



the
Exchange
WINTER 2006
THE NEWSLETTER OF HISTORY SAN JOSÉ

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Saving a Part of the Speed City Story

Discarded mural highlights social history of San José

The historic mural *Freedom vs. Exploitation = Revolution* was saved from the scrapheap of history when it was found in the dumpster of a utility yard ten years ago and moved to storage. The recovered mural, which condemns the corruption of the times and celebrates local activists, is a highlight of History San José's *Speed City: From Civil Rights to Black Power* exhibit.

The mural concept was developed collaboratively by 46 San José State College students and dedicated in 1977 under the direction of professors Alan Barnett and Robert Freimark as part of a course in mural making. The students were both artists and non-artists, and the entire process took nearly a year and a half. The college administration, while

initially supportive of the concept of a bicentennial mural created by the students, put up a series of bureaucratic roadblocks as the political nature of the design became apparent. Eventually, Barnett and Freimark negotiated a compromise that allowed the mural to be completed but displayed in a less visible location than originally planned.

Due to the resulting delays, only a handful of students were still available to participate in painting the mural, but the controversial design, which had been the product of many hours of student collaboration and consideration, was retained. The finalized mural starts from the left with images of corruption and exploitation, among them Al Capone, symbolizing organized crime, portrayals of women

Speed City Story, continued on page 5

MUSEUM INFORMATION

History Park

Kelley Park, 1650 Senter Road
San José, CA 95112
408.287.2290, Fax 408.287.2291

Peralta Adobe-Fallon House Historic Site

175 W. St. John Street
San José, CA 95110
408.993.8300, Fax 408.993.8088

Administrative Offices

Pacific Hotel, History Park
1650 Senter Road
San José, CA 95112
408.287.2290, Fax 408.287.2291

www.historysanjose.org

ADMISSION

Free public admission to History Park.

HOURS

History Park & Gallery, Museum Store, and
O'Brien's Café

Tuesday – Sunday, 12 pm – 5 pm

Peralta Adobe-Fallon House Historic Site

To schedule a custom tour, call 408.918.1055.

Research Library

By appointment. Call 408.521.5026.

Administrative Office

Monday – Friday, 8 am – 5 pm
Call 408.287.2290

GROUP TOURS

To schedule a custom tour for groups of
10 or more, please call 408.918.1055.

PROGRAMS

Public Programs History Makers, Family Days,
Portraits of the Past

School Programs All school programs must
be reserved. Please call 408.918.1050.

RENTALS AND EVENTS

Call 408.918.1055 for information.

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Eva Guralnick, Editor; e.g. communications, Layout

PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE

A Legacy of Local History

by Alida Bray, Acting President & CEO

The year 2006 will, in part, be remembered as the year we lost local historian Leonard McKay. The only thing is...I can't quite get it through my head that he is actually gone. I still talk about Leonard, and I hear others talking about Leonard almost daily—and not in a past tense, but in the present as if he will walk in the door any moment carrying a new artifact or preparing to tell a story.

It may not be immediately obvious, but Leonard's influence weaves through the articles in this issue of the *Exchange*. We originated an exhibit on the Speed City era at San José State College and Leonard proclaimed "It's about time that story was told." He knew Coach Bud Winter personally and felt that neither he nor the athletes of that era ever received the recognition they deserved. Leonard also helped us choose *Manuel Valencia: California's Native Son* as the next exhibit in the *Leonard and David McKay Gallery* at the Pasetta House. An accomplished painter and a direct descendant of the De Anza party, Valencia was of dual interest to Leonard. And as a long-time member and President-elect of the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County, Leonard was instrumental in the planning and completion of the Paulson House, which opens simultaneously with the Valencia exhibit.

When I think about how there will never be another Leonard McKay, someone who can recount local history with his trademark panache, I begin to despair. I have to remind myself that there is a new generation of local historians emerging. All we need to do is look around us. *Speed City* Curator Urla Hill is one of these. She has already introduced us to a wealth of activists, athletes, coaches, students and professors who are all sharing their stories with us through the *Speed City* exhibit and lecture series.

