



Cupertino Historical Society & Museum

the  
presents  
**Cornerstone**

Winter 2026

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Quinlan Community Center 10185 N Stelling Rd, Cupertino, CA 95014  
Museum open 10am-4pm Wednesday-Friday pending docent availability

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cupertinomuseum.org

## PRELUDE TO DE ANZA: EARLY SPANISH EXPEDITIONS

In 1542, Portuguese mariner João Rodrigues Cabrilho mapped the Pacific coast but failed to spot the Golden Gate likely obscured by persistent fog that would keep San Francisco Bay hidden from Europeans for over two hundred years. Spain's colonization of California was finally driven by the southward expansion of the Russian Empire along the Pacific coast.



*Painting of Portolá in SF Bay 1769 by D. Ziemski 2019*

In 1769, Gaspar de Portolá led 73 men north from San Diego alongside Father Juan Crespí and Fernando Rivera y Moncada, while Father Junípero Serra remained behind to consecrate Mission San Diego. Low on food and suffering from scurvy, the party overshot Monterey Bay — and on November 2, became the first Europeans to observe San Francisco Bay and the Santa Clara Valley. Pedro Fages, also on the expedition, succeeded Portolá as acting governor

and later passed through the Santa Clara Valley, becoming the first European to confirm that the Bay connected to the Pacific Ocean. By 1775, Rivera y Moncada and Father Francisco Palóu had scouted the Peninsula for missions and a presidio, and on August 6, the *San Carlos* became the first Spanish ship to enter San Francisco Bay, greeted by Ohlone and Miwok in tule fishing boats. What remained was to send settlers.

## THE DE ANZA EXPEDITION: COLONISTS ON THE ROAD TO SAN FRANCISCO BAY

In 1775, many of the newly established California missions were in danger of collapsing due to food shortages and Indigenous resistance to missionization. Father Junípero Serra — president of all the California missions — argued that the missions required Spanish and Hispanicized settlers from New Spain to support them. The man chosen to lead them north was Lt. Col. Juan Bautista de Anza, who had already established an overland route from New Spain to Alta California in 1774, forging friendly relations with the Quechan (Yuma) people along the way.



*Painting of Juan Bautista de Anza by Fray Orci; 1774  
New Mexico Digital Collections*

The De Anza Expedition set out with 240 colonists including 30 soldiers, 40 women — eight of whom were pregnant — and more than 100 children. The colonists were of diverse backgrounds, including a mix of Indigenous, European, and African heritage. The expedition also included vaqueros, muleteers, servants, Indigenous guides, friars, 695 horses and mules, and 385 Longhorn cattle. Father Pedro Font served as chaplain and diarist. His and De Anza's meticulous records give us much of what we know about the journey today.



*Painting of Pedro Font  
by Bill Singleton  
National Park Service*

On September 29, Font collected the settlers at Horcasitas in Sonora, Mexico, and the party arrived at the Presidio of Tubac in Arizona on October 15. The expedition set off on October 22 — but that very night, a soldier's wife and mother of seven named Manuela Peñuelas went into labor, giving birth to a "very lusty boy." She would die of complications the following morning, the only expedition member to perish on the journey. She was buried at Mission San Xavier del Bac, where her newborn son was baptized. Her passing was a sobering reminder of the dangers faced by the colonists. Multiple women would give birth along the way, and De Anza repeatedly delayed the march so that mothers could recuperate.



*Painting of Death of Manuela Peñuelas by Bill Singleton  
National Park Service*

Crossing the Sonora Desert, the party struggled to find enough water for everyone and all their animals. Their solution was to "march *a tardeada*" — splitting the party so that portions could travel over a stretch of

trail at a time. Desertions began almost immediately and those caught were punished with beatings.

On October 29, De Anza made clear his policy on interactions with Indigenous peoples: his men were not to steal goods, use weapons except in self-defense, or violate women or face harsh punishments. De Anza's motives were twofold in that he wanted to preserve good relationships with Indigenous nations, but also wanted to "set an example" and prepare native peoples for eventual missionization.

