

Coastside Chronicles

The Newsletter of the Half Moon Bay History Association

September / October 2020

Rancho Arroyo de los Pilarcitos

Joaquin Jimenez contributed this look into early days on the Coastside, in honor of Latino Heritage Month.



Joaquin Jimenez
Guest Contributor

Arroyo de los Pilarcitos was the land grant that Juan José Candelario Miramontes, an officer at the Presidio in San

Francisco, was granted by the Mexican government.

The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ended the Mexican-American war in 1848. The California Land Act of 1851 honored the Treaty, intending to protect Mexican citizens' property rights. However, the Land Act required landowners to prove their titles in American courts, and many lost their property trying to litigate under the new American legal system.

Juan José and his wife Maria Guadalupe Briones were the owners of Rancho Miramontes. Around the year 1841 Rancho Miramontes was known as Rancho San Benito, a diverse community that included different ethnic backgrounds. Rancho San Benito's demographics included the native Ohlone, Mexicans, Italians, Portuguese, Polynesians, Scots, Chinese, and other ethnic groups. During this era Rancho San Benito was known as a very prosperous community.

Mexicanos and Latinos are not new to this community. After the war of 1848 many Mexicans moved out of the area into the central valley of California.

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President's Message

Juliette Applewhite
President



We hope that all of you and your families are staying healthy in this bizarre time.

The Jail Museum is currently closed, but we've been busy...

Changes to the History Association Board

We meet frequently, and are making progress on several levels. After two Board members resigned to work on other projects, Ellen Chiri was elected to the Board of Directors. She has also taken on the role of Communications Chair.

Education Committee News

Our Education Committee is developing a video presentation of our school programs, with an accompanying activity booklet. The crossword puzzle on the Puzzle Page (page 3) is an example of what's in the activity booklet. Michelle Dragony has offered to videotape our amazing team in action. We will post the video on our website when it is complete.

Expanding our Museum

We are working with Falco Construction to transform the barn behind the Jail Museum into a spectacular expanded museum. Construction plans are continuing at a slower pace since the onset of COVID-19. As you can imagine, many delays are caused by the pandemic and the fires. We will break ground as soon as we can.

Ed Love designed the expanded museum structure, and we are waiting for plumbing plans to be complete before we can have our final permit approved.

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Rancho Arroyo Pilarcitos, from page 1

After World War 2, many Mexican nationals came to work in the fields of Half Moon Bay. Most of these were migrant workers or seasonal workers.

It was not until the 1970s and 1980s that many Latino families decided to stay in Half Moon Bay. Now, in 2020, Mexicanos/Latinos are 32 percent of the population, many continuing to do farm labor. Present-day Half Moon Bay is again becoming a welcoming city for Mexicano/Latino residents.

The City of Half Moon Bay has issued a proclamation to celebrate September 15 to October 15 as Latino Heritage Month.

Oral Histories

Does your family have a long Coastside history? Do you, or someone you know, have Coastside stories from long ago? Our Oral History team is gathering personal histories... may we add yours?

History Mysteries

Do you have a Coastside history mystery you'd like us to investigate? Let us know!

Contact us at
info@halfmoonbayhistory.org

President's Message, from page 1

New Historical Artifact Donation

We recently received a Native American mortar and pestle from Jerry and Marie Cook of Colorado. Mrs. Cook's father discovered them in the Deer Creek area of El Granada in the 1940s, while he was digging in his garden.



The local Ohlone group were the Chiguan, and their villages were thousands of years old when the Spanish explorer Portolá passed through our Coastside. The mortar and pestle are now housed in our Jail Museum in Half Moon Bay. The Museum will re-open as soon as allowed for indoor museum spaces during the pandemic.

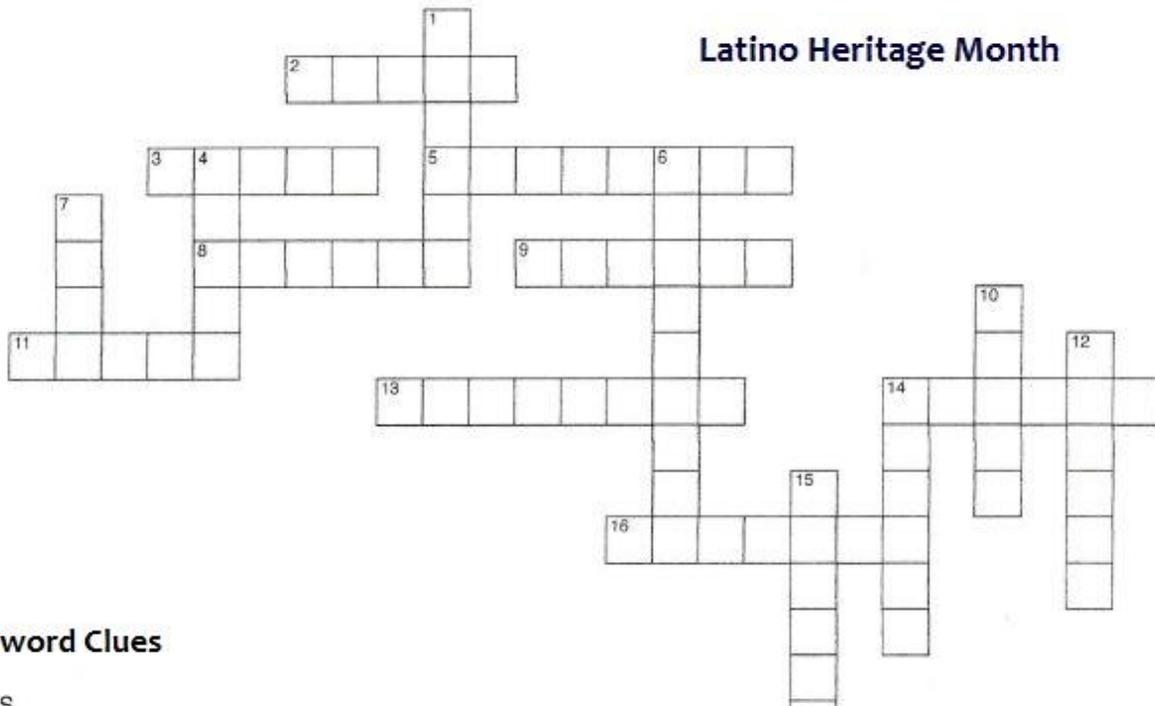
We thank Audrey Bettencourt Seaton and her family for the extended loan of their Cotegen Ohlone mortar and pestle. Audrey's great-uncle Manuel "Mayrose" Bettencourt found the stones long ago on his Tunitas Creek ranch, originally the site of a Cotegen village, also thousands of years old.

