

BHNA General Member Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: May 20 2014

Location: Beresford Recreation Center

Presentation: History of San Mateo; From Exclusive Enclave to Humble Village

Number of Attendees: 56 people, including board members.

Board Members in Attendance: Andrea McCutchin, Heinz Plischke, Susan Rowinski, Kay Sharma, Lisa Tanner Ellen Wang.

The meeting's refreshments was arranged by Kay Sharma.

Lisa Tanner, BHNA President, called the meeting to order at 730pm.

Donna Bishoff, former BHNA BOD member, tried to recruit (4) senior men from the audience to participate in a food tasting survey for the San Mateo Senior Center. Unfortunately Donna was unable to recruit enough volunteers.

Heinz Plischke, BHNA Director Emeritus, member, began the presentation with the announcement of the upcoming BHNA general meetings followed by an introduction to Mr. Michael Svanevik, the meeting's speaker.

Mr. Svanevik's presentation commenced at 7:40 pm and lasted for 30 minutes. The presentation followed by a 20 minute Q&A.

Mr. Svanevik's presentation focused on a 25-year period in San Mateo's history, 1870-1894. He described before the incorporation San Mateo into a town in 1894, it was comprised of large estates and rancheros, typically 400 acres in size, owned by families such as the Parrots, the Haywards and the Borrels. There was no formal police or fire department or a public school system and there was one saloon.

According to Mr. Svanevik, the event that transformed San Mateo from an Exclusive Enclave to a Humble Village was the creation in the 1880s of the San Andreas drinking water reservoirs (west of 280) by a private enterprise known as the Spring Valley Water Company. The company was purchased in 1930 by the city of San Francisco and is now part of the San Francisco Water, which provides drinking water to the Peninsula.

In order for the Spring Valley Water Company to create the drinking water reservoirs, the San Mateo Creek was dammed. To create the earthen dams required over 1000 laborers. The laborers, mostly of Irish decent, moved from the east and brought their families with them. In a very short time, the population in the San Mateo area exploded from less than 100 people to over 3000 people. Because of the explosive growth in the area's population, the city of San Mateo was incorporated in 1894 and police and fire departments set up and a public school system was established.

The meeting came to close at 830pm.

Meeting Minutes submitted by Susan Rowinski, BHNA Director.