

The Pioneer Press  
 West Side Pioneer Association  
 Tracy Historical Museum  
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## Upcoming Events



<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Location/Presenter</b>
Sept. 12-27, 2015		<i>European Train Enthusiasts (ETE)</i> <i>(See Page 5 for times and dates)</i>	Tracy Historical Museum
Saturday Sept. 12, 2015	1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	<i>Ellis Marker Dedication</i>	Joan Sparks Park
Wednesday Sept. 16, 2015	7:00-8:30 pm	<i>The origins of Sept 16 and Cinco de Mayo</i>	Tracy Historical Museum Richard Soto
Wednesday Oct. 21, 2015	7:00 pm	<i>The life of a SP Locomotive Engineer</i>	Tracy Historical Museum Jim Dameron
Saturday Oct. 24, 2015	10:00 am- 2:00 pm	<i>History Day at the Museum</i> <i>Family Event</i>	Tracy Historical Museum
Sunday December	7:00 pm	<i>Museum Holiday Open House</i>	Tracy Historical Museum

**Please Note:** Programs are subject to change.  
 Call the Museum, to confirm schedule



# THE PIONEER PRESS

West Side Pioneer Association/Tracy Historical Museum

1141 Adam Street, Tracy, California 95376

Phone: (209) 832-7278

E-Mail: [tracymuseum@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tracymuseum@sbcglobal.net)

Web: [www.tracymuseum.org](http://www.tracymuseum.org)

Vol. 26-5

September-October 2015

## WSPA President's Message

Larry W. Gamino - President

**"We should not look back unless to derive lessons from past errors, and for the purpose of profiting by dearly bought experience."** George Washington

Smile as summer sizzles during our mid-year pause to prepare for our Fall Historical Seminar programs. In this summer newsletter, we will showcase three historical essays from our 2 and 4 year college bound high school senior scholarship winners. Beginning with Jordyn Luna from Kimball High School who explores San Joaquin Valley before the invasion of European arrivals in California, two Tracy High seniors Hunter Wells and Alex Carter who delve into the visual evolution of historical Banta School and an eye opening revelation of the Mexican Mafia initiated at the Tracy Duel Vocational Institution, respectively. Each will receive a \$500 WSPA scholarship to further their college education this fall.

As part of the community supported WSPA mission to preserve history, it is equally important to encourage the next generation of teenagers, called the Millennial or Generation Y, the importance of local history to understand the world we live in. At the same time, these student Millennials reveal themselves in terms of unique values and piqued interests as they approach adulthood through their relevant subject matter. As such, The Millennial cohort is exerting their influence on the world around them, as all prior generations have done.

Because our Millennial scholars grew up in a computer filled and online socially networked world, our college bound awardees represent the tip of the most ethnically diverse generation. Outnumbering the Baby Boomers, the following three historical essays challenge traditional concepts and taboo subjects with original insights and independent thinking. This President salutes their bold methodologies on their way to honorable adults.

Lastly, the WSPA invites the whole City of Tracy and beyond to partake in an inaugural Ellis Marker dedication at Joan Sparks Park on September 12th from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm and an exciting evening lecture celebrating the History of the 16<sup>th</sup> of September and Cinco de Mayo by Tracy Adult educator Richard Soto at 7 PM at the Tracy Historical Museum. In addition to our Historical Seminar Series lecture, a special night on September 16<sup>th</sup> with the European Train Enthusiast (ETE) will simultaneously kick off at 6 PM and conclude at 9 PM.

***ELLIS MARKER DEDICATION***  
**Saturday, September 12, 2015**  
**Joan Sparks Park**



Keynote Speaker  
Architect Pete Mitracus

The West Side Pioneer Association in partnership with the City of Tracy has placed a marker at the location of historic Ellis.

Ellis was established as a coaling station in 1869 on the Western Pacific Railroad - the last link in the Transcontinental Railroad. In 1878 rail operations were transferred to Tracy and Ellis passed into history. Some of the first buildings in Tracy were moved from Ellis.

Join us for the dedication of the Ellis Historic Marker.

**WHERE :** Joan Sparks Park

at the corner of Carol Ann Drive and Marie Angela Drive

**DATE:** September 12, 2015

**TIME:** 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm.

**Refreshments will be provided by the Ellis Marker Committee**

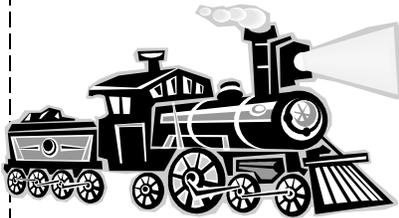
Thank you....  
Pete, Mike & crew, Brian, Larry  
for all your help.



# *Do you know anyone who likes trains?*

**September 12 - 27, 2015**

THE WEST SIDE PIONEER ASSOCIATION/TRACY HISTORICAL MUSEUM has invited the Bay Area Chapter of the European Train Enthusiasts to come display their very beautiful and skillfully crafted Model Train layout featuring the typical scenery and villages of Europe.



Come visit so you can watch the many colorful passenger and freight trains of times past and present from Holland, Germany, Switzerland, France, Austria and others.

Please bring the *whole family* and friends to experience this wonderful event.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TIMES</u>
Saturday, Sept 12	10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Sunday, Sept 13	10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Wednesday Sept 16	10:00 am - 4:00 pm AND 6:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Friday Sept 18	10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Saturday, Sept 19	10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Sunday, Sept 20	10:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Wednesday, Sept 23	10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Friday, Sept 25	10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Saturday, Sept 26	10:00 am - 4:00 pm
Sunday, Sept 27	10:00 pm - 4:00 pm

# **History Day at the Museum**

**Saturday, October 24, 2015  
10:00 am – 2:00 pm**

\*\*\*\*\*

Civil War Re-enactors, Spinning,  
Basket Weaving,  
Junior History Explorer Kids Activities

\*\*\*\*\*

**Free – Bring the Family**

Tracy Historical Museum, 1141 Adam Street  
209-832-7278, [www.tracymuseum.org](http://www.tracymuseum.org)

# YOKUTS CHULAMNI INDIANS

## TRACY HISTORY

JORDYN LUNA  
MARCH 27, 2015

In the mid-1700s, these Yokuts siblings, their family and friends may have inhabited the land we recognize today as the city of Tracy. The area they occupied is geographically defined on the west by the Altamont Pass and on the east - Middle/Old River. The tribe was likely a Yokuts Indian tribe, specifically the Chulamni people. The Yokuts people are the least known aboriginal people of the Central Valley, but the evidence they left behind indicates they were relative newcomers to this northern part of the Central Valley migrating and settling at some point during the early 1700s. Further archeological evidence leads us to believe the Chulamni migrated from southern parts of the state specifically from Southern Yokuts communities in the Fresno area, a well-documented area dating back as far as 1600.

In the 1700s, Yokuts population in the Tracy area was roughly estimated at 18,000 people, by the 1920 federal census they numbered only 523. This immediate decline and accelerated extinction are the direct result of Spanish-Mexican missionization in the 1800s followed by the Gold Rush. Well protected naturally by hilly country to the west, the Sierra Nevada to the east and swampy sloughs in the Valley; teams of search parties never reached their area. Once their land was discovered, however, there was no contest. The Yokuts began to perish. New diseases were introduced without cures and since they were not an aggressive or trained militant people they were swiftly infiltrated and overcome by the search parties. New ways of life, severe structure via the mission system, and odd, unfamiliar work became their new existence and the tribe quickly faded to extinction.



In earlier times, the Yokuts Chulamni settled in small “mobile” communities on the riverbanks of the waterways. Prone to flooding in the late winter and spring, the convenient nearby Sierra foothills occupied by friendly Miwok Indians where a welcome sanctuary for the displaced communities when necessary until the waters of the San Joaquin River subsided and they could return.

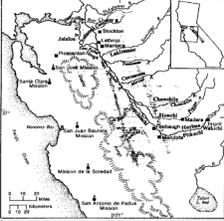
The original geography offered complex layers of living essentials. Area rivers, lakes, and streams provided construction goods for the Indians in the form of tule reeds, logs, branches, and clay/sand-based soil well-suited for sustaining Central Valley life. These same waterways were nature’s pantry abundantly stocked with a variety of fish and shellfish; shrimp, mussels, clams, and salmon, to name a few; while adjacent land boasted a limited variety of plants, trees, seeds, and nuts. Wildlife naturally frequented the waterways providing hides, meat, bones, and ligaments sustaining the need for meat, clothing, blankets, and additional materials for making tools and weapons with which to hunt and protect themselves.

The climate was amicable enough making the valley a good choice for permanent residence. While reasonably arid, the winters were wet and cold; spring brought warmer temperatures and flooding to the valley from snow runoff originating in the Sierras; and summers saw temperatures above 100 degrees when the only apparent annoyance were the mosquitos.

