

UNION CITY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Founded by Myrla Raymundo, MBA

3841 Smith Street, Union City, California 94587, Tel. (510) 324-3298

Three Components

**(1) Museum & Artifacts, (2) Oral History (3) Preservation of Historical Homes
Museum Board meets quarterly at the Museum at 7 PM**

VOL. 10 NO. 1

July 2008

**Myrla Raymundo, MBA, Editor/Writer
e-mail: ligfinio.raymundo@sbcglobal.net**

MISSION STATEMENT

The Union City Historical Museum is a non-profit organization committed to the preservation, maintenance and protection of, and the education of the public about the architectural, cultural, natural and historical heritage resources of the City of Union City.

**BERNIE MORALES
Past Mayor of Union City**

By Myrla Raymundo



Bernie Morales, former Union City councilmember and mayor, celebrated his 91st birthday last May 20, 2008. He was born in Lyons, Kansas and has lived in Union City since 1945.

I always admire these leaders who had done so much for our community. I have so much respect for them that when I see them walking down the street, I can't help but to converse with them.

He told me again about his experiences in the city.

Bernie, the first Mexican-American to be elected to public office in Alameda County, was elected to the City Council in April 1964. He served two years as a councilman and two terms as mayor until 1968.

He was the past chairman of the American G. I. Forum and a member of the Mayor's Conference. He was appointed to the Human Relations Commission of Alameda County. He founded the SASSO (Southern Alameda County Spanish Speaking organizations) and was a member of Commission Honorifica Mexicana, and was vice chairman of the Union City Teen Club.

He accomplished a lot for Union City and we are proud to acknowledge all of his accomplishments.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, BERNIE!!

**MEET DEMAS LAMAS
of the Union City Newspaper
The Leader**

By Myrla Raymundo



Demas Lamas, who now lives in Texas managing his Real Estate business, came to visit the Union City Historical Museum. He is a Real Estate broker in Texas and California. He was in the process of completing a sale in Patterson, California.

Demas worked for the Union City newspaper, The Leader, from 1959 through 1965. He also worked at the News Register in Oakland in 1965, the Argus in 1966 and the Daily Review in 1976.

Before going to Texas in 2003, he owned a real estate and mortgage company in Fremont and he was proud to say that he sold around 700 homes and processed 3000 loans. He started his real estate business in 1973.

In his younger years, the family lived on Teddy Drive, very close to Manuel White School. He went to that school in 1959, in its first year of opening.

He attended Logan High School in 1967 and was getting a lot of awards. Some

of them were the Seone-James Award for all year-round students. He was Sports Editor of the Colt Carrier in his freshman year.

He was Editor of the Colt Carrier in his sophomore year and in his senior year, he was Editor of the Yearbook, the Epitaph.

He remembers that at age 11, he worked as a window washer for 50 cents for all the windows in one building. In four years, he was able to finish all the windows in 40 duplexes.

He also remembers that at that age, he used to deliver newspapers for Folgers Graphics. One day, he wrote two short paragraphs on the Sports Section of The Leader regarding basketball. The top executive noticed him and that was the start of his writing career for The Leader.

In 1962 through 1963, he managed the Union City National Little League.

He graduated at Cal State University in 1971 with a degree in Mass Communications.

His dad Demas Sr., age 87, was the first manager of the Union City Senior Little League. His mom, Allane, age 81, and his dad live in Texas. He has one sister, Linda, age 61, also attended Logan High School in 1964 and lives in Hayward. They once owned a farm in Union City.

Demas' wife Marianne was a professor at Chabot College and retired five years ago. They have two children, Demas III, 36, a banker in Texas, and Deanna, 34, a schoolteacher, also in Texas. They have three grandsons.

**JAMES LOGAN STUDENTS
ON THE JOB**

By Myrla Raymundo



**Tarminder Singh, Haotian Wang,
Niraj Astanah, and Bhargov
Bhrambhatt**

The above Logan High School students had been working at the Museum earning community work credits. They are all 16 years old and in the 10th grade.



Tarminder, born in Fremont, copies and files historical records and documents.



Haotian files all the materials on the TriCity and Union City elections.



Bhargov scans pictures for publishing in the Museum Newsletter and for display in the Museum. Bhargov was born in Fremont and lives in Union City.



Niraj, born in Redwood City, pastes newspaper clippings about Union City on bond papers and files them in binders.

ALBERT (AL) CEASE
Car Racer

By Myrla Raymundo



Albert (Al) Cease visited the Museum and gave his stories to this Editor.

“Around 1935, my dad John Cease, leased a ranch from Mr. Ezra Decoto. The ranch was on Alvarado-Niles Road, from Dry Creek to Decoto Road and Alvarado Niles Road to the railroad tracks. He had the ranch from about 1935 to about 1942. He went to work for Pacific States Steel and retired from there. His buddies from the mill were always at our home in Decoto. His hobby was cars (he loved to work on them) and fishing. He loved fishing in the Delta as well as deep-sea. He was occasionally the bartender at Foletti’s Corner. Foletti’s Corner consisted of a bar, gas station and garage.”

“This is the way racing started in Union City in the 1950’s and 1960’s.