Along the Gila River, the expedition was warmly welcomed by O'odham villages of as many as 1,000 people who had come to view De Anza as a peacemaker on his 1774 expedition. On November 27, De Anza met with Captain Salvador Palma, a leader of the Quechan people at the Colorado River crossing. Palma had taken a liking to De Anza and told him that he desired for the Spanish to come live among his people. De Anza promised to take him to the Viceroy of New Spain to plead his case, a promise with lasting consequences for Alta California as relations between the Spanish and Quechan would sour leading to conflict in 1781 where Rivera y Moncada would lose his life and De Anza's trail would be closed. Both Palma and De Anza's scouts informed him there was no easy ford, but De Anza found a place upriver where the river split into three shallower and more manageable streams where the expedition could cross. Fathers Garcés and Eixarch remained behind under Palma's protection until a mission could be set up with the Quechan.

The crossing behind them, the expedition now faced the most punishing leg of the journey. Caught in a serious snowstorm near the Laguna Mountains west of the present-day Salton Sea, the party lost a significant number of animals to the cold. Fifty more head of cattle perished in subsequent delays between December 14–16 and December 20–22. Lieutenant José Joaquín Moraga was temporarily deafened in both ears from cold exposure. On Christmas night, a third boy was born on the expedition.

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Then came news that would cast a shadow over the entire enterprise. On January 1, 1776, soldiers sent ahead from Mission San Gabriel returned with word that the San Diego mission had been attacked by Kumeyaay warriors, killing Father Luís Jayme, wounding all the soldiers, and burning the mission. The rebellion had occurred on November 5th, when Portolá expedition veteran Lt. José Francisco Ortega and his men were away to establish San Juan Capistrano. Fifteen out of twenty-five Kumeyaay villages in a 31-mile vicinity contributed warriors to the assault, numbering as high as 600. The Kumeyaay were furious that the Spanish were seizing land to support their livestock and crops which disrupted their traditional economies and encroached on villages while taking their people into missions for labor. It was one of the most successful revolts against the California missions.

On January 4, the expedition arrived at Mission San Gabriel, where they met military governor Fernando Rivera y Moncada, an officer who had marched with the original 1769 Portolá expedition. De Anza, Font, and Rivera agreed that the colonists would recuperate at San Gabriel while the officers rode south to assess the damage. They arrived at San Diego on January 11. Rivera launched investigations, sent out soldiers to capture the rebellion's leaders, and traded threats with nearby Kumeyaay villages. But the investigation moved slowly, and De Anza, already on a mission of his own, grew impatient. The two men clashed

repeatedly. By February 3, with little progress made and word arriving that the settlers were straining San Gabriel's food supply, De Anza resolved to depart, leaving Rivera to his investigations.

Further complications awaited at San Gabriel. A soldier had deserted the night before De Anza's return, taking three muleteers, a servant, twenty-five of their best saddle animals, trade beads, tobacco, chocolate, and two muskets. Lt. Moraga set out with seven soldiers to run them down, catching the deserters some 10 miles from the Colorado River. It turned out the soldier had stolen chocolate and liquor from the commissary, and fearful of being caught, had persuaded the others to flee with him. They were imprisoned and eventually sentenced to labor at the Presidio of San Francisco.

On February 20, De Anza departed without Moraga, leaving orders for him to catch up. The expedition followed the coastal trail defined by Portolá, reaching Mission San Luís Obispo on March 2. Font recorded an amusing scene upon arrival: those who had dressed up to enter the pueblo were precisely those who got the wettest crossing a mire. The pueblo itself had barely a dozen inhabitants.

On March 10, the expedition arrived at the Presidio of Monterey, where Father Serra greeted them and invited De Anza and Font to Mission Carmelo. There, Font spent time with Fathers Palóu and Crespi, both veterans of expeditions to San Francisco Bay, as preparations were made to set out for the Bay on the 14th. On the 13th, however, De Anza became suddenly severely ill, suffering from debilitating pains and a fever. It wasn't for another week that he would be able to take some steps, and he decided to proceed against doctor's advice.

