



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

October 2022

◆ 2022 HAPPENINGS 2022 ◆

- President’s Message

Morgan Hill Historical Society activities can be found in the President’s Message on **page 2**. What’s the progress on the new building to be constructed on the rear of VMM? The MHHS annual meeting and official election of the Board of Directors will take place on **Thursday, October 20, 6:30 pm** at the Morgan Hill House. Watch your mail for ballots.

- Election of Board of Directors

Information about the 16 candidates for the Board of Directors (ten newly appointed and six currently serving directors) is on **page 3**.

- Stories from the Past

The newest *Stories from the Past* documentary will be presented on **Saturday, December 4, at 3:00 pm** at the MH Community & Cultural Center, El Toro Room. It will include memories of and stories from George and Gene Guglielmo, Wally Adams, Mary Lou Britton Gunter, Karen K. Christopher, Lorraine Leonetti Caruso, and Danny and Cheryl Benz. The film will be followed by a wine and lite bites reception. More information is on **page 4**.

- 2023 History Makers

Our next film in the *History Makers* series will explore a regional theme and reveal once-hidden stories sure to inspire appreciation for history. Watch for it in early 2023. In the meantime, you can see the first in this series about the founding and accomplishments of the Morgan Hill Historical Society on our website: [MHHS MEDIA - History Makers](#). Details are on **page 4**

- Also in this newsletter:

Historic Downtown Walking Tours **page 5**

In Memory of Kathy Shumate **page 5**

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Our Local Peace Monument **page 7**

Bill Briggs new book, “Badass Lawman”, **page 8**

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◆ NOTES FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Roger Knopf, rknopf@morganhillhistoricalsociety.com

There are signs that the season is changing: leaves turning color and falling, an early storm that brought welcome rain to the area, and temperatures cooling a bit more in the evening. There are changes and new activities at the Historical Society, too, along with continuing activities and events.

The Founders Dinner was back after a two-year Covid break, this year hosted by Sheila and Joe Giancola at their beautiful Rhoades Ranch on Cochrane Road near the Anderson Dam. Thanks to Ellie Weston, Kathy Sullivan, Sandy de la Cuesta, and their team, it was a smash hit; no one will want to go back to the Community Center!



Leonee Kuebler Alter
& Ruth Alter Johnson



Jean Skeels Pinard
& Anita Kell Mason



Sheila & Joe Giancola
Our Hosts



Paul Ward



Nancy Castle Buchanan
& Sharon Palma Alciati

Villa Mira Monte continues to be open with docents in the House and Museum on Saturdays, 10 am to 1pm. The Native/Indigenous Garden has a bright, new paver walk; ground preparation and planting will take place this fall and winter. Schools are getting comfortable with having field trips again, so those will start up in the spring.

Looking toward the future, a team of city staff and MHHS representatives recently interviewed three architectural firms to facilitate the redesign of the property's rear one-acre to include parking, appropriate historical landscaping, and a multi-purpose building. The building will have a classroom, small office, research and archival space, and restrooms.

Annual Membership Meeting and Election of Directors

There will be an annual membership meeting, the first in-person one in three years, on **October 20, 6:30 pm** at the Morgan Hill House. Light refreshments will be provided, and there will be a short presentation on what is going on at Villa Mira Monte and what the future holds.

The business of the evening will be the election of directors. Ballots are in the mail; watch for them, vote, and send your ballot back per the instructions. You may also bring your ballot to the meeting where you will be able to meet candidates and hear them speak. We are very excited to be submitting a full slate of directors. This will bring the Board to full strength, the first time in many years. The proposed board is composed of very "community centric" individuals who each have a passion for local history, especially as it impacts the culture of our special community. To learn more about the candidates, read the article **on page 3**.

The next activity of the historical society is to expand our operating team, the ones who do the day-to-day work of our organization. We presently have a wonderful group of volunteers, but there is no end to the opportunities to "collect, preserve and present the history of Morgan Hill and its Environs." You are all welcome to help wherever you would feel comfortable. Contact Margo Hinnenkamp, Volunteer Coordinator, margohin@morganhillhistoricalsociety.com, to learn more.

Election of Board of Directors

In August the Board appointed ten directors to fill the vacant, open seats on the MHHS Board of Directors to join the current six directors. The Board nominates all 16 for election to the Board of Directors for a three-year term. They are all longtime, committed supporters of the Historical Society and the community of Morgan Hill.

◆ Newly appointed candidates for the Board of Directors in alphabetical order are:

Al Alciati: Native of MH, served as the Chief Building Official for the city, currently on the MHHS Facilities Committee.

Julie Alter: Native of MH, director of recycling at Recology.

Peter Anderson: Local geologist with a passion for poppy jasper, served on the MHHS board in the early 1990s.

Mario Banuelos: Retired from San Jose Public Works Department as director of Geographic Information System. Serves on the board of MH Community Foundation.

Rosy Bergin: Owner of a successful local restaurant, Past Leadership Morgan Hill "Leadership Excellence Award" honoree.

Chris Foster: Native of MH, president of the local Rotary Club, long family history with MHHS.

