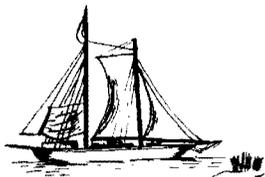


SAN JOAQUIN HISTORIAN



PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY
SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



VOLUME XIII

APRIL - JUNE 1977

NUMBER 2

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COLLEGE WOODBIDGE, CALIFORNIA

By Celia Adams Myers

(Continued from the January-March 1977 Issue)

EDITOR'S NOTE:

This is the second of Mrs. Myers' three-part history of the United Brethren in Christ Church college located in the small San Joaquin County community of Woodbridge from 1879 to 1897. Although opened as a secondary school under the name of "Woodbridge Seminary," it became the "San Joaquin Valley College" with the introduction of college-level courses and degrees in September of 1883.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COLLEGE ESTABLISHED

The Conference gave wholehearted support to the

trustees and staff of the Seminary. They took the position that if they could not secure a firm deed or lease to the property, they would open subscriptions for the construction of a new campus. Their confidence in the school's success was unqualified. More than that, the Seminary had operated as a preparatory school for three years. Students were now ready for college and the only ones available were many miles distant. The decision was made to add college level courses and to incorporate as the San Joaquin Valley College. The Articles of Incorporation, dated December 29, 1882, read as follows:

We, the undersigned, J. A. Sollinger, R. W. Williams,



HOME OF ALBERT S. THOMAS, taken in 1894. Note portion of building to the right rear of the new home. This was the 1891

college boarding house.

From the Fred Ballew Collection.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COLLEGE (con't)

D. Shuck, J. H. Keen, D. G. Rush, J. L. Field, and G. M. Palmer, all of Woodbridge, in the County of San Joaquin, in the State of California together with our associates namely, G. W. Burtner of Butte County in said state, C. W. Gillett of Lake County in said state, A. H. Cowell of Yolo County in said state, John McBride of Yolo County in said state, R. Metcalf of San Joaquin County aforementioned, and T. J. Bauder of Fresno County in said state being desirous of forming a corporation for the purpose hereinafter designated under and in pursuance of the laws of the State of California, do hereby certify and declare by these Articles of Incorporation as follows:

- First - That the said Corporation shall be known by the name of San Joaquin Valley College Association
- Second - That said Corporation is formed for the purpose of education and instruction in knowledge.
- Third - That the town of Woodbridge in the said County of San Joaquin and State aforesaid, shall be the place where the principal business of the Corporation shall be transacted.
- Fourth - That this association have no capital stock
- Fifth - That said Corporation shall exist for fifty (50) years
- Sixth - That the number of Trustees who shall manage the concerns of said Corporation shall be seven (7) and the following are the names and residences respectively of the Trustees who are appointed for the first year to wit: J. A. Sollinger, R. W. Williams, D. Shuck, J. H. Keen, D. G. Rush, J. L. Field and G. M. Palmer, each and every one of whom resides at said Woodbridge, in said San Joaquin County.

These Articles of Incorporation conclude with the proper signatures attested to by a Notary Public. They were duly filed with the County of San Joaquin on January 3, 1883, and with the State of California on the following day.

The trustees of the school building, faced with this affirmative action on the part of the United Brethren Conference and with no alternative use for their building, decided to deed their property to the new College Association. However, to prevent any further misunderstandings several provisos were included in the deed to protect their interest in the building. Briefly stated they were:

- 1 - that the association or their successors were to maintain a school on the premises for thirty-six weeks in each year
- 2 - that they were to pay all State, County or Township taxes
- 3 - that they were to keep the building insured for not less than \$4,000
- 4 - that they were to expend annually not less than \$200 in necessary repairs and improvements until they had spent \$5,000 in improvements
- 5 - that any dispute which arose between the two parties was to be adjudicated by specially appointed arbitrators
- 6 - that should the Association fail to maintain a school on the property or should fail to preserve the property or fail to comply with the provisions of the deed, they were to reconvey said premises and all improvements to the building trustees or their successors.

This deed was dated May 11, 1883.

With their first years of experience behind them and with their legal problems settled, the trustees and staff were

now free to organize classes and plan curriculum for the collegiate department.

