



SAN RAMON VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

January 2018

The East Bay Municipal Utility District was the topic at the November 16th Dinner Meeting

Kathryn Horn is EBMUD's Community Affairs Representative. Kathryn began by noting the earliest people in the area were the Indians. Normal years brought 18.75 inches of rainfall to the area. Then strangers arrived coming by boats and on horseback. The strangers brought domestic animals and non-native plants. The Rancho San Antonio of Don Luis Peralta in 1820 was cited, with other names soon appearing including Castro, Estudillo, Moraga, and Pacheco. They built *(continued on page 2)*

What is Four Corners? will be the subject of the January 18th Dinner Meeting

Up until about 100 years ago the San Ramon Valley consisted of lush grass covered hills studded with an occasional oak tree and riven by a few isolated streams. As people moved here businesses, churches, ranches and schools covered many of those spaces. Surprisingly many of them have already been replaced too. Very familiar landmarks just vanished. Because of that rapid change here is a puzzle for you to solve: "What was four corners?" And for the geographers in the crowd, where was Four Corners?

Join the San Ramon Valley Historical Society on Thursday, January 18, 2018 to find out. Unlocking this mystery for us will be Beverly Lane, Betty Dunlap, Steven Minniear, and Don Wood. It is quite a fascinating story that you do not want to miss. Check out the photo and see if you can begin to figure out the puzzle.



The San Ramon Valley Historical Society will meet in the party room of the Black Bear Diner. We will gather at 6:30 pm, begin dinner at 7 pm, and then enjoy our speaker!

The Black Bear Diner is located adjacent to the Best Western Motel in Danville at I-680 and Camino Ramon (Use the Sycamore Valley Road exit from I-680). The dinner cost is \$23.00 per person. Dessert is extra on your tab.

Please make your reservation and share a great evening with us! *Over 47 Years Looking Back!*

East Bay Municipal Utility District (Continued)

adobe haciendas and dug wells to get water. They planted corn, wheat, and beans on land that they called *contra costa*, the opposite shore of the bay. After the Mexican War, more men appeared and helped themselves to land they wanted. Reports of a big gold discovery in 1849 brought a stampede of people to the area shortly thereafter. In 1852, *Contra Costa* village was incorporated under a new name, Oakland. Two years later, it was re-incorporated as a California city. The first mayor, Horace Carpentier, wanted a water works constructed to fight fires.

The problem of obtaining water was to produce vexatious and turbulent conditions for the city and neighboring communities for the next sixty years. Water development in California at the time was done by private companies. People discovered that water was a source of profit and power for those who controlled it. In April of 1858, the Legislature passed an act to govern the water activity. Under its terms, any company incorporated for the purpose of supplying a locality with pure fresh water could purchase or appropriate such lands and waters as might be required. The company was obligated to furnish water to all who applied for it, at reasonable rates, so long as the supply permitted. Water was to be provided free for fire protection in the communities served, and water rates were to be set by a board of commissioners named by the city and company.

In 1858, Anthony Chabot brought San Francisco its first public water from a creek near the Presidio. He understood the mechanics and economics of moving water. He had gained experience from his activities involving moving water in the gold fields. He saw the opportunity for applying this experience on the eastern shore of San Francisco Bay. He came to the east bay and started the *Contra Costa Water Company (CCWC)*. For 41 years, it was the dominant institution in the water development of the East Bay. On July 3, 1866, he appeared before the council and was granted a franchise to lay pipes in the streets, lanes, and alleys of Oakland. Unlike other water companies, Chabot delivered the water. The water was not always clean from mud, and the rates were high. Homes were not metered. Modest homes could expect to pay \$5 to \$7 a month. Water piped into a house was a dear commodity.

By 1870, Oakland's population was 15,000. Because demand for water increased along with population growth, Anthony Chabot built a second dam on San Leandro Creek and completed Lake Chabot in 1876. Service began in Piedmont, and Oakland residents were using more water per capita than any other American city at the time. However, Chabot's water quality was not always good and reliable, leaving an opportunity for competition.

William Dingee began Oakland Water Company by tunneling Moraga Peak. He tapped an ancient reserve for 250,000 gallons a day. He piped the water to a reservoir in Piedmont. Water wars developed. Eventually these two companies merged into *Contra Costa Water Company* with Dingee as manager. Other water companies in Alameda and Berkeley developed San Pablo Dam.

In 1906, there was an earthquake in San Francisco. A large population moved to the East Bay. On August 30, 1906, *Peoples Water Company* was incorporated. It took in *CCWC*, *Richmond Water Company*, and *Syndicate Water Company (San Pablo)*. In 1917, *The Peoples Water Company* went bankrupt and sold to another private water company called *East Bay Water*.

