

VOLUME 34 | JANUARY 2013

CALIFORNIAN

*California History Center
& Foundation*

A Center at De Anza College
for the Study and Preservation
of State and Regional History



Serbian Jackson

**Amador County from Gold Rush
days to modern times**

At the Center:

The Art of Protest: 1960s–1970s

**Lens on Silicon Valley—
A Photographic Exhibition**

**History is dead,
long live history!**



The Art of Protest: 1960s-1970s

**26 original silk screen posters documenting
college campus social protest movements**

At the California History Center Jan. 15 through Feb. 28

Opening reception Thursday, January 17 featuring panelists
Lincoln Cushing, Archivist, Kaiser Permanente Heritage Resources
Gil Villagrán, Lecturer, School of Social Work, San Jose State University
Sharat G. Lin, President, San Jose Peace and Justice Center

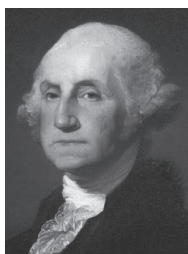
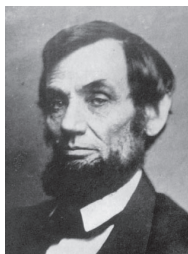
Spring Calendar

JANUARY

- 7** First day of Winter Quarter 2013
- 15** Art of Protest: 1960s–1970s exhibit opens, CHC
- 17** Art of Protest exhibit reception 4–6pm, CHC
- 21** Observance of Martin Luther King’s birthday
- 24** Living Legends lecture 6:30pm, CHC
- 26** Living Legends field trip
- 28** Brief History of Silicon Valley lecture 4pm, CHC

FEBRUARY

- 2** Brief History of Silicon Valley field trip
 - 7** Living Legends lecture 6:30pm, CHC
 - 8** Brief History of Silicon Valley field trip
 - 9** Living Legends field trip
 - 11** Brief History of Silicon Valley lecture 4pm, CHC
 - 15** Observance of Abraham Lincoln’s birthday
 - 16-17** Presidents’ Weekend
 - 18** Observance of George Washington’s birthday
 - 26** Day of Remembrance 1:30pm, Campus Center Conference Rooms
 - 28** John Steinbeck’s California lecture 6:30pm, CHC
- Art of Protest exhibit closes, CHC



MARCH

- 2** John Steinbeck’s California field trip
- 7** John Steinbeck’s California lecture 6:30pm, CHC
- 16** John Steinbeck’s California field trip
- 19** Los Gatos-Saratoga Camera Club photograph exhibit opens, CHC
- 29** Last day of Winter Quarter 2013



California History Center & Foundation

A Center for the Study of State and Regional History
De Anza College

21250 Stevens Creek Blvd., Cupertino, CA 95014 (408) 864-8712
Fax: (408) 864-5486 Web: www.DeAnza.fhda.edu/califhistory

Trianon Building Hours:
Tuesday through Thursday 9:30am to noon and 1-4pm
or call for an appointment.

Foundation Board

President
David Howard-Pitney

Founding President
Louis Stockmeir

Founding Executive Director
Walter Warren

Trustees
Alicia Cortez, Purba Fernandez,
Cozetta Guinn, William Lester III,
Ulysses Pichon, Noemi Teppang

Ex-officio
Carolyn Wilkins-Greene

CHC Staff

Director
Tom Izu

Librarian
Lisa Christiansen

Californian

Editor
Lisa Christiansen

Contributing Author
Milina Jovanović

Designed by Nelson Design

In this Issue

- Director’s Report 4
- Serbian Jackson: Amador County from Gold Rush Days to Modern Times 6

At the Center

- ‘A Taste of History’ Event Recap 21
- Meet Jennifer Henderson 22
- Membership 23
- Upcoming Exhibits 23
- Spring Classes 24

Californian is published by the California History Center & Foundation. The magazine is mailed to members as a benefit of annual membership in the CHC Foundation. Membership categories: \$30 Individual; \$40 Family; \$50 Supporter; \$100 Sponsor; \$500 Patron; \$1,000 Colleague.

Your contribution is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. The value of goods received as a benefit of membership must be deducted from the amount of all contributions claimed as a deduction. CHCF members receive issues of *Californian* magazine and members who contribute at the \$50 level and above also receive a yearly Local History Studies publication, when available.

© 2013, California History Center Foundation ISSN: 0742-5465

Director's Report



Tom Izu

History is dead, long live history!

History is never over and this is the source of many troubles, including my own. When I was younger, history pretty much ended when it was supposed to end, by page number accuracy according to our books in school. Things happened in a very specific order by a very specific time and date, and there was no arguing about it since you could only circle an answer that either was correct or incorrect.

But then the turmoil of the 1960s and early 1970s arrived, bringing constant questioning to my formative years in school. I learned that history is something to be endlessly interpreted, reinterpreted, and argued about.

The past, not the future, I learned, was something that always seemed to be changing. In fact, the future became quite reliable, always on time, whether it was foreseen or unforeseen. The past was not so reliable; sometimes it could take years before you ever saw it again, and even then, the reimagined past wasn't the same old past. Someone was always tinkering with it.

And knowing this is how the troubles with history began for me. For you see, I rebelled against this. I wanted history to be history for once and for all. I admit that I wanted history to end. I thought if this would happen, it would make things clear for everyone and history education would become much easier for all since it would be a directive rather than a process, based on comforting presumptions rather than troubling questions.

I became hardened in my belief that there is a correct and true history and based upon it one could identify all of the false histories people had in their heads that led them to become racist, ignorant, and oppressive (or supporters of leaders who were). But what always got in the way of my endeavor were people's stories and the details of their day-to-day lives, and most importantly, how they felt about those lives with all of their ideas, dreams, and different ways of being. The more I explored, the more these annoying details undermined the pattern of history that I assumed must explain the truth.

I came to realize, after years of working on local and community related projects, that such a view closed off many of the life stories people would try to share with me. I began to see that this is an issue whether you are left-wing, right-wing or have no wings at all. A "final", deterministic history

makes it impossible to discuss anything we don't understand or know except perhaps the weather (but even that is controversial now).

As a recovering historical determinist, rehabilitation in a local history organization is fitting. And I am proud to be here. You need incredible flexibility and open-mindedness and the willingness to change what you thought the past should have been and to try to see it differently. And most importantly, you need the patience to work through it with others not so convinced.

I do not believe that history is a free-for-all and I do know it matters greatly which rendition of history you do decide to promote as part of society's cultural and political foundation. Choosing the past about which to educate others does matter. If you let others choose or you just ignore the choices, with what sort of past will you be compelled to live?

The recent elections along with predicted fiscal precipices and epochal endings have brought out the historic reinterpreters in force. But human society abides. So, it looks like history is not dead yet and is doing quite well no matter what anyone says, including myself.



Over the years I have reported on the dire budgetary situation of our home institution, De Anza College, and the entire state's on-going fiscal crisis and my worries regarding the future of the center. I have some substantial news this time directly impacting my role as the center's director.

I will be working half-time in my capacity as executive director of CHCF for the next four school years with the other half redirected to another project. I accepted this arrangement as a way to help take some of the financial burden off of the center and college. Most likely, the CHCF will be required to fund my position through its own fundraising initiatives beginning fall quarter 2013.

My new assignment is as Project Director for a U.S. Department of Education grant De Anza College is very fortunate to have received: an Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) grant. This is the second year of a five year grant and I am replacing

continued on page 23

Very few things happen at the right time, and the rest do not happen at all. The conscientious historian will correct these defects

—Herodotus

Lens on Silicon Valley

A Photographic Exhibition

Is it possible to capture the essence of a place in a way that can be recognized and understood by others? How about a place whose exact geographic boundaries are sometimes hotly debated, and at other times claimed not to exist—only accepted as a “state of mind”? We are referring to our own region known as “Silicon Valley.”

Through the work of the Los Gatos-Saratoga Camera Club, the California History Center will host “Lens on Silicon Valley: A Photographic Exhibition” to explore this challenge. Members of the Camera Club have been asked to answer the question, “What does Silicon Valley mean to you?” and will have free rein to capture what they feel is the meaning of “Silicon Valley.” Approximately 48 photographic works will be selected and displayed. We are excited to see what they come up with and look forward to how their work might inspire our own students to come up with future documentation projects.