On March 24, the party entered the Santa Clara Valley through Gilroy, where they began to encounter the local Matalans, Thámien, and other Ohlone peoples — the same people who had inhabited this valley for thousands of years, stewarding its environment.

And so it was on March 25, 1776, that De Anza encamped on the banks of Stevens Creek, which Font named the Arroyo de San Josef Cupertino. Over a century later, Cupertino would become the name of our city.



*Above: The Cupertino logo is a conquistador's helmet (morion).*

Near modern Burlingame the party found the cross that Rivera had raised to mark a place for a mission, though De Anza found the site to lack water in the dry season. On March 27, they reached Fort Point, where De Anza stood at the cliff's edge and looked out on the Golden Gate, erecting a cross to mark the site of the future Presidio of San Francisco. On March 29, he and Font located a suitable site for the mission at the Arroyo de los Dolores. The next day, Font measured a towering tree: 5.5 yards in circumference, 50 yards tall. It would come to be known as El Palo Alto which gave its name to the city of Palo Alto and still stands today, a true witness to history.

Returning to Monterey April 8, De Anza would in the end never see the founding of San Francisco. Still recovering from illness and unable to obtain a reply

from Rivera for permission to begin founding the missions San Francisco and Santa Clara, he was forced to return to Mexico City. De Anza and Font would end up running into Rivera soon on the way to Mexico with Rivera hardly saying a word to De Anza who would take great offense. They would soon learn that Rivera had been excommunicated for removing at swordpoint the rebel leader Carlos from the church protection that he had been placed under. De Anza left the task to Lt. Moraga, who led Father Palóu north to establish what the expedition had set out to build. The first mass in San Francisco was said on June 29. The presidio began construction on August 18 and was officially founded September 17. Mission Dolores followed on October 9. Rivera established Mission Santa Clara on January 12, 1777 only to be relieved of his position on February 3. And on November 29, 1777, Moraga founded El Pueblo de San José de Guadalupe, the first Spanish civilian settlement in the San Francisco Bay area.

*Article by Jana Kilpatrick. Supporting research by Gail Fretwell-Hugger. Graphics by Savita Singh. See more pictures, information, & full article at [cupertinomuseum.org/articles.html](http://cupertinomuseum.org/articles.html)*

**THE ANZA EXPEDITION 1775-1776**

In 1776, while American patriots fought for their independence from England, Spanish Lt. Colonel Juan Bautista de Anza led more than 240 men, women, and children some 1,800 miles to establish a settlement at San Francisco Bay.

These families were the first colonists to come overland across the frontier of New Spain into present-day California.

Al mismo tiempo que en 1776 los patriotas angloamericanos iniciaban la lucha por su independencia de Inglaterra, el teniente coronel español Juan Bautista de Anza condujo a unas 240 colonos más de 2900 kilómetros para establecerse en Alta California.

Era la primera vez que se utilizaba la ruta terrestre de Nueva España para traer pobladores, en este caso los que habían de establecer el pueblo de San Francisco.

**Map Key**  
 Native Tribes and Cultures  
 Anza's 1775-1776 Expedition Route  
 Recruitment of Expedition Families  
 Significant Stops

www.nps.gov/juba | www.anzahistorictrail.org | @AnzaTrailNPS

## IN MEMORIAM: ALECIA THOMAS



*Alecia in front of the CHSM Painless Parker exhibit 2023*

The Cupertino Historical Society & Museum dedicates the De Anza exhibit with deep affection and enduring gratitude to the memory of our cherished friend, colleague, and dedicated archivist, Alecia Thomas, who passed away on February 22, 2026.

Alecia served as Collections Manager for the CHSM, where she poured her passion into preserving and sharing the rich history of Cupertino and the surrounding area. Her meticulous research brought historical subjects and notable local figures to life through thoughtfully curated exhibits. She excelled at collecting, reproducing, and displaying photographs, documents, maps, and other materials — arranging and weaving them into compelling, comprehensive storylines that educated and inspired visitors.



