THE PINE RIDGE ASSOCIATION • HENRY W. COE STATE PARK •

The Ponderosa

The Pine Ridge Association Newsletter
Henry W. Coe State Park

April 1994

From under My Brim

by Barry Breckling

Hike Coe

I always wanted to do the Big Loop. The Big Loop, or Blue Ridge Loop, is a little over 14 miles in length. That doesn't sound too bad, but when you add almost 4,000 feet of elevation gain it makes it a little more serious. The Short Cut must also be considered. This is 1,500 feet of elevation gain in just over a mile! Brutal is one word that comes to mind when thinking about the Short Cut. Back when I was in good enough shape to do it, I always had an excuse: next spring would be a good time, I need to wax the car, it looks like rain . . . .

Rain, that reminds me about the great things we have on rain for the park. Everett Allen has put together and maintained the wonderful rain binder. He took the data we have collected since 1975, and he displays individual rain amounts by day, year-to-date amounts for each year, monthly and yearly averages, and more. My favorite part is the "Will It Rain Today" page. This gives the probability of rain on any single day. Say you were going to take a hike on February 6. Everett's chart shows that there is a 28 percent chance of rain. Not too bad, a better than ⅔ chance that it will be nice.

Gary Keller has entered the same basic data into his computer but has gone one step further. He obtained rain records from a rain gauge used since the mid-1950s on the Coit property, Santa Cruz rain information going back to the turn of the century, and San Francisco data going back to 1850. He extrapolated these additional data to show what our rain at Coe was probably like going all the way back to 1850. I'm glad I wasn't around in the winter of 1861–1862 when we probably had over 60 inches. A copy of Gary's chart is in Everett's rain binder, which resides near the relief map at the visitor center.

I hinted to volunteers that it might be fun to have a rain hike this winter (according to Everett's binder, January 6 or February 14 would have been the best bets), but no one took me up on the idea. I remember several years ago getting excited about the rain hike Lee Sims was giving. The publicity said something like, "Sun will cancel." Lee was well studied on H_2O: Coe's yearly average is 25 inches, the earth's surface is ⅔ water, only 3 percent of the earth's water is fresh and ¾ of that is locked up in the ice caps, the human body is 65 percent water, and much more. The day of the hike came and what do you know, it was raining.

Inside this issue . . .

Life in the 1850s in what is now Coe Park

A stroll through a graveyard in Morgan Hill

An opportunity to see the eastern part of the park

Calendar of upcoming events

. . . and more!

The only problem was that no one showed up for the hike. Lee went by himself and had a great hike. The highlight of the day came when he saw a pygmy owl with a mouse in its tiny talons only a few feet away.

Well, enough rambling. I always envisioned doing the Big Loop on a beautiful spring day, or maybe it would be a warm and windy fall day, or maybe a crisp winter day with the Sierra Nevadas spread out from north to south. On the morning of February 6, a dozen volunteers sat in the visitor center looking out as rain lightly fell. Should we do the Big Loop hike as planned despite the fact that more rain was predicted for the rest of the day? Should we just cancel the hike? Suddenly, out of my mouth came the words, "Let's go for it!" They weren't my words. I'm still not sure where they came from, but they seemed to be the deciding factor. We spent the next nine hours trudging up and down the ridges. For a full description of the hike, you will have to get hold of one of the volunteers' next *Pine Cone* newsletter. Roberta Wright is putting together an article about the hike. You might also talk Don Mason into showing you his entertaining video of the hike. My point is that we had a great day despite a wind chill factor of 14°, rain all day except for a short half hour late in the afternoon, and finishing cold, wet, and exhausted. We did see the first shooting star for the year, a few Indian warriors, and some johnny-jump-ups. We saw how beautiful rocks and moss are when they are wet. We sang songs, told jokes, and reminded the other person how stupid they were for being out in the rain. Most importantly there were strong feelings of camaraderie and accomplishment. We returned to headquarters and shared a bottle of champagne. We will remember it as a good day.

You miss so much
you learn no things
there is no gain
when you don't go

Rain or shine
or sun or snow
or heat or hail
hike coe.

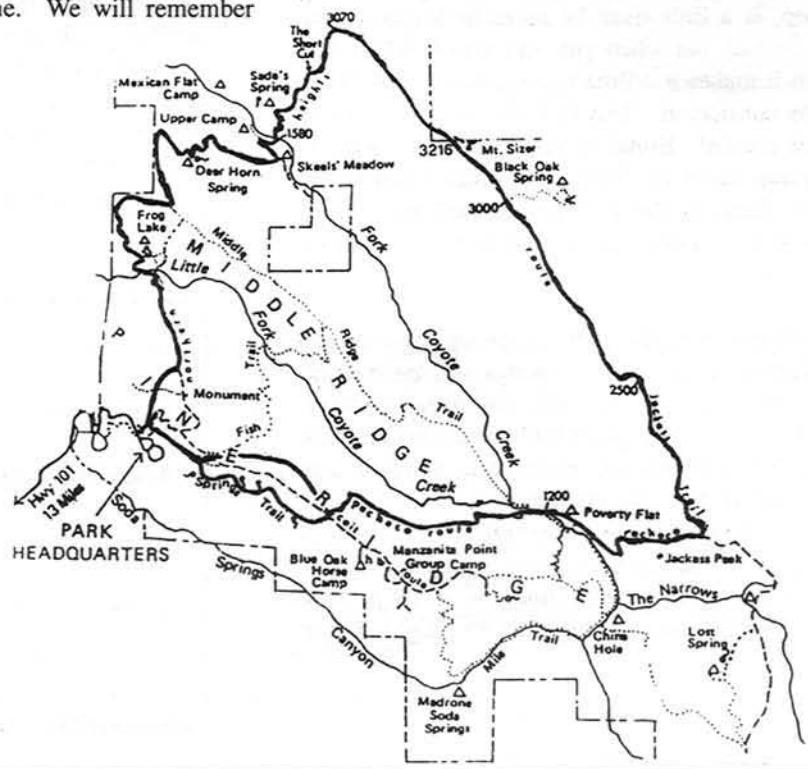
A Shared Vision across Cultures

submitted by Jim Tuomey

The scenes of Coe can evoke a deep response in the viewer. How often these moments in nature are captured by the simple intensity of a *haiku* written hundreds of years ago by a poet touched by the beauty of his world:

In the cold sky of dawn
Only a single pine-tree
On the peak.

