of local schools, businesses, farms, and neighborhoods, there's something for every history enthusiast. We invite you to explore the complete collection of columns and discover the rich history of the Tri-Cities, one story at a time.

Visit: <https://museumoflocalhistory.org/history-columns-in-the-tri-city-voice/>

Museum Garden by Tri-City Ecology Center

Since about 1979, TCEC has been looking after the garden at the Local History Museum at 190 Anza Street in the Mission San Jose District. We meet at the garden for 2-3 hours on the second Sunday of each month. Everyone is welcome to come and help or just come up and see what we are getting up to. There are benches, actually they were pews, under the eaves to sit on while eating a snack and watching the birds come and go. The Museum is open that day also, so a visit to the garden can turn into a glimpse into our local history.

In May, the garden was featured on the Bringing Back the Natives Garden Tour, which we think is a great honor and a big deal. We had nearly 100 visitors to the garden during the day and everyone was delighted with what they found there. Our latest addition is a cast iron bathtub bird bath, you have to come and see it. This quote from a visitor really says it all:

"I especially enjoyed the Museum's garden in Fremont. The volunteer's enthusiasm was infectious. Tri City Ecology did a great job of welcoming folks."



Phil Stob,
Janis Stob,
Sandra Nevada,
Jerri Lightfoot



Caroline Harris



Janis Stob



Caroline, Phil and Janis



Ana Ryan

Calendar of Upcoming Museum Events

SEPTEMBER

Shinn House Celebrates 150 Years - CHECK OUT THE WEBSITE:

<https://www.historicshinnhouse.org/>

SAT 9/12 - SUN 9/13: every hour on the hour from 11 am to 3pm watch the short videos of Bernie and Marlene Leal about growing up and living in Mission San Jose

SUN 9/13 - Doors Open California, with the California Preservation Foundation. Come step back in time in Mission San Jose. Locations you can visit: Palmdale Gardens (two tours offered, with a guide), Old Mission San Jose (tours all day), Olive Hyde Art Gallery (open all day), plus our museum. For more information:
<https://sites.google.com/view/funthingstodofremonthistory/home>

SAT 9/19 - Irvington Urban Hike - the tour starts at 8:30 a.m. Participants should meet at 40991 Fremont Blvd in Fremont (Irvington Plaza Park) - Led by Caroline Harris and Patricia Schaffarczyk

SEPTEMBER CONTINUED

Come in and visit us to see our new exhibits and talk history with us!

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER

- Celebrate the anniversary of the **1776 De Anza Expedition** as WTMHLH collaborates with the Old Mission San Jose Museum. *More details forthcoming.*

DECEMBER

- Join us for our annual night of hosting **Las Posadas**, in collaboration with the Fremont Cultural Arts Council.
Date TBD - Christmas week in December.

- The museum will be **closed** (no regular open hours) from December 19th, 2026 through January 5th, 2027. Happy Holidays!

Museum Collections

Preserving our community's treasures for future generations

Featured Collection

We continue to acquire new and interesting collections. Almost weekly something new comes in to add to our unique one-of-a-kind museum.

Handful of highlights from 2025 and 2026:

Plummer Family Album: We purchased a photo album that belonged to the Plummer Family who owned the Turk Island Salt Works. The album includes well-preserved photos of Washington Township from 1890-1910, photographed with professional precision. Through the generous donations of various individuals and groups we were able to purchase and preserve this gem. More information about its contents will be in later newsletters and online as we research and catalog its contents.

A special thanks to the financial contributors:

Marjory Begley, Barbara Baxter, Laura Calvillo, Patterson House Foundation, Mary Kay Chicoine, Janet Barton, Mission Peak Heritage Foundation, and Newark Rotary Foundation.

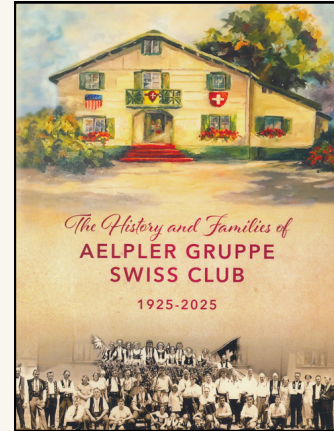
Sampling of other new collections:

Photo Collection of Aelpler Gruppe Swiss Club (1925-2025) and Book: The History and Families of Aelpler Gruppe Swiss Club, 2025 (Patricia Schaffarczyk)

Michael Johnson Collection (former Fremont planner). City of Fremont planning documents, photos, aerials, etc.