And there is a still younger generation of historians in training with the Digital Clubhouse Network at History Park. The Clubhouse has specialized in intergenerational storytelling using digital technology since 1996. Recently, twenty-something Charles Farrell interviewed and filmed eighty-something Jerry Rosenthal, World War II veteran and President of the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County. The resulting film, *Our Commander-In-Chief*, can be viewed by going to www.digiclub.org/sv and clicking on *Stories of Service*.

As we enter a new year, we will keep Leonard in our minds and our hearts. And we can pay tribute to him by keeping local history alive in the McKay tradition. Keep your eyes and ears open for stories, remember them, repeat them—and you'll be keeping alive the traditions and memories that make San José unique. Just like Leonard did. Thank you, Leonard.

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Leonard McKay: Will We Ever See Another?

by Jack Douglas



Courtesy Leonard McKay family; (below) John Eric Paulson, Master Photographer

Leonard at work, Smith-McKay Printing, 1976; (below) at the opening reception of the Pasetta House, History Park, March 2005.

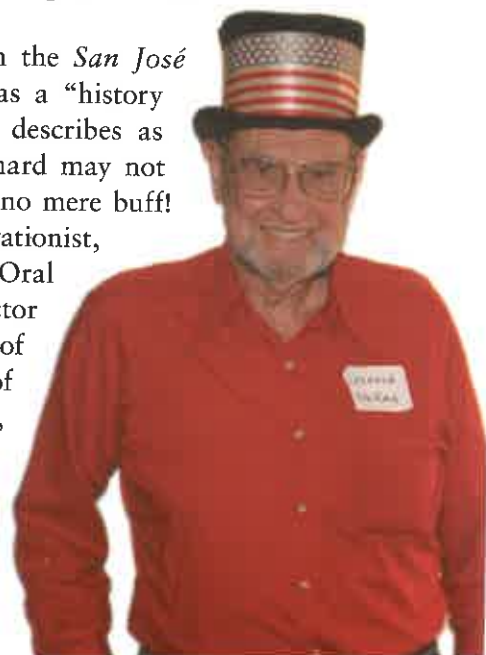
To answer my own question, no. I don't think we will. Granted there are intelligent, highly educated individuals out there gathering data, writing reports and giving lectures on history, but Leonard was in a unique category of his own.

Born and raised in our valley, he experienced its many changes first-hand, much as Clyde Arbuckle did. Just being in a place or being a witness to events is important, but realizing history as it is being made, as Clyde and Leonard did, is a talent that you are born with. Leonard remembered and pondered the events of his time. I spent countless hours sitting near his desk in his history store, aptly named "Memorabilia San José," with Clyde, Leonard's dog Traveler, and anyone else who may have come in off the street.

Leonard's discussions would cover a wide range of historical topics. One might say that he carried on an oral tradition. He usually had suggestions for stories that I was writing—particular details that weren't in the newspapers or historical sources. Very often he could supply visual materials from his personal archives. Memorabilia San José was, in some ways, one of the best museums on our town's history. Where else could one see master paintings of the West, Indian artifacts, postcards and early photographs, all in the same space?

When San José first started to get interested in its own history in the 1960s and 70s (after much of it already had been torn down), it was Leonard and Clyde, and later Tom McEnery who would promote the long-forgotten landmarks such as Pellier Park, the Peralta Adobe and the Fallon House. Leonard was always there to preserve our heritage.

The tribute to Leonard in the *San José Mercury News* called him as a "history buff," which my dictionary describes as a hobbyist or amateur. Leonard may not have had a Phd, but he was no mere buff! He was, however, a Preservationist, Bookman, Printer of History, Oral Historian, Archivist, Collector of Western Art, Purveyor of Local Memorabilia, Writer of History, Genuine Character, and Great Friend to the many with whom he shared his wisdom. No, unfortunately, there can never be another Leonard McKay.



Unearthing a Treasure Trove

The recent move of History San Jose’s Research Library from the Pacific Hotel to the Collections Center has given us a rare opportunity to re-discover items that had long been forgotten. Like most other archival repositories, the Research Library has a backlog of materials awaiting cataloging. In preparing for the move, Jim Reed, Curator of Archives and Library, and volunteer Roxanne Nilan, spent many days sorting and organizing these unprocessed collections.