Gyodai



La Vereda del Monte

by Teddy Goodrich

Clouds of dust drift into a darkening sky, and the silence is rent by the frenzied neighing of restless, milling horses and the cursing of a dozen men. Slowly the weary vaqueros thread the nervous, sweating band of mustangs into a brush corral where they will be held for the night. The vaqueros' own mounts are relieved of saddle and bridle, hobbled, and turned loose to graze.

A fire is lit, and a simple meal is quickly eaten. One of the men produces a bota of wine and passes it among his comrades. The first stars appear, and the smell of tobacco smoke mingles with the smell of sweat and leather as they quietly discuss the day's events. In the afternoon, a grizzly was sighted along the trail, and they are concerned for their safety as well as that of the horses.

Soon their boots and heavy, roweled spurs and the machete that each man carries are laid aside. Bedrolls are placed on the ground. Their high pommeled saddles will serve as pillows. They turn into their blankets, save for one lone lookout who begins his silent vigil by the flickering campfire.

Tonight they camped in a meadow where the spring known as Aguaje Mesteño provides a reliable source of water for the horses.

The year is 1852. This is the third year they have driven horses along La Vereda del Monte, or as the Anglos call it, the Devil's High Road. The trail begins south of Mt. Diablo and traces the crest of the Diablo Range. It is part of La Vereda Caballo, which runs 800 miles to the south to end in Mexico.

Since the early 1800s, wild horses have run free in the San Joaquin Valley. These horses are mustangs, small, wiry descendants of Arab stock: pinto, canelo, and palomino brought by the Spaniards to California. Some were abandoned by soldiers or vaqueros; others were stolen by the Indians in raids on missions and ranchos.

Taking these wild horses is not considered stealing. The ranchers are glad to be rid of them, for they consume feed needed for their cattle. The horses have been for the most part unwanted until the Mexicans discovered a handsome profit can be made by driving them south of the border into Mexico.

Each band consists of 300–350 horses. No drives are made during the summer months when the heat is unbearable for both man and beast. The drives, which occur at monthly intervals, begin after Mexican Independence Day, September 16, and end by the first of May. The vaqueros average 30 miles a day and usually hold their animals for 24 hours at their overnight camps. Along the way, more horses are collected, having been driven up the eastern drainages of the Orestimba, Garzas, and Mustang Creeks.

The camps are well established. The horses are driven from the San Antonio Valley to Valle Atravesado or Estación Atravesado (a valley that lies crosswise), the present site of Mississippi Lake in Coe Park. Valle Hondo (now known as Pacheco Camp) is an alternate overnight stop. Other recognized camps are Estación Paraiso (Paradise Flat) and Mustang Flat. The brush enclosures that are located in each of these areas are made of juniper branches arranged in such a manner that escape is impossible.

The vaqueros' occupation is not for the tenderhearted. Drags, heavy poles four or five feet long, are tied to the off foot of each horse, and six or more horses are tied together by their necks. As the horses tire and quiet down, the restraints are removed. Those horses that are unfit or unmanageable are shot or have their throats cut.

The man responsible for this enterprise is wanted by the law for robberies and murders committed throughout California—the infamous Joaquin Murietta. So many of his exploits are based on legend that a valid description of the man has forever been obscured.

A brief image of Murietta is captured in the journal of Ygnacio Villegas, whose father kept a store at San Felipe near Pacheco Pass in the 1840s and 1850s. "For several years past a Mexican came to the ranch of Señor Pacheco at San Felipe at different intervals, sometimes there would be a large band and oftentimes he would come alone. He always had the finest and fleetest of horses, beautiful silver-mounted saddles and trappings. I had often conversed with him, and he was a quiet, affable fellow, well liked by everybody. I always knew that there was something mysterious about him. At the time of my awakening, this Mexican had hardly been gone five hours when a posse came up and asked if we had seen Joaquin Murietta or any of his band. Then it dawned on me who the quiet Mexican was."

An adobe structure reputed to be one of Murietta's hideouts still stands on a ranch near Coe Park. It consists of a single room, barely ten by fifteen feet. Though tiny in dimensions, it is meticulously constructed. A keystone caps the single door and window, both of which face east. A small fireplace is located in the south wall. The interior is lined with vertical poles, several of which are missing. Local

legend claims that Murietta hid his gold in the wall and removed the poles when he returned to retrieve it.

A.D. Davenport was a miner from Gustine who spent many years prospecting in and near the park. According to his grandson, Mr. Davenport found a shelter on the slopes of Burra Burra Peak that was reputed to be a hideout, or perhaps a lookout, used by Murietta's men. Somewhere within the present park boundaries he also located a spring that had a coffin for a catch basin, another Murietta landmark.

