



A LITTLE BIT OF THANKSGIVING HISTORY

By Gail Fretwell-Hugger, Historian

Although President Abraham Lincoln is credited with issuing the proclamation that created Thanksgiving as a national holiday in 1863, the “backstory” of the holiday makes interesting reading.

Sarah Josepha Hale was New Hampshire born and bred. She became a prominent writer and editor and the author of the widely known children’s poem, “Mary Had a Little Lamb”. She also founded American Ladies’ Magazine which had a circulation of more than 150,000 by the eve of the Civil War. In addition to her publishing work, Hale was a committed advocate for women’s education (including the creation of Vassar College in New York). She also raised funds to construct Massachusetts’ Bunker Hill Monument and helped save George Washington’s Mt. Vernon estate.

Growing up in New Hampshire, Sarah celebrated an annual Thanksgiving holiday as early as 1827. In colonial America, giving thanks to Almighty God for blessings of good harvest and mercies of protection and provision were staples of the new country’s early traditions. She often wrote editorials and articles about Thanksgiving and lobbied state and federal officials to pass legislation creating a fixed date for a national holiday. As the years passed and tensions and divisions arose between northern and southern parts of America, Sarah felt that having a day set aside to give thanks to God for shared blessings could help ease the growing chasm between the differing ideas and philosophies of these two geographical areas. By 1854 more than 30 states and U.S. territories had a Thanksgiving celebration on their respective books, but Sarah’s hope for a unifying national holiday remained elusive.

A national day of Thanksgiving had not originated with Sarah Hale. The idea had been around since the earliest days of the republic. In 1789 the newly inaugurated President, George Washington, issued a proclamation calling for a national day of thanksgiving to recognize the end of the Revolutionary War, the ratification of the U.S. Constitution and to thank God for His mercy and protection of our newly

formed nation. The outbreak of the later Civil War still did not deter Sarah Hale. She continued to urge Americans to “put aside sectional feelings and local incidents” and rally around the unifying theme of Thanksgiving. Interestingly enough, the holiday continued to be observed in some states in both the Union and the Confederacy during the war. Often combatants on both sides would lay down their arms on Thanksgiving Day (and Christmas as well) to give the men

rest and to give thanks for whatever meager rations they had or other mercies they felt they had received from God.

Shortly after President Lincoln gave his famous address at the Gettysburg battlefield in the summer of 1863, he received a letter from Sarah Hale in September of that year. In part her letter read, “You may have observed that for some years past there has been increasing interest felt in our land to have the Thanksgiving held on the same day in all the States; it

now needs a national recognition and authoritative fixation to become permanently an American custom and institution.”

Within a week, Secretary of State William Seward drafted Lincoln’s official proclamation fixing the national observance of Thanksgiving on the final Thursday in November each year. In the course of Sarah’s campaign for a fixed national day of Thanksgiving she had written to no less than 4 Presidents preceding Lincoln. In the end, Sarah and Abraham Lincoln and others gave us a national day in which to remember our many blessings - and share with family, friends, strangers, newly arrived immigrants and even temporary visitors a tradition with deep meaning - to the traditional turkey on the table has been added food from around the world as each group observes and celebrates in its own way.

A Very Happy Thanksgiving to one and all in our wonderful community of Cupertino!

Resources - George Washington Proclamation of Thanksgiving 1789. Abraham Lincoln Proclamation of Thanksgiving 1863. Various sites on Sarah Josepha Hale.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

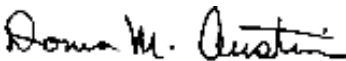
By Donna Austin, President

Dear Members,

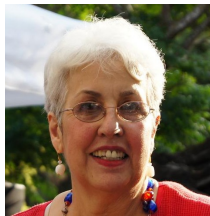
The Cupertino Historical Society began their strategic planning session in August at Vallico Hills' demonstration center. Sandy James, a life member of the historical society hosted our session, and Reed Moulds gave a short presentation about possibilities for Vallico's future. CHS is grateful to The Hills at VALLCO for offering the possibility of a new home for our museum if Measure D passes in November. Richard Lowenthal gave a brief presentation about a partnership with Rotary to renovate the Stocklmeir House. After hearing about future possibilities for places to display Cupertino history, we began our strategic planning by looking at our by-laws and former strategic planning data. We formed groups in finance, collections, membership and fund development. Then in September the various groups met to research our possibilities to improve our organization. We continued our strategic planning in October with our very own board member, Mike Foulkes from Apple leading the strategic planning. In November we will continue the learning process with so many possibilities and challenges. We welcome all our members' ideas and input as we learn and grow.