COURSES OFFERED

The report of the president, Darius A. Mobley, to the Board of Trustees at the end of the first college year (May 1, 1884) listed the following subjects as having been taught by him during the first term:¹³ Homer, Tacitus, Logic, English Past and Present, Latin Reader, Caesar, Analysis, Sophocles, De Senectute et de Amicitia. Prof. Ridenour had conducted classes in Geometry, Trigonometry, Analytical Geometry, History of England, Arithmetic Beginning, Arithmetic Completing, Algebra Completing, and Penmanship. Prof. Klinefelter had taught the following classes: Physiology, Natural Theology, Chemistry, Geography of the Heavens, English Grammar, Algebra Beginning, Physical Geography and Word Analysis.

There were also weekly class drills in Spelling, Mental Arithmetic, Parsing and vocal music. Mr. Snell conducted a class in Bookkeeping, Miss Carrie Ellis taught Instrumental Music, Miss Essie Sawtelle held classes in Drawing and Painting.

During the second term new teachers were added. Prof. Kephart taught English Grammar, Natural History, Zoology, Political Economy and Ethics. Prof. Strachan of San Francisco conducted classes two days a week in Voice Culture and Mr. C. B. Newton had charge of classes in Elocution. Prof. Kephart was placed on a regular salary while Prof. Strachan and Mr. Newton as well as Miss Ellis and Miss Sawtelle "received such support as the tuition of their respective classes might afford."

By 1886 there was also a full range of subjects offered for those wishing to prepare themselves for a business career and the Teacher's Course was described as giving "careful attention to all studies required for a First Grade Certificate, and also embraces a number of other interesting and helpful studies calculated to give the teacher a more comprehensive idea of his work."

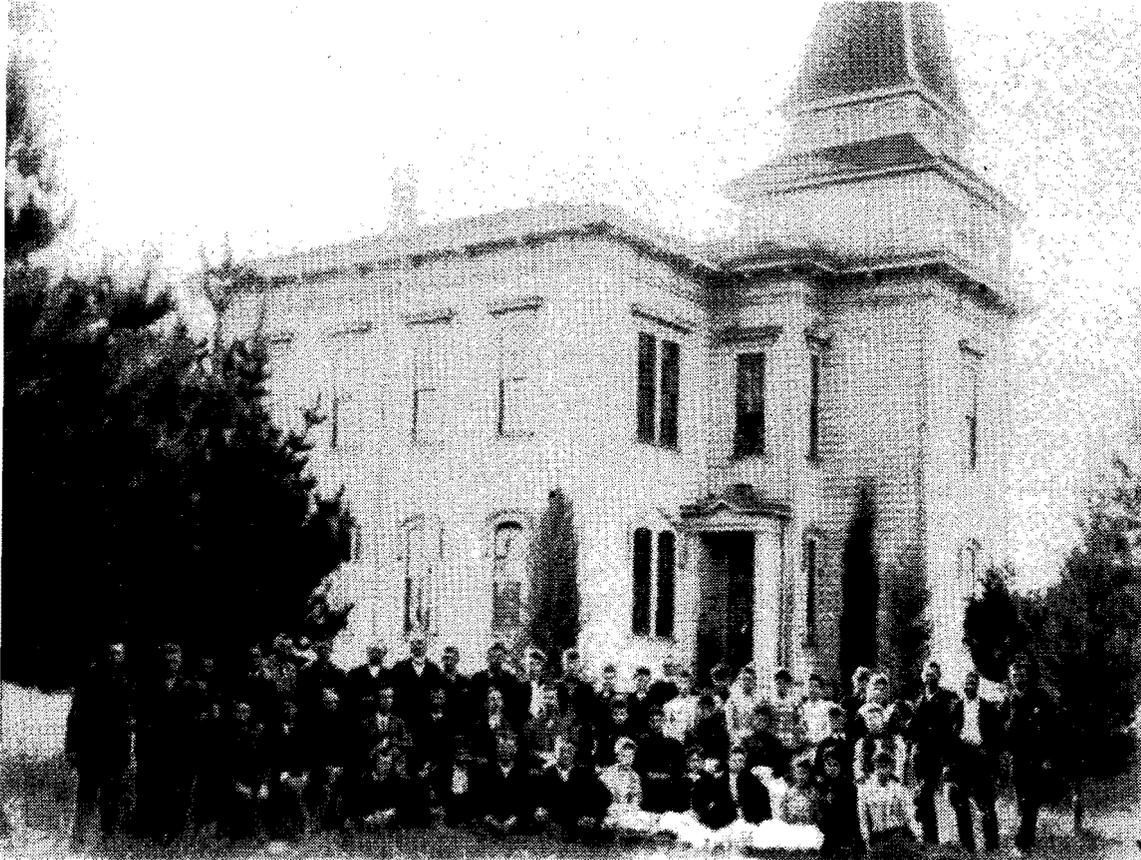
The college offered the following degrees: a Bachelor of Arts to those completing in a commendable manner the studies prescribed in the classical course, a Bachelor of Philosophy was conferred on those who satisfactorily completed the Philosophical Course, a Bachelor of Science was conferred on those who satisfactorily completed the Scientific or English Course. A Diploma was granted to all students who creditably completed the Business Course. A Certificate was awarded to all who satisfactorily completed the Teachers' Course. A Master's Degree was offered also but the list of graduates indicates there were few who qualified for that degree.