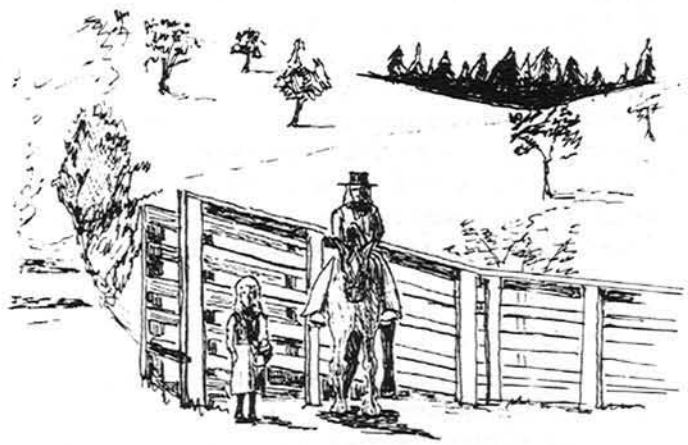
Depending on whose account you choose to believe, Murietta may or may not have met his end in a battle with Harry Love's posse near Cantua Creek in 1853. But this event is still more than a year away, and tonight the slumber of his weary band is undisturbed, save for the gentle hooting of an owl perched in a gray pine and the discordant yapping of coyote pups at the full moon riding high in the blackened sky.

The following references are recommended for those who would like to know more about the life and times of Joaquin Murietta.

Joaquin Murietta and His Wild Horse Gangs by Frank Latta

Boyhood Days, Ygnacio Villegas' Reminiscences of California in the 1850s edited by Dr. Albert Shumate

Various articles about wild horses and vaqueros by Arnold Rojas published in *The Californians,* a magazine of California history



Visiting Mt. Hope Cemetery—Plus Digressions

by Bonnie Larsen

With thanks to Catherine Fouts, Ruth Johnson, Karen Pranger, Gordon Siebert, Winnifred Verbica, and Jean Wright

The first time I went to Mt. Hope Cemetery in Morgan Hill was in 1978 or '79. I liked to walk a couple of miles in a way that I ended up back home. Mt. Hope Cemetery was at the far edge of my range. Walking there was for days when I had some time. Having a preschool child at home meant that I usually didn't have time, so I didn't go there very often.

A couple years later my daughter went to school, and I met a friend who walked Max, a German pointer. By then my family had acquired Rufus, a black Labrador retriever. We walked Max and Rufus up El Toro Mountain to the city water tank and back. This was endlessly interesting, as I could watch the plants through the seasons and see wildlife within blocks of home. I did not think about walking to Mt. Hope Cemetery.

Years passed and my daughter took piano lessons from a lady living in the Spring Hill tract. I was working some days, so it was advantageous for me to use the piano lesson time to walk Rufus and get exercise myself. I would load my daughter and Rufus into the Volkswagen truck, park at the piano lesson, and walk. Thus I returned to Mt. Hope Cemetery. On my first piano lesson walk I determined to walk around the periphery of the cemetery. I turned the corner on the east end and there it was:

SADA SUTCLIFFE COE ROBINSON
BORN DECEMBER 7, 1910
DIED NOVEMBER 2, 1979
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

Over the ridge to the great divide,
Life is such a little while.

I was surprised, and wondered why I hadn't noticed it before, but then it came to me—I hadn't been a volunteer when I'd walked in the cemetery before and hadn't known about Sada and how she had given the land for the park. It seemed very odd, and it occurred to me that it had been years since I'd been in the cemetery.

Week by week I strolled through, looking for familiar names, items of interest. I took my mother when she was visiting. Why not? She read Sada's tombstone and concluded that Sada had been married twice, first to Mr. Coe, then to

Mr. Robinson. I explained that Sutcliffe was Sada's mother's maiden name. She had married only Mr. Robinson, and divorced him, too. So it goes.

Right down the row, neighbors in death as well as in life, are the

JACKSON SISTERS

GLADYS J. JACKSON	RUTH G. LOWE
NOV. 11, 1896	March 4, 1893
DEC. 21, 1984	DEC. 24, 1986

"Ah," said my mother, "One never married." I had to explain that neither married, that the Jackson sisters were not related to one another. Ruth Lowe was an orphan taken into the family by Gladys Jackson's grandmother. The Jackson Sisters invented their sisterhood and stayed together all their lives. And afterwards too. Their ranch on Dunne Avenue is in the process of becoming the Jackson Ranch Interpretive Area in Anderson Lake County Park.

So far, showing Mother around the cemetery had led to a lot of explanation, so I showed her one of the best known and totally self-explanatory graves, which is that of

ISOLA V. KENNEDY
SEPT 10, 1909

SACRIFICED HER LIFE BATTLING
A LION TO SAVE SOME SMALL BOYS

The attack occurred on a picnic near where Anderson Dam is today. Though Isola and the injured boy lived through the attack, they later died miserable deaths, unpleasantly detailed in the local newspaper. The lion was rabid, and there was no cure for rabies in 1909. The monument on Isola's grave was put there by the U.S. Loyal Temperance Legionnaires, of which Isola had been a member.

Another grave of interest to park history buffs is that of

LLOYD WESLEY SKEELS
CALIFORNIA
CSP & USNR
WORLD WAR I & II

This is the Skeels of Skeels' meadow in the park. He homesteaded the land mainly so that he would have a place to go hunting, which he did. He took along his friends and relatives, too. Hunting was the thing to do at the time, Middle Ridge the place to do it. Doubt has been expressed as to whether Lloyd Skeels knew where the actual boundaries of his property were. Undoubtedly, it didn't matter, since Skeels and Coe were good friends.

Next to Lloyd's grave is that of his wife, Myrle Pinard Skeels (1900–1989). Myrle did not join the hunting parties but was familiar with the area. She had enjoyed hiking there, particularly on the property that her cousins, the Thomases, later sold to the park. Myrle was notorious for her poor sense of direction. She could think she was on her way home and be headed for Yosemite.

Together and individually the Skeels had varied and interesting careers. When they were first married, they could only find work with an uncle collecting honey from bees. Later they purchased the old Ford garage in Morgan Hill. It was located on Monterey between Main and First, about where the Wells Fargo Bank parking lot is today.