Evidence of settlements (larger ones) have been found on berms or the higher ground near main waterways, a natural way to protect people and belongings from the expected seasonal flooding and rising rivers. Family homes were simple and easy to relocate when necessary, consisting of thatched or strung, pliable tule reeds, and wooden poles. Mats were made of coiled/ braided tule and sewn together. Tule reeds were a necessary commodity for making baskets, cradles, mats, trays – every kind of vessel or container. The people developed various forms of artistry to make the vessels interesting and used them to trade with other Californian tribes. Evidence of the tule artistry has been found throughout the state as far away as Monterey and in the Sierra Nevada’s.

# YOKUTS CHULAMNI INDIANS

## (Continued)



They also made rafts of tule. Tule was fashioned into a raft during spring/summer and left upside down to dry. The process rendered rafts waterproof and capable for fishing or transportation.

It is believed the Yokuts Chulamni were a spiritual people since shamanism (spiritual healer/intercessory figure) was developed and closely followed in early California history. There is evidence in Tracy of burial grounds including remains that are partially cremated, not unique to the Yokuts community and indicative of some form of ceremonial activity.



The Yokuts Chulamni were a peaceful people, slow to fight or war, and with little reason to do so. In the rare instance of visitors or expeditions to the area, inhabitants would communicate the pending approach through smoke signals to warn others of possible danger. The natural geography of the valley floor made this form of communication highly effective.



In 1906, Jesus Oliver, a descendant of the tribes near Tracy and an informant for a University of California, Berkeley research project made mention that his tribe, the Yokuts Chulamni, was extinct. He explained the dialect was no longer practiced and even he had forgotten the language making him one of and possibly "THE" last known survivor of the area.



I find the term and termination of this tribe sad. There is so little "first hand" evidence of their existence. Much like Tracy today, the Yokuts Chulamni were a simple community content to thrive at the river's edge. I trust we are good and thorough caretakers and stewards of the city of Tracy so that future generations will be inspired to do the same by virtue of the legacy and examples we leave behind.

**About the Author:** Jordyn Luna is a Senior from John C. Kimball High School and plans to accept CSU Stanislaus and major in criminology.

### WORKS CITED

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# The Mexican Mafia

By Alex Carter  
Tracy High School

Tracy is not one of the major cities of the United States but rather a small town. It isn't like Los Angeles or New York City, and it is not that town that is popular to tourists, nor is it notorious. However, there have been a handful of times when Tracy has been on the news. You may have heard of the Sandra Cantu kidnapping and murder, or of the teen that was held in shackles in his own home and abused by his family. I remember hearing of these true crimes and thinking that it could not possibly happen to my town where I was raised to believe was safe. When I was in middle school we couldn't wear red because then they would assume we were in a gang, and I would hear rumors that in High School all the Hispanics were Sureños or Nortenos. Now as a senior in Tracy High School in 2015, I'm glad to say those rumors were incorrect. However, in Tracy's past there is a history gang fights and quarrels in Hispanic neighborhoods and this was common during the 1950's through the 1965. What I\* didn't know was that Tracy had been the subject of a high profile gang, who were called "La Eme" or the Mexican Mafia. Despite the name, the Mexican Mafia was entirely a United States prison gang. The gang was formed in 1957 by 13 Hispanic street gang members in Los Angeles that were currently at a California Youth Authority Facility in Tracy California. When this gang had only thirteen members, it was called "Mexikanemi" Aztec for "He who walks with God in his heart". The reason that they formed this group in this facility was to protect themselves from other threats, for example: prison gangs. The person who formed this gang is Luis "Huelo Buff" Flores who was already apart of another gang, named Hawaiian Gardens in Hawaiian Gardens, California. The Mexican Mafia were that powerful, that Luis Flores was able to get gang enemies to set aside differences, when they would enter the prison system. Some gangs for example who set aside their rivalries due to entering the prison were White Fence, San Fer, Pacas, Avenues, Clanton 14, Varrio Nuevo Estada and Hoyo Maravilla. How did Luis Flores get this much power from just 13 member, you ask? Flores was smart. Flores would recruit the most violent members to his gang to create a highly feared group so that he could control the black market activities of the prison. One of the members, Ramon "Mundo" Mendoza argued that in the beginning the only goal was to torture the prison system and get prison luxuries while all serving their time. It started out as a normal gang, but then turned into a Mafia with 250,000 members.

La Eme also dominated many of the gangs even outside of prison. When some of the new members leave prison to go back to the streets, they recruit more gang members to use for their dirty work. Anacleta "Annie" Ramirez was a well-known member of the East Los Angeles community and took advantage of many young neighborhood kids. She taught them discipline, street life and then very little crime. That didn't last long however, she later found herself as the shot caller, and she would make her young apprentices help her with her drug trade and send them to drug deals. After she would send the youngsters on these drug deals, many of her enemies were murdered on sight. Today the Mexican Mafia is not just in California, but to at least seven other states including Texas and New Mexico.