In a day when higher education for women was not stressed, it is interesting to note that the church adopted the following statement of policy: "Believing that the Creator endowed woman with intellectual powers as capable of infinite development as man and believing that she should be granted equal chances for culture and equal honors wherever earned and believing that the best results are secured where both sexes are admitted to the same privileges and are associated in daily class instruction, we have extended all the privileges, immunities and honors of this college alike to young ladies and gentlemen."

Anxious to attract as many students as possible, the College officials, through their annual catalogs, stressed the many advantages to be enjoyed by its students. Concerning its location an early catalog noted that the

San Joaquin Valley College is an institution for both

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COLLEGE (con't)



SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COLLEGE circa 1890. Persons in foreground not identified, but could be staff members and

some of the students (perhaps graduates of the several departments within the College).

Courtesy of the San Joaquin County Historical Museum.

sexes and is located at Woodbridge, San Joaquin County, in one of the prettiest and most healthful sections of California. Woodbridge is fourteen miles north from Stockton and two miles northwest from Lodi, the nearest station on the Southern Pacific Railway. A branch of the Southern Pacific runs to Woodbridge and renders transportation to the village easy. There is also a daily stage to Lodi and return furnishing conveyance for students.

Another catalog stressed the healthful location of the campus:

Especial attention of parents is called to the healthful location of the S.J.V.C. It has no protracted fog, no severe heat, and sickness is almost unknown among the students. The evenness of its temperature, the distance from malarial districts, and the sanitary condition of the town render it an exceptional healthful place.

The moral and religious influence which the college exerted was not overlooked: "The School is under the control of the United Brethren in Christ. It aims at the thorough education of the mind and heart. While sectarian principles are studiously avoided,¹⁴ a correct moral and Christian character is regarded as a matter of the first importance, and no pains will be spared to secure the most desirable result. Reading the Scriptures and prayer are held in the College Hall every morning, except Saturday and Sunday, and all students are required to attend. Student's prayer meeting, which all are invited to attend, is held one evening each week." A later catalog noted that there were two flourishing churches in town which held

Sabbath services and all boarding students were requested to attend one of them. There were also two good Sabbath schools and a Young Men's and a Young Women's Christian Association, to which the students were made welcome.

The campus was described in glowing terms: "The College building is a large frame structure situated in the southwestern portion of the village and lies within easy access of all students. It has comfortable recitation rooms and a capacious hall for chapel, rhetorical and other public exercises. The building stands enclosed in a large and beautiful campus, ornamented with choice trees of various kinds. Ample space is given to grounds for football, baseball and other athletic sports." No mention was made of any physical education classes nor was there any description of an athletic program sponsored by the school. Probably all sports or games were strictly extracurricular, organized by the students themselves. They may have played local community teams.¹⁵

CULTURAL ASPECTS OF THE COLLEGE

The college did encourage the formation of, and membership in, literary societies. These were student organizations devoted to the study of parliamentary law, public speaking and debate techniques. They organized debates, sponsored lecture series, and stimulated discussion groups. There were three of these societies at the San Joaquin Valley College, the Philophronean and the

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COLLEGE (con't)

Advance to which young men belonged, and the Zetegathean for the young ladies. The preamble of one of them was typical of the aims and purposes of all three of the literary societies at Woodbridge:

We, the members of the Philophronean Literary Society of the San Joaquin Valley College, knowing that growth and development of mind with fluency and readiness of speech, is the result of investigation and free discussion of religious, political, scientific and other topics for enlargement of our fund of general intelligence, for cultivation of friendship and promotion of wisdom, for mutual improvement in composition, elocution and debate; in the pursuit of which we desire to exhibit a due regard for the opinions of others and to maintain a perfect command of temper in all our exercises; do adopt for our government the following constitution and bylaws

The students apparently enjoyed their school and were very proud of it. Their Colors were green and gold. Their school song was found on one of the school programs:

In the green and fertile valley
Near both mount and sea
Stands our noble Alma Mater,
Dear S. J. V. C.

Chorus:

Lift the chorus, send it onward,
Sound her praise o'er lea.
Hail to thee, our Alma Mater,
Hail, S. J. V. C.

In thy courts we've sought for knowledge
To be wise and good
And we love thee, our own college
As thy children should.

Chorus

To thy halls where honor's nourished,
To our teachers true,
To our friends and each one cherished,
We'll now bid adieu.

Chorus

The townspeople received many cultural benefits from having the college in their midst. Many entertainments were presented during the school year. Some were recitals to display the students' talents and some were in observance of special occasions; some were for fundraising purposes. A grand piano, extra chairs for the college hall, and furnishings for the stage as well as books for the library were purchased with the profits from public programs presented by the students. A typical program would include vocal and instrumental numbers, recitations or readings, or perhaps an oration. A band was organized which gave concerts from time to time. One program noted instrumental music by the Lockeford Quartet whose members were A. L. Norton, W. Locke, S. J. Winkleman, and H. L. Bruml.

The college-sponsored lecture series featured learned speakers from San Francisco and other parts of the state. There were many lively debates promoted by the literary societies on topics of current interest. The *Lodi Sentinel* for May 20, 1882, reported: "The Advance [Literary Society] is the excitement of the town. At the last meeting the resolution 'That woman suffrage would prove beneficial to this government' was argued by Messrs. Snell and Hemphill for the affirmative and negative respectively. The decision was for the negative."

The preparation and delivery of orations was an important part of the college student's scholastic work.



MRS. HARRIET ANN (HESSEY) MOBLEY, wife of the first president of the College, and grandmother of Mrs. Ellsworth (Janet) Beckman of Lodi. Courtesy of Mrs. Beckman.

This was an excellent way in which each student could display his skills in logic, rhetoric and speaking ability. The law firm of Louttit, Woods and Levinsky of Stockton (Alexander Louttit, S. D. Woods and Arthur Levinsky) offered a gold medal each year to the best orator in the graduating class. Levinsky frequently traveled to Woodbridge to deliver addresses at the college.¹⁶ There were also special events associated with the annual commencement programs which often lasted an entire week.

Woodbridge became affectionately known as the "Athens of San Joaquin County," and the local church became the center of Conference activity for the state's United Brethren. This gave to the local church the distinction of being the "Mother Church" of the Conference.

An excellent relationship apparently developed between the college and the community. The president reported each year that the conduct of the students was very good. For the most part they attended classes regularly and punctually; they were studious and attentive. If some of the students became careless and indifferent, steps were taken to correct and control that element before it would get out of hand. Newspaper accounts mentioned from time to time the participation of students in various community events.

The college authorities described the town in a complimentary manner for the benefit of the parents of prospective students: "The moral atmosphere of Woodbridge is unsurpassed by any community in the State. A strong temperance sentiment prevails and the village is free from the many vicious allurements that infest larger cities and which entice the student from his work and implant in his nature the seeds of bad habits." This general appreciation of the virtues of the community did not

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COLLEGE (con't)

prevent Prof. Mobley from complaining, however, of the town's new skating rink in his report for the term of 1884-85: "... notwithstanding all that may be said in defense and commendation of the skating rink, it is an unmistakable fact that as conducted here the past winter, it has very materially affected the literary improvement of the students and in some cases injured their health, and while it may not be advisable to prohibit students engaging in such exercise, we are sure that some attention should be given to the extent such amusement should be indulged."

The school offered an extensive list of subjects in all departments. The collegiate course provided a typical classical education of four years. It included classes in Latin, Science, History, Politics, Literature, German, Moral Science, Philosophy, Psychology, and Bible study.