Lloyd bought and drove trucks in the early 1920s. Then he graduated to buying trucks and having other people drive them. Myrle's life was kept miserable doing the book work for this enterprise. Causing a great deal of annoyance was Franklin D. Roosevelt, who kept promoting more and more regulations for the trucking industry.

Still business apparently was good as the Skeels ended up owning property from Monterey Highway back to the railroad tracks and north to Central Avenue (which runs in front of Britton School). Unfortunately everything was lost in the crash of '29, at which time Mr. Skeels went into police work, ultimately becoming Chief of Police in Morgan Hill.

Failing to be elected sheriff in 1944, Lloyd Skeels rejoined the military. He had been a little too young for WWI and was now a little too old for WWII. He spent time with the Shore Patrol in Vallejo. When Lloyd joined the military, Myrle bought the Orange Freeze in Morgan Hill and ran that business for many years.

The Skeels were the parents of three daughters. One is Jean Wright who for several years came to the park as a volunteer and enjoyed portraying members of the Coe family for park programs. Another is Rae Parker, who was my daughter's first-grade teacher. Bobby Ryan, the third daughter, is a Morgan Hill resident.

In the upper lawn part of the cemetery, a grave with a relationship to the park is that of Eric David May. Eric, age 26, died of a fall on July 4, 1988, while climbing Mt. Shasta. Because he had enjoyed the park, family and friends placed a memorial bench on Pine Ridge west of the monument.

One thing I kept looking for in the cemetery was the oldest grave. I finally decided on that of

LAURA L. McCRACKEN
DIED
JULY 23, 1894
AGED 16 YRS.

Next oldest was that of

SARAH A. HOLMES
BORN
FEB. 12, 1841
DIED
MARCH 2, 1895

Asleep in Jesus

I was pleased with finding the oldest graves. Then I decided to write this article. Reading a file on the cemetery at the Morgan Hill library, I discovered that the cemetery had been founded in 1898. There seemed to be a discrepancy. At the Morgan Hill library, the librarian and I discussed this. What were the possibilities? The property was someone's family plot before the cemetery was there? They buried Miss McCracken and Mrs. Holmes elsewhere when they died and later moved them to Mt. Hope? There were errors about some of the dates? Naturally I had to find out.

So on to a little cemetery history. In 1896 Morgan Hill had a population of 250, a post office and two churches, but no cemetery. Attempts to acquire land for a cemetery were unsuccessful until June 1898 when Mr. S. S. Story took charge and raised enough money to buy property. He did this by convincing fellow citizens to donate money.

According to an article in *The Times* in 1926, fewer than 25 citizens contributed $25 each. This resulted in the purchase of ten acres that were part of the Dunne Ranch. (Notice that the ten acres cost $600 or less!)

Contributors and those buying plots became members of the cemetery association, which was responsible for upkeep of the cemetery. Mr. S. S. Story was association president. On his board of trustees was A. B. Holmes. Hmmm. Was A. B. Holmes related to Sarah who apparently was buried in the cemetery before it existed?

Curiosity led to perusing copies of *The Morgan Hill Sun* after the death dates of Mrs. Holmes and Miss McCracken. The paper was uninformative about the resting place of Mrs. Holmes, who was indeed the wife of A. B. Holmes, but offered the information that Miss McCracken was buried in Gilroy. Aha!

The newspaper also offered the information that Miss McCracken died of quick consumption and that "Miss McCracken has been confined to the house for about 18 weeks, during which time she patiently suffered and awaited the time to be called to the 'beautiful beyond' where all is peace and happiness." Miss McCracken was survived by her mother and her brother, Orace. Following her obituary is a somewhat lengthy poem by her neighbor at Mt. Hope, Mrs. Holmes, beginning

They placed white flowers in her pallid hand,
The flowers she loved so well,
But they know she looks on fairer flowers,
Where she has gone to dwell.

Several stanzas follow. In case anyone missed the poem when Laura McCracken died, it was published again at the end of Mrs. Holmes' obituary.

There is a big difference between obituaries of the 1890s and those of the 1990s. Zipping through *The Sun* on microfiche, I came upon the October 27, 1898, edition, which tells us that "the remains of Mrs. S. S. Story and those of Mrs. A. B. Holmes were removed to the new cemetery near Morgan Hill last week." Aha again! And right uphill from Mrs. Holmes is a marker that says STORY without any other names or dates. (It could be said that Mr. Story and Mr. Holmes left no stone unturned in their efforts to get the new cemetery started, but perhaps that would be in bad taste, so it won't be said here.)

Mr. Holmes apparently was ending one chapter in his life and beginning another as a week later *The Sun* tells us, "Mrs. A. B. Holmes arrived last Monday from Green Bay, Wisconsin, and will be cordially welcomed in Morgan Hill."

Whatever the personal plans of the cemetery founders, *The Morgan Hill Sun* declared, "We are glad to state that Morgan Hill has got a cemetery of its own and will not be compelled to go to San Jose or Gilroy to bury the dead."

Sadly, the McCrackens make the news again. The February 9, 1899, issue of *The Sun* tells us that Orace J. McCracken died in Manila, participating in the Spanish American War. *The Sun* offers the information that Mrs. McCracken, upon Orace's enlistment, remarked that she would "never look on his face alive again." It also reported that Mrs. McCracken planned to leave Morgan Hill and join family members in Tennessee.

In 1926, according to *The Morgan Hill Times*, a committee of five was appointed "to interview the public and arouse interest enough to raise money to beautify the grounds and if necessary hire a permanent caretaker."

Cemetery maintenance seemed to be an ongoing problem. In 1935 Mayor John Telfer pointed out that, "Every person owning a lot in the cemetery is a member of the association and presumably should have an interest in maintaining the cemetery." Nevertheless, meetings of the Association were poorly attended and cemetery maintenance sporadic or done by lot owners. A subsequent newspaper article points out that the sole source of income was through the sale of lots, and that when the sale of lots lagged there was no money for upkeep.