For over 50 years, the Los Gatos-Saratoga Camera Club has provided opportunities for local photographers to share their work, participate in workshops, and organize exhibits for the general public. <http://lgsc.photoclubservices.com/Default.aspx>

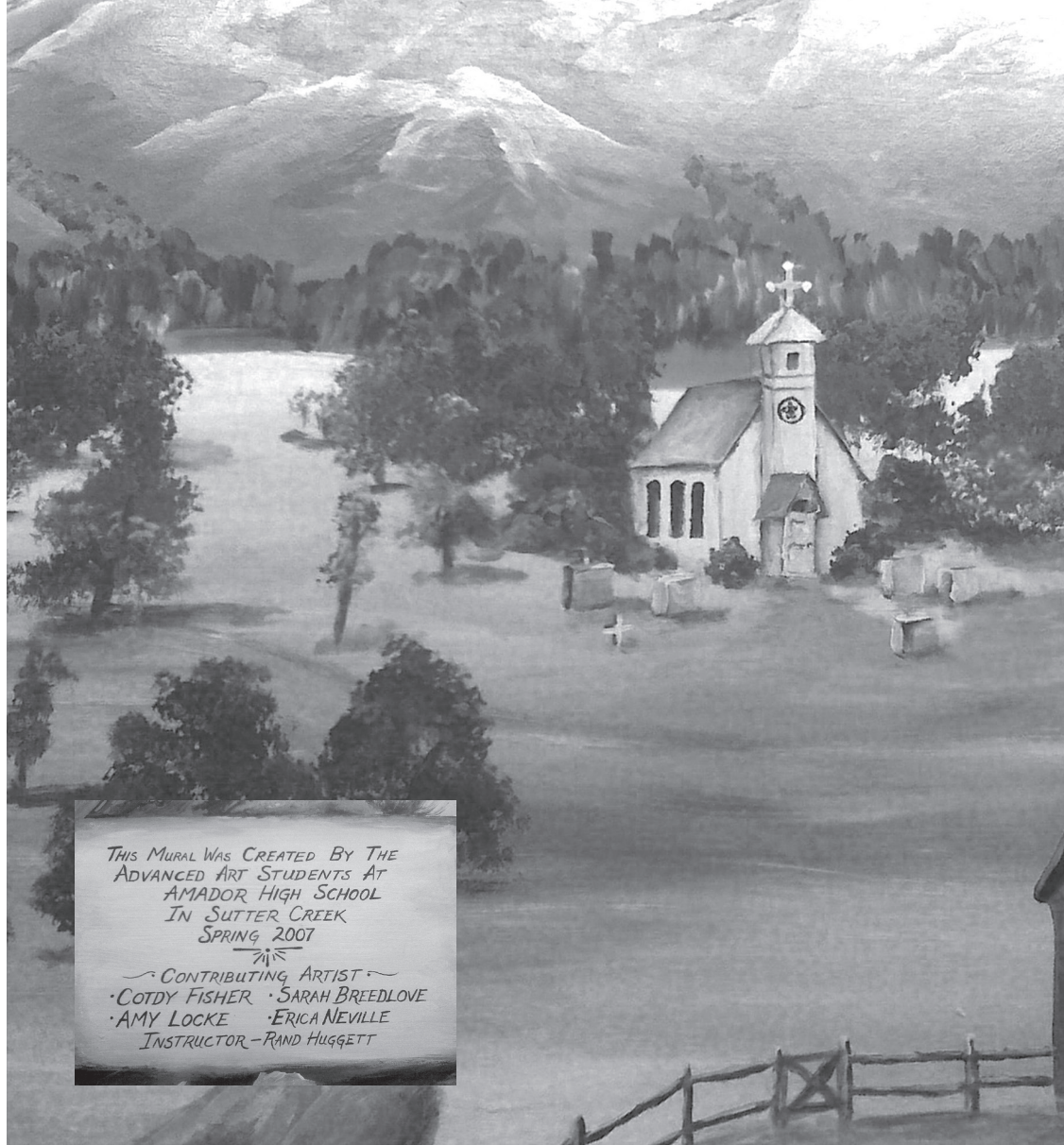
For more information, please contact Tom Izu, (408) 864-8986
izutom@deanza.edu.

California History Center
March 11 through June 21

RECEPTION SUNDAY, MARCH 24, 2–5PM

Sociologist Milina Jovanović's study of the Serbian/South Slav community in the Mother Lode city of Jackson, California, presented here in summary, featuring excerpts from three oral histories, addresses many issues of importance to all immigrant groups in America: obligations and connections to family, to fellow immigrants, to neighbor, and to country, both old and new; assumptions, prejudice, and stereotyping based on nationality, ethnicity, economic class, gender, and religious belief; relationships between occupation and individual/family well-being; organizations established for the permanence of the community; traditions chosen for preservation or discard in the new environment; political identity as equal members of a democracy; and courage and opportunity to become contributors to the development of their chosen homeland.

Jackson's Serbian community put down new roots in that place because of factors common in the history of immigration to the U.S.— some negative, many positive. Jovanović's future publication of a monograph on this timely subject, as "people's history," promises to continue and enlarge discussion of these universal issues as it also focuses on the particular circumstances of this vibrant California community.



Serbian Jackson

Amador County
from Gold Rush days
to modern times

By Milina Jovanović



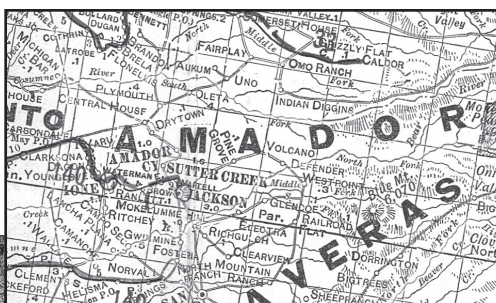
The Serbian American residents of Amador County have the longevity that is not present in other Bay Area communities. Just imagine...the great-grandfathers and great-grandmothers came [to Jackson] 110 years ago. The people who live here belong to the families of the original settlers in this area. They've been here almost as long as the French, and the Italian, and the Spanish, and the Irish...and together they've built this place now called Amador County. The people here have the longevity that you did not have in Moraga or Saratoga. In Moraga, a large portion of population came right after World War II and they have a different mindset. There were certainly Serbs in San Francisco in the 1850s, but proportionally they were not that significant. Here, in proportion to the total population, we have much more influence. The Serbian presence here is real. Others who live here but don't have Yugoslav roots also know Serbian traditions. You know, there is this tradition here in Jackson that all merchants don't take down their Christmas decorations until Serbian Christmas comes; this is an indication how influential our community is. Most definitely we've preserved our good reputation here. And the reason goes back to the fact that we were so influential. There was a solid basis here and people were not swayed by the propaganda. Because their neighbors were Serbian, their grandparents grew up with Serbians, they knew that this doesn't compute—it cannot be the right thing. But when they live in big metropolitan areas with a lot of people who came from all over the world, there is not the same foundation to build upon, or to challenge the information that is being fed to them. They have been told an untruth about Serbian Americans and now they have to undo it.

—Reverend Stephen Tumbas, St. Sava Church, Jackson, California, 2005

Jackson is the county seat of Amador County, California, situated in the Sierra Nevada foothills at the junction of highways 88 and 49, 50 miles southeast of Sacramento. Immigrants from the Yugoslav region originally settled in this Mother Lode region during the California Gold Rush and ever since, a prominent Serbian American community has resided there. This article will focus on Serbian American contributions to Amador County over the past century and a half.

Because most of the material in the paper was based on personal interviews with members of the Serbian community in Jackson, some of the following story will be told by those interviewees. In the past 20 years people of Serbian background have been denigrated in the popular culture and scholarly works, largely influenced by the demonization of Serbs before, during, and after the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s.¹

In this article I will begin by discussing the methodology



Amador County's central gold country location is shown on this map detail from Davis' *Commercial Encyclopedia of the Pacific Southwest*, 1911.



¹ See: Foerster, Lenora, ed. *War, Lies and Videotape: How the Media Monopoly Stifles Truth*. 2000. N. Y.: International Action Center. During the 1990s, in order to justify foreign policy goals and interventions, the U.S. and NATO used material generated by Ruder Finn Global Public Affairs public relations firm. Bosnian and Croatian governments hired the firm and relied heavily on its propaganda. Also see about negative media, public, and academic images of Serbs and Yugoslavs: Parenti, Michael. 2000. *To Kill a Nation: The Attack on Yugoslavia*. N. Y.: Verso, p.81-95; Grubacic, Andrej. 2010. *Don't Mourn, Balkanize*. Oakland: PM Press, pp. 26-28, 42 & 124-131; Todorova, Maria. 1997. *Imagining the Balkans*. N.Y.: Oxford University Press, pp. 107-120

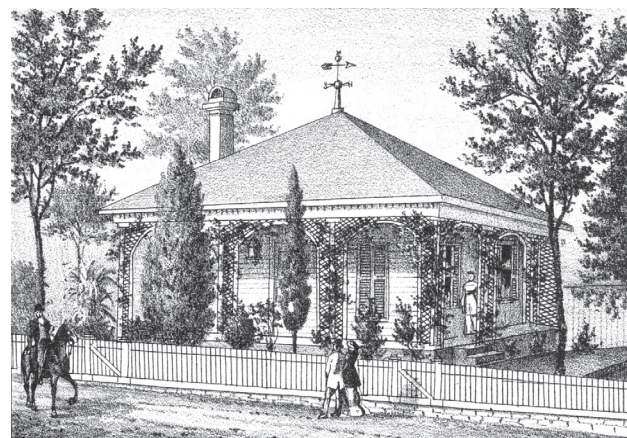
used in my research into the community. Next, I will highlight contributions made by the Serbian community in California between 1850 and 1900 and those of Serbian American women during the major part of the twentieth century. I will note contemporary contributions of Serbian Americans, discuss the image of the Serbian American community, and explore major issues facing Serbian Americans in Amador County today. Finally, I will introduce some questions for future research.

Methodology

Serbian Americans, in spite of having lived in Northern California for 150 years, constitute a community whose contributions to the development of the region are known to only a small number of researchers, scholars, and laypeople. The research I conducted in 2003-2007 focuses on the long history that Serbian Americans share with other residents of Amador County². My research included a combination of qualitative and quantitative methodological techniques and is an attempt to present a version of “people’s history” rather than a removed historian’s views. Only a few academic works focus on the history of Serbian Americans and their contributions using this approach³. One of these sources is Jerome Kisslinger’s *The Serbian-Americans*, published in 1990. He notes that Serbian immigrants were diverse in their social and political views and their understanding of what being Serbian American meant, but many threads kept them together⁴. It is especially important that Kisslinger mentions not only the contributions of such prominent Serbian Americans as inventor Nikola Tesla, communication and technology researcher Mihajlo Pupin, actor John Malkovich, and Basketball Hall of Famer Pete Maravich, whose contributions are recognized by the entire American society, but also the role of miners and factory workers. Kisslinger adds that Serbian Americans are “woven into every fiber of the [American] social fabric.”⁵

While doing research, I was presented with invaluable material that included numerous previously untold stories of Serbian miners, educators, athletes, county employees, county supervisors, state senators, war veterans, judges, sheriffs, police officers, sales representatives, winery and restaurant owners, medical doctors, veterinarians, actors, artists, and

community activists. The people I interviewed shared their deepest insights, family histories, and precious memories, as well as written documents and photographs. They expressed hope that their individual and collective stories would be heard. In addition to 16 in-depth interviews, I also conducted two types of surveys with Serbian Americans who live outside of Amador County, and with local residents who don’t have Yugoslav roots. The following pages represent a summary of a longer manuscript entitled: *All Roads Lead to Jackson: A Case Study of Serbian-American Contributions in Amador County, CA Since the Gold Rush*.⁶ This article presents a selection of summarized stories highlighting the contributions of the Serbian American community from the late 1850s into the twenty-first century.⁷ The exact words of my interviewees are presented in the sidebar interviews.



The Froelich family came to Jackson from the South Slav region in the early 1850s. This drawing of a Froelich family home appears in Thompson and West’s *History of Amador County*, 1881.

The Gold Rush and the First Serbian Immigrants: 1850-1900

Larry Cenotto, long-time Amador County archivist, asserted that it was gold mining that attracted the earliest Serbian immigrants to California.⁸ According to the County’s records, the first Serbian immigrants came to this area around 1852. One of the families who came that early was the Froelich fam-

⁶ A book to be published in 2013.

⁷ Methodological concerns and timeframes are discussed at length in the larger manuscript.

⁸ Cenotto, Larry (1931-2012) in Logan’s Alley, Volume II, 1988: Cenotto Publications, p. 248 Even before the gold rush started, a small number of Yugoslav immigrants were present in California. There are records of Dalmatian explorers and other Croatian immigrants coming to the United States and Mexico, as early as 1600s, and definitely before 1850s. Because of the confusion in data collection, especially prior to 1900s, the country of origin was not recorded accurately: it was usually marked as Austria-Hungary (or either of these countries), Turkey (Ottoman Empire), Venice or Italy—the Yugoslav territories were dominated by these powers. Adam Eterovich documents that the first immigrants from Croatia, Herzegovina and Boka Kotor started coming to the U.S. territories in greater numbers approximately 200 years ago. They first immigrated to Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Texas. Also, see: Eterovich, Adam. 2003. *Gold Rush Pioneers from Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and the Boka Kotor*. San Carlos, CA: Ragusan Press, p. 2

² Eterovich, Adam. 2003. *Gold Rush Pioneers from Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Boka Kotor*. San Carlos, CA: Ragusan Press, pp. 26-29 & 63-76; A. Eterovich also emphasizes that the Yugoslav Americans have had a major role in the development of this region and California as a whole in the past 150 years.

³ The existing literature that focuses on the lives of Serbian and other Yugoslav Americans and documents their contributions is more ethnographic in nature than sociological or anthropological, with a few exceptions such as Karlo (1984); Mace (2004); De Grange (1998); and one immigrant account by Adamic (1934) that bring people’s voices to life.

⁴ Kisslinger, Jerome. 1990. *The Serbian-Americans*. NY & Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, p. 17.

⁵ Ibid, p. 17.

ily. George and Rosa Froelich were recorded as farmers in the Patron's Directory in Township No. 1, immigrants who most likely came from Dalmatia or Herzegovina.⁹

The 1860 census recorded the following families already living in Amador County: the Aurvich, Babaga, Botiza, Cargich, Gospodnetich, Kosich, Madich, Radich, Svainac, and Velcich families.¹⁰ As Gold Rush-era placer mining evolved into a large-scale mining industry and California's population grew, hundreds, later thousands, of immigrants from different lands that later formed Yugoslavia arrived as new inhabitants of the gold country. They came to the U.S. and to California in search of a better life—it was very difficult to make a living in the Balkan rural and mountainous areas. Most people who came from Yugoslav territories called themselves “Slavonians.”¹¹ The meaning of the word “Slavonian” is closest to the term “Yugoslav” or “South Slav.” At that time, most Serbian immigrants came from the territories of Montenegro, Herzegovina, and Dalmatia, rather than from Serbia. Local historians record that by the mid-1870s the population of the Yugoslav community in Amador County had increased from 200 to over 1,000 people.¹² The Serbian population in Jackson was so significant in the 1890s that it comprised nearly one-third of the town's total population.¹³ The population of the City of Jackson today still doesn't exceed 7,000 people.

Serbian immigrants were initially monolingual and spoke Serbian or Serbo-Croatian, written in Cyrillic alphabet. During the existence of socialist Yugoslavia, Serbo-Croatian was the official language; most Yugoslavs speak Serbo-Croatian, excluding large numbers of Slovenians and Macedonians. All of these languages belong to the family of Slavic languages. With time, many Serbian immigrants acquired certain English skills and became more integrated into the larger society. When Serbian children started school their English language skills exceeded their parents' abilities and many of them became the bridge between their families and the larger society. Many of my interviewees shared with sadness that their teachers forced them to change their names: Slavko became Sam, Ivo became Evo, Branko became Brian, Ilija became Elia, etc. In addition, most institutions of the larger society forced them



Serbia (Serbia) and surrounding countries are portrayed in a Century Atlas Company map from 1897.

to add an “h” to their last names to make pronunciation easier for English-speakers.¹⁴

The first and second generations of American-born children had a much better chance of becoming familiar with all aspects of life in American society, including the phenomenon of upward mobility. For example, Dalmatian Andrew Pierovich became a state senator in 1933, a judge in 1941, and served in many other capacities. Similarly, John Begovich became a county supervisor and state senator during the 1960s and 1970s; George Milardovich was the chief of police in the 1970s; Mike Prizmich served as the county sheriff for two terms and just recently left to serve at the state level. At the very beginning of immigration from Yugoslavia, the generations of their parents worked mostly in the gold mining industry selling their labor, often risking their lives. From the 1860s to the early 1900s only a few Serbian American men worked any other jobs. In the “old country” only a few of them were miners. Most of them worked as farmers, fishermen, and construction workers before coming to the U.S. The early Serbian miners were uprooted from their homeland and they were often homesick, but they continued to work hard. Mining was arduous, filling their lungs with toxic dust, causing them much pain, and in many instances, ending their lives prematurely. One of the examples that show the effects this dangerous work had on the Serbian community is the August 1922 Argonaut Mine disaster. Of 47 miners who died in the

⁹ *History of Amador County, CA with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of its Prominent Pioneers*. 1881. Oakland, CA: Thompson & West

¹⁰ Eterovich, Adam. 1978. *Yugoslavs According to the 1860, 1870 & 1880 Amador Census of Population*. Palo Alto: Ragusan Press.

¹¹ There are several theories that explain the use of the term “Slavonian.” None of the explanations refer to Slavonia as a part of Croatia.

¹² Information posted on the St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church's website in 2005.

¹³ There is no accurate data. The first census information available is from this time frame when Yugoslav immigrants, including Serbian, were often recorded as Austrian, Hungarian or Italian, depending on the area dominated by these powers.

¹⁴ For example, Kosti was spelled as Kostich, Dabovi as Dabovich, etc.

MINERS' RESCUE STILL SEVERAL DAYS DISTANT

Deliverance of 47 Buried Men
Depends on Hunger
Capacity

AIR IN LOWER LEVELS

Efforts Directed Now Toward
Helping Families of Un-
fortunates

(By Associated Press)

JACKSON, Calif., Sept. 2.—If the 47 miners entombed in the Argonaut mine are still alive and can survive without food until the rescue party, burrowing in the depths of the Kennedy mine reaches them, they will be saved. Indications this morning were that it would still be a matter of some days, however, before the relief crews which have been feverishly digging every minute of the night and day since last Tuesday morning, are able to break through into the Argonaut. While official predictions as to when the two mines will be joined are lacking, it was reported today that those in charge of the rescue operations believe that it may be four or five days.

The discovery that fresh air was trickling through into the Kennedy from the lower levels of the Argonaut brought new hope to Jackson yesterday. If the trapped miners remained in the lower levels of the

Men Have Families

It has been learned that two of the entombed miners, J. Kovac and J. Janovich, who were reported on the Argonaut mine company's official list as being single men, are married. They are Serbians and their families are in Serbia. A brother of Kovac has arrived from San Jose. He states that he wrote to his brother at the end of last week, sending him money to come to San Jose to work in the fruit. The letter did not arrive until after the disaster occurred. Kovac stated that his brother always sent a portion of his monthly pay check to his family in Serbia. Janovich has a wife and seven children in Serbia, to whom he remitted regularly when he was working. Janovich is a veteran of the World War, having fought in the Serbian army.

Several days into the 1922 mine disaster those safe on the surface still held out hope for the miners' survival. This article from the *Palo Alto Times* concludes with an anecdote tying the fate of a Jackson Serbian miner to actions of his family members in San José.

it was the first Serbian Orthodox Church established on the North American continent.

The entire Amador County recognizes the importance of St. Sava Church. One of the murals in Jackson's city hall depicts the original church building, and the church is included on the National Register of Historic Places. It is also one of the three symbols of the City of Jackson.¹⁵ This church has always meant much more than a place of religious worship to Serbian Americans—it once symbolized home in the new country; today it is a material reminder that a vibrant community existed such a long time ago. It allowed the Serbian community to have its own space where it renewed its optimism and conviction that with hard work the next generations could have a better future. The idea for St. Sava Church began when Serbian immigrants established the St. Sava Church Organization in 1886. This organization played a major role in the building of the church. In 1893 Father Sebastian Dabovich¹⁶ came to Jackson from San Francisco. Elia and Elena Dabovich, immigrants from the Boka Kotor and well-known merchants in San Francisco, were his parents. Father Dabovich was the very first American-born Serbian priest and the first head of the Serbian Orthodox mission on the North American continent.¹⁷

In the 1897-98 *Russian Orthodox Messenger*¹⁸ Father Dabovich wrote about the origins of the Serbian Orthodox Church in California explaining that before he started provid-

¹⁵ See the 3 symbols on the home page of the City of Jackson: St. Sava Church, Kennedy Mine Wheels and National Hotel: <http://ci.jackson.ca.us/>

¹⁶ His original Serbian name was Jovan

¹⁷ Today, we have many Serbian Orthodox Churches around the country. This was the very first Serbian Orthodox Church established on the continent.

¹⁸ *Russian Orthodox Messenger*, Vol. II, 1897-1898, # 2, pp. 43-45

disaster, 11 were miners of Serbian descent. Other victims were Croatian, Italian, Spanish or Mexican, Cornish, Irish and Polish Americans. The community was devastated and organized a communal burial at the St. Sava Church cemetery. Mike Backovich, Sr., who was a miner himself, and a few of my interviewees whose fathers worked in the gold mines, all remembered vaguely their childhood experiences, including the sorrow and anxiety present in the air during the time of the disaster. All of them knew some miners who lost their lives. In spite of hardships and great risks, miners and their families continued to rely on the communal spirit the local Serbian American community provided.

A center of Serbian community life, and one of the oldest buildings in Jackson, is the St. Sava Church. Built in 1894,



The Serbian Orthodox Church is an autonomous Orthodox Christian Church. It is the second oldest Slavic Orthodox Church and has authority over Orthodox Christians in Serbia and other lands throughout the world. The Patriarch of Serbia is the recognized religious head of state and the highest body of the Church is the Holy Assembly of Bishops. The Serbs were converted to Christianity not long after their arrival in the Balkans, before the Great Schism of 1054 C.E. split the Christian Church into rival Latin-speaking (Roman Catholic) and Greek-speaking (Eastern Orthodox) churches.

ing services in Jackson, Serbs were part of the Orthodox community at Fort Ross. Father Sebastian, one of the first U.S.-born male children of Serbian descent in the San Francisco Bay Area, crossed oceans many times during his lifetime. Like many priests, he denounced material wealth and personal possessions. There are records showing that Father Dabovich worked tirelessly to promote understanding across different religions and to explain Serbian Orthodoxy. He developed one of the first English translations of the Orthodox liturgy and published a newspaper entitled *Herald of the Serbian Church in America*.¹⁹

St. Sava Church, its architecture and Byzantine bright icons, had some influence on the architecture of the region. St. Basil of Ostrog, the Serbian church in nearby Angels Camp, was built in a similar style in 1910. These were small wooden structures, with carved iconostases (solid screens

¹⁹ Dobrijevic, Mirko. 1994. *The First Serbian American Orthodox Apostle: Archimandrite Sebastian Dabovich*. in: *Celebrating a Century: St. Sava Church*. Jackson, CA: church publication. More about Father Dabovich in: Palandech, John. 1942. *The Life and Work of an American Missionary: The Very Reverend Sebastian Dabovich*. Chicago: Palandech Publishing House. Eterovich, Adam. 1976. *Father Sebastian Dabovich and the Origins of the Serbian Orthodox Church in America*. Palo Alto: Ragusan Press.

showing religious art and separating the nave from the sanctuary), originally equipped to accommodate 50-60 people, at most. Over time, their original structure was preserved. Today, Amador County's larger community has adopted St. Sava Church as one of its symbols and major points of interest for tourists and historians.

Some of the pioneers who had a pivotal role in establishing the Serbian community in Jackson as well as in building St. Sava Church were: Micho Curilich, Todor Curilich, Risto Curilich, Tripo Curilich, Trifko Curilich, Father Sebastian Dabovich, Milosh Dragolovich, Nikola Dragolovich, Scepan Dragomanovich, Simo Dragomanovich, Panto Kojovich, Savo Lakonich, Petar Obradovich, Savo Savich, Joko Skulich, Tripo Vasiljevich and Andrija Vukovich. In 1902, members of the St. Sava Church Organization and other South Slavs joined together to form the St. Sava Benevolent Society of Amador County.²⁰

The Yugoslav community is often credited for contributions to the development of California's agriculture. The community in Amador County is no exception. Based on the *Report of the Agricultural Experiment Station of the University of California at Davis, 1892-1894*, Dalmatian immigrants introduced the Dalmatian fig to Amador County in 1893. This fig is sometimes called White Adriatic Fig. The California Agricultural Experiment Station concluded that in Amador County this fig grows smaller than the same fig in other locations, but very sweet and rich. Nowadays, many Californians enjoy Dalmatian fig spread without thinking much about its origin and history.

²⁰ Ilkovic, Edward. 1977. *The Yugoslavs in America*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications Company. Pp. 25-6



Father Sebastian Dabovich. Photograph courtesy of Adam Eterovich.



Left: St. Sava Church and Cemetery are pictured, early 1900s. Above: St. Sava Serbian Orthodox Church was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1986.



THE SCLAVONIC ILLYRIC MUTUAL BENEVOLENT SOCIETY Is a branch of the San Francisco society of the same name. Monthly dues, one dollar; the members receiving in case of sickness, eight dollars per week. In case of death the funeral expenses are paid by the society. They own a hall, costing about three thousand five hundred dollars. The society was organized at Sutter Creek, 1874.

From Thompson & West's *History of Amador County*, 1881, a description of the work of the Benevolent Society.

The original Slavonic Illyric Benevolent Society's building in Sutter Creek. South Slavs founded this organization to lend support to the Slavic community through insurance and other assistance in times of need. Photo, circa 1920, is courtesy of Adam Eterovich.

First Serbian Benevolent Society dedication and grand opening of Serbian Hall, Sunday, 225 Valencia, San Francisco, January 26, 1936. A branch of this group meets in Angels Camp. Photograph by P.P. Tornich.



The Amador County region is well known for its Shenandoah Valley vineyards. The Yugoslav community, and specifically Dalmatian immigrants, introduced a special variety of Zinfandel, the Dalmatian grape, Crljenek Kaštelanski. The wines made of this grape are known to be concentrated and full-bodied, often are described as intense.²¹ Currently, Milan Matulich has a very successful winery in Plymouth called Dobra Zemlja.²² Yugoslav and Balkan cuisines were mostly preserved within the family, even though a few Serbian restaurants existed, such as Dan Vukajlovich's cafes and restaurants. They used to be popular gathering places of the larger community in Jackson in the 1970s and 1980s.

²¹ <http://threegracesvineyards.com/vineyards.html>

²² The interview with Milan Matulich is included in the forthcoming book *All Roads Lead to Jackson* written by the author. Dobra Zemlja means fertile soil.

Serbian American Women's Contributions During the Twentieth Century

Serbian American women have made very significant contributions to the community of Jackson. Beginning in the 1850s, women operated boarding houses, produced food, and sustained their families and entire communities. In fact, women were also instrumental in cultural and linguistic preservation and social networking. They used their skills as homemakers and provided their homes, meals, and often laundry services to gold miners. Many maintained vegetable gardens and livestock. At the same time, Serbian women worked to form organizations. In the twentieth century, the most important contributions have been made through the women's organization—The Circle of Serbian Sisters (*Kolo Srpskih Sestara, KSS*)—initiated in Belgrade in 1903 and organized locally in 1936 in

the home of Mare Curilich of Jackson. This organization has both religious and secular origins and purposes. It exists in Serbia and in the Serbian Diaspora and symbolizes the growing circle of women's connections. When it was established in Jackson, this was the first formalized Serbian woman's group in the area with a strong humanitarian purpose. The mission of the KSS here has been to connect Serbian American women with each other, with other religious and community organizations, and to provide support to the larger community. Some of their main activities have included the establishment of children's camps, publishing of the St. Sava Church & Mission annual publications and pamphlets, organizing retreats, fundraising²³, communication and various collaborations with the larger community, including with non-Serbian residents. Serbian American women aided WWII efforts by doing humanitarian work. In many instances, the Serbian community in their homeland looked at women as "emancipators" and "freedom fighters" since the Middle Ages as they participated in movements and armed struggles²⁴. The women in Amador County clearly liked that role. As an example, Ann Ingram, a Serbian American who lived her entire life in Jackson, was the *first woman in Amador County* to join the military and go to



Ann Ingram, right, with the author, 2004.

World War II. It seemed that the entire Amador County came out to send her to that mission with pride²⁵. In her self-identification, she never used the word feminist in my presence, but that's exactly how I saw her. Strong, creative, and active all the way into her mid-90s, Ann was an inspiration and role model for many.

In 1945, after World War II, The Circle held its first convention in the U.S.

in Libertyville, IL. That was the occasion when the American Federation of Circles of Serbian Sisters was formed. Meanwhile, in Amador County of the early 1950s, a drive began under the direction of Reverend Milovan Shundich to build a church hall adjacent to the St. Sava Church property. At this time the Circle helped raise funds, organized dinners, and cul-

tural events, and bought and donated equipment for the hall.

