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Sourisseau Academy

Smith-Layton Archive presents:

Images of Los Gatos

by Amy Long

Les Amis (The Friends)

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[44] **Greyhound and Peerless Bus Station, 1944 - 1946.** Buses were a popular way to travel between San Jose, Los Gatos, Santa Cruz and San Francisco. The tiny lunch counter inside the Art Deco-style station was a popular lunch spot for senior citizens to meet for lunch. The Art Deco station and its exterior tile façade are still located at 145 North Santa Cruz Avenue and now house retail stores.



[45] **Hotel Lyndon, 1955.** The Hotel Lyndon replaced the Los Gatos Hotel, which burned down on May 26, 1898. The hotels were located at the southwest corner of Main and Santa Cruz Avenues. Jacob Lenzen and Son of San Jose were the architects, and E.A. Hettinger of Palo Alto was the contractor. Nearly all of Los Gatos' residents attended the grand reopening on June 1, 1899. The hotel had 175 feet of frontage with an illuminated front porch where ices were served to the guests in the evening. The hotel moved furniture out of public rooms to accommodate dancing. These rooms were decorated with velvet carpets, and furniture of maple, ash and oak, combined with natural wood, pine and redwood. There were 60 bedrooms upstairs. The hotel was constructed of approximately 300,000 board feet of lumber, much of it redwood brought from James Lyndon's nearby lumberyard. The landmark hotel was demolished on March 30, 1963.



[46] **Sacred Heart Novitiate, 1950-1960.** In 1886, the Society of Jesus (Jesuit order) purchased the Harvey Wilcox ranch at the top of what is now College Avenue. The property had flourishing orchards and vineyards overlooking the town. Sacred Heart Novitiate was formally opened on July 25, 1888. Young men entered the Novitiate for the 13 years of training required to become a Jesuit priest. During the 1950s, Jerry Brown studied for the priesthood at this location. In 1888, wine production began, and for many years the Novitiate was the largest bonded ecclesiastical winery in the county. Today, Testarossa Vineyards produces wine on part of the property, and retired priests occupy the Novitiate buildings.



[47] **La Hacienda, 1965.** In 1901, Mr. and Mrs. Theodore Morris of the China Japan Trading Company, who had lived in Yokohama, Japan, retired to Saratoga. They built an Asian inspired inn, restaurant and several cottages on a 32-acre plot located on Highway 9. It was called the Nippon Mura (Japanese Villa). In 1941, the Velo Family purchased the property and changed the name to La Hacienda. Today, the structure and restaurant still serve the town locals and visitors.



[48] **Paul Swanson Ford, circa 1963.** Originally located on North Santa Cruz Avenue, Paul Swanson Ford moved to the northwest corner of Blossom Hill Road and Los Gatos Boulevard in 1959. During the 1950s and 1960s, many Los Gatos automobile dealerships moved from the heart of Los Gatos to the Boulevard.



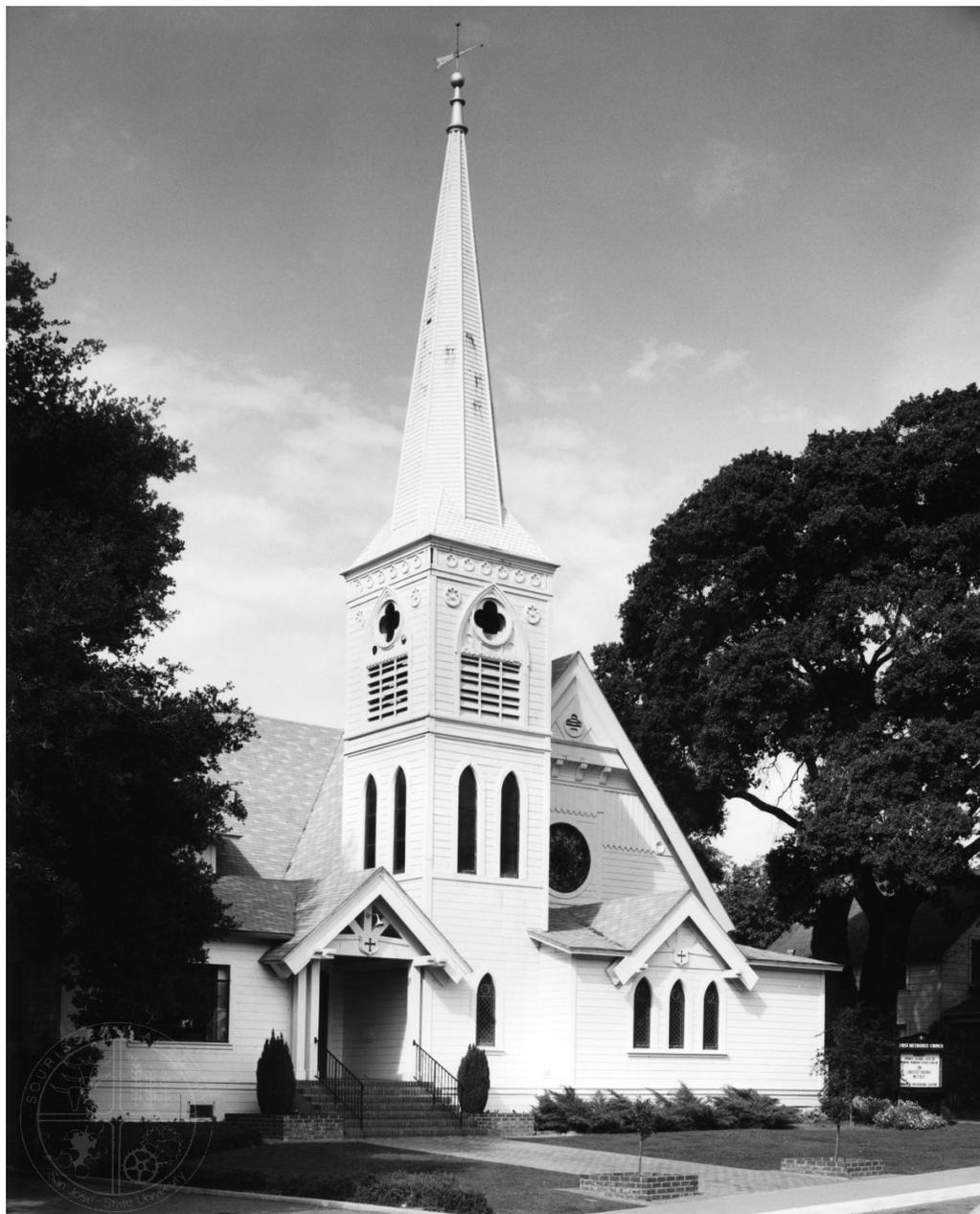
[49] **Town Hall, 1950-1955.** Built in 1913, the Town Hall was located on the current Civic Center grounds on Main Street. Designed by William Crim, Jr., the building was demolished in 1965. There were many heated debates and much opposition in town over the destruction of the property. It was replaced in 1967 with a modern, brick, civic center.



[50] **Fanning's Motel, 1960.** Fanning's Motel, located at 214 Saratoga Avenue, was owned and operated by Carol Fanning from 1951-1965. It was a popular motel stop during the travel by car boom of the post WW II era.



[51] **Live Oak Inn, 1960.** The Live Oak Inn, located in the Little Village shopping center off of North Santa Cruz Avenue south of Highway 9, was constructed between 1945 and 1950. Floyd “Bus” Benson and his wife Ruby operated the inn for several decades. It was also a hot spot for dining, dancing and cocktails. In 1978, it was known as the Grog and Sirloin, and then Double D’s in the 1990s. Interestingly, the businesses sit on top of the original nineteenth century Los Gatos Cemetery. Some of the bodies from the 1800s were never claimed when the cemetery was relocated, and are still located on the property.



[52] **Old Methodist Episcopal Church, 1950s.** The Methodist Church was organized in Los Gatos in 1866, the first formal religious organization in town. Their first services were held under a Live Oak tree. For fifteen years this was the only church in Los Gatos. This structure, completed in 1889 on Church Street, was torn down in 1965 and replaced by a newer Methodist Church.



[53] **The First Church of Christ Science, 1940s.** In 1904, Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Harding began to hold lesson sermons of the Christian Science faith in their apartment. As attendance increased, they held services at various locations. In 1929, they purchased two lots on Main Street across from the high school. They constructed a Neo-Classical church, designed by William Crim Jr., designer of the 1913 Town Hall. The building's impressive portico has a row of large Corinthian columns. The first service in the building was held in February 1930, and the church has graced Main Street for the last 87 years.



[54] **St. Mary's Catholic Church, 1950.** Saint Mary's Catholic Church was erected in 1881 at Bean and North Santa Cruz Avenues. In 1912, a new church was constructed at 219 Bean Avenue, the old church moved to the site where it served as the nave, and a rectory added in 1913. In 1914, San Jose architect Louis T. Lenzen designed a new front addition and facade, as shown in this photograph. The new addition included the vestibule, baptistry, and choir loft. