

alvarado adobe

SAN PABLO

Historical and Museum Society

number 1 alvarado square, san pablo, california 94806

Alvarado / Castro Adobe?

Should it be called The Castro Adobe?

All of us who have visited the **Alvarado Adobe, California Historic Landmark 512**, know that it is named after Juan Alvarado, the last governor of Mexican California. This replica of the original is the only standing tribute to the original adobe homes that **Don Francisco Castro** and his family built on the northeast shores of San Francisco Bay.

The cities of San Pablo, Richmond, El Cerrito, Kensington and El Sobrante were all part of the San Pablo Land Grant awarded to Don Castro for his service during the Anza Expedition to California. The Contra Costa was sought out to be use as grazing and agricultural support of the newly established presidio in San Francisco.

The first family home was actually the stables and adobe farm structures. Built, around 1815, by the native peo-



Martina Castro de Alvarado

ple who worked the fertile fields around San Pablo. These primitive structures would be home to Francisco, his wife Gabriela and their 14 children. It was believed to have been located very near to where Doctors Medical Center is located today.

Many years later, after Francisco's death, the family would build the other adobe structures as the family grew. Antonio would build a home about 1/4

mile south of the original family home on the other side of Wildcat Creek. Joaquin and Gabriel built houses just to the north. Victor chose a site at the southern end of their land, along Cerrito Creek which is now El Cerrito Plaza. Toward the end of 1843, son Jesus Marie, would build a new home for his family and his mother. This is the adobe home that you see now, reconstructed at it's original site, at the corner of San Pablo Ave. and Church Lane.

At the same time, daughter Martina met and married, the then governor Juan Alvarado, and were living in Monterey. Soon after the governor and his bride would retire to San Pablo and take residency in our historic adobe. Hence the name, **The Alvarado Adobe.**

This is just a brief outline of the Castro Family's rich heritage in Northern California. Much more is available for you to learn at the museums so maybe you can decide : Is it the **Alvarado Adobe** or is it the **Castro Adobe**? Either way we are lucky to have it.

**SAN PABLO
HISTORICAL AND
MUSEUM SOCIETY**

1 Alvarado Square
San Pablo, Ca. 94806

Phone— 510 215-3046
On the web *www.SanPabloCA.gov/HISTORY*

Make San Pablo's History a Part of Your Life

We need new members and volunteers. Members may participate in all San Pablo Historical and Museum Society activities including public relations, program planning, hospitality, research, fundraising and/or become a docent at one of our museums.

The Historical and Museum Society's responsibility is to maintain the interiors of all three museums. The Alvarado Adobe, The Blume Farm House and The Bunk House.

**Items Of Interest @ the
Museums**

Urgent Message: The museums are in need of volunteer and financial support. But most of all we need you to visit us. This has been a long, cold, wet and lonely winter at the museums but spring is here, the rains are stopping and our doors are open. The Alvarado Adobe. The Blume House and the Bunk House are your local museums that highlight the rich California history that is San Pablo.

Museum hours of operation

may have to be scaled back for the next 2 months unless we get new volunteers to help out. Currently we are opening both home museums on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month. Our staff has been stretched thin and overworked. In order to keep these wonderful building opened to the public at all we will only open one museum at a time. We are sorry for this development and hope we can get some new help for our dedicated staff. We are

San Pablo Historical and Museum Society
2011 Membership Application
 THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY EXISTS TO STUDY AND PRESERVE SAN PABLO'S INDIAN-RANCHO-PIONEER HERITAGE.
 WE SERVE THE COMMUNITY MAINTAINING 3 MUSEUMS THE ALVARADO ADOBE-THE BLUME HOUSE-THE BUNK HOUSE
 AND A LOCAL HISTORY REFERENCE LIBRARY
 AS A MEMBER YOU ARE WELCOME TO USE OUR LIBRARY.

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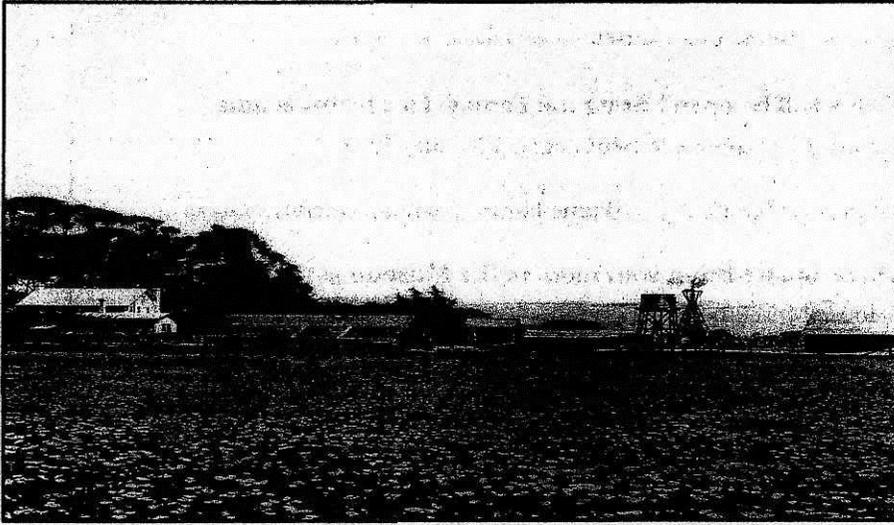
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 SAN PABLO, CA. 94806

also sorry for the delayed newsletter. We always try our best to get it out in a timely manner.