Women's activities of yesterday and today include food drives for all needy residents of Amador County, fashion shows, and collaborations with other communities. Some of these activities are highlighted in the interview with Sylvia Krzich²⁶. Women continue Serbian family and religious traditions, music and *kolo* dancing. They also help preserve multiple ties with the homeland. Whether doing humanitarian or educational work, connecting with friends and family who stayed in Yugoslavia, or bringing Serbian iconographers, artists and musicians, women had a key role in social networking and strengthening connections with their historical and cultural roots.

Women from Amador County also served in regional and national offices of KSS. The following residents of Jackson have served on the regional and national boards between 1960 and 1990: Anne Begovich Casagrande, Vera Davidovich, Sophia Ducich, Martha Kardum, Bessie Kosich, Ljuba Ljepava, Dorothy Milosovich, Mildred Popovich, Edith Perovich, Andja Polich, Dorothy Salata, and Olga Stanisich. At the St. Sava Mission one entire wall is covered with portraits of women who contributed in multiple ways to the Serbian community, St. Sava Mission, St. Sava Church, and Amador County at large. Portrayed are Anne Begovich Casagrande, Vera Davidovich, Sophia Ducich, Martha Kardum, Ljuba Ljepava, Sophia Marich, Draga Milkovich, Andja Polich, Stella Towers, and Amelia Zlokovich. Andja Polich's portrait on page 14 is just one example.

Andja Polich was instrumental in establishing a children's camp and the St. Sava Mission. Together with her husband, they donated funds and labor, helped establish a non-profit organization to oversee the Mission and tirelessly worked to leave a legacy to Serbian children. Every summer (and sometimes even during the winter), up to 400 children come to Jackson to continue learning about their Serbian roots, have fun, and find friends. Their families visit and many adult community members volunteer to work there as teachers, coaches, and kitchen workers. The Mission also created a fund and annually awards college scholarships to high school



Milo Radulovich and Sylvia Krzich in Montenegrin national attire, photographed mid-1960s.

²³ Jovanovic, Miroslava. 2010. "The Heroic Circle of Serbian Sisters." *Serbian Studies*, Vol. 24, No 1-2. Bloomington, IN: Slavica Publishers, p. 133

²⁴ 40th Anniversary of Federation of Serbian Sisters' Circles. 1986. Grayslake, IL, p. 25

²⁵ This information was shared in the interview with Ann Ingram conducted in 2005 and in the Amador Ledger Dispatch article published in 2004 for her 90th birthday.

²⁶ Included in the sidebar.



Original founding members of the Circle of Serbian Sisters, 1936, include (order from left to right, top row first): Saveta Vasilovich, Marija Shundich, Milica Popovich, Mildred Stowers, Mary Dabovich, Olga Stanisich, Rose Boretta, Julia Ball, Joka Stanisich, Zorka Klarich, Mara Prentovich, Staka Jaksich, Savica Churich, Mara Danilovich, Mare Skulich, Soke Begovich, Soke Angelich, Mara Curilich, Mary Ivezich. Photo courtesy of Ann Ingram, not pictured (she did not serve at that time).



Andja Polich's portrait in oil on canvas. Photo by Tomislav Gajic

Recent KSS members include: Andje Perovich Nikolich, Ange Porobich, Anitza Angelich, Anne Milovich, Darlene Vasilovich, Elena Matich, Franka Bojinovich, Gospava Jurasovich, Jovanka Bryovich Trklja, Jovanka Jurovich Radojich, Jovanka Prdavica, Kristina Martinovich, Ljuba Pasalich, Mare Danilovich Milanovich, Mare Evezich, Mare Prentovich, Mare Skulich, Maria Rakich, Mary Dabovich, Mary Evezich, Mary Gacanich, Mila Lugonja Perovich, Mildred Popovich, Milica Jovicich, Angelich Milica Merovich Milosovich, Milica Nikceвич, Olga Stanisich, Saveta Kosich, Saveta Terzich, Savica Churich, Slavka Dabovich, Sofia Vidovich, Soke Begovich, Sophia Ducich, Stake Jaksich, Toshe Terzich, Ann Ingram, Sylvia Krzich, Marie Kostich, and Danica Paul.

graduates in the U.S., Canada, and Serbia. This summer St. Sava Mission celebrated 50 years.

Contemporary Contributions of Serbian Americans and Their Image

Today, Serbian roots have taken hold in Amador County's soil, its symbols, and its culture. Important buildings, bridges, highways, public spaces, businesses, stores, tourist attractions, and even nationally protected places, have something Serbian in their name, image, or historical development.

Serbian Americans have also preserved their positive image and good reputation. Furthermore, many residents have had a chance to learn the complex history and strong ties their Serbian American neighbors have to both the United States and Yugoslavia. This includes the multiplicity of reasons for Serbian immigration to the United States, and Serbian American contributions to the betterment of the larger society. Throughout the last 150 years locals have had opportunities to cross paths and share lives with many Serbian Americans as neighbors, colleagues, schoolmates, students, customers, and community activists. Each year on January 7th, major businesses and institutions close their doors and join in the celebration of Serbian Christmas. Many tourists participate in gold mining history tours and learn about the eleven Serbian and four Croatian Americans who died in one day, along with 32 others, in the 1922 Argonaut Gold Mine Disaster.²⁷

Serbian Americans have influenced cultural and artistic trends by sharing Serbian traditions and celebrations with the larger community. This has included putting together theater plays based on the works of Serbian authors, performing annual recitals, and bringing their multiple talents to the Volcano Amphitheatre. The 2006 survey of Amador County residents who didn't have any significant ties to the Serbian community, or Yugoslav roots, confirmed that Serbian Americans had preserved their positive reputation in this region.

²⁷ Mace, O. Henry, 2004. 47 Down: *The 1922 Argonaut Gold Mine Disaster*. Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

The same view was expressed by the people I interviewed.

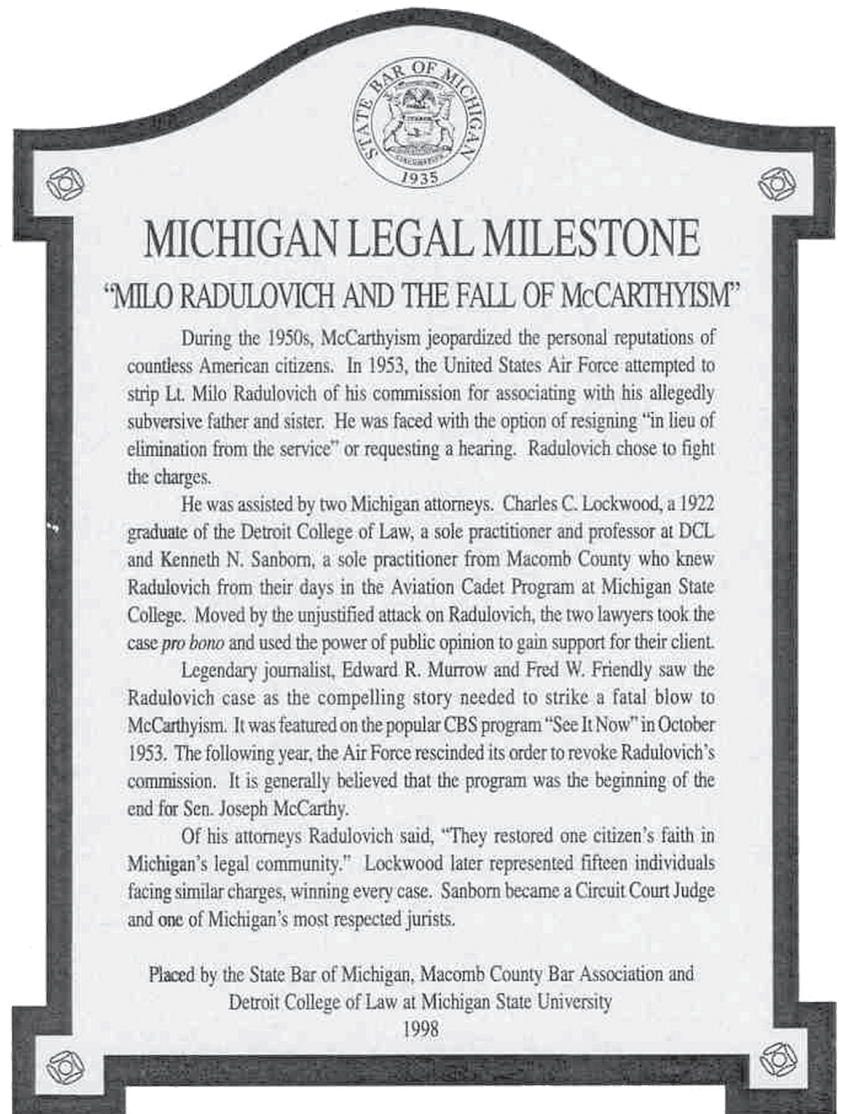
The number of Serbian Americans who currently live in the region is small, but the Serbian American community has stayed strong and vital. Many Serbian Americans who live elsewhere regularly come to Jackson. During the summer events, the community grows in size as many visitors attend the 4th of July celebrations, retreats, children's camps or three-day long gatherings of the Western (region) Orthodox Dioceses. These events also attract the larger community and visitors from Oregon, Arizona, Montana, and other states.