Paintings from various donors: Westvaco Chemical Plant in Newark, by S. Williams; Mission San Jose by Hal Booth; Stevenson home by Marjorie Stevenson

Fremont Chamber of Commerce Ephemera (1960s-1970s)



NEW! Aelpler Gruppe book by Patricia Schaffarczyk

Plummer Salt Works



Barbara Baxter showing off the Fisher Room

Stevenson House painting and photo



Chinese History Project

The history of Washington Township is deeply connected to the Chinese immigrants and Chinese Americans who helped shape the community through their work on railroads, farms, ranches, nurseries, and local businesses beginning in the 1860s. The Chinese History Project, a committee of the Washington Township Museum of Local History, preserves and shares these stories through research, exhibits, educational programs, and community outreach.

This year, as we celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Shinn House, we also recognize the many people whose contributions built our community. The Chinese History Project helps ensure these important stories continue to be remembered.

Learn more on the Washington Township Museum of Local History website or by following the project's social media.



L to R: Mike Au, intern,
intern, Mayor Raj
Salwan, Jill Au, Allen
Chan, Zhen Cao,
intern, Janet Barton



Exhibit on
display at
Shinn Park

Union City Historical Museum

In 2021 the Union City Historical Museum closed and the historical society dissolved. The Washington Township Museum of Local History is in the process of working with Union City to be the lead in re-opening the museum on Smith Street. From May 6th to July 8th, 2025, a coalition of volunteers from the WTMLH worked for 166 hours in the UCHM cleaning, organizing, boxing and indexing the entire history collection there. The next step is for the City of Union City to evaluate damage to the building, assess and perform needed repairs.

When work begins we will post a sign in the window. Watch for changes on our website. Questions? Let us know. Thank you!



Union City museum clean out crew
(Kelsey Camello, Marjory Begley,
Tim Swenson, Patricia Schaffarczyk)
Not pictured: Barbara Baxter

Volunteers

Outreach Intern: Our museum depends on our volunteers. We are in the process of hiring an Ohlone student to jump start our efforts to draw more volunteers to help us in the many needs we have to make our museum even better in terms of outreach, activities, research, collections, and student programs. Our intern will begin work this fall, thanks to a matching grant from the Ohlone College Foundation (\$1,000 from WTMH and \$1,000 from Ohlone).

We hope this is the beginning of a continued partnership with Ohlone College.

Program Manager for Student Programs: Dianne Holmes has volunteered as the Student Program Manager for over 10 years. She will step back from those duties in the fall of 2027. We are looking for someone to help lead the 4th grade tours at Rancho Higuera and the 3rd grade tours at the museum. We are also looking for volunteers to work with the program managers. If you like to work with children and want to develop and improve our already successful programs, please contact the museum.

High School Volunteers: Summer High School volunteers. This summer we were lucky to have had several students help with cataloguing and creating our revised newsletter. Thank you for your help: Ananya Gupta, Sam Kittur, Bhargavi Kumari, Gabriel Sya, Jiya Shah, Anish Sekkilar, Izumi Wei, Ashely Wu.

Dedicated Volunteers: A special thanks to the core of people who are here every week, month and year!



Jiya
Shah



Ananya
Gupta



Gabriel
Sya



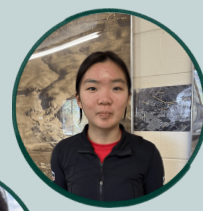
Bhargavi
Kumari



Sam
Kittur



Izumi
Wei



Ashley
Wu



Anish
Sekkilar

Membership Chair Needed

For the first time ever we have revised our membership prices.