***Making Connections: Stories from the Land***  
*Permanent Exhibit at Los Altos History Museum*

Before joining our team, Alecia honed her skills at the Los Altos History Museum for five years (2018–2023), where she catalogued and cared for their extensive collection with the same care and precision she later brought to Cupertino.

Alecia's boundless enthusiasm for history was matched only by her warmth, helpfulness, and joyful spirit. She was a true delight to work with—always collaborative, always generous with her knowledge, and deeply committed to the mission of the Cupertino Historical Society and Museum. Her dedication touched everyone she encountered, from staff and docents to members and visitors alike.



***Gadgets Galore! Transforming the American Household***  
*Rotating Exhibit at Cupertino Museum 2025*

Though she is profoundly missed, Alecia's legacy lives on in the exhibits she shaped, the stories she preserved, and the love of history she ignited in so many. We are forever grateful for the light she brought to our community and our museum.

Rest in peace, Alecia. Your work and your spirit will continue to guide us.

### **ALECIA'S EXHIBITS & PROJECTS**

- Project: Collection/Archive Inventory (2022-2025)
- Article: Kelly Truck (2022)
- Exhibit: Stepping Out in 1880 (2023)
- Exhibit: Victorian Hair Craft & Mementos (2023)
- Exhibit: Painless Parker (2023)
- Exhibit: Fremont and Cora Older (2024)
- Articles: 7 Businesses – Apple Computer, Blue Pheasant, Cupertino Library, Paul & Eddie's, R. Cali & Bro, Rancho Rinconada, Yamagami (2024)
- Project: Mayor Chao's Cupertino Stories (2025)
- Exhibit: Gadgets Galore! (2025)
- Exhibit: The World of the Honeybee (2025)
- Article: Cupertino 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (2025)

## REMEMBERING FAYE FAULHABER



CHSM Member Faye Louise Faulhaber, of Cupertino, died January 2, 2026 in Santa Clara, CA.

She was born on March 3, 1940 in the old O'Connor's Sanitarium in San Jose, to Linda Maria

(Pianto) Quintero and Angelo Ricardo "Cheet" Quintero. She grew up in a prune orchard, behind Rifredi's Market, in Monta Vista. As a child, she cut apricots during the summer. She was a majorette in the Sunnyvale Sparklers. She attended Cupertino Grammar School, Fremont High School, and San Jose State University where she graduated with a BA in primary education and earned her teaching credential. She worked for Lockheed Missiles and Space Company in the 1960's.

Through her friend Esther Johnson, met Richard "Dick" A. Faulhaber, on a blind date. The two married on October 16, 1965. After being a homemaker for several years, Faye returned to work, first, at Hillview Preschool. Later, she held a succession of clerical positions.

She loved animals and greatly enjoyed gardening, sewing, quilting, and antique hunting and collecting. She spent countless hours bead-crafting her own jewelry and collecting and meticulously curating her greatest passion: buttons.

Faye was a great cook, continuing many family traditions. Her tabouli and bean dip were out of this world. She also excelled in baking (and eating) cookies. In her latter years, she also excelled at baking "incinerated" chicken and occasionally setting off the smoke detector.

A memorial service was held on January 23, 2026.

[Read her full obituary in the Mercury News.](#)

## WELCOMING NEW STAFF



CHSM is excited to welcome Savita Singh to our team. Savita has an extensive background in graphic design and is looking to give back to her community. She is working on our exhibit imagery and

signage, the composition of our newsletter, and our publicity materials. With her enthusiasm and technical prowess, she is quickly growing into her role as a valued member of our staff.

## WANDERING BEES



Those with a keen eye may remember the rotating bee anatomy model crafted for the *World of the Honeybee* exhibit by volunteer and woodworker Rylan Luke.

It was built help educate visitors about the different kinds of bees found in

beehives: 1 queen, several drones and many worker bees. All worker bees are female. Drones are male and only mate with the queen bee. Visitors can slide the pictures on the stand around to match up the parts of the different kinds of bees. The model stand is crafted from reclaimed cherry and has hexagonal elements which echo the chambers of the bee's wax honeycomb.