Some of the most representative contemporary stories include those of former sheriff Mike Prizmich, Danica Paul, Marie Kostich and Milo Radulovich. Sheriff Prizmich worked with the community to establish first shelter for victims of domestic violence and to improve the lives of young inmates who could see their children and play with them thanks to the program instituted by Prizmich. George Milardovich was the chief of police in the 1970s and had a pivotal role in controlling gambling and prostitution in Jackson.

Danica Paul seems to run almost everything in the Serbian community and organizes food drives for *all* needy people in Jackson. Marie Kostich, a very humble and quiet woman, will be remembered by the Amador County residents for her grace and for her traditional Serbian dishes that were adopted by the local Irish community as well.

Milo Radulovich had the first meteorological station in Jackson at the end of the 1950s and beginning of the 1960s. When Milo Radulovich passed away on November 19, 2007 even the dominant media finally acknowledged his pivotal role in American history and in defeating McCarthyism. Some called him a hero, some saw him as an important social justice activist who remained active for decades. Toward the end of his life he received special awards from the Michigan State Senate, Macomb County Bar Association (MCBA's first ever Medal of Achievement and Courage) and other institutions. His court case is considered a legal milestone when it comes to defending our civil liberties, and the Michigan State University Law School displays a plaque explaining the importance of that legal milestone (see Michigan Legal Milestone, above). George Clooney's film "Good Night and Good Luck" captured only some highlights from the most popular documentary program in CBS's history, "See It Now", in which Edward R. Murrow focused on Milo's situation in 1953.

The two current priests, the Rev. Miladin Garic and the Rev. Steve Tumbas, serve as community ambassadors of the local Serbian community. The Jackson community has pre-



A plaque at Michigan State University's Detroit College of Law honors the Radulovich case.

served many ties with the homeland. During the Balkan Wars (1912, 1913), World War I, and World War II some of the men went back home to Serbia to join the military and found other ways to support families and friends who struggled with their oppressors and fought in the two world wars. During the most recent wars of the 1990s, some community members were able to travel to the war zone and then provide eyewitness accounts upon their return. The community also collected funds to send to orphanages, children's and maternity hospitals bombed by the U.S. & NATO in 1999, and joined various humanitarian efforts throughout the 1990s. During peaceful times, Serbian Americans host visitors from all parts of the former Yugoslavia, maintain open channels of communication, and promote educational exchange.

The Future of the Serbian American Community

The Serbian American community is also looking toward the future. Local community members are still dreaming, refining, and advancing their project of a unique Serbian Village that will

Christina Stojanovich

include a retirement home, children's school and summer camp, recreational center, services for cultural and linguistic proficiency, and the St. Sava Church as a religious and cultural center. This center could be seen as California's "Little Serbia." Other larger immigrant groups have built and preserved such places throughout the United States. Larger Serbian communities in other parts of the United States such as the one in Chicago, IL, have many of the cultural elements needed for such a project, but even they have not yet fully developed a "Little Serbia." In Jackson, this project is still developing with the senior center and other components yet to be built. However, driving on Main Street from the St. Sava Church, passing by the John Petkovich Park, and continuing on Broadway towards the St. Sava Mission Center, it's a straight line leading to the "Serbian Village."



Big plans for "Little Serbia" in Jackson.

The present generations of Serbian Americans are facing great challenges. In today's globalized world it is not easy to preserve individual and group identities, cultural and linguistic traditions. The community in Amador County is currently small, with young people leaving the area in search of educational and employment opportunities. Many community members who were considered "living encyclopedias" because of their extensive knowledge of local history have passed away in recent decades. They belonged to generations that relied heavily on oral tradition. At the same time, the new generations are entrusted to preserve the legacy of several generations, the work that their great-grandparents started. How much will they be able to continue the legacy and move forward in Jackson as a symbolic home to Serbian Americans living on the West Coast and beyond? This will depend on many social factors shaping the present and future for all young people in today's world, Serbian Americans included. The Serbian Village is envisioned to connect the children with seniors who will have their retirement homes next door. Whether symbolically, or in reality, they would be able to meet and converse, bridge generational gaps, and continue to pass their stories on to new generations, generations that might become even more deeply rooted in the California soil. ■

Christina Stojanovich had started college when I interviewed her in 2005. She represents a very small number of young people who have Jackson as their primary residence. Here is what she had to say about her parent's activism in the Church and the larger community:



CS: In all honesty, sometimes I forget my mother isn't Serbian purely because she contributes just as much as my father in our community. Both my parents are proud Board Members in our church and they both assist with almost all of the events, as well as help to prepare Sunday lunch every week. I think the fact that in our Serbian community is so tight knit and everyone is treated like family keeps my mother so connected to the Church and Serbian community. Just because she is not Serbian doesn't mean that she can't enjoy serving the community or take part in its events, and that doesn't seem to concern

those that are Serbian either. In her heart I know she feels just as Serbian as everyone else and, to me, she is.

CS: We have many different families that attend church who are not Serbian or Orthodox for that matter. Even one of my own friends who is Italian and Catholic attends church with me every Sunday. As far as camp goes, children from all over California, Oregon, and even some from other states attend almost every year. I feel that Jackson's age and history seems to intrigue people and when they visit, they often find themselves captivated by the beauty and compassion of the Serbian culture.

MJ: Have you participated in Church and Camp activities? If so, what motivates you to do that?

CS: I attend Church every Sunday and try to help prepare lunch as well. I help with the clean up sometimes. As far as other activities, I attended camp once when I wasn't living in Jackson but when my family moved. Now, I felt that since I am within walking distance of camp, I can go and help with camp related duties when needed. I

usually help serve lunch and dinner as well as other little tasks. I really enjoy helping out when I can and I think the fact that I am helping to serve my own community motivates me to do so.

Here is what Christina says about the young people's role in the preservation of Serbian heritage.

CS: I think that it's incredibly important for younger generations to keep the life of the church going as well as carrying on the traditions of our Serbian culture in the effort to preserve Serbian heritage. I feel that if more kids are educated in their Serbian heritage, it will draw them into wanting to be more active in our Serbian community. I also feel that local schools should include at least one lesson on Serbian and Italian contribution to the Mother Lode.

MJ: What do you think about the reputation of the Serbian community in Jackson and Amador County as a whole?

CS: I feel honored to be Serbian when I think of how Serbs are viewed in Amador County. The Serbian Community in Amador County is regarded as being hardworking, dedicated, strong, and a vital part in the history of the Mother Lode. I feel that the Serbian community is observed with a certain respect by others living in this area because they know how long Serbs have been here.

MJ: Is there anyone whose contributions stand out? What contributions she/he made? Why are they important?

CS: I believe the contributions of Danica Paul are probably the most noticeable out of anyone else in our community. She's always doing something for either the church or somebody in the larger community who needs her help. Every Sunday she cooks lunch, she cooks for many of our Church holidays (Christmas, Easter, etc.), as well as preparing memorial luncheons for members of our community who have passed. It's more than the fact that she just does these things out of the goodness of her heart, but she's happy to do them. I don't think I've ever heard her say "no" to anyone and to me, that shows how much compassion she has for our community and Serbian Orthodox Church and that's really what counts.



Christina and her brother Nick Stojanovich were among the most talented children actors in Hollywood in the 1990s.

The most significant and memorable roles that they played were in "The Apostle," together with Robert Duvall and Farrah Fawcett.




MJ: As a child you started your acting career in Hollywood. Your brother is now continuing his acting career. Has our community been supportive of your efforts and successes? Has anyone in Hollywood noted that you have a Serbian last name? If so, did they make any comments or ask questions?

CS: I feel that our community has been extremely supportive of my brother's and my acting career. I think it makes our local community excited to know that one of our very own Serbian kids is out there getting his name out. Lots of people have noted that my last name is rather long and they usually ask what my cultural background is. After I explain to them that I am of Serbian descent, it seems to interest them, so they usually ask questions about Serbia's location and other questions relative to that. It happens quite a bit if I do say so myself.

MJ: If you leave Jackson, do you think that you would be coming back often?

CS: Most definitely. Since my mother and father will continue to live here when I leave and start college, I will always come back to visit when I can. Even though I wasn't born here, I feel that a lot of the people involved in this community are my family and I love them all dearly. I will always return to my roots just because it's important for me not to forget my family and where I come from.



Support the preservation of local history by becoming a member of the California History Center Foundation

Membership categories: \$30 Individual; \$40 Family; \$50 Supporter; \$100 Sponsor; \$500 Patron; \$1,000 Colleague.

Mail your check to CHC Foundation, 21250 Stevens Creek Blvd., Cupertino, CA 95014. Call (408) 864-8986 for more information, or visit us on the web at calhistory.org

ORAL HISTORY **Sylvia Krzich**



Sylvia Krzich was very eager to share stories about the Serbian community, her own family, and the larger society. She was born in 1921 in Dinuba, CA, graduated from Dinuba Union High School and attended Reedley College. Sylvia lived in Amador County for 58 years. Her death in 2007 surprised many; she was previously very energetic and in good health. Note: *Krsna Slavas* is the celebration of a family's patron saint's day. *Selo* is a Serbian word for village.

Here is how she remembered her family's immigration experience:



SK: Fresno was primarily an agricultural area. Most people made their livelihood as farmers or had some businesses in town. I was born and raised on a farm in Dinuba, CA. All Serbian communities were spread out in that area, but we often gathered together. All of the families observed their *Krsna Slavas*. Many of our parents didn't speak English. My parents were active in a Serbian Benevolent Society that had its own social hall. The church was built later. My brother was a civil engineer and he was the head of the building committee of the St. Peter Church in Fresno. We made and sold raisins. Then, after I got married to Ilija Krzich, I came up here. When I came I understood that things were better here even during the depression because they had jobs. And the women had boarding houses, and a lot of the miners were single men. So, they survived the depression better than the people in the valley.