At this time other California areas were using aqueducts to transport water from sources far away. Los Angeles was getting water from Owens Valley and San Francisco was getting water from Hetch Hetchy. Oakland decided to consider this approach. However, WWI started. Industrial plants needed a reliable source of water. Oakland wasn't able to do this. Lake Chabot literally became a mud hole. Richmond looked for water from Marin, Oakland, and the Eel River. *(continued on page 3)*

Members' Corner

The Board of Directors and fellow members of the Society extend a warm welcome to a new member:

Mary Daniel Gullett

Alamo, CA

We hope that you will enjoy this organization. We urge you to attend the bi-monthly dinner meetings with guest speakers discussing their areas of expertise, join the group on field trips, participate in the selection and marking of historic sites in the San Ramon Valley, and share your views and experiences with other Society members. We also urge you to learn about and support the activities of the Museum of the San Ramon Valley and the San Ramon Historic Foundation.

East Bay Municipal Utility District (Continued)

Berkeley residents, irked by water meter charges, paid their water bills directly to a Commission,. In 1917, East Bay Water had 500,000 customers in three different cities.

In May, 1921, The California Legislature passed the Municipal Utility District Act. This was a new concept in local government. The days of the private water company were numbered. East Bay Municipal Utility District was formed. Arthur Davis was the general manager and chief engineer. He was a former head of the U. S. Reclamation Service. He was joined by William Mulholland, an engineer for the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power who had had a major role in developing the Owens River project. Major General George W. Goethals, builder of the Panama Canal, also assisted Davis. EBMUD's original Board of Directors, elected May 8, 1923, were James H. Boyer, Albert Latham, Marston Campbell (President), Grant D. Miller, and Louis Bartlett. EBMUD had no money. These individuals received no compensation. They had to hire staff with no compensation, but pay them on credit, which they were able to do.

EBMUD realized that they needed a more reliable water supply. They took over some assets of East Bay Water and looked for alternate sources of water. They looked at twelve different water supplies, including the Trinity, Eel, McCloud, Sacramento, American, Mokelumne, and the Tuolumne Rivers. Environmental and engineering assessments were made for each river. They finally decided on the Mokelumne River. P.G.&E. already had a power dam upstream at Electra and was planning another nearby at Salt Springs. These could help regulate both runoff and quality of water. Strategizing began to get this water, which was ninety miles away, to the East Bay. They started by planning for the 12,628 acre Pardee Reservoir. Dr. George Pardee, a former Governor of California as well as a former Oakland Mayor, was elected EBMUD Board President, and served seventeen years with no compensation.

There was opposition to the project from local land owners in the Mokelumne area. There were a couple of pieces of land that EBMUD was unable to acquire. The Board of directors put up a \$65 million bond measure which passed with 72% of the vote in 1924. Some \$26 million was used to buy out East Bay Water. The remaining \$39 million was used for the dam, *(continued on page 4)*

East Bay Municipal Utility District (Continued)

aqueduct, and other facilities. This is the water used in our area today.

In December, 1927, the first concrete was poured for Pardee Dam. On December 8, 1928, EBMUD took over the East Bay Water Company. Then the identification of places to store the water began. Local reservoirs needed to be built. Chabot, Temescal, San Pablo, and Lafayette reservoirs were examined.

The Mokelumne Aqueduct was gravity fed, which saved energy. The water was being delivered to an area where the pipes at the time were about 2 inches in diameter. Some of them were made of hollowed out Redwood trees. They were a mishmash from different private water companies. It was realized that this infrastructure would have to be replaced. There was a tragedy while the Claremont Tunnel was being built to bring water from the Lafayette side of the hills to the Oakland side. Ten men were killed, trapped and drowned, while working on its construction. By 1928, EBMUD had in operation 1400 miles of pipe, three large reservoirs, and fourteen service reservoirs. Then on June 22, 1929, with only twenty-one days of water remaining down in the cities, the thermometer hit 91°F at Lake Chabot -but relief was on the way. At Pardee Dam, workmen knocked out the bulkheads to send water flowing down the pipeline. On Sunday afternoon June 23, 1929, the head of the stream dipped into San Pablo Reservoir and began to spread.

There was a dedication luncheon on top of the Pardee Dam on October 19, 1929. Then on October 29, 1929, the stock market crashed. This caused people to cut back. Less water was used. EBMUD had to extend credit and start a collection program. Businesses were as bad off as their customers. Termination of service for non-payment was held to a minimum. Yet there were 8,288 terminations in 1931 and 18,037 in 1932.