The three-year business course covered all areas of transactions that one could expect to meet. The preparatory year taught all the basics. The second year, called the Junior Department, placed the student in charge of a fictitious business in which he learned all phases: buying, selling, ordering from a distant firm, shipping merchandise, then progressing to a partnership. In the third year, referred to as the Senior Department, the student studied the wholesale office, the commission office and the commercial and exchange bank.

The teachers' course gave thorough preparation for a teaching career. The music department offered four years of instruction in voice and piano. Instrumental instruction was also available. In addition to all these departments three years of preparatory (high school) work was offered.

The school administration stressed the serious aspects of advanced education. Their aim "to hold before the students the worthiest ideals of life and citizenship" were expressed in the admonition printed in the 1895 catalog under the caption "To Young People." It stated:

A young man or young woman today confronts heavy responsibilities. The world has a right to expect of them not only as much as their fathers and mothers accomplished, but even more. As our nation grows older, more puzzling problems perplex our statesmanship, our social life needs to be permeated with a broader and deeper culture, and the increasing hunger of the people for the bread of intellectual and spiritual life needs to be satisfied. In order to meet these needs, education should be widely diffused. What will be your part in ushering in the new day of intellectual and moral glory? It can at least be this, that you secure for yourself a thorough education and a noble character. If you will not do it for the sake of society, you ought to do it for your own sake. . . . The day is here when the very best training is essential to success.

The college presented an impressive curriculum and held forth high ideals for its students. In a large measure they succeeded admirably in providing a creditable education for those who enrolled in their classes. They were fortunate in having well educated, dedicated professors. Thus a worthwhile education was provided for students in an area where none other was available. The highest yearly enrollment reached approximately 180, divided about equally between the collegiate department and the other departments. The cost to the students varied according to the subjects taken, plus a set amount to cover board, room, fuel, and general tuition costs. Typical are the following charges, taken from the catalog for the school year 1894-95:

Preparatory course, per term,	
first and second year	\$15.00
Preparatory course, per term, third year	18.00

Scientific Course, per term	18.00
Philosophical Course, per term	20.00
Teachers' Course, per term	\$15.00 to 25.00
Teachers' Course, per year	45.00 to 60.00
Full Business Course	60.00
Full Business Course, per term	25.00
Elocution, per term in class	7.50
Elocution, private lessons, two per week	1.50
Elocution, single lesson	1.00
Bookkeeping, per term	\$15.00
Instrumental Music--Piano, per term of twelve lessons (in advance)	8.00
Instrumental Music--Organ, per term of three months (in advance)	8.00
Rent of Piano or Organ, per term of three months (in advance)	5.00
Instrumental Music--Violin, per lesson	.50
Vocal Music--Class Singing, per term	2.50
Vocal Music--Voice Culture, per term of twelve lessons (in advance)	8.50
Harmony, per term	10.00
Modern Languages, per term	7.50
Elocution, per lesson	.50
Graduating Fee	10.00
Board, per week	3.00
Rooms, furnished, per month	\$3.50 to 4.00
Scholarship, per year, including tuition, board, room rent, fuel, etc.	\$175.00 to 200.00

FINANCIAL PROBLEMS OF THE COLLEGE

Despite its apparent success, however, the college was beset with financial problems from about 1885 until it closed its doors in 1897. In his annual reports Professor Mobley each year called the attention of the Trustees to their financial plight. He repeatedly warned them that aggressive action was required to keep the school solvent, and that the needs of the school should be kept before all the churches in the California jurisdiction. His recommendations included hiring an agent to work full time canvassing the Conference district, persuading parents to enroll their sons and daughters in the college. The trustees responded halfheartedly, sending one of their own members out for two months. He reported back with a donation of \$10.00 and a bill for \$124.00 for his expenses. "Prominent citizens of substantial means should be approached for help with the mounting bills," the president admonished, but no such campaign was initiated.¹⁷

President Mobley also pleaded again and again for enlarged and improved boarding facilities to encourage more out-of-town students. But when a new boarding hall was finally built in 1891, it was too late to stem the tide of decreasing enrollment.