SK: I want to tell my daughter how my parents came to America. My mother came in 1912. She married my father in Herzegovina and they had my sister Sarah. Then, my father came to this country to better their way of life. So, anyway, he worked in one mine and moved to another. At that time, it was hard to save money, but eventually he did and sent it to my mother and sister to come to America. My mother started the trip with other ladies who were coming to meet their husbands. So they were in France and they were booked on a ship to come to New York. That ship was the Titanic. What happened was that they got bumped off and she remembered that all of them cried. They did not get on it and they were so disappointed. They had to wait for the next boat and eventually came later. They first came

to Ellis Island and my sister Sarah, who was five years old, had some contagious disease, measles or mumps... so they quarantined her for six weeks. They wouldn't let her leave. My father was in Angel's Camp, here. Anyway, she was there and she said that it was a miserable time. They told her that she could go but the child would have to stay. They lived a few years in Angels Camp. My mother's brothers told my father that it was much better to do something else than to get miner's consumption. The first house that they stayed in burned down and so her coming to America was very sad.



Sylvia moved to Sutter Creek in 1949, the year she married a World War II veteran Ely Krzich. They had two children, Sam and Barbara. Ely passed away early, in 1989. Sylvia worked at the Wells Fargo Bank in Sutter Creek and Jackson. She was one of the key board members of the St. Sava Church Board and served as President of KSS for more than 9 years. Sylvia was very proud of KSS for the many accomplishments they made throughout the years.



SK: My mother in law was one of the original KSS members. It was organized in 1936. The group was not very active during the World War II years.

MJ: You were the KSS president for a number of years, right? What was accomplished during that time?

SK: Nine years. And I was also on the Church Board with Slavko Kostich and Milo Radulovich for a long time. Well, we built the hall. That was the main thing. We had many fundraisers. More people of our age, first generation Serbian Americans, showed more enthusiasm, saying that we want to carry on with what our fathers and mothers did. Our fathers came to this country in early 1900s or before, built the church for us, and now we need to carry on our families' traditions. When we had our hundredth anniversary in 1994 we needed to renovate some space and we organized that.

MJ: When you were active, did that activity take a lot of your time?

SK: Oh, yes it did. We did not have children right away; almost ten years... I worked 26 years for the Wells Fargo Bank. And that was a very busy time

MJ: So, how did you manage all of that? Was your family supportive?

SK: I don't know. Oh, yes, they did support me. And there were so many other nice ladies of my age with KSS during that time... There was Dolores Danilovich Shealor, Ann Ingram Skulich and we were all very close, because our mothers came practically from the same *selo*, by Trebinje in Herzegovina. Our mothers knew about each other back in the old country. We had a special and close bond. They all married Americans, though. I was the only one who didn't.

MJ: I heard that the Kolo has organized many events and activities to benefit not only the Church and our people, but also the larger society.

SK: Yes, we do things for the community. We've always done that. Food drives are organized for the needy. We have a big warehouse and we do it with different kinds of foods. We are Serbian, but we care for the whole community. The last few years, we have had one big activity, which is a fashion show. Everyone was invited to that. I used to spend the whole week here distributing invitations. We had to invite our American friends, too. I really have a lot of them, since I worked for the Bank for a long time and my husband was born in Sutter Creek and was well liked. And we would send the invitations to KSS in Fresno, Moraga, Sacramento... It was good. It was fun.

MJ: Did you have professional models?

SK: No, our women did that. So, now our main project is to use the money to furnish the Parish home. There is always something to do... And, Sam has probably told you, we are trying to acquire the land behind the Church to expand the cemetery.



Sylvia understood the importance of heritage preservation. During the 1980s, she was a member of a small group instrumental in the process of registration of the St. Sava Church as a national landmark.

ORAL HISTORY **Mike Backovich, Sr.**

In 2004, I had a discussion with Mike Backovich, Sr., his son Tom, and grandson Mike Jr. The son and grandson helped Mike Sr. to reflect on his long and productive life. With his many talents, wisdom, and experience, Mike was able to adjust to multiple social changes that occurred during his lifetime. He wasn't interested in the political life, nor was he always very social. Yet, he was very connected to nature and maintained that connection over the years. His stories were not only fascinating, but essential in reconstructing many events in Jackson's history. In Mr. Backovich's own words, the main reason for his survival was his conscious decision to limit his hours and exposure to the toxic work environment at the time when he worked in the mines. In fact, he had a great strategy to remedy his exposure by spending his entire summers in the woods. Note: Berry's referred to in the oral history is the Berry Lumber Company. Castello's was a restaurant and winery. Mike Backovich, Sr., passed away in 2011.



Mike Sr.: I tried all the mines. But I would work in the mines during the winter and in the woods during the summer. I worked on and off, never steady. That is the only reason I am still alive. I was thirteen when I started working. I first worked for a man called Vottaw who was looking for someone to ride his horse. He asked me: "Would you like to ride one?" I said "yes." So it was in the late afternoon one day when I came home and told my uncle: "I got a job." Then, I worked in a sawmill. That was for that man called Duke. I also worked for a sawmill over here for another man, Nick Gacanich and Chris Jurovich and another man. I forgot his name... His name was Delmar. And Nick Gacanich...

Tom Backovich (son): You know, he was also working up at Hell Hole Dam, running a bulldozer. That was back when he built his house; that would've been in the mid sixties. Anyway, they go in and they drill, and they load the blast, and there are bulldozers there. There was one bulldozer that he rotated with another guy when he was off. They had the holes loaded, it started storming, and the lightning touches off and killed this guy. It wasn't his turn, but they rotated. It's like in the mines; you never know... he could have been at a wrong place at a wrong time.

MJ: How far is that from here?

Tom: Well, Georgetown is seventy miles from here. It's called Hell Hole Dam. In the sixties they had it when it happened that they had a big storm and, as he explained that to me, the earth-filled dam with rocks outside, and they filled it with a core wall. There was so much rain and the water came up and came through the rocks and washed it out. He was one of less than a half a dozen people to see that dam go. And it took out the Georgetown bridge... So, he's seen a lot of history. He always had jobs and also created them... In '57 or '58 he went to work for the guy named Jo Lima for a union, over here in Martel. In '58 we both worked at Castello's and I was there three months, but he worked for him about 6 months. He also worked for a guy in Plymouth who made pipes... Jim Paul, or something like that. And he pulled chains for Berry's.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Milina Jovanović came to the U.S. 1994 from Belgrade, Yugoslavia, where she completed her college education and received a J.D. and an M.A. in Sociology of Law and Women's Studies. Between 1991 and 1994 she worked as a sociologist at the Sociological and Criminological Institute in Belgrade researching changes in the Yugoslav family, youth, gender relations, and Sociology of Love. During that time Ms. Jovanović published a number of articles in various Yugoslav scholarly journals.

Upon coming to the San Francisco Bay Area, Ms. Jovanović received her M.A. in Social Sciences and Women's Studies from San José State University. As a graduate researcher she compared women's education and employment in California and Yugoslavia and published the results of her study.

Between 1999 and 2001, as a member of a small team, she conducted research on immigrant contributions and integration practices in Santa Clara County. She contributed to a nationally recognized study, *Bridging Borders in Silicon Valley*, and co-edited *KIN: Knowledge of Immigrant Nationalities*. This research was funded by the Santa Clara County Office of Human Relations. Milina is still working at the same office, designing and monitoring programs for immigrants and providing mediation services.

This article is based on her own research conducted in Amador County, CA. More complete results of the study are presented in a longer manuscript awaiting publication.

At the Center

'A Taste of History' gets a glimpse of the future

Thank you to all who attended our second annual "A Taste of History" event on Saturday, October 27, 2012.

This year's event, entitled "A Taste of History plus a Glimpse of the Future," featured gourmet food and wine tasting provided by five local wineries. Wine historian and author, Charles L. Sullivan gave a talk about the significance of the Santa Clara Valley in the state's winemaking past. A Power Point presentation of selected photographs from the CHC archives helped illustrate local viticultural history. Lovely music was provided by the De Anza College String Quartet.

Topping off the event, college president Brian Murphy led a special tour of the new Media and Learning Center (one of the greenest campus buildings in the region), next to the California History Center. Guests also had a chance to see the photo and map panels celebrating the wine history of our historic corridor on the walls of the renovated Baldwin Winery building.



De Anza College president Brian Murphy leads a group of "Taste of History" guests through the brand new Media and Learning Center.



Susanne Chan, International Student Counselor, and Counselor K.D. Le join in the festivities.



Viticultural historian Charles L. Sullivan speaks to the audience, one of his publications in hand.

Thank you to our many sponsors for this event. We raised more than \$13,000 to support student and campus projects that will preserve, document and share our local history.

Cindy Castillo, retired director of Financial Aid at De Anza College, shows "Taste of History" attendees historic photographs of the estate now gracing the walls of the Baldwin Winery.



"Taste of History" guests stroll through the Media and Learning Center's beautiful, and functional, gardens.