In addition, we are looking for someone to volunteer as our membership chair. Kelsey Camello has been taking this role on for many years in addition to the many other tasks she performs for the organization. If you have a few hours a month, are willing to work at the museum computer to input the necessary information and are enthusiastic about helping us increase our membership, you are the right person. **Please contact the museum.**

Meanwhile, everyone, please promote new members among your friends and help us increase our membership. [See the new membership flyer on last page of newsletter.](#)



Historical Resources Oversight Committee (HROC)

Every old building tells a unique story of our shared identity. Over the last decade, demolitions (including entire blocks in Centerville) have rapidly altered our architectural character. To reverse this trend, beginning in March 2026, the Museum of Local History formed the Historic Resource Oversight Committee (HROC) to share the stories of historic structures, identify vulnerable properties, and to work with residents and city staff to preserve our architectural heritage as we build for the future.

The Urgent Need for Update Historical Resources List

Fremont's Historical Resources List is outdated, including missing critical maps and addresses. Updating this list is HARB's municipal duty. In addition, our committee is working to ensure HARB board members and the public have easy access to potential historical resource information and completed Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) surveys.

HROC Unveils Crucial Watch List

Here is a sample list of properties that may face immediate threats of neglect, sale or erasure

- **The Harvey Houses (3560 & 3590 Grand Lake Drive):** The city has asked long-term tenants to leave and may demolish one house while "mothballing" the other, leaving vacant structures vulnerable to vandalism. We are advocating preserving both in the current footprint, securing grants for structural upgrades, and repurposing them as a community hub and agricultural heritage museum room.
- **California Nursery President's House (36501 Niles Blvd):** This foundational piece of California's agricultural boom must be preserved in as close to its original condition as possible.
- **Palm Avenue Park Barn (42354-43410 Palm Ave):** We are advocating for prominent interpretive signage and historical markers to publicly document the property's agricultural history.
- **Vallejo Mills Historical Park:** This highly significant site is on the Fremont Register and eligible for the National Register, yet recent park revisions completely omit its historical context. We demand that its preservation and the story of the mill be explicitly written into all future park development phases.
- **Japanese Language School (3810 Bonde Way):** in incorrectly named as the Japanese Language School (3810 Bonde Way). There is new research to add to the city record about its history and the subject of photographer Dorothea Lange in 1942. The building was also a Filipino grocery store and owned by the Ranoa family, helpful in supporting the Filipino community. <https://downloads.densho.org/ddr-ajah-2/ddr-ajah-2-840-mezzanine-f1f1b17c2e.pdf>

Use Your Voice: Join Us Today!

We need neighborhood advocates willing to learn about these structures, speak at city meetings, and share the history of their own homes. To take action, contact Patricia Schaffarczyk at info@museumoflocalhistory.org or visit the Museum of Local History website to learn how you can help.

Oral History Interviews

Help capture our heritage. Do you have someone you would like to interview? We need volunteers to interview, record, transcribe and summarize interviews. Capture the heritage of the tri-cities one person at a time. Contact Patricia Schaffarczyk: info@museumoflocalhistory.org

Recent Interviews:

Bernie and Marlene Leal: Throughout the years Bernie Leal, a superb storyteller, has been interviewed, and he has told stories about his heritage and about growing up and living in Mission San Jose. In 2024, Patricia Schaffarczyk interviewed Bernie and his wife, Marlene, of 72 years in their home. Tom Coroneos filmed the interviews that were edited into three short videos. Marlene passed away May 5, 2026. Due to the agreed terms of use, we cannot post the videos on the internet. We will screen the videos of Bernie and Marlene at the museum during our open hours on the weekend of Sept 12th and 13th from 11 am to 3 pm, every hour on the hour. Museum open hours are 10am - 4pm both days.

Laura and Cruz Calvillo: In 2025, Laura and Cruz Calvillo talked about living and working in Fremont. Cruz was born and raised in Union City and remembers growing up in Decoto during the 1950s and 1960s. Cruz enlisted in the army just after graduation from Logan High School. He tells of his experience in Vietnam, coming home and adjusting to life after war. Come into the museum to read a summary of their story with pictures (2025.12)



Bernie and Marlene Leal, 2024



Laura and Cruz Calvillo, 2025



Cruz, 1960s



Bernie, 1949

In Memoriam

In the last couple of years we have had several members who have passed away. We honor and miss them. These members supported us and contributed to the historical community in many ways. If you have any other people to add to this list please contact the museum.