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!It has come to our attention that the City of San Pablo is interested in moving offices into The Alvarado Adobe. We think this is a bad idea. What do you think? Call the city at voice your opinion and help preserve this Historic Landmark!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The California Poppy



The John Nicholl Farm, ablaze with poppies, was once part of the Rancho San Pablo but is now downtown Richmond, Ca.

April 6th is California Poppy Day, our state flower. Commemorated in 1903 by the State Legislature, *Eschscholtzia californica*, has had a prominent role over the course of our modern history.

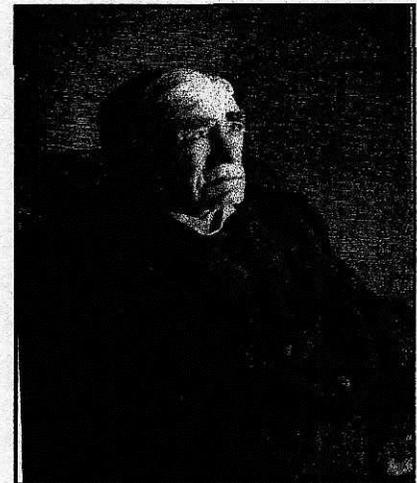
When the Spanish explorers first saw coastal California, these poppies covered entire stretches of the hillsides. They called California the Land of Fire, "La Tierra del Fuego" An old tradition claims that the Spanish sailors steered their course by certain great poppy fields as their ships skirted our coast ablaze with these flowers. Colonists compared the flower covered fields to the alter cloth of san Pascual, the patron saint of Easter. Writers often referred to them as the modern

"Field of the Cloth of Gold". Early Spanish and Mexican settlers named this poppy *copa de oro* (cup of gold), *calace de oro*, *la amapola* (the poppy) or sometimes *la dormidera*, the sleepy one, perhaps referring to the poppy's closing petals at dusk or to the native peoples medicine made from it, which aided in sleep. Native Americans often told a tale of poppy blooms depositing gold into the earth. Owing to this gold connection, the California poppy symbolizes wealth and success.

Later on into the 19th century, sightseers took "Sunday drives" to marvel at the spectacular sight. One such "sight to behold" was right here in what is now downtown Richmond.

John Nicoll, who was one man who saw that wealth and success, was born in Ireland and came to California by way of New York in 1857. He and his wife initially purchased land from the Castro family's rancho land grant but continued to gain land holdings through various business dealings. Mr. Nicoll is considered the creator of Richmond, Ca. and The John Nicoll farm was located between 23rd and 33rd. Sts from Macdonald to Carlson Blvd. All of which fields bloomed the most gorgeous luxuriant California poppy.

When we study California history, the fauna, flora, and the people who made it happen we learn that so much of what is California history started right here in our own backyard. Visiting local museums that preserve this history help to enrich our appreciation of the place we call home.



John Nicoll : the father of Richmond, Ca.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- Apr. 5- Board meeting 3:00-pm - 5:00 pm (@ The Blume House interested members welcome)
- Apr 10 - Alvarado Adobe /Blume House/Bunkhouse Museum open 12noon- 4pm
- Apr. 24 - **EASTER SUNDAY** We will be open ! Bring the Family To The museums
Alvarado Adobe /Blume House/Bunkhouse Museum open 12noon- 4pm
- May 3 - Regular board meeting 3:00pm- 5:00pm (@ The Blume House (interested members welcome)
- May 8 - **MOTHERS DAY** we will be open ! Bring your mom to the Museums
Alvarado Adobe /Blume House Museum open 12 noon- 4pm
- May 22 - Alvarado Adobe/Blume House/Bunkhouse Museum open 12 noon- 4pm
- June 7 - Board meeting 3:00-pm - 5:00 pm (@ The Blume House interested members welcome)
- June 12 - Alvarado Adobe /Blume House/Bunkhouse Museum open 12noon- 4pm
- June 26 - Alvarado Adobe /Blume House/Bunkhouse Museum open 12noon- 4pm

San Pablo Museum and Historical Society
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Sonia Rivas, Redevelopment.
City of San Pablo
San Pablo, Ca. 94806