



Morgan Hill Historical Society
Established 1971

Historically Speaking

Our Mission is to “preserve and share the history of Morgan Hill, and its environs, to inspire a sense of community.”

Published Quarterly

July 2022

* Old Fashioned BBQ for Members and Volunteers *

The MHHS Board of Directors invites all members to our fabulous old-fashioned BBQ dinner on Wednesday, July 13, 5-7:30 pm at Villa Mira Monte.

After a three-year break, we are excited to once again host this event as a way to thank our faithful members and generous Community Partners for all that they do to keep the history of the Morgan Hill community alive.

Social hour with an assortment of beverages begins at 5 pm, and our delicious BBQ dinner with all the trimmings starts at 6 pm. There will also be entertainment from some of our favorite local musicians.

There is no charge for this event, but we do need a count for food. **Please RSVP no later than July 6.** You may **click the Link Below** or leave a message at 408-779-5755. Provide your name, phone number and any additional names for the reservation.

RSVP to: events@morganhillhistoricalsociety.com

* 2022 Upcoming Events

- July 9, 2022 Historic Downtown Walking Tours (page3), Second Saturday of each month, 10:00 am—12:00 pm, 3rd Street Plaza (outside Coffee Guys)
- July 13, 2022 Member & Volunteer BBQ (page1), 5:00—7:30 pm, Villa Mira Monte
- August 27, 2022 Founders Dinner (page2), 4:30 Social — 6:00 Dinner
- The Rhoades Ranch, Cochrane Road, Morgan Hill
- September 17, 2022 Leadership Excellence Awards (page 5), Honoring Kathy & Brian Sullivan, 5:00 pm, Guglielmo Winery
- November, Holiday Boutique is cancelled. A Spring 2023 Boutique is being planned.

* Founders Dinner Returns - August 27



Our Founders Dinner is back, this year at a new location. It will be held at the historic **Rhoades Ranch on Cochrane Road, August 27, 4:30 Social - 6:00 Dinner**. This annual celebration honors those who have helped shape the community that we love.

When the Community and Cultural Center was unavailable for this event, Sheila and Joe Giancola agreed to host it in the huge, shady backyard of their home, which is listed on the National Register of Historical Places. No access to the house will be provided during this evening, but a special home tour is being organized for the

spring of 2023. In 2020 there were plans to commemorate the property's centennial with a fundraiser for the Historical Society, but that couldn't happen because of Covid-19.

This event will also feature a new caterer for the buffet meal: Dave Bozzo of Gilroy Grill Catering. They come highly recommended by the Giancolas. Music will be provided by Joe Ferrara on guitar. Joe has a repertoire of over 1,500 songs from a variety of genres including folk, rock, standards and show tunes. San Francisco Giants fans may have heard him performing the national anthem, which he did for 30 years up to 2012.

Special invitations will be mailed to community members who have resided in Morgan Hill, Coyote, Madrone, and San Martin for 50 years or longer. Members of the Historical Society who have lived in the area for 70 years or more will receive a complimentary dinner. Postcard invites will be mailed to MHHS members and the general public in mid-July.

Don't miss this special event and the opportunity to catch up with friends in this beautiful, outdoor setting.

MHHS planning committee: Ellie Weston, Sandy de la Cuesta, Jan Guglielmo, Margo Hinnenkamp and Kathy Sullivan.

With special thank you to Sheila and Joe Giancola.

Photo: Front entry to the Rhoades Ranch Home.

NOTES FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Roger Knopf, rknopf@morganhillhistoricalsociety.com



Well, summer arrived with a high temperature punch. With the season change comes a renewed enthusiasm and level of energy to return to the old normal. Ellie Weston and team are planning the Annual Founders Day Dinner on Aug 27. We will be hosted by Sheila and Joe Giancola at their Rhoades Ranch property. It is a beautiful setting; you won't want to miss this one.

On July 13 at 5 pm the Society is hosting a members' BBQ at Villa Mira Monte. We are also getting back on track to support the 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade history lessons on Early California. The trunk show went to several classes this spring, and on-site field trips are being restaffed and will begin in the new school year.

With all this and talk of more, the success of these activities is dependent on our volunteers.

Volunteers are the ones who make it all work. Please consider getting involved by working as a docent or supporting a one-time activity. Tell your family, friends, neighbors, and work associates about us. Come one come all!

We also need to fill a few vacancies on the Board of Directors. If you are interested or would like to suggest someone to be considered, please email me.