Chris Ghione: Currently serves as the MHHS liaison to the City of MH.

Anthony Goularte: Retired from a local concrete ready-mix company, longtime supporter of the Machado School Heritage Society,

Michelle McKay: Managing Director at Silicon Valley Bank, serves on Edward Boss Prado Foundation Board.

Donna Ruebusch: Retired Live Oak HS teacher, past president of her teachers' union and trustee of the MHUSD.

◆ Current Board members are:

Karl Bjarke: Retired Public Works Director for City of MH, served on the MHHS board for five years and is now Vice president and Treasurer.

Margo Hinnenkamp: Active volunteer with AAUW, serves as MHHS docent, Secretary and Volunteer chair.

Roger Knopf: Santa Clara Valley native, 58-year resident of MH, longtime community volunteer, current MHHS President. Past Leadership MH "Leadership Excellence Award" honoree.

Kathy (Kat) Napoli: Served on board for six years, chair of the History and Education Committee, special interest in Hispanic and Native Indian cultures.

Kathy Sullivan: Member of the board for 12 years, immediate past president, developed MHHS relationship with the city, serves as chair of Marketing & Communication and Membership committees.

Ellie Weston: Longest-serving MHHS director, on the board for over 30 years, was president, museum director, and currently chair of the Facilities Committee. ■

“STORIES FROM THE PAST”



Our newest *Stories from the Past* documentary will debut on December 4th from 3:00 to 5:00 pm at the Morgan Hill Community & Cultural Center. Come enjoy our ninth installment in this series, an historic collection of first-hand accounts from folks with deep roots, fond memories and stories of personal contributions to the Morgan Hill, Madrone, Coyote and San Martin communities that we call home.

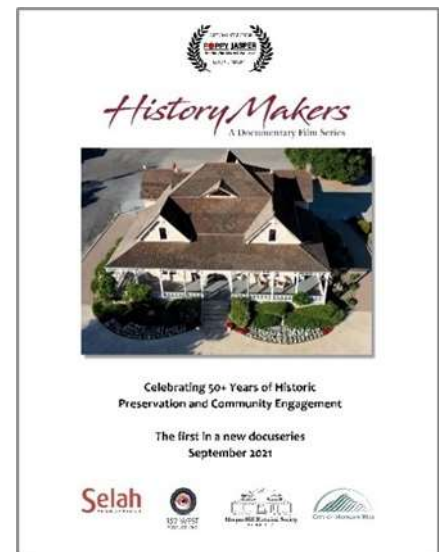
Our lineup will include George and Gene Guglielmo, Wally Adams, Mary Lou Britton Gunter, Karen K. Christopher, Lorraine Leonetti Caruso, and Danny and Cheryl Benz. The film will be followed by a wine and lite bites reception.

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. You can watch our past films on our website: [MHHS MEDIA - Stories from the Past](http://www.mhhs.org/MHHS-MEDIA-Stories-from-the-Past).

◆ *History Makers*

If you haven't seen *History Makers*, you are missing out on essential Morgan Hill history! Our first feature-length film in this series won rave reviews from the community since its debut last year. The film recounts the founding of the Morgan Hill Historical Society and its accomplishments in preserving two landmark historic buildings and creating a Centennial History Trail, resulting in what is now our local history park, Villa Mira Monte. You can watch the film on our website: [MHHS MEDIA - History Makers](http://www.mhhs.org/MHHS-MEDIA-History-Makers).

Our next film in this series will explore a regional theme and reveal once-hidden stories sure to inspire appreciation for history. Watch for it in early 2023. The *History Makers* docuseries is made possible by a grant from a generous local family.



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Morgan Hill Historical Society!

Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase to MHHS!

Over the past few years MHHS has received \$700+ from Amazon. You can help grow this amount by using <http://www.smile.amazon.com> when ordering from Amazon!

◆ HISTORIC DOWNTOWN WALKING TOURS ◆

Margo Hinnenkamp, Tour Docent

“As a long time resident of Morgan Hill taking the historical tour, I loved seeing and hearing stories about old places (the Grange, vintage houses), new places (the 4th Street garage and its Tarantula artwork, Railroad Park, businesses at the remodeled Granary) and seeing Morgan Hill through the eyes of visitors. The walking tour is a wonderful way to acquaint yourself with Morgan Hill’s vibrant, downtown mix of old and new restaurants, cafes, shops, playgrounds and historical buildings.”

(Sandy Stoob, tour participant)

I have discovered that the best way to learn more about the history of our city is to immerse oneself in the ambiance of downtown Morgan Hill during its early days. We have so many unique buildings that each has a story to tell. Sharing those stories is a marvelous way to introduce our tour attendees to the people and places that are distinctly Morgan Hill.

“I love the opportunity to share the history of Morgan Hill with new residents who are just beginning to learn about our city. It is so satisfying to share stories about what the downtown area was like in the past. I think that learning about the early days of our town can give a new resident a sense of belonging and connection.” **(Clay P, a former tour docent)**

Those who join us on the tour are always fascinated with those tales of days gone by. Some of these folks are familiar with that era and have stories of their own to share with the group. “I didn’t know that!” is a frequent refrain. “You mean those sculptures near the depot are a depiction of Morgan and Diana Murphy Hill and their daughter? I have seen them so many times and never stopped to read the plaque.”