Among their many finds was a large accumulation of trade catalogs, product brochures, and instruction manuals. Known to librarians and archivists as “gray literature,” such materials were printed and distributed with no thought of their possible future historical value, and usually discarded when no longer of use. Such items are invaluable to historians, collectors and hobbyists, as well as to museum curators researching the context of objects in their collections.

The Research Library is just beginning to organize and catalog its collection of these items, which includes such diverse materials as operating manuals for kitchen equipment, office machines and automobiles, and catalogs from gun and ammunition wholesalers, hardware distributors and farm equipment makers.

Perhaps the item of most local interest thus far discovered is a catalog from the Bean Spray Pump Company, founded in the 1880s to manufacture and market an insecticide sprayer for orchards. The playful cover shows a farmer proclaiming “I’ve bought a Bean Spray Pump!” while insects dressed in human clothing run from the fields in terror, saying “Good bye! We’ve heard of Bean Spray Pumps before.” Advertising has certainly evolved since then. Years later, through a series of mergers and acquisitions, the company became the FMC Corporation, the maker of the Bradley Fighting Vehicle.



History San José Collection

Bean Spray Pump Co. Catalog No. 20



GOAL
\$89,467

AMOUNT NEEDED
\$26,929

AMOUNT RAISED
\$62,538

Thank you generous individuals, families, corporations and rockers! We’ve made great progress in raising funds to match our NEH grant to relocate and preserve the Research Library. We still have a ways to go, however. Please help us get to the top of the stack! Call Barbara Johnson at 408.918.1053 to make a contribution and help preserve history. All donations are gratefully accepted!

Walk Through San José Neighborhoods Online

In January 2007 History San José will launch a new area of our website called *Neighborhoods*, which over time will feature in-depth information on a series of local communities. We’ll put the spotlight first on Pierce Ranch, Almaden Valley, Shasta-Hanchett, and Alviso, thanks to a sponsorship by SummerHill Homes.

Each neighborhood will have its own dedicated pages, in-depth information and unique design. We will provide historical context for each neighborhood, and are developing a searchable catalog of all the artifacts in HSJ’s rich collection that pertain to each. And we’ll provide resources such as links to local schools, libraries, museums, parks, and organizations for residents and visitors. When completed, these virtual neighborhoods will include access to images and records of maps, objects, photographs, and documents in the HSJ collection that relate to each neighborhood. Come and take a stroll through your neighborhood! It’s only a click away.

R. Trevy & Co. Store, Alviso, California. Collection of History San José.



Courtesy Trotter Galleries, Carmel, California



Manuel Valencia, Pastoral with Mt. Tamalpais in Distance, c.1915, oil on canvas.

California's Native Son

Beginning February 4, 2007, History San José members will enjoy a new exhibit in the *Leonard and David McKay Gallery* at the Pasetta House. The exhibit, *Manuel Valencia: California's Native Son*, is on loan from the Hearst Gallery at St. Mary's College in Moraga. The exhibit features over 25 paintings as well as personal items loaned by Valencia descendants Mary Lou Valencia Giller and Edwin Valencia, Jr. The following is an excerpt from the exhibition catalog by exhibit Curator Julie Armistead.

Manuel Valencia is distinctive in the annals of California art: as a direct descendant of one of the soldiers of the 1775-1776 Anza-Moraga expedition to establish the Mission and Presidio of San Francisco, he is certainly one of California's first native-born artists.

Valencia began painting as a youth, perhaps inspired by his artist father, also named Manuel Valencia. Painting did not, however, always pay the bills. As with many other artists of the day, Valencia's earliest employment was as an illustrator. He worked for the Salvation Army magazine *War Cry, Pacific Coast Edition*, published in San Francisco between 1883 and 1900. During that time Valencia met and married Mabel Eadon, with whom he had nine children. The family lived in San Francisco, and Valencia maintained a studio there as well.