With the passage of time, managing the cemetery became too complex for the Association, and in 1951 the cemetery was deeded to the City of Morgan Hill. Maintenance problems persisted. In 1952, an article entitled "Improvement of Mt. Hope Cemetery Now Underway" appears in the local newspaper.

Mr. and Mrs. Edwin P. Johnson had purchased the local funeral home in 1935. By the time of the 1952 article, Mr. Johnson was a member of the city council. He had been the last chairman of the Mt. Hope Cemetery Association before it was dissolved.

On a tour of the grounds, Mr. Johnson outlined improvement plans for the benefit of the city council, the Morgan Hill Flower Lovers Club, and representatives of the Morgan Hill Grange. Road work was being done by the city. The Flower Lovers had started planting 'Paul Scarlet' roses along the front fence and was asking for a donation of two dozen more roses to finish the job. Chinese elm trees were recommended to enhance the border of the grounds. Purchase of proper flower containers was contemplated so that "jars and bottles of various descriptions will not be left on graves throughout the cemetery." A plot reserved for servicemen was to get special attention. It can be supposed that most of this was done, for the elm trees are there. Six roses survive, irregularly spaced along the cemetery wall. There is a monument in the servicemen's plot put there by the Veterans of Foreign Wars of Morgan Hill.

By 1978 the city wanted to get out of the cemetery maintenance business and offered Johnson Funeral Home a lease to operate the cemetery.

The funeral home accepted the contract and maintains the cemetery with 20 percent of annual plot sales and 5 percent of gross revenues invested in a perpetual care fund that was created around the time the city took over the cemetery. Interestingly, the care fund supports the part of the cemetery with the lawn. The rest, being there before the initial care fund, mostly gets the weeds kept down.

On November 20, 1992, *The Morgan Hill Times* reported that, at the present rate of use, Mt. Hope can accommodate those dying to get in for only four more years. City staff determined that at current prices another 10 acres would cost $400,000 and could not realistically be paid for by cemetery fees.

More recently, the city has decided to sell the cemetery. Apparently a private owner may by law do things that the city may not, such as build a mausoleum. Unless a solution is found, Morgan Hill residents will have to go out of town to bury their dead, and the city will be in about the same predicament it was in before S. S. Story successfully raised funds to found the cemetery.

Mt. Hope has come full circle. Once new and empty, it is now close to 100 years old and almost full. Waiting to be 100, Mt. Hope Cemetery occupies its hillside on the south side of Spring Avenue. From the upper road, on a clear day, there is a fine view of Pine Ridge, Mt. Hamilton, Nob Hill in Morgan Hill, and El Toro (the peak west of town).

When fine weather comes, the roses bloom. In fall they make enormous spiny hips. Creeping grasses obscure the names on the servicemen's flat markers. Mr. Johnson's effort to have "proper flower containers" has been long abandoned. "Jars and bottles of various descriptions" abound, as do clay pots, artificial flowers, toys, and home-made decorations of all kinds.

From Sada's grave, you can look across the valley at Pine Ridge, which she gave to the people, and at the mountains where she spent most of her life. Questions come to mind. Did she select the site herself? No, her brother, Henry S. Coe, did that for her. Did she write the lines on the stone? People who should know, think so, but can't exactly place them. Would Sada be unhappy that a pepper tree is growing up and obscuring the view of Pine Ridge?

One day as I was walking by, I decided that it didn't matter about the pepper tree, because come Judgment Day, Sada and the Jackson Sisters and all the rest will rise up out of their graves. They'll be able to rise up above the pepper tree, and there, along with the Greater Glory of God, they will see Pine Ridge. A friend, who has researched the possibilities of Judgment Day, informs me that, with the Greater Glory of God being there, no one will notice Pine Ridge, but I'm not so sure.

And since you can see Pine Ridge from Mt. Hope cemetery, can you see Mt. Hope Cemetery from Pine Ridge? Yes. The best place for a view is up high, west of the monument, southwest of Eric's bench. With your eyes you can follow Dunne Avenue across Monterey. Spring Avenue parallels

Dunne, and if you look carefully you can spot Mt. Hope south and west of the shopping center at the corner of Dunne and Monterey. The easiest thing to see is the road at the back where the Monterey pines are. You can see that there are roads with no houses there.

The piano lessons have been over for some time now. There is a new NO DOGS sign at the cemetery entrance, but it doesn't bother us because Rufus is too old and creaky to walk there anymore. Still, if you're up on Pine Ridge and you have really good binoculars, you may be able to see, if only in your mind, two specks moving west on Spring Avenue. That will be Rufus and me, moving away from—yet toward—Mt. Hope Cemetery or some other similar place.