John Cease built his first car in 1957. He himself did not drive, but had Jerry Shannon drive the #99 car for him. In 1958, Ed Trammel built a racecar in partnership with John Cease. In 1960 Ed quit racing and gave the car to Al Cease.

In 1959 or 1960, the Prevette brothers (Gil and Gene) built their car. We all did our share of winning and losing races.”

Al was born in Hayward in 1936. The family moved to Decoto in 1949 when he was 13 years old. He attended Barnard White, and went to Washington Union High School in 1954.

He joined the Air Force in 1955, got out of the service in 1959 and lived in Decoto. He got married in 1963 and has a son David. He moved to Fremont in 1963 and has lived there ever since.

He worked for the United Car Company in Hayward and retired ten years ago.

His mom is Joyce Cease, 85 years old, still living in the same house in Decoto. She was a secretary at Alvarado Elementary School. His grandfather was Royal Atherton from Wisconsin.

Al Cease is an avid car racer. He gave the Museum a whole binder of his memorabilia consisting of pictures of his family, the ranch, and his car racing activities.

If anyone wants to browse through the Al Cease memorabilia, they are in a white binder filed in the Museum.

We thank you, Al Cease, for helping in telling the stories of Union City.

EARLY ENTREPRENEURS

By Myrla Raymundo

John C. Whipple - Whipple was lured to California in search of gold in the spring of 1854. He invested in acres and acres of land in Alameda County. He bought 200 acres near the Decoto Brothers Ranch on what is now Whipple Road. He added 300 acres more to his domain in the hills east of the Hayward-Niles Road. He planted fruit trees and used the land for cattle and raising of grains and vegetables.

John Quigley - One of the pioneer industries in Union City was the salt industry. As early as 1850, in New Haven, (later named Alvarado) salt deposits were gathered and, for a long time the entire County of Alameda depended on the supply. In 1862, John Quigley, a pioneer salt-maker of Alameda County, commenced operations as Quigley Salt Works in Alvarado. The process, originally employed and substantially in use now, consists of admitting, with the rising tide, the salt water up a level surface of the ground, which had been dyked into vats. These vats are filled to the required depth. The connection between them and the outside water is severed, and the water in the vats is allowed to evaporate until the chloride of sodium (salt) can be gathered up.

The Soares Family - Agriculture thrived in the early times. There were farmlands throughout Alvarado and Decoto. The early settlers started the farming industries. It was followed by the next generation. The Soares family had a big farm that produced fruits and vegetables.

Other Industries

In Decoto there was a small custom-built roof-tile company on Mission Boulevard owned by two men who called the firm M & S Tile. One of the owners, George Smith, was a founding member of the Niles Rotary Club, as were Chuck Kraft and George Mays. The Saltz Brothers Warehouse handled from 4,000 sacks of grain and 1000 bales of hay per season at their Decoto warehouse

The Cheng family - The Cheng family farmed acres and acres of land in Union City. The Wah Sing Cheng Farm was located at the site where the Crown Plaza at Alvarado-Niles Road is located now. Wah Sing Cheng emigrated with his grandfather from Canton, China, in 1919. His wife, Gum Hoo Cheng, arrived four years later as a picture-bride. They started farming and grew sugar beets, tomatoes, cucumber, bok choy, cabbages, cauliflower and corn.

Joseph P. Pearce - The Marlo Cannery in Decoto had been founded in 1930 as Hooden Food. In 1946 the name was changed to the Pierce Cannery under the management of a former Hayward cannery executive, Jos Pearce. The Jos Pearce Canning Company brought prosperity to Alameda County. There were 350 men and women working for Jos Pearce. Peaches came from Modesto and Merced and tomatoes from Alvarado, Decoto, Hayward, Fremont, Centerville, Niles and Warm Springs. The canning factory stopped operation in 1945.

UNION CITY TODAY

By Myrla Raymundo



Union City, California has a very unique place in American history. It served as the passageway for our ancestors who shaped the historical districts of Alvarado and Decoto. Our ancestors traveled far beginning in the 1800s as they passed through relatively vast and empty lands. It was the route for most of them heading to California for a new start and new land, with high hopes of becoming rich. Native American Indians were the early people of the land. Pioneers came and taught them Christianity and trades.

As settlers began to arrive they found the land hard but very rich. With crude tools and great human effort they made it productive. The area developed into rich agricultural land. Union City has developed a unique heritage and has produced a variety of special sons and daughters

Developments occurring in the 60s through the 80's and 90's brought swift changes to the City. As you travel on Highway 880 on your way to San Jose, you can't miss the bustling Union Landing. It is a hub of recreational and restaurant activities in Union City, which now boasts more than 67,000

inhabitants. You would be amazed at the panoramic views of the surroundings that stretch to the horizon, from beautiful hills to salt marshes and meandering creeks surrounding the city.

You will discover a collection of upscale homes with one and two-story designs. While you're there you look at your surroundings. There are commercial and office buildings complete with public art pleasing to the eye and large parking lots. The roads have thematic signage and beautiful streetscape, bicycle and pedestrian trails, good lighting and landscaping. Utility lines are now underground.