The instructors did all they could to help the institution remain solvent. Many let their back pay accumulate, hoping for better days ahead. Some preached the Sunday services and gave their fees to the college treasury. At their own expense they went out during the summer vacation giving talks to all the churches they visited, seeking to encourage students to come to Woodbridge. "During the months of June and July of 1887 the president and professors Ridenour and Klinefelter spent much time in the canvass for students in Humboldt, Butte, parts of Yolo, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Calaveras and Amador Counties . . . The results, while far below what it promised, brought quite a number of new students."¹⁸ But the increase proved to be temporary, and the problems permanent.

SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY COLLEGE (con't)

In 1889 the school lost a valuable and hard working instructor when W. H. Klinefelter resigned to return to the East to live near his wife's parents due to their declining health. Professor Klinefelter had headed the department of Natural Science and had also served as the college's treasurer.



WILLIAM H. KLINEFELTER, professor of Natural Science, was one of the three original instructors at the Woodbridge school. He resigned in 1889 after ten years' service to return to the East. From the W. S. Montgomery Collection.

In the president's report for 1890 Professor Mobley expressed his embarrassment over the size of their indebtedness, and discouragement over the decreasing enrollment. He further warned the trustees: "This church must have this college; this community must have this college. Neither will live without the other. Let this college die and the property will depreciate 50% on the dollar. The moral and intellectual influence will drop down to the level of other interior villages. Business will die and all that is pleasant and profitable will be destroyed."¹⁹

The new boarding hall (mentioned above) was completed in the spring of 1891 on the southeast corner of the intersection of Orange and Carolina streets, about two blocks from the college building. The building committee was listed as T. R. Burkett, J. J. Riley, Robert Boyce, John Keagle, J. A. Sollinger, D. Shuck and E. H. Ridenour. It was a large building, two stories high with a commodious basement that housed the dining room.

OTHER PROBLEMS PLAGUE THE COLLEGE

In his letter to the Trustees dated June 2, 1891, Professor Mobley reported as follows concerning the boarding hall project:

We submit herewith the report of the work and worry of the 12th year of this institution. We are completing a year of unusual trial and responsibility. The plans and hopes of the last meeting of this Board have to a great extent been realized, but it has been by means of

persistency and ceaseless care and labor and a firm faith in God. If all who should have helped in this work had done so, it would have been accomplished with painstaking enough care, but when some of our most favored men gave no help by word or deed, the undertaking became a gigantic one. Once into the work it seemed impossible without great loss and shame not to continue, although the ideas in regard to the manner of building and paying for the same had to be radically changed. It became necessary to work with singleness of purpose in the erection of the new building and this has been done, in a measure to the neglect of other lines of work. But the need of a Boarding Hall was so great the steps taken, forced and hazardous as they may appear to some, had to be taken. As a result we have a magnificent building valued at \$10,000 although the actual cost will not exceed \$8,000. This surplus has been saved by the untiring labor and rigid economy of your Building Committee whose anxieties and patience and self sacrifice you will never know. It takes life to make life and this your Building Committee has given and we believe the future will prove that the life will return in fresh and ever increasing vigor

(To Be Continued in Next Issue)

Footnotes will be found at the end of the third issue (XIII - No. 3)

The Quarterly of the
SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.
 Published Four Times Each Year
 P.O. Box 21, Lodi, California 95240

Editor: Robert Bonta

The San Joaquin County Historical Society, a non-profit corporation, meets the fourth Monday of each month except for July and August. Annual memberships are: Individual - \$5.00, Corporate - \$8.00, and Junior - \$1.00, and include a subscription to the **San Joaquin Historian**. Non-members may purchase individual copies from the Society's Secretary at \$1.00 per copy. The Society also operates the San Joaquin County Historical Museum at Micke Grove. Persons wishing to donate items should contact the Museum Director.

Officers of the SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY [1976-77]

Mrs. Vivian Hughes **President**
 Tod Ruse **1st Vice-President**
 Robert Bonta **2nd Vice-President**
 Mrs. Howard Linsley **Recording Secretary**
 Mrs. Elwood L. Myers **Corresponding Secretary**
 Hart Wilson **Treasurer**

DIRECTORS

Robert Friedberger Frank Nunes
 Mrs. Glee Mason Mrs. L. Dow Wakefield

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Mrs. L. Phillip (Medora) Johnson **Director**
 Micke Grove Park
 11793 N. Micke Grove Road, Lodi, California
 Phone area 209 368-9154 P.O. Box 21, Lodi, Calif. 95240