JOIN * VOLUNTEER * DONATE

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and its environs, to inspire a sense of community.

IN MEMORIAM

Marie Benz Brindle
Floy Elizabeth Montarbo
Marcie Anne Venosta
Kathrine "Katie" Albertson Aiello
Stanley "Stan" Oren Stockam
Judy Kinker
Louis Allen Lepera

DID YOU KNOW?

In the 1500's.....

Common entertainment included playing cards. However, there was a tax levied when purchasing playing cards but only applicable to the "Ace of Spades." To avoid paying the tax, people would purchase 51 cards instead. Yet, since most games require 52 cards, these people were thought to be stupid or dumb because they weren't "playing with a full deck!"



The Morgan Hill Historical Society
presents

A Walking Tour of Morgan Hill's Historic Downtown

2nd Saturday of the Month

10:00 AM to Approximately Noon
Park at the Community Garage [Enter on 4th Street]
Meet at 50 E. 3rd Street [Garage Pedestrian Exit]

Reservations not required.
FREE Tour – Donations Welcome
For Additional Information, Leave a Message at – 408-779-5755

Walking distance about 1.5 miles
Wear comfy shoes!

Tour starts at 3rd Street Plaza under the Poppy Jasper Glass Panel at the Community Garage and proceeds to Dunne Avenue working its way up to 2nd Street and over to Depot Street for highlights on the history of some of our City's oldest buildings and homes.

The Tour Guide will weave in general information on area history.
A great end to the tour would be a walk, or drive, north on Monterey to visit Villa Mira Monte History Park.

Join us and get a little exercise along with a dose of history!

Before or after, treat yourself to coffee, breakfast, brunch or lunch at one of our charming local eateries.

Visit [AmazonSmile](https://www.amazon.com/s?ref=ain_text) when making purchases online and select
Morgan Hill Historical Society!

Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase to MHHS!

Over the past few years MHHS has received \$600+ from Amazon. You can help grow this amount by using <http://www.smile.amazon.com> when ordering from

Volunteer Corner: RIC SMITH *

Margo Hinnenkamp, Volunteer Chair



Ric Smith has been one of our faithful volunteer docents for many years. He can be found at the museum one Saturday each month welcoming visitors and sharing the history of the Acton House and its wonderful displays. He discovered MHHS one day when he was driving past Villa Mira Monte and decided to stop in. Kathy Sullivan gave him a tour of the house and then invited him to become a docent. We are so glad that he said “yes”! He says that he meets many interesting folks on the walking tours, as well as those who tour the museum.

Being able to explain some of the colorful history of our city is what keeps Ric coming back and sharing his time and expertise with us.

Ric also volunteers for WERC (Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation Center) in Morgan Hill. He is frequently seen holding a rescued bird and sharing its colorful rehabilitation story.

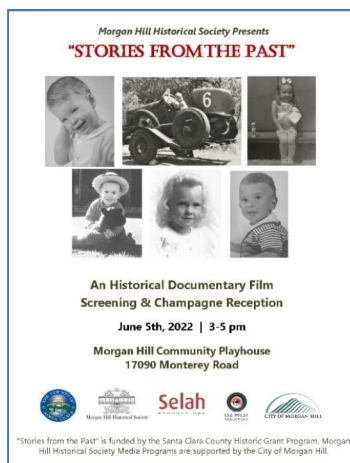
Friends of the Library is another of Ric’s passions, and he has long been a part of their volunteer group: helping with book sales, working in the bookstore, and serving on the board.



Historically Speaking

Don’t miss the Summer 2022 issue of [gmhTODAY magazine](#), coming to your computer and local newsstands in July. Given the timing of this issue, we seized the opportunity to write about Morgan Hill’s longest running, hands-down favorite community tradition, the Fourth of July Parade. We are not exaggerating. This holiday tradition began in 1867, more than 30 years before the City of Morgan Hill was incorporated. Over time, it expanded into what we now call Freedom Fest. Events include the 5K Freedom Run/Walk and 1-Mile Kids’ Run, a classic Car Cruise and Show, the Patriotic Sing, the Family Music Fest program, the Fourth of July Parade, and the Fireworks on the Green. According to Freedom Fest leader Matt Stein, Freedom Fest has hosted as many as 45,000 spectators, served by 450 volunteers, many of whom have been involved for 10, 20 years or more. Long live Freedom Fest!