After his studio was destroyed during the 1906 earthquake and fire, Valencia moved his family to 954 Vine Street, San Jose. Throughout his career, while he continued to keep a studio in San Francisco and exhibited regularly, he also spent time traveling the state and beyond, producing images of a California that largely has been lost through population growth and urbanization.

Manuel Valencia was a prolific painter who focused the passion of his Californio spirit to capture on canvas the essence of the California landscape. He died at age 79 in Sacramento on July 6, 1935, after an operation. It is fitting that his family scattered his ashes on Mt. Tamalpais, not far from the place where he was born.

To learn more about Valencia's life and art, attend a free curator's walk-through in the Gallery with Julie Armistead on Sunday, February 18 at 1:30 p.m.

Speed City Story, continued from cover

in the roles to which sexism had limited them, and the Statue of Liberty, holding aloft her torch to burn a three-dollar bill bearing the portrait of Richard Nixon. From the right side of the mural come contrasting images that include San José State College athletes Tommie Smith and John Carlos giving a clenched fist protest at the 1968 Olympics and community leaders such as Cesar Chavez. The placement of the Smith and Carlos figures was intended to visually and politically balance the image of the Statue of Liberty at the other end of the mural.

The college administration declined to attend the unveiling, but then-Congressman Norm Mineta was the keynote speaker. "The mural's detractors and critics will be those who believe patriotism is a one-way street," he said in his speech, "that one cannot love, defend, and honor our country and at the same time recognize that we have made grievous errors in the past." The ceremony concluded with a speech by Harry Edwards, by then a professor at University of California, Berkeley, who formed the Olympic Project for Human Rights (OPHR).

The mural was soon moved from its first location to a space deep in the basement of the student union. It was later attacked by a vandal who scrawled words between the figures of Smith and Carlos. Eventually the mural was discarded. It remains a powerful documentation of social history that continues to raise awareness and spark emotion thirty years later, and a tribute to those social and political issues its creators found most urgent.



A complete view of the mural Freedom vs. Exploitation = Revolution.

San José Rocks 2006 Is a Dazzling Success!

We knew we were on to something big. What we didn't know was the magnitude that San José Rocks 2006 would achieve. The inaugural event was a huge success, attended by over 400 guests enjoying the 1960s music of Jefferson Starship, Syndicate of Sound, Count Five, John Tristao and the Groove Kings, and The New Arrivals. This year's success established a foundation for future events and introduced a brand-new audience to History Park and History San José. There is still a buzz of excitement, a contagious energy that is empowering the committee to move forward with strategies for San José Rocks 2007.

All of this was made possible by the donors, contributors and participants. Our Presenting Sponsor was Hugh Stuart Center Charitable Trust. The Muller Family and TAJ Stone Records and Orloff/Williams were Band Sponsors. Hopkins & Carley sponsored all of the inaugural awards and SummerHill Homes sponsored the souvenir posters. The San José Mercury News and Community Newspapers were media sponsors. History San José is indebted to all of you for helping to make the night a roaring success.

The auction committee was so organized, and pulled out all the stops with some outstanding silent and live auction items. Many participants hotly bid on the signed guitars from The Doobie Brothers and Smash Mouth, as well as a Les Paul Guitar from Gibson Guitar. A Nashville trip with a private tour of Gibson Guitars was also a live auction highlight.

There has never been an event by History San José with so many in-kind donations. Each time we asked a company or organization to contribute a service or tangible item, the response we received was positive. All of the stars were aligned perfectly on October 20, 2006...the weather, the food, the bands, the outdoor setting, and the light tower as the focus for the evening was spectacular.

A mere thank you does not seem adequate to express our appreciation for the outpouring of support and confidence in the production of San José Rocks—but we'll say it anyway! On behalf of the San José Rocks steering committee, board of directors, and HSJ staff, *our deepest thanks* to everyone involved in helping us produce a wonderful event.



John Eric Paulson, Master Photographer



John Eric Paulson, Master Photographer



left and top: Dave Lepori

(top) Syndicate of Sound lead singer Don Baskin at the end of singing their hit song Little Girl. (left to right) The crowd enjoying the evening; acting President & CEO Alida Bray bestows a San José Rocks Inaugural Award to John Tristao; Count Five performing their hit song Psychotic Reaction.