La Eme has been around since the 1950's and is not going to be easily overcome. This gang is especially important because it was made in a non-traditional somewhat thought-to-be impossible way which is in prison. La Eme has been accused of controlling drugs, gambling, extortion and prostitution throughout the system. They were also accused of terrorizing the local Latino street gangs by making them obey their commands, such as a ban on drive-by shootings, and they also have no problem executing any of the gang members who disobey its commands.

Tracy's history is very important and incredibly more diverse than I could imagine. The kids at my school say "this school is white" and "all we have is white people and farmers," but little do they know, about this notorious Mafia that once lived in Tracy's Youth Authority Facility. This is important because it shows us that even though this gang is powerful, it is locked up behind bars.

***About the Author:** Alex Carter is a Tracy High School Senior and plans to attend either UC Davis, UC Irvine or San Diego State University and major in aerospace engineering.*

# Historical Banta School

By Hunter Wells  
Tracy High School

Geography and the cultural landscape history into what it has become today. This term definitely applies to the town of Tracy's changing history. I chose to do my report on the old Banta School. The cultural landscape has changed the purpose of the building from what it used to be. The building located on Grant Line road, was used as a school for the children of Banta. There was actually another one room building, built in 1878, that was located on Banta Road. This school was called Valley school. When the new Banta School was constructed in 1925-26, it was still called Valley school until when a petition was formed on March 1929 to change the school's name to Banta School. The school was donated to the community by California Irrigated Farms. The first year the school was used, one hundred and eight children attended it. Banta School was used until 1970 when a larger building was constructed right behind the school on El Rancho Road. This became the new Banta School. The building is now used as a church. The structure has been remolded since it was used as a school because the owner mentioned that it was worn down. Other than a few changes though, the building is very similar to its original architectural style. Not only did the cultural landscape connect to the project but the five themes definitely connected to it as well. Movement and the recourses moved people out here which caused the cultural landscape to change dramatically in the Banta area.

To observe the changes from the old building to the new building, I analyzed a picture taken of the old and new school. In the old picture there are no people or cars in it so I couldn't tell when the picture was exactly taken. I noticed that there was a huge telephone pole right in the front of the school. The building had circular shaped mosaic tiles that added to the décor of the building. The building shows an early California architectural style because of the shape of the details of the building such as the windows, mosaics and doorways. The structure had a shingled roof, ten arched windows, two short stairs, and what looks to be a dirt drive way. The picture shows that it was taken after the school had been moved to El Rancho Road because the power lines are down which would be very hazardous for children that attended the school. This cannot be a hundred percent accurate though because there no activities shown in the picture. The cultural landscape shaped the building because the community needed a bigger school to send their children so they could get an education. The original school was only a single room that had a class of five. This building had to be built to hold more children. The geographic traits of the land changed here to suit the needs of the community.

The newer picture that I took of the building had not changed a whole lot from its original style. The building, which is now a church, still had its original structure. The whole structure of the building is the same except for a few details such as the fencing, paint, and a few cultural objects. The building still had had its round mosaic tiles to add to the décor of the structure. It still had its ten arched windows, two short stair cases, and it also still had its two rectangular shaped windows that were covered by lattice pattern shade. The old picture looked like it had a dirt drive way. Today the building does not have this drive way. It has a small yard in the front. Also, in the old picture, a small bob wire wooden fence surrounds the building while today a chain link fence surrounds the building.

This building still has a shingled roof as well. Again, as more people moved into the small community of Banta, a new school had to be built to accommodate all of the new children that needed an education.

# Historical Banta School

(continued)

This building is part of my background because I actually live in the community of Banta. I went to the newer school that is located on El Rancho Road since kindergarten. This building is now a church which is opened on every Sunday. I do not attend the church but this building led to the development of the newer one that I did attend. This building is a part of a lot of other people's backgrounds. Many people who live in Banta have been here for a long time and their families have been living here since the area started becoming a community. This building is a part of their background because these people received their education from the school. Spatial perspective led people to creating the new versions of the school to suit the community's needs.

The original building that was used as a school helped shaped the cultural landscape of the area because the school had to be built to suit the community's needs. Today the building is not used because as the geography of the town changed, so did the history. The school became a church and a new building was built to replace to school to again fit the needs of the community. This project showed me how important the Banta School was for all of the children who lived in the community of Banta. Banta School was a big part of the town's historical geography.