I am proud to announce that our board has made our very own Ragini Sangameswara, the Director of the Cupertino Historical Society. She has worked tirelessly for our society and has done an outstanding job. Congratulations Ragini for a job well done! Please members, feel free to call or to come by the museum to congratulate Ragini!

Thanks to all for your prayers and good wishes for my husband. Scot is home and doing better each day. Please contact the museum if you have a few hours to volunteer. We'd love to see you here!



Donna Austin, President of the Cupertino Historical Society & Museum
"History doesn't repeat itself, but it does rhyme." - Mark Twain



Day 1 *Dhana-trayodashi*, Rangoli (colored powder) is used to create colorful patterns in the entryway.



Day 2 *Narak Chaturdashi*, marks the day Lord Krishna destroyed the demon Narakasur and freed the world from fear.

Day 3 *Laxmi Pooja*, the goddess of wealth is welcomed into all households.

Day 4 *Padwa* is the day symbolizing love and devotion between the wife and husband.

Day 5 *Bhau-Bheej* is the day brothers take gifts and sweets to their sisters. The sisters offer prayers for the brothers' longevity and prosperity.

Traditional festival attire includes:

Bindi - a bright dot of red color applied in the center of the forehead close to the eyebrow. Traditionally, the area between the eyebrows is said to be the sixth chakra, *ajna*, the seat of "concealed wisdom". The bindi is said to retain energy and strengthen concentration.

Bangles - Indian women have been adorning their arms with bangles since ancient civilization. Bangles made from sea shell, copper bronze, gold, agate, chalcedony etc. have been excavated from multiple archaeological sites throughout India. A figurine of a dancing girl wearing bangles on her left arm has been excavated from Mohenjo-daro (2600 BC).

Henna - The name refers to the dye prepared from the plant Henna and the art of temporary body art (staining) based on those dyes. Henna has been used since antiquity to dye skin, hair and fingernails, as well as fabrics including silk, wool and leather. While there is some controversy over the origins of the use of henna as a dyeing agent, the earliest clear evidence of henna application on the body appears in Egyptian mummies whose



hair and nails were stained with the reddish brown tones of henna. Botanists believe the henna plant, *Lawsonia inermis*, originated in Egypt and was carried regularly to India where it was used since at least 700 AD for decorating hands and feet. Henna in Indian tradition is typically applied during special Hindu weddings and festivals like Diwali.

Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org>

NEW EXHIBIT

Diwali - Festival of Lights

Diwali means a row of lamps. They are an invitation to Laxmi, the goddess of wealth and prosperity. A Diwali lamp is a silent reminder that enlightenment and radiance are the goals of human life. Firecrackers are burst to ward off the evil spirits. An essential part of the festival is the sharing of sweets with relatives, friends, neighbors, and business associates as a gesture of goodwill.

In 2002 the first Diwali event was held in Cupertino organized by the Cupertino Chamber of Commerce and its Asian American Business Council (AABC).

Five Days of Celebration

Diwali is the best loved and most universal five-day celebration in India. Different legends are associated with its origin.