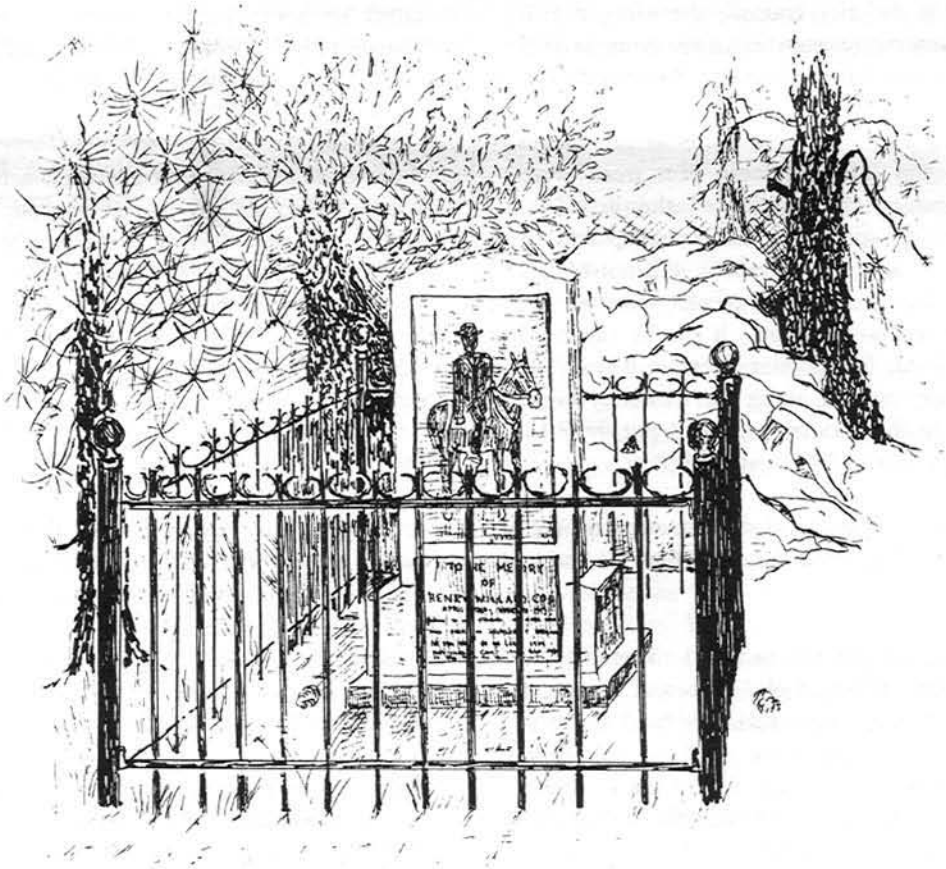
Below is the monument on Pine Ridge placed by Sada Coe in memory of her father, who is buried in San Jose

Mother's Day Breakfast

by Lee Sims

Tickets for the tenth annual Mother's Day Breakfast at Coe Park go on sale at the park headquarters on *Friday, April 15.* Tickets may be ordered by mail or purchased in person; no telephone orders will be accepted. If you order by mail, please include a self-addressed stamped envelope, or else your tickets will be placed on will-call. Also, of course, please include a check for the proper amount. Tickets are $8.25 for adults and $5.00 for children (under 12) and seniors (over 62). This is a very popular event. Tickets sell out quickly, so order yours now!

NOTE: The breakfast location has been moved to the old Ridgeview environmental camp. This site is much closer to the headquarters than Manzanita Point. We encourage everyone to walk to the breakfast. The distance is about 1¼ miles and will take 30–45 minutes from the parking lot. There will be limited transportation available from headquarters for those who cannot walk to the breakfast. Call park headquarters if you have any questions (408/779-2728).



The 1994 Orestimba Experience

by Libby Vincent

The Orestimba weekend in April 1993 was such a success that the Department of Parks and Recreation has decided to open the east side of the park again to convenient public access. This spring, on Saturday and Sunday, April 23 and 24, the public will be able to drive from Bell Station on Highway 152 into the Orestimba Corral area for a special weekend called the Orestimba Experience.

Last year's open weekend featured a fantastic display of wildflowers, mild and sunny weather, and 1,400 visitors. We're hoping for more of the same at this year's Orestimba weekend. There will be interpretive activities at the Orestimba Corral, and visitors will be able to hike and ride mountain bikes or horses on roads and trails leading out from the corral either on their own or with a Coe Park volunteer.

Visitors will be able to car-camp overnight on Saturday night at the corral or backpack into the Orestimba Wilderness. This is a wonderful opportunity for PRA members and the public to explore the remote and beautiful east side of Coe Park—to go fishing at Mississippi Lake; contemplate the infinite beside Jackrabbit Lake, Mustang Pond, or Kingbird Pond; walk, ride, or bike up County Line Road to Mustang Peak; perhaps glimpse the Rooster Comb.

Once again, a barbecue lunch will be available on Saturday between noon and 3:00 p.m. It will cost $5 for barbecue sausage and $3 for hot dogs (*not $7 as indicated on the flier, because of a change in the menu*); the price also includes salad, beans, and all the trimmings. Lemonade will be available free of charge, courtesy of the Pine Ridge Association; cold sodas will be available all day on both days for 50¢ each.

The entrance at Bell Station will be open Saturday and Sunday between 8:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. for incoming traffic and closed after the last traffic leaves the Orestimba Corral by 4:00 p.m. each day. A $5 per car entrance fee will be charged this year, whether people are coming in for the day or staying overnight. In case of rain, the Orestimba Experience weekend will happen the following weekend, Saturday, April 30, and Sunday, May 1.

If you'd like to help with any of the many activities to enhance visitors' enjoyment of the Orestimba Experience, contact a member of the Orestimba Experience steering committee: Park Superintendent Kay Robinson, Ruby Domino, Irwin Koff, Leif Larsen, Barbara Radd, Libby Vincent, Chris Weske, or Roberta Wright. You can help staff tables at the corral to provide information for hikers, bikers, campers, backpackers, and horse people; give a talk or demonstration; work traffic detail; staff the entrance at Bell Station; support the barbecue lunch on Saturday; drive a shuttle; tend to lemonade, cold drinks, and coffee supplies; or just be available to help when seventeen things need to be done at once.

A flier describing this event, including instructions on how to reach Bell Station, was sent to you several weeks ago under separate cover. Use it to best advantage—post it in a public place, tell friends, bring the family. More fliers are available at the visitor center, and the phone is ringing hard as people who hear about another Orestimba open weekend want to know more. Get ready to enjoy another splendid weekend, the Orestimba Experience!