The piece is now on loan to the McClellan Ranch Preserve Environmental Education Center, which is open Saturdays. The wandering bees will eventually return to CHSM.

Rylan says 'Volunteering at the museum has been a wonderful experience. The shared stories and experiences of people from all over the world as well as Cupertino, are the best part. Please come visit!'

## TRAVELING TRUNK

CHSM's Traveling Trunk team presented their program to 3 classes of students on different days at Sedgwick School last month. Also in February, Traveling Trunk went to Live Oak Adult Day Care center in Cupertino. Later in March, program presenters Gail Hugger and Mercy Hegland will take the old-time school, farm and kitchen artifacts and do a presentation at Morningstar on De Anza Blvd.

Traveling Trunk is a free educational program that teaches the history of many items used in early homes and farms around 1900 to children and adults alike.

Learn more at [cupertinomuseum.org/ttschool.html](http://cupertinomuseum.org/ttschool.html).



*Some of the artifacts featured in the presentation*

## TAVERN TALK AT CICERO'S PIZZA



6-8 PM Wednesday, March 11, 2026

Cicero's Pizza in Orchard Farms Shopping Center  
6138 Bollinger Rd, San Jose, CA 95129

Join us on Wednesday for some of Cicero's famous thin crust, a complimentary glass of wine and the story of how Cicero's has been serving the community since the late 1960's! Come hungry and get your orders in during our reception starting at 6pm, the talks will start at 6:30pm!

All proceeds benefit the Cupertino Historical Society & Museum a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Get tickets at Eventbrite: [bit.ly/TavernTalkCiceros](https://bit.ly/TavernTalkCiceros)

## RECURRING EVENT: BLACKSMITH DEMONSTRATION



*Blacksmith Lester Markarian explains his techniques (right, image by Alyssa Yang, El Estoque)*

As part of a long-term partnership with McClellan Ranch Park, the restored Baer Blacksmith Shop at McClellan Ranch has most of CHSM's collection of blacksmithing artifacts. Blacksmithing demonstrations are usually scheduled for the last Saturday of every month, weather permitting. While the blacksmith works, docents from CHSM speak to visitors about Cupertino/Monta Vista history with a display of photos and texts on a table outside the shop.

Join us and learn a bit about early local history and the craft of blacksmithing. Free admission & free parking. The following dates have been posted:

March 28, 2026	11 AM – 3 PM
April 25, 2026	11 AM – 3 PM
May 30, 2026	11 AM – 3 PM

McClellan Ranch, 22221 McClellan Rd, Cupertino

If you like talking to people about local history, we would greatly appreciate your participation as a docent. We have 2 permanent volunteers but need substitutes willing to take a 2-hour shift on an occasional last Saturday of the month. One of the permanent docents will spend a 2-hour shift with you to get you started. If interested, please email Gail Fretwell-Hugger at [gailhugger80@gmail.com](mailto:gailhugger80@gmail.com).

### THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS!

Gail Fretwell-Hugger	George Sousa
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And thanks to all our members, volunteers, & supporters who make our mission possible!



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## EXHIBIT OPENING: DE ANZA EXPEDITION

6–8 PM | Wednesday, March 25, 2026

Cupertino Historical Museum

Quinlan Community Center

10185 N. Stelling Rd, Cupertino, CA 95014

We welcome you to attend the grand opening of our upcoming exhibit celebrating the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Juan Bautista de Anza Expedition passing through Cupertino (March 25–27), and the United States Semiquincentennial! Come see a uniform worn by the reenactors of the expedition in 1976 and much more on display March through July!

[cupertinomuseum.org/museumExhibits.html](https://cupertinomuseum.org/museumExhibits.html)

COMING SOON

# 1776-2026

## Celebrating 250 Years

Juan Bautista de Anza Expedition  
& United States Semiquincentennial

EXHIBITION OPENING 2026 COMING IN MARCH

[cupertinomuseum.org](https://cupertinomuseum.org)