Tour attendees agree that the Historic Downtown Walking Tour is one of the best ways to learn about the colorful history of our city.

◆ **The tours take place on the second Saturday of each month from 10 am to noon. We meet at the 3rd Street Plaza, just outside the parking garage.**



In Memory of Kathy Shumate

We are sad to report that one of our faithful docents died suddenly in late August. Kathy Shumate had been a docent for more than two years. Kathy was not a native of Morgan Hill, but she took a great interest in our local history and was passionate about the minute details of both the Morgan Hill House and Museum.

Kathy had a background in historical fabrics as well as interior design and had a sharp eye for detail. She had a warm, welcoming personality and was a joy to be with. Her smile was contagious and her love of history made her the perfect fit for her duties as a docent in our house and museum. We will miss Kathy, and we extend our deepest sympathy to her family and friends.



Memberships Support Local History

Looking Forward to Your Support in 2023

Kathy Sullivan, Membership Chair

We are very grateful for all our 2022 MHHS members and the financial support provided to serve our mission.

In October-November you will be receiving our **2023 Membership Invitation**. We hope you will rejoin or join anew. And as you look for year-end tax-deductible contributions, add a little extra donation to your membership dues.

MEMBERSHIPS

Individual- \$35

Family - \$50

Patron - \$150

Champion - \$250

Enthusiast - \$500

Benefactor - \$1000

All Memberships include our Newsletter, member meetings and educational events.

The Society is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation, tax ID 94-2562450.

Your donation may be fully tax-deductible.

Check with your tax advisor for additional information.

DID YOU KNOW?

In the 1500's....

Houses had thatched roofs, thick straw, woven and piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all of the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying "It's raining cats and dogs." there was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed. Therefore, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.

Morgan Hill Dedicates Peace Monument

Roger Knopf, MHHS President

On a beautiful evening, September 21, a couple of hundred folks gathered at the Civic Center plaza adjacent to the library for a milestone event: the dedication of the Morgan Hill Peace Monument. It all started out many years ago as an idea to establish a "Peace Pole" in MH resulted eventually in the unveiling of a huge rock Peace Monument. The work was spearheaded by two locally committed and tenacious sisters, Janet Leach and Monica McClintock, both members of the Historical Society. They were supported by many local citizens, organizations, and businesses.



What started out to be a simple pole became a 9-foot-high multi-faceted basalt monolith. Artist David Middlebrook, SJSU professor emeritus, designed and sculpted the monument. The word "peace" is inscribed on the monument in 27 different languages; all those languages and their cultures are present in Morgan Hill. There are three stone benches around the base of the monument, so visitors can sit and contemplate the meaning of the monument.



At the end of the evening everyone became part of the celebration by standing in the form of a peace symbol around the monument while a drone took photos from above. It was a very touching moment in the history of Morgan Hill. I invite all to visit the site, sit and think about the message that is being conveyed to you.

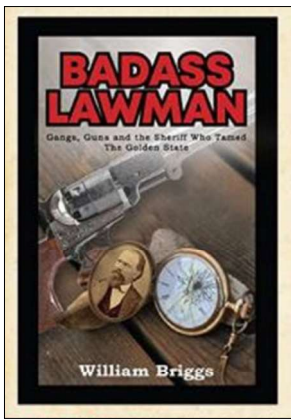
For a list of Peace Monuments located in California, go to http://peace.maripo.com/x_us_ca_north.htm for Northern California and <http://peace.maripo.com/>

DID YOU KNOW?

In the 1500's.....

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying, "Dirt poor." The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they added more thresh until, when you opened the door, it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entry-way. Hence, a "thresh hold." **Now you know!!!**

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BOOKS

◆ Bill Briggs, MHHS member and former co-president, is the author of a new book,
Badass Lawman: Gangs, Guns, and the Sheriff Who Tamed the Golden State

It is the story of 19th century Santa Clara County Sheriff John Hicks Adams, who came to California during the Gold Rush and settled in Gilroy. His exploits include the capture of Confederate sympathizers, stagecoach robbers, and the pursuit of local outlaw Tiburcio Vasquez.

The book is available at BookSmart.

◆ *Back to the Land in Silicon Valley*

Join former Morgan Hill resident and author Marlene Bumgarner for a presentation on her memoir *Back to the Land in Silicon Valley* which takes place in Morgan Hill. Marlene will discuss writing her memoir and her experiences coping with the challenges of rural life as the Silicon Valley evolves into the high-tech center it is today, and the world in which she lives transforms itself culturally, economically, and politically.

November 5, 2022 at 2:00 pm in the Morgan Hill Library

IN MEMORIAM

Kathy Shumante
Robert "Bob" Stannard

Morgan Hill House & Museum—open on Saturdays, 10:00am — 1:00pm
The Grounds, Rose Gardens & Centennial Trail, open 8:00am — 6:00pm

Morgan Hill Historical Society

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MORGAN HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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