JANUARY

New Exhibit!

Speed City: From Civil Rights to Black Power

Learn about San José State College student athletes who became globally recognized figures of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. History Park, Pacific Hotel Galleries.

Members' Opening

Thursday, January 11, 6 – 8 pm

Opens to the Public

January 12 – November 30, 2007

Tuesday – Sunday, 12 – 5 pm

FEBRUARY

History Makers

Speed City: The Black Power Years, 1964 – 1969

Thursday, February 8, 7 – 9 pm

See story below.

Barnes & Noble Booksellers at the corner of Almaden Expressway and Blossom Hill Road. Free



Manuel Valencia, *Seventeen Mile Ride, Monterey, California, oil on canvas.*

Private collection, courtesy of DeRut's Fine Arts

Panel Discussion

Freedom vs. Exploitation = Revolution: The 1976 Bicentennial Mural Project at San José State

Wednesday, February 14,

1 – 2:30 pm

San José State University. Free

Panel Discussion

Speed City: The Good Brothers, 1956–1964

Sunday, February 25, 1 pm

Antioch Baptist Church, 268 E. Julian St., San José. Free

New Exhibit!

Manuel Valencia: California's Native Son

For details, see story on page 5.

History Park, *The Leonard and David McKay Gallery* at the Pasetta House.

Members' Opening

Sunday, February 4, 1 – 5 pm

Members Only

Open to the Public

February 10 – May 27, 2007

Saturday – Sunday, 12 – 5 pm

Free

Curator's Walk-Through with Julie

Armistead of Hearst Galley

Sunday, February 18, 1:30 – 3 pm

Free



Sarah Puckett

Parlor and dining room of the newly renovated Paulson House, History Park, 2006.

The Paulson House Opens!

Members Preview

Sunday, February 4, 12 – 5 pm

Join the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County in showing off their new digs. Antiques from the Jackson Ranch and paintings by A. P. Hill will be on display.

Members only

UPCOMING

Greek Film Series

Presented by the Hellenic Heritage Institute.

History Park, Empire Firehouse. \$8: HSJ members; \$12: non-members; \$2: children

He Who Must Die

Friday, January 26, 7 pm

NYFES

Friday, February 23, 7 pm

America, America

Friday, March 23, 7 pm

HISTORY MAKERS

Speed City: The Black Power Years, 1964 – 1969

Thursday, February 8, 7 – 9 pm

During the early years of the Black Power Movement on San José State College's campus, from roughly 1964 through 1969, college students became serious participants in the political issues of their time—racism, poverty and injustice within the United States, and abuses of power by those in government. Panelists and former sprinters Dr. Robert Griffin and Mr. Frank Slaton look back on how their experiences empowered them as students and informed their political positions and activist roles in protests of San José State football games, in the proposed boycott of the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City, and in other demonstrations by San José State students. Dr. Steven Millner, who also was a student at SJSC during that time, will contribute a scholarly analysis of the social, economic, political and cultural context of the times.

The panel will be moderated by Urla Hill, guest curator of the exhibition *Speed City, From Civil Rights to Black Power* at History San José.

Barnes & Noble Booksellers, Almaden Expressway and Blossom Hill Road, San José. Free



Top, l-r: Kirk Clayton, Jerry Williams, Sam Davis, Bill Gaines, Lee Evans, Bob Griffin, Frank Slaton. Bottom, l-r: Tommie Smith, Ronnie Ray Smith, John Carlos.

Jeff Krook





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MANUEL VALENCIA: CALIFORNIA'S NATIVE SON

Enjoy this beautiful catalog from the traveling exhibit that originated at the Hearst Art Gallery at Saint Mary's College of California. The exhibit opens with a special member's preview on Sunday, February 4, at the Leonard and David McKay Gallery.



UNIQUE HANDMADE PILLOWS

Pacifica artist Beverly Britton uses antique needlepoint from her collection to produce exquisite hand-made pillows. Details include a patchwork of fabrics and antique buttons for accents. All pillows are one-of-a-kind and Beverly will also design custom pillows for your home.