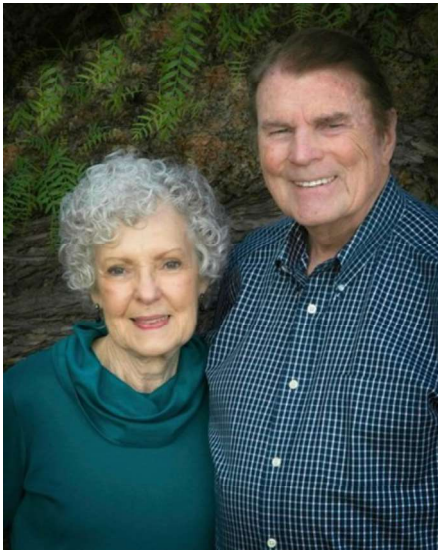
MEDIA UPDATE *Stories from the Past*



Our newest *Stories from the Past* documentary made its debut in June at the Morgan Hill Community Playhouse. The theater was packed...standing room only. The film offered diverse and often surprising first-hand accounts from folks with deep roots and memories of Morgan Hill and San Martin “back in the day.” Our lineup of beloved community members included Gary Ponzini, John Telfer, Joan Sullivan, Dan and Tom Rocca, and Linda Tarvin. The film was followed by a champagne reception with “the bubbly” donated by Guglielmo Winery.

This year’s *Stories from the Past* was made possible by a grant from the Santa Clara County Historic Grant Program with support from the City of Morgan Hill. If you missed the screening, watch it on our website: [MHHS MEDIA - Stories from the Past](#).

* Leadership Morgan Hill Honors Kathy & Brian Sullivan



September 17, 2022 5:00pm Guglielmo Winery

Leadership Morgan Hill will honor Kathy and Brian Sullivan with Leadership Excellence Awards during a gala at Guglielmo Winery on September 17, 2022, at 5 pm. The event theme is “Preserve and Protect,” a tribute to Kathy’s commitment to historic preservation with the Morgan Hill Historical Society, and Brian’s commitment to public safety with the Community Law Enforcement Foundation (CLEF).

Join the Morgan Hill community and MHHS members in honoring this special couple. Find event details and ticket information at:

<https://www.leadershipmorganhill.com/>

Brian and Kathy are the first couple to be celebrated jointly, and this is the first time a current class member, Brian, is being honored.



SHARE YOUR HISTORY

Be Part of “Stories from the Past”

Every year we meet with people from Coyote, Madrone, Morgan Hill and San Martin who are part of the fabric of our community. Many were born here, some have families who’ve made our region their home for multiple generations. They have immigrated here from all over the world, built their lives here pursuing a variety of livelihoods, and contributed in a myriad of ways to community life.

If you have a story to share with us, please get in touch with Robin Shepherd, r.shepherd@morganhillhistoricalsociety.com. Our mission is to gather and preserve stories, in print, film and online, so that present and future generations can learn and appreciate how history shapes our community and binds us together.

We began this project in 2014 and are inspired to continue it well into the future. Our work is 100% funded through grants and donations from generous people like you. Thanks for your support!



Welcome to
“Stories from the
Past”

Our annual
documentary film
project to gather
and preserve local
history for the
benefit of
generations to
come.

Let us know if you
have a story to
share!

MORGAN HILL
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
17860 Monterey
Morgan Hill CA 95037

(a 501c3 nonprofit)

www.morganhillhistoricalsociety.org



Louis Allen Lepera March 5, 1915 - June 11, 2022

Louis Albert Lepera, a lifelong resident of Morgan Hill and great supporter of the Morgan Hill Historical Society, passed away peacefully at home at the remarkable age of 107.

Louis attended Morgan Hill schools, graduated from Live Oak High School and studied Accounting at Heald Business College in San Francisco. He married Louisa Carpignano in 1939, and they enjoyed 73 years together. Louis was a prune rancher here in the valley. After retiring he took up golf; he loved the game.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Louisa, son, Leonard and daughter-in-law, Meriel Lepera. He is survived by his daughter Pauline Price of Morgan Hill, as well as grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Louis was featured in the 2004 version of *Stories from the Past*.

Donations in his memory may be made to the:

Morgan Hill Historical Society, P. O. Box 1258, Morgan Hill, CA 95038 or

Yosemite Conservancy, 101 Montgomery St., Suite 2450, San Francisco, CA 94104.

* Memberships Support Local History

Kathy Sullivan, Membership Chair

Membership donations are accepted throughout the year to support our mission to preserve and share the history of Morgan Hill and its environs, and to inspire a sense of community.