For years we have shown hundreds of local children the Bettencourt family's mortar and pestle during our Education Committee's 3rd grade classroom visits. The stones have been on display in the Jail Museum for the last two years. With the donation of the El Granada stones, we have returned the Tunitas Creek stones to the Seaton family, with much gratitude for their contribution to our local children and to our museum!



Puzzle Page

Our Education Committee's school program is going virtual, with a video presentation and a kids' activity booklet. Crosswords are just one example of the fun in the booklet! Linda Landucci of our Education Committee created this puzzle honoring Latino Heritage Month.



Crossword Clues

ACROSS

- 2 A country in Europe that once ruled California.
- 3 a public square
- 5 a hat
- 8 an afternoon nap
- 9 a ranch
- 11 a roofless courtyard
- 13 a thin, flat pancake made of cornmeal or flour
- 14 a pen for horses or cattle
- 16 a cowboy

DOWN

- 1 a party
- 4 a rope used to catch cattle
- 6 a rolled tortilla usually filled with meat
- 7 a flat-topped mountain
- 10 a small donkey
- 12 a deep gorge
- 14 a wild animal that belongs to the dog family
- 15 California was once part of this country.

History Quiz

The name Miramontes appears in Coastside place names and street names.

Who was Miramontes?



The answer is in this newsletter!

Video Tour of the Johnston House



Have you wondered what's inside that big white house on the hill south of Half Moon Bay? Stay tuned! Coming soon is a video tour of the Johnston House, hosted by Gail Stevens.

Gail is a docent with both the Half Moon Bay History Association and the Johnston House Foundation. She will take us through the house, room by room, to tell its story and the story of the people who lived there.

Many thanks to Michelle Dragony and Rob Carey for their excellent professional videography! We'll post the video on our website when it is complete.

Board of Directors

Juliette Applewhite, President

Dave Olson, Secretary

Scott Frazier, Treasurer

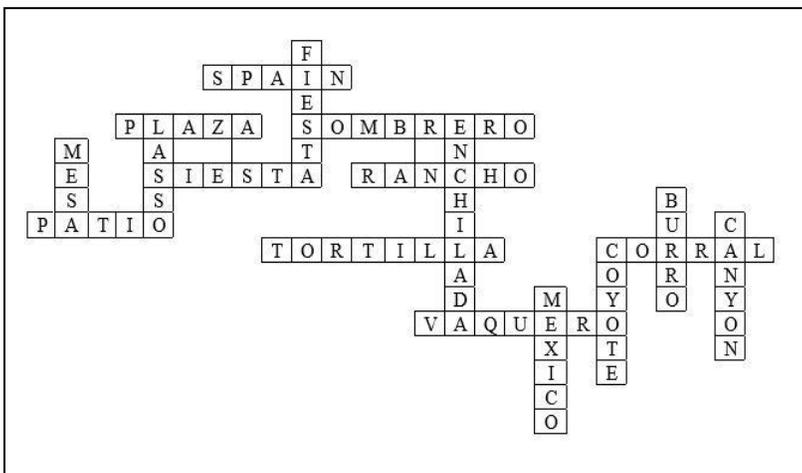
Mary Ruddy, Education Chair and Jail Museum Manager

Sally Benson, Special Projects Coordinator

Lau Hodges, Ex-officio Advisor

Ellen Chiri, Communications Chair

Crossword Answers



Help Preserve Coastside History

Half Moon Bay History Association is dedicated to bringing together all members of the community, to preserve and share the history of the San Mateo County Coastside, from Montara to Año Nuevo.

Our history is the lives and works of all the cultures that made the Coastside what it is today, from the times of the earliest Ohlone villages, to the Spanish and Mexican periods, through the early American period, to modern times.



Our mission is to educate as we preserve, honor, and celebrate Coastside history.

Let Us Hear From You

- Become a member—basic membership is \$25 per year. Join us on our [Membership page](#)
- Visit us on the web at halfmoonbayhistory.org
- Follow us on Facebook 
- Check out our [YouTube channel](#).
- Email us at info@halfmoonbayhistory.org with your questions or comments.
- Write to us at
625 Miramontes St. #203
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019

Volunteer Help Wanted!

- We would love to have your help with our Education, Oral History, and Program Committees.
- If you have experience writing grants or designing websites, let us hear from you!