*About the Author: Hunter Wells is a Tracy High School Senior and plans to attend San Joaquin Delta College and teach history*

## ANY TIME TO SPARE?

**Spring Cleaning** The Tracy Historical Museum is in need of a **GRAND DUSTING!** We are looking for anyone with some "Dusting" power that can come in Tuesday and/or Friday at 9:30am. Two rooms in particular need "DUSTING". Rags are provided. There's soap and water to wash up afterwards! Please! Come and help! Let's get our Tracy Historical Museum in tip-top shape!



Contact Jean on Monday at the museum to set up a date when you can help out, call 832-7278. For anyone wanting to take on another task: like moving a cabinet or a desk or writing down numbers???? **PLEASE CALL!**

## Volunteers needed for Museum and Living History Program

Our Historical Museum is run by volunteers. We need your help to volunteer to staff the Museum when it is open and the wonderful 3<sup>rd</sup> grade living history programs that Museum operates.

- Regular Museum Hours:
  - Monday 9:00 am – 2:00 pm
  - Saturday 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
  - Sunday 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm OR by appointment for groups.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Program at Museum: Mondays 9:00-11:00 on school days
- Historic Lammersville Pioneer School Program: School days in January-May (one or two days a week)



If you can commit to a few hours one day a week or every month, or on special events, we can use your help to keep these wonderful programs going. Please call the program coordinator for more information and to lend a helping hand:

- Museum Coordinator - Open - 209-832-7278
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Museum Program Coordinator – Judy Lee - 209-814-3358
- Historic Lammersville Pioneer School Program Coordinator – Wes Huffman - 209-879-3155



**Come out and volunteer and have fun at the same time.**

## Museum Launches New Web Site

[www.tracymuseum.org](http://www.tracymuseum.org)



We are pleased to present our new web site at our existing URL, [www.tracymuseum.org](http://www.tracymuseum.org). We have not only updated basic organizational information, but we can also now easily post announcements and program updates on the site. We will also start to build an online archive of many written documents and photographs that are in the Museum library archives.

Special thanks to Kevin Harb for his technical expertise to develop the site.

Check back regularly at [www.tracymuseum.org](http://www.tracymuseum.org) for the most current news from the Tracy Historical Museum and West Side Pioneer Association.

# SUPPORT THE MUSEUM



## ***RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2015***

Annual Membership Dues  
(Starting every January)

Adults	\$10.00
Couples/Families	\$15.00
Students	\$ 5.00
Organizations	\$10.00
Commercial	\$20.00
Lifetime Membership	\$150.00



**Use the renewal form below to  
help the museum continue to  
serve your community**



Cut along this line

### **West Side Pioneer Association Membership Application**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Membership Dues  
(Starting every January)

Make checks payable to  
West Side Pioneer Association

\_\_\_ Adults \$10.00  
\_\_\_ Couples/Families \$15.00  
\_\_\_ Students \$5.00  
\_\_\_ Organizations \$10.00  
\_\_\_ Commercial \$20.00  
\_\_\_ Lifetime Membership \$150.00

**Return application and payment to:**  
West Side Pioneer Association  
1141 Adam St.  
Tracy, CA 95376

## Have you forgotten to provide your Email Address



Although we are a historical museum, there are some technological advances we need to adopt! Because email is now a common form of communication, we are going to start to update our membership records with email addresses. We will continue to issue the *Pioneer Press* in print. Please consider providing your email to us as it is the most cost effective way for us to communicate with members about program updates and reminders. You can add your email to the Annual Dues Payment Form included in this issue when you send in your check, or you can email the Museum at [tracymuseum@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tracymuseum@sbcglobal.net) with your name and address. Thank you for your help and support.

### West Side Pioneer Association Board of Directors for 2015-2016

<i><b>Elected Board Officers</b></i>	<i><b>Name</b></i>	<i><b>Telephone #</b></i>
President	Larry Gamino	209-836-9687
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	David Lee	209-814-6658
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	Open	
Recording Secretary	Janice Johnson	209-836-3770
Treasurer	Mitra Behnam	209-740-2764
Corresponding Secretary	Jean Shipman	209-835-8933
Museum Chairperson	Open	
Old Lammersville School	Wes Huffman	209-879-3155
3rd Grade Tour Director	Judy Lee	209-814-6658
Landmark Committee	Pete Mitracos	209-835-0270
<i><b>Elected Board Members at Large</b></i>	David Middleton	209-835-3797
	Ruth Sanford	209-835-6023
	Virginia Mynatt	209-836-1171
<i><b>Appointed Board Members</b></i>	Open	
	David Castro	209-835-2478
	Kathy Bergthold	408-569-8931
	Celeste Garamendi	209-914-0792
<i><b>Ex-officio</b></i>		
	Immediate Past President	David Lee