Diwali exhibit, in collaboration with the Cupertino Chamber of Commerce, is on display at the Cupertino Museum through November 2016. We invite you and your family to come and visit the museum at 10185 N Stelling Road, Cupertino.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

AUGUST 2016 thru OCTOBER 2016

RENEWING MEMBERS

Valerie Abid	Stacey and Wes Morse
Catherine Alexander	Charles E. Newman and
Mary Egan	Jutta Jacobs
Michael Foulkes	Charlotte Niemeyer
Annie Ho	Barbara Nunes
Violet Humphrey	Letizia Picchetti
Esther Johnson	Barbara Stocklmeir
Jeffrey Johnson	Bob Vitro
Cupertino Chamber of Commerce	Gilbert Wong
Wendell and Shari Kerr	
Beverly Lenihan	NEW MEMBER
Genevieve and George Luchessi	Philip Nielsen

Strategic Planning Session and Board of Directors Meeting

Friday, November 18, 2016

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Environmental Education Center,
McClellan Ranch Preserve,
22221 McClellan Rd, Cupertino

All members are welcome to attend!

Cupertino Veterans Memorial

The Cupertino Veterans Memorial has been the home of the city Veterans Day celebration every year since 2007. In recent years it has seen special tributes to veterans of specific wars and American military operations. Special recognition was given to World War II, Vietnam, and Korean War veterans in 2010, 2011, and 2012, respectively. The 2011 event saw a visit from the American Veterans Traveling Tribute, which included the display of a replica Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

The memorial features the centerpiece sculpture *The Guardians* which depicts the image of two watchful soldiers back to back. The two soldiers represented are Cupertino's own Matthew Axelson, and James Suh of Florida, two Navy SEAL's who died fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan during Operation Red Wings in June 2005.

www.cupertinoveteransmemorial.org

A CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

The time a volunteer spends at the Cupertino Historical Museum is often just as rewarding to him or her as it is to us. If you have a love for the community, please help show off Cupertino's past and present.

Our volunteers help keep our museum open!

If you are available to volunteer for a two-hour shift, **Wednesday through Saturday** between the hours of **10 a.m. – 4 p.m.**, please contact the Cupertino Historical Museum at **408-973-1495** or email us at cuphistsociety@sbcglobal.net

THE TRAVELING TRUNK

Looking for a Unique Experience?

Have you ever worked in a classroom as an aide, volunteer or teacher?

If so, the Traveling Trunk Educational Program may just be the volunteer experience you have been looking for. Our show-and-tell program teaches the history of many items used in homes and orchards around 1900 to young audiences in local schools. No public speaking experience is required. We work in pairs so there is always the support of another docent. Feel free to come and observe for several sessions to get acquainted with the program. For additional information, please contact Ragini Sangameswara at the CHS office at cuphistsociety@sbcglobal.net



Every Year on November 11th from 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

we celebrate

Veterans Day at Cupertino's Memorial Park

This year our Veterans Day Ceremony will commemorate the ten year anniversary of the dedication of the Cupertino Veterans Memorial. Operation Redwing was the catalyst for the design and placement of the Cupertino Veterans Memorial and subject of the book and movie "Lone Survivor".

In addition to Military, Fire and Sheriff's Honor Guards, there will be military speakers and a Coast Guard Helicopter Fly-Over.

**Please join us as we salute our veterans, active duty
military and first responders**

Our World is a safer place because of their service and sacrifice



www.cupertinoveteransmemorial.org



Cupertino Historical Society & Museum

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Visit us online at www.cupertinohistoricalsociety.org

- Learn more about Cupertino's History
- Shop for unique Cupertino themed memorabilia
- Join the museum or renew your membership
- Donate to the museum

Current resident or:



The

Cupertino Historical Society & Museum

Cornerstone

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Cupertino Historical Society & Museum

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Donna Austin, Valeri Abid, Ragini Sangameswara

The Cornerstone is published quarterly by the Cupertino Historical Society, a private, non-profit organization..

BULLETIN BOARD

Museum Hours:

Located in the Quinlan Community Center, the museum is open to the public **Wednesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

Admission is FREE.

Strategic Planning Session and Board of Directors Meeting
 Friday, November 18, 2016

4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
 Environmental Education Center,
 McClellan Ranch Preserve,
 22221 McClellan Rd, Cupertino

Holidays: QCC closed

November 11, 2016 Veterans Day
 November 24-27, 2016 Thanksgiving weekend
 Dec 23 - 31, 2016 Christmas Holidays
 Jan 1-2, 2017 New Year's weekend