PRA Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Pine Ridge Association was held this year in the Flying Lady Restaurant in Morgan Hill on February 5. The meeting of the Coe Park Volunteers was held first. The Chair, Bill Frazer, stated that the total number of hours volunteered during the 1993 calendar year was a staggering 13,983. Volunteers spent 4,394 of those hours in the visitor center—which is equivalent to more than two full-time employees. Bill stated that the volunteer organization had been extremely active during the past year, as evidenced by the large number of award presentations. John Kolb, Superintendent of the Four Rivers District, indicated that the state was very appreciative of the efforts of so many individuals; without their efforts, the park could not be operated so smoothly.

This year's class of new volunteers was also large. Twenty-three new volunteers graduated from the training program and became trainees: Joseph Belli, John Briese, Peter Carlisle, Dave Carter, Bonnie Doran, Sharry Dunn, Dale Dyer, Tom Fink, David Finkle, Fitz Fitzharris, Julie Fitzharris, Bill Gingras, Dennis Green, Dave Janich, Penny Kirk, Tom Laye, Steve Marquez, Owen Melroy, Marty Michael, Thom Parks, Toni Sousa, Tim Stokes, and Deborah Vajretti.

Eighteen trainees, who had completed the requirements of the training program and had served 50 or more hours, were promoted to full volunteer status; four of them had completed the requirements earlier in the year. They were Michael Brookman, John Castaneda, Linda Cowles, Stew Eastman, Jenifer Emma, Frank Escobar, Page Frechette, Patrick Frederick, Barbara Grace, Herb Grace, Jim Gregory, Jim Jeffers, Tami Koval, Bill Mauk, Carmen Patane, Shannon Smith, Kitty Swindle, and Jan Webb.

Specially designed T-shirts, which contained a beautiful drawing of a coyote by Judy Mason surrounded by art work prepared by David Hornby (the shirts were produced by Lee Dittmann), were offered to volunteers who worked 36 or more hours in the visitor center during the past year. This year, an unprecedented number of forty-five volunteers were eligible to receive this award: Everett Allen, Barbara Bessey, Bob Buchner, Carl Clinger, Lee Dittmann, Ruby Domino, Phyllis Drake, Stew Eastman, Mavis Ellis, Bill Frazer, Patrick Frederick, Kevin Gilmartin, Barbara Grace, Herb Grace, Rosse Hemeon, Don Holmes, David Hornby, Gary Keller, Bob Kelley, Millicent Kellogg, Fred King, Irwin Koff, Tami Koval, Bonnie Larsen, Michael Lynds, Don Mason, Jim Mason, Judy Mason, Bill Mauk, Roger McClain, Beverly Nickol, Dave Perrin, Lois Phillips, Dennis Pinion, Barbara Radd, Martie Sinclaire, Derek Smith, Shannon Smith, Richard Stone, Kitty Swindle, Jane Tracey, Jim Tuomey, Libby Vincent, Chris Weske, and Bill Workman.

Eleven individuals, who volunteered 200 or more hours of which 100 hours were spent in the visitor center, were promoted to senior volunteer; five of them had completed the requirements earlier in the year. These were Adrienne Bachleda, Carl Clinger, Millicent Kellogg, Roger McClain, Beverly Nickol, Diane Rubida, Dave Perrin, Lois Phillips, Kitty Swindle, Elaine Tischler, and George Van Gorden.

Thirteen volunteers received special pins for the tremendous numbers of hours they have spent on Coe Park interpretative activities. Between them, they have donated 20,000 hours to the park. Barbara Bessey, Kevin Gilmartin, Tina Greco, Gary Keller, Bob Kelley, Barbara Radd, and Jim Tuomey all volunteered more than 1,000 hours of service. Everett Allen, Don Holmes, Jim Mason, Joan Throgmorton, and Roberta Wright volunteered 2,000 hours of service. Judy Mason received a pin for volunteering 3,000 hours of service.

Kay Robinson, District Superintendent for the West Sector-Coe Park, made a special presentation to those volunteers who had donated 200 hours or more within the past year. Each received a free annual pass to state parks. Receiving the award were Everett Allen, Barbara Bessey, Carl Clinger, Lee Dittmann, Ruby Domino, Bill Frazer, Kevin Gilmartin, Tina Greco, Don Holmes, Bob Kelley, Irwin Koff, Jim Mason, Judy Mason, Roger McLain, Dave Perrin, Barbara Radd, Kitty Swindle, Jim Tuomey, Libby Vincent, Chris Weske, and Roberta Wright.

The Volunteer Committee's Golden Bear Award for exceptional service was presented to Chris Weske. He became a volunteer in 1985, and he has donated over 950 hours since that time. He has participated in a wide variety of activities serving the park: carried out vehicle patrols, served as trail crew leader on trail days, parked cars at the visitor center and during the association's special fund-raising events, annually inspected the larger dams, carried out survey work in the eastern part of the park, helped train new volunteers on radio operations and on emergency procedures, and has applied any pyromaniac tendencies he may have to work on prescribed burns in the park.

Kay Robinson announced that the state also has an award honoring volunteers who have contributed substantially to state parks. Ann and Winslow Briggs had won it in 1991. She indicated that the 1992 winner had not been announced earlier and would be given out this year along with the winner for 1993. Roberta Wright received the award for outstanding service in 1992, and Bill Frazer received the honor in 1993. Bill has participated in many activities, including being on the PRA Board of Directors and serving on the Volunteer Committee for many years.

Ruby Domino offered a special thank-you to the individuals who had worked on the effort sponsored by the Mule Deer Foundation to clean up and revitalize some of the springs in the park. These individuals were Diane Rubida, Steve Knepper, Barbara Hunnicutt, Bob Bruce, Phyllis Drake, Peter Carlisle, Steve Cost, Don Holmes, Dave Hildebrand, Doug Meyers, Dean Meyer, and Kay Robinson.

Congratulations to all!

Kay Robinson reminded attendees that the Coyote Creek entrance will be open this spring on a trial basis, thanks to the hard work of Dave Perrin and Harry Councell. Plans for the visitor expansion are well underway, with consultations occurring between the architect, the design consultants, state staff, and PRA members. John Kolb provided some updates about district activities. In addition, he mentioned that there will be a bond measure on the ballot (California Wildlife, Coastal, and Parks Initiative, supported by the Planning and Conservation League), which, if approved by the voters, would provide some funds for Coe Park.

The keynote speaker, Alan Levanthal, had no trouble keeping the rapt attention of the group. A tribal ethno-historian on Ohlone and Esselen tribes, he was formerly with the American Museum of Natural History in New York City and has been at San Jose State University since 1978. He has spent much time with tribes in California, and he has participated in archeological digs. His slides depicted historical events in Ohlone history and provided a sense of modern-day life of the Ohlone Indians, called Costanoans by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Anyone wishing to read more about the Ohlones is encouraged to read the article entitled "A Contemporary Ohlone Tribal Revitalization Movement: A Perspective from the Muwekma Costanoan/Ohlone Indians," written by Alan Levanthal, Dolores Sanchez, and Rosemary

Cambra. It appeared in the fall 1992 issue of *California History*, which is published by the California Historical Society.

Chair Dennis Pinion opened the Association portion of the meeting. He announced that he and Kevin Gilmartin had been re-elected to the Board of Directors. The new officers of the PRA Board of Directors were announced: Dennis Pinion as Chair, Barbara Bessey as Vice Chair, Kevin Gilmartin as Recording Secretary, and Jim Mason as Treasurer. Jim Mason summarized the financial status of the organization. It was announced that the membership approved the proposed changes to the bylaws in the election in December. The board voted to approve additional funds for radio equipment that would be used at the newly opened Coyote Creek entrance.

The PRA Annual Award is given to an individual who has contributed outstanding work in furthering the mission of the association in preserving and enriching Coe Park. This year's award was presented jointly to Barbara Bessey and Kevin Gilmartin for all of their work on the Volunteer Handbook, assistance with volunteer training, their participation on the PRA Board, and their efforts as co-editors of *The Ponderosa*. They have volunteered over 200 hours each year since they became volunteers; this year, they received 1,000-hour pins. The presentation was made even more special this year as past winners of the award were on hand to offer remarks: Barry Breckling, Roberta Wright, Jim Mason, Lee Sims, Judy Mason, Don Mason, and Dave Hildebrand.

After the meeting was adjourned, all members enjoyed a delicious luncheon catered by the volunteer committee.

New Board Member Appointed

At its regularly scheduled meeting, the PRA Board of Directors appointed a replacement to fill the remainder of the term vacated by Lee Dittmann. Three PRA members submitted candidacy statements for consideration by the board. The candidates were all actively involved with lots of park activities and interested in serving on the board. Although this was a very difficult decision, the board voted by secret ballot to appoint Libby Vincent to the position. Libby is a senior Coe Park volunteer; she served as an editor for the recently completed Volunteer Handbook; she is on the board's Publications Committee; she has been actively involved with the preparations for this year's Orestimba Experience weekend; she has co-led hikes and backpack trips into the park. Her term will expire at the end of the calendar year.

The board members were appreciative of the interest shown by the candidates and hope that they will decide to run in future elections.

Thanks to the three candidates, and congratulations to Libby!

PRA Calendar

Don't forget that the spring season of interpretive weekend walks and Saturday evening programs is in progress. See the flier sent to you earlier this month for program listings; or call the park headquarters for more information (408/779-2728).

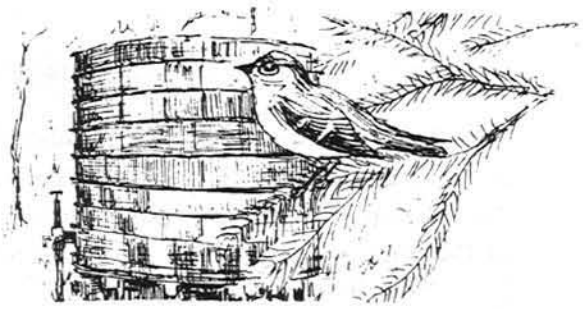
Saturday and Sunday, April 23 & 24: The Orestimba Experience weekend. See the article on page 9; fliers were mailed to all PRA members earlier this month. In case of rain, the event will be held the following weekend. Additional information about the weekend and whether it will be held should rain occur just prior to the weekend, can be obtained from the visitor center (408/779-2728).

Saturday and Sunday, April 30 & May 1: Rain date for the Orestimba Experience weekend.

Thursday, May 5: The next regularly scheduled meeting of the PRA Board of Directors. The board meeting will be at 7:30 p.m. in a new location—Gateway Title Company located at 16195 Monterey Road. All PRA members are invited to attend. Please contact PRA Chair Dennis Pinion for more information (408/779-3916).

Sunday, May 8: The annual Mother's Day breakfast, one of the most popular events sponsored by the Pine Ridge Association. This year, the breakfast will be served in a different location (see flier and the article on page 8). Tickets will go on sale on April 15.

Saturday & Sunday, May 28 & 29: The PRA will host an informational booth at the Morgan Hill Mushroom Mardi Gras. Call Bob Kelley (408/779-9635) for more information.



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The Ponderosa is a periodic publication of the Pine Ridge Association. Its mission is to enhance and enrich the public's experience at Henry W. Coe State Park through education and interpretation. Articles and artwork relating to the history, natural history, and management of the park are welcome. Please send submissions to the editors care of Henry W. Coe State Park, P.O. Box 846, Morgan Hill, CA 95038; or call 415/851-7813.

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