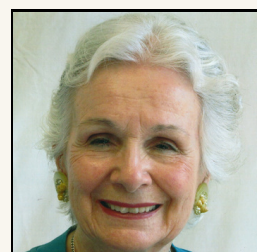
Lois Ulrich, 2025



Betty McCoy, 2024



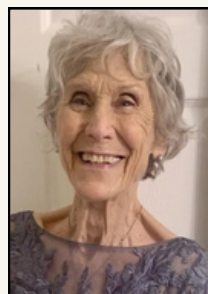
Dorothy Bradley, 2026



Antoinette Cordeniz, 2024



Tom Heater, 2026



Patricia Griffin, 2025



Marlene Leal, 2026



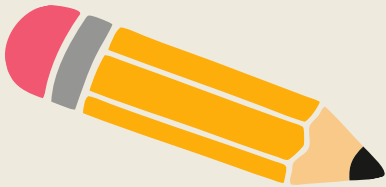
Nancy Johnson, 2025

Student Tours at the Museum and Rancho

This spring, we were happy to host several local elementary schools for our 3rd grade museum field trips! This 2-hour program teaches students and their parents the history of the Tri-City Area, with a heavy focus on the gold-rush time period and onward, and the pioneering and entrepreneurial spirit of the area which continues to this day.

This program has an indoor component led by local parent volunteers Ms. Belle and Ms. Vikki, and the outdoor hands-on program is led by longtime volunteer and former teacher Ms. Dianne! Our revamped indoor curriculum this year added focus on how the gold rush helped shape the Washington Township Area, as well as the important Union City and Newark industries of salt and sugar beet harvesting.

Our fourth-grade rancho program continues with good popularity from local schools, led by Ms. Dianne and several other hardworking volunteers leading the children in amazing interactive activities.

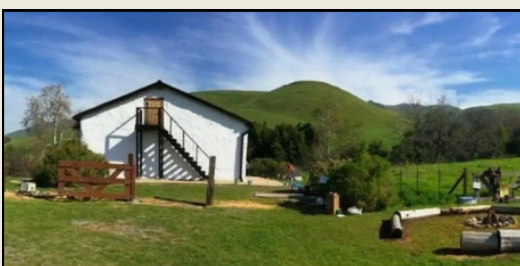


School Tours Notes from Dianne Holmes

What a great time we had at the rancho and the museum this past school year. We hosted 38 classes at the rancho and 9 classes at the museum. We had many schools from Fremont visit, and we had a private school from Union City, as well as three schools from San Ramon who joined us. How wonderful it is that schools from outside our district come to the rancho!

This summer the adobe received a facelift in the big room. The city patched and reapplied the coating that covers the walls. Next year the city will re-texture the walls of the smaller rooms. This summer I have been visiting local museums in neighboring cities to get ideas on how to make our programs even more relevant to students.

I would like to see more classes visiting our museum in the future. ALSO, Come and join our team of volunteers who run programs. We're fun!





190 Anza Street, Fremont, CA 94539

Membership Benefits

All memberships are paid annually

If Paid Jan 1st - Sept 30th - valid through end of calendar year

If Paid Oct 1st - Dec 31st - valid through end of following calendar year

Senior/ Student - \$20 Individual - \$40

Museum Newsletter/emails
Free Admission to museum & Rancho
Reduced image fees \$7/image

Family/Household - \$80

All Individual benefits PLUS
\$10 off in store/year

Non-Profit Partner - \$100

All Individual benefits PLUS
\$20 off in store/year

Patron (Indiv/Family)- \$300 / Sponsor (Business) - \$500

All Non-Profit Partner benefits PLUS
Web & Newsletter advertising

Lifetime (Indiv/Family)- \$1000 / \$2000

All Non-Profit Partner benefits PLUS
Name displayed at museum & on plaque



Want to renew your membership or become a new member?

You can now sign up and pay online by visiting our website at <https://museumoflocalhistory.org/support/membership/>. You can also mail this form and a check to **190 Anza Street, Fremont, CA 94539**.

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Senior/Student	☐ \$20
Individual	☐ \$40
Family/Household	☐ \$80
Non-Profit Partner	☐ \$100
Patron (Indiv/Family)	☐ \$300
Sponsor (Business)	☐ \$500
Lifetime (Indiv/Family)	☐ \$1000/\$2000
General Donation	_____
Total Contribution:	_____