In 1936, California and Hawaiian Sugar Refining Company agreed to put up \$450,000 for construction of thirteen miles of pipe from Richmond to its plant in Crockett. The cost was reimbursed by two million gallons of water a day on a ten year contract. EBMUD would own the main and could use it for whatever customers it developed along the way. It stretched *(continued on page 5)*

Museum News

November 21 to December 31: **Christmas Memories featuring the Tassajara School.**

January 20 to March 18: **Great Frontier Odyssey, Sketching the American West.**

Town of Danville Tours: To schedule a tour, please call Eve/Donna at the museum at (925) 837-3750.

General: When the Museum is open, a trained docent is always on duty and can provide exhibit tours for visitors. Reserved tours are available during open or closed hours by appointment. Large groups are encouraged to call ahead to assure that a docent is available specifically for your group.

The Museum of the San Ramon Valley is located on the southwest corner of Prospect & Railroad Avenues, and accessible via the Iron Horse Trail [P.O. Box 39, Danville, CA, 94526, (925) 837-3750]

Hours: Tuesday-Friday 1-4 pm; Saturday 10 am-1 pm; Sunday 12-3 pm.

East Bay Municipal Utility District (Continued)

EBMUD's territory from the Bay at Alameda to the Carquinez Strait.

On May 14, 1941, George Pardee retired. On September 1, 1941, he died. Through seventeen years of his life, he had represented the voice and image of EBMUD and been its most militant champion.

Under George Pardee, there were requests to open up EBMUD's water shed lands for recreation. Pardee Reservoir has boat launching, overnight camping, trailer parking, picnicking, boat and motor rentals, children's play area, hot and cold showers, a restaurant, a bait and tackle shop, and parking. The Lafayette Reservoir has boat and bank fishing, picnicking, hiking trails, and parking. The Chabot Reservoir recreation facilities are operated by the East Bay Regional Park District, of Oakland. At the Camanche Reservoir, recreation is supervised by the Camanche Regional Park Board, of Clements. Swimming, wading, water skiing and similar activities are permitted at Camanche, as it is a flood control and irrigation reservoir, not one devoted to providing public drinking water. Such activities are not permitted at the public water supply reservoirs.



Kathryn Horn, Jerry Warren

On December 7, 1941, WWII started for the USA. All normal service and restoration projects were put on hold. Local industry was growing and needing water. People were encouraged to plant victory gardens. Flower beds were replaced with vegetable gardens. Special water rates were offered for this. Conservation of water was encouraged. Construction of a second aqueduct for reliability was put on hold. Also put on hold was the start of a water treatment plant.

After WWII, between 1945 and 1965, growth continued to be the norm. The second and third aqueducts were built. EBMUD built filter plants in Lafayette, El Sobrante, and Walnut Creek. The Camanche, Upper San Leandro and Briones Dams were completed. Some 142 reservoirs were built and thousands of miles of pipe were laid. On November 15, 1951, the Sewage Disposal System started operation.

In 1958, the San Ramon Valley Water County District was annexed adding 20,000 new water customers to EBMUD. This made EBMUD the largest water district in California at that time. In 1964, the northern portion of San Ramon Village was annexed, taking EBMUD down to the Alameda County line in the valley. The Blackhawk Ranch Unincorporated Territory was also annexed.

In November, 1970, \$60 million in general obligation bonds were approved for a water pollution control project to add secondary treatment facilities. In December, 1970, EBMUD signed a contract with U. S. Bureau of Reclamation for 150,000 acre feet per year of American River water to be taken from Folsom South Canal. In 1974, EBMUD established school water education programs. In 1975 EBMUD's Affirmative Action Program launched.

In the winter of 1976-1977, the driest year of record occurred since construction of the Pardee Dam. In February 1977 a water shortage emergency was declared because of the drought and water rationing went into effect until February 1978. (In our most recent drought, water *(continued on page 6)*)

East Bay Municipal Utility District (Continued)

levels were lower than 1977). In September 1980, the Jones Tract flood in the Delta threatened EBMUD aqueducts. On October 17, 1989, The Loma Prieta earthquake damaged EBMUD water and wastewater systems. On January 2, 1990, the Hodge Decision affirmed EBMUD rights to American River Water. On October 20, 1991, the firestorm in the Oakland Berkeley hills cut off 2,400 water services and destroyed more than 3,000 homes.