At the Center

Meet Jennifer Henderson

A new face at the California History Center is actually a long-time friend of the center and of De Anza College. Jennifer Henderson was enlisted last January as a Stockmeir Library/ Archives volunteer and as a student employee with CHC's Silicon Valley Documentation Project (SVDP). Her chosen specialty as a volunteer with the center is the digitization of our large (over 400 count) oral history audio cassette tape collection, a long overdue project. For the SVDP, which is a joint project between CHC and De Anza College's Institute of Community and Civic Engagement funded by "Taste of History" donations, she is compiling oral histories and creating a database to archive and organize them in an accessible format. Her affection for the center, which grew over 15 years of taking history center classes, led Henderson to use skills she acquired through her long career in high technology to help us prolong the life of, and expand, our spoken record.

Born in San José, Henderson, grew up in Cupertino and attended Cupertino schools. She was a gifted student, and she also recalls the difficulty of being one of a very few non-white students in school. Henderson spent a year at university "trying to figure out who she was" and then joined the army of working adults in Silicon Valley. Henderson liked her jobs, and liked the income and the independence.

During stints at FMC, Claris, and Adobe, career advancement took her from clerical tasks into management where her ability to learn quickly, process new knowledge, then teach and lead diverse personalities and groups, gave her great satisfaction and success. A person who prefers to work behind the scenes, facilitating the success of others is a primary goal in Henderson's work and personal life. Her life's motto might be: Learn, reformulate, pass it on.

Though her formal college education was interrupted early, Henderson, a natural life-long learner, found interesting ways to further her studies at De Anza College. She started out by taking Inter-personal Communications, an Intercultural Studies course, which she credits with greatly enhancing her on-the-job communication skills. Henderson's first CHC class was with instructor Chatham Forbes in the 1990s. Over the next decade and a half, Henderson took many CHC classes from Forbes and from Betty Hirsch. Long-time CHC volunteer Trudy Frank, who knew Henderson as a fel-

Her life's motto might be:
Learn, reformulate,
pass it on.

low CHC student, also has her own family connection to Henderson and her husband Mike. Frank recognized a match between Henderson's skills and the evolving needs of the history center and the rest is, as they say, history.



Jennifer Henderson with CHC instructor Chatham Forbes. Henderson calls herself terrifyingly organized...with brief spurts of insanity.

Besides pursuing her studies, helping the history center, and doing related work for the Silicon Valley Documentation Project, Henderson improves each moment of the day with a variety of hobbies including innovative crochet and needlepoint projects, (she also participates in Knitzvah, a group of knitters and crocheters who create clothing items for Jewish Family Services), cooking and baking, and attending musical performances, especially operettas. She enjoys her own digital collections of favorite shows and performances. A great reader, Henderson favors science fiction, scientific works on the animal world, and cookbooks. Henderson says she improves her observational abilities through reading as well as through real time experience. Henderson is proud to call herself a generalist and wants to know something about everything. She hopes to help change the world for the better by acting at the local level, a good description of her valued work for the history center.

Director's Report

continued from page 4

another staff member who has moved on to focus on his teaching career. The project is an innovative and exciting one that creates curricula and support activities aimed at increasing the success rates of Asian and Pacific Islander students from groups who have some of the lowest student success rates in our higher education system. The project will, in the long run, help improve how we assist all of our students in their efforts to navigate community college. For this opportunity, I am very grateful and honored to be selected.

While this redirection of my time actually helps me maintain my work with CHC, it does mean some big challenges for CHCF, in regard to both fundraising and finding ways to operate with fewer staff hours. We will be looking for volunteers, including board members, who have creative ideas for us on how to meet these challenges. Please contact me. With your continuing support, we will find a way.

MEMBERSHIP April 2012 – November 2012

Special Gifts

'Taste of History' Sponsors

Apple, Joan and Dave Barram, Gregory and Linda Druehl, Jim and Pat Jackson, Hugh Stuart Center Charitable Trust, Brian Murphy and Susan Hoffman, Mary and Laury Smith, Dorothy and Darryl Stow.

Wine tasting provided by Burrell School Vineyards, Guglielmo Winery, Loma Prieta Winery, The Mountain Winery, Savannah-Chanelle Vineyards, with Laura Ness, Winery Coordinator.

Floral arrangements by Ann Cleaver and Barbara Juhl.

'Taste of History' Donors

Sheryl Alexander, Gregory and Yuki Anderson, Cindy Castillo, Susanne Chan, Pearl Cheng and Bob Campbell, Karen Chow, Ray Epstein, Wolfgang and Christina Espinosa-Pieb, Rodney and Purba Fernandez, David Howard-Pitney, Maryanne Ifft, Tom Izu, Robert and Kathee Kraker, K.D. Le, Beverly

Lenihan, Orrin and Carolyn Mahoney, Leslie Masunaga, Judy Miner, Kathleen Moberg, Joseph Anthony Moreau, Edmundo Norte, Dave and Margaret Obenour, Thomas Ray, Eno Schmidt, Shirley Sparks, Linda Thor and Bob Huntsinger, Rowena Tomaneng, Hung Wei, Carolyn Wilkins-Greene.

Membership

Individual

Dorothy Ames, May Blaisdell, Frances Bush, Roslyn Davis, Linda Grodt, Joseph Myers, Eno Schmidt, Marie Smith, Margaret Swift, Beth Wyman.

Family

Cecilie Vaughters-Johnson and Robert Johnson, Beverly and Phil Lenihan, Patrick and Marjorie McMahon, Patti and Richard Perino, Eugene Ravizza, Robert Senkewicz and Rose Marie Beebe.

Supporter

Nancy Bratman, Colin I. Busby, John Cochrane, Beverly David, Mary Hanel, Milina Jovanović, Clysta McLemore, Dale Mouritsen, Keith Peterson, LaVerne Prentice, Linda Quintero, Ann Sebastian.

Sponsor

Donna and Scot Austin, Robert Bettencourt, Ron Bottini, Albert Faris Jr., Yvonne Jacobson, Leslie Masunaga, Shirley Oneal.

Foothill-De Anza

Community College District

Employee Payroll Deduction:

The following employees of the college district have generously given through the college's payroll deduction plan:

Gregory Anderson, Diana E. Argabrite, Karen Chow, Tracy Chung-Tabangcura, Marc Coronado, Purba Fernandez, Richard Hansen, David Howard-Pitney, Hieu Nguyen, Diane Pierce, George Robles, Kristin Skager, Rowena Tomaneng, Pauline Yeckley.

UPCOMING EXHIBITS



Poster from University of California, Berkeley, 1972.

The Art of Protest: 1960s–1970s

CHC's next exhibit features original silk screen posters that document campus social protest movements of the 1960s and 1970s. As a follow-up to our student-curated exhibit on the 1968 presidential election displayed spring and fall, this collection features 26 original posters and prints from UC Berkeley and UC Santa Cruz student movements, with many focusing on campus protests against the US war in Vietnam, for peace, and in opposition to racial discrimination. The collection is from the San Jose Peace and Justice Center.

CHC is planning an opening reception on Thursday, January 17, 4 p.m., with speakers and refreshments. The exhibit will run from Tuesday, January 15, 2013 through Thursday, February 28, 2013.

Lens on Silicon Valley – A Photographic Exhibition

CHC joins with the Los Gatos – Saratoga Camera Club to host a special exhibit of original photographs taken by club members in response to the question, "Silicon Valley: What does it mean to you?" Club photographers will explore places, ideas, and themes that resonate with what they think "Silicon Valley" is all about. The exhibit will feature approximately 48 original photographic works. The exhibit will go up in mid-March and run through spring quarter.

WINTER CLASSES

California History Center State and Regional History Academic Program

The following courses will be offered winter quarter 2013 through the California History Center.
Please see the History class listing section of the Spring Schedule of Classes for additional information
www.deanza.fhda.edu/schedule or call the center at (408) 864-8986.

A Brief History of Silicon Valley

HIST 107 X 95 2 units

Instructor: Mary Jo Ignoffo—ignoffomaryjo@deanza.edu



This class will examine the antecedents of what today is known the world over as “Silicon Valley.” Why did the field of technology blossom here, in what had been known as the blossom-laden “valley of heart’s delight”? How did the emergence of Silicon Valley alter the social, political and economic environment of Santa Clara County? We will also explore the genealogy of technology companies, with their numerous spinoffs in the fields of aerospace, defense, personal computing, consumer electronics, the internet, and social networking. We will visit museums that display the history of machines, components and documents related to the rise of Silicon Valley.

LECTURES:

Mon 1/28 & 2/11
4:00pm–7:45pm

FIELD STUDIES:

Sat 2/2
& Friday 2/8



Living Legends: Restored Palaces of the Silver Screen

HIST 53X95 2 units

Instructor: Chatham Forbes—chforbessr@msn.com

Movie theatres came to full glory in the 1920s and Depression Era ‘30s. They captured the hearts of Americans everywhere, hence the prevalence of examples of grand old theatres, restored and still operating in many communities, including in the San Francisco Bay Area.

LECTURES:

Thurs 1/24 & 2/7
6:30pm–10:00pm

FIELD STUDIES:

Sat 1/26 & 2/9



John Steinbeck’s California: His Role and Influence

HIST 52X 95 2 units Instructor: Chatham Forbes—chforbessr@msn.com

Extreme social and economic disparities in the farm communities of California inspired the deep sympathies of John Steinbeck, who observed them at first hand in his native Salinas. He won both the Pulitzer and Nobel prizes for literature for his powerful calls to remedy injustices visited upon the agricultural poor.

LECTURES:

Thurs 2/28 & 3/7
6:30pm–10:00pm

FIELD STUDIES:

Sat 3/2 & 3/16