Preserving, maintaining, and operating the 2.5-acre Villa Mira Monte History Park is an opportunity and challenge the Historical Society took on in 1993. We continue to fulfill our obligations as stewards of the site. Your generous membership donations help make this possible.

If you haven't yet sent in your 2022 Membership, please consider doing it TODAY. Forms are available at Villa Mira Monte. You may also go to our website to pay online or print a Membership form that can be mailed. Visit <https://www.morganhillhistoricalsociety.org/membership>

* Property Updates

Ellie Weston, Property Management Manager

The interior of the Morgan Hill House had not been painted since its major renovation in the 1990s, and it definitely needed to be refreshed. This spring the downstairs and back porches were painted by McLaughlin Painting of Morgan Hill, using the same traditional colors. We appreciate Rich Hinnenkamp for prepping and painting the back porch stoops. He, along with Roger & David Knopf, moved all the large, heavy furniture before painting and back again when the work was completed. Kathy Devine has created an Ingenious tool to move items and photos hanging from the picture rails without climbing a ladder. This made it much easier for her to take down those items in preparation for painting.

The thirty rose bushes that were relocated in the early months of this year to make way for the Native Garden are doing well, and most are blooming.

Our thanks to the Morgan Hill Bible Church and Pastor Haynes for allowing overflow parking on the back lot of their premises for the Youth Mariachi Competition and Family Picnic event.

Members Keep History Alive

For 50 years Society members have sustained our mission and served the greater community in preserving and sharing our local history. We very much appreciate the following individual and family members at the Patron and higher levels for their generous support. We also thank all members who donate at any level. Gifts in any amount support local history preservation.

You will find the logos of our Community Partner businesses on our website at: morganhillhistoricalsociety.org/partners. Click on the logos to go to their websites.

 Please support our local sponsors!

Our Member - Donors

Preservationist \$1000

Carol O'Hare - in Memory of Bud O'Hare
Karen Christopher

Rob Bettencourt

Trail Blazer \$500

Al & Sylvia Cook Susan Farris Jeanne Gregg Barry & Karin Link

Anthony V. Goularte - in Memory of Jane Reed Goularte

Historian \$250

Lisa & Karl Bjarke William & Kathleen Briggs Roger & Michele Burch
Mike & Mary Cox Dana & Elaine Ditmore George & Janice Guglielmo
Teri & Tom Hennessy John & Holly Henry Roger & Janie Knopf
Dave & Perrin Larton Pauline Lepera Price Joan Marfia Lewis
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Cheryl Willnauer Cathleen & David Reisenauer

Patron \$150

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Margo & Rich Hinnenkamp Michael & Barbara Klyszeiko Craig & Peggy D. Martin
Bill & Monica McClintock



Our Members & Donors (cont'd)

Patron \$150

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Mike & Karen Parks

Joe & Mary Picazo

Jean Marie Pinard

Vicky & Joseph Reader

Nancy L. Reynolds

Robin Shepherd

Roger Schindewolf & Patty Robinson

Samuel & Lilie Shueh

Rene Spring

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Ron Ward

Paul Ward

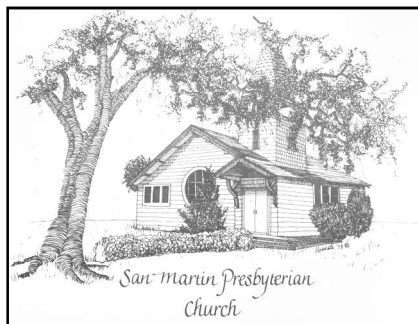
Bonnie & Chip Williams

Ron & Peggy Woolf

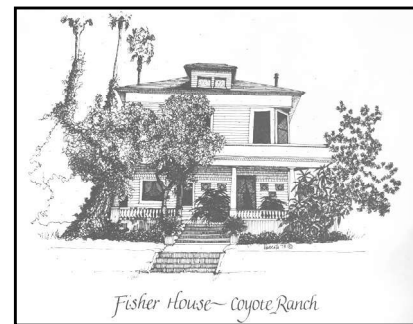
Martin Guerrero & Robert Ward



Machado School 1895
Sycamore Ave.



San Martin Prebyterian Church
1898
Lincoln Ave.



1870's Fisher House
now Coyote Ranch
land bought in 1844

~ These Michael Muscato drawings and more are for sale in the Museum at Villa Mira Monte ~



Morgan Hill Historical Society

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MORGAN HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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