EBMUD's current service area has 1.4 million customers in two counties, including 25 cities. There are five local reservoirs: Briones, Chabot, Upper San Leandro, Lafayette, and San Pablo. There are three inline water treatment plants and three conventional plants. The difference is that the inline plants (in Orinda, Lafayette, and Walnut Creek) have a different process because they are receiving almost entirely Mokelumne water. The conventional plants are getting Mokelumne water blended with local water and use a different process involving ozone. There are 4,200 miles of pipeline, 135 pumping plants, and three Mokelumne aqueducts.

EBMUD has aging infrastructure. Many of the pipes are 70 years old; some are 100 years old. A goal was to replace fifty miles this year; sixty miles was achieved. Helicopters are being used to get equipment for repairs into remote areas. A new technique called aqua pipe is being used. A resin is put in the pipe and it hardens. It is a pipe within a pipe. The old pipe is on the outside and a new pipe surface is on the inside. With the heavy rains in 2016-2017, EBMUD generated more hydroelectric energy than it had ever done before.

*This information was taken from Kathryn Horn's presentation,
and the book Its Name was Mud by John Wesley Noble (Book I) and Gayle B. Montgomery (Book II)*

In Memoriam



Rodger Henry Mast

October 27, 1927 - October 25, 2017
Longtime San Ramon Resident



Our beloved Rodger Henry Mast, age 89, passed away peacefully at home with his family by his side on Wednesday, October 25, 2017. Born October 27, 1927 in Hayward, he was a resident of Danville and San Ramon where he attended San Ramon Valley High School then served in the U.S. Army. Thereafter, he took over the family ranch and joined the fire department until retiring in 1988 as a fire captain. His love for his two professions gave him the best of friends, whom he cherished. Rodger was a member of the Farm Bureau and Cattleman's Association.

He is survived by his loving Wife and Best Friend, Janice, of 60 years and their Sons: Carl and Paul (Deborah); Grandchildren: Hank (Kelly and Allison), Koree, Justin, Jacquelyn, Travis (Courtney), Avery and Giancarlo; and Sister: Sister Mary Jane, residing in Mission San Jose.

Services were held at Danville Veterans Hall on November 3, 2017. Rodger is now with the Angels.

The information above was taken from the East Bay Times, November 1, 2017.

The Sales Table ~~ Nancy Ramsey

Packets of cards depicting Mount Diablo, Front Street, Southern Pacific Depot, Tassajara School, "Grand Dames" of San Ramon, Alamo Grammar School 1876, and a collection of assorted historical scenes are available.

Each packet contains 8 cards and 8 envelopes.

Member Price - \$3.50 per 8 card packet

Historic scene postcards are \$0.20 each

Do stop by the Sales Table

www.SRVHistoricalSociety.org



Founded 1970
P.O. Box 521, Danville, CA 94526

OFFICERS

Jerry Warren *President*
Ginny Ferreira *Secretary*
Frances Lloyd *Treasurer*

DIRECTORS

Lee Halverson
Steve Larmore
Bill Lloyd
Jean Mello
Karen Stepper

Member's Memorial Gift

NAMES HONORED BY MEMORIAL AND COMMEMORATIVE GIFTS, AND NAMES OF DONORS, ARE ENTERED IN A BOOK OF MEMORY AND WILL BE PLACED IN OUR MUSEUM. For tax purposes, we are a non-profit organization. You may make your donation to the society or to the Museum - Please check box below.

Make check to: San Ramon Valley Historical Society Memorial Fund. Please ✓ for: SRVHS MSRV

Mail to: SAN RAMON VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY P. O. Box 521, Danville, CA 94526

This contribution REMEMBERS HONORS EXPRESSES APPRECIATION OTHER

NAME _____

DONOR Name(s) _____

Address _____

PLEASE NOTIFY Name _____

Address _____

Dinner Reservations

**Thursday
January 18, 7 p.m.**

\$23.00 per person

Black Bear Dinner
807 Camino Ramon, in Danville
(at I-680 and Camino San Ramon in Danville)

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO S.R.V.H.S. (Deadline January 16, 2018)

Mail to: S.R.V.H.S., P. O. Box 521, Danville, CA 94526

NAMES: _____

Happy New Year!

Reminder: watch for your dues renewal notice!

Annual dues renew every January, and notices will be sent to all current members

Individual \$20.00

Couple/Family \$30.00

Organization \$30.00

January is a great time to invite family, friends or neighbors to join!

**Need a Ride To The Society Meeting On January 18th? Contact Bill Lloyd
Visit - SRVHistoricalSociety.org**



**SAN RAMON VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 521 · DANVILLE, CALIFORNIA 94526**

**NEXT MEETING
THURSDAY,
JANUARY 18TH
What is Four Corners?**