The completion of BART, which is the main means of transportation to the City, brought an end to the rails, but made life very easy for the residents. AC Transit and the Union City Transit allows residents to go places without their cars. Transportation in and to the City has improved immensely.

The City also boasts of community-based organizations that provide health, education and social services. The City has a big library, a historical museum, great schools, numerous fire stations, great police department, City Hall, a big medical center and an upscale Senior Center. Places of worship are the St. Anne Church, Our Lady of the Rosary Church, the Union City Apostolic Church and many others.

The city has a number of distinctive districts – Station District, Central Technology Center, Union Landing, International Market Place, Decoto and Old Alvarado – that serve as important residential, shopping and employment centers.

PRESENTATION OF HISTORY



3rd graders from Pioneer Elementary School were given a presentation of Union City history on May 23, 2008 by Myrla Raymundo.

**CHANNEL 5
"EYE ON THE BAY"**



Myrla Raymundo with Reuben Maness, Producer of Eye On The Bay, KPIX-CBS TV Channel 5

The "historic plane crashes" episode of Eye On The Bay, featuring the story about the 1951 Union City crash in the Decoto hills was aired last May 12, 2008 on Channel 5.

Former Fire Chief Elvin (Al) Rose was featured as the lone witness at the scene.

If you want to see the episode, please visit the Museum.

It is another part of the history of Union City.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



Teresita "Tessie" Gatan

As I complete my first year as President of the Union City Historical Museum, I like to report that we had a very good year.

We presently have a total of 101 members.

We continue to educate the community on the history of Union City.

We continuously receive artifacts from Union City residents.

We continue clipping and filing newspaper articles about Union City.

We publish the Museum Newsletters on a bi-monthly basis.

I would like to thank all the officers, members and volunteers of the Union City Historical Museum and the community for their valuable contributions to the Museum.

TESSIE GATAN

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

An election of officers for next fiscal year (FY08-09) was held on June 2, 2008 at the General Membership meeting. Dom Filardo chaired the Nomination Committee with Ray Raymundo as a member.

Below is the result of the election as reported by Chairperson Dom Filardo:

Officers - July 1, 2008-June 30, 2009

- Teresita Gatan, President
- Joey Golaw, Jr.-Vice-President
- Marina Bamont-Secretary
- Hugh McNamara, Treasurer

Directors – July 1, 2008-June 30, 2010

- Rodrigo Galindo
- Miles Price
- Rorie Rabuy
- Myrla Raymundo
- Al Rose

The following directors are still serving up to June 30, 2009:

Directors- July 1, 2007- June 30, 2009

- Allen Cecil
- Georgia Megue dela Cruz
- Dom Filardo
- Dana Hernandez
- Ray Raymundo
- Angel Villorente

FOUNDER'S NOTES



It is again with pleasure that I thank the people who were born and raised in Union City for taking the time to come and visit the Union City Historical Museum and giving their stories to this Founder and Editor.

Some of them are already out of this area and live in far-away places such as Utah, Oregon, Texas and Southern California.

Some of them hear about the Museum and they come and visit and bring their stories and old photographs to us.

They bring their recollections of the place and donate artifacts, pictures and historical records. To name some with their stories on this issue are Demas Lamas from Texas and Albert Cease from Fremont,

As we all know, the Union City Historical Museum is dedicated to recording and preserving the history of Union City. We will continue with that objective.

The community helps by donating artifacts, old newspapers that contain the history of our city, and by telling us their stories.

Please continue to donate artifacts to the Museum, continue to tell your stories to us, continue to help us preserve our historical buildings and homes, and continue to preserve our culture and heritage.

With all of you great and beautiful people, we will all together weave the stories of Union City.

I am also proud to say that the Union City Historical Museum was featured on Channel 5 and viewed by people all over the Bay Area. It was featured in the “historic plane crashes” episode of Eye On The Bay with our former Fire Chief and one of the Museum Directors Elvin (Al) Rose, who was interviewed as the lone witness at the scene.

MYRLA RAYMUNDO



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Myrla Raymundo, MBA,
Founder/CEO**

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Rodrigo Galindo
 Miles Price
 Rorie Rabuy
 Myrla Raymundo
 Al Rose

MUSEUM LIFETIME MEMBERS

Phil & Leila Verzola
 John & Cathy Tester
 Eva Kamakea
 Georgia Megue & Mike dela Cruz
 Ligfinio (Ray) & Myrla Raymundo
 Gina Lewis
 Reiner & Sheryl Glausch
 Al & Marsha Badella
 Barbara Scheifler
 William & Dorothy Hubbard
 Bob & Leslie Swartz
 Steve Miller & Diane LaMountaine
 Fernando & Helen Cabiles
 Allen & Simona Cecil
 Josephine Pando
 Frank, Jr. & Elvamae Borghi
 Angelo dela Cruz
 Marcos. Jr. & Tessie Gatan
 Joey and Vilma Golaw
 James Celcer

EDITORIAL BOARD

FY 2007-2008

Myrla Raymundo, Editor

Jo Ann Lew
 Miles Price
 Ligfinio (Ray) Raymundo
 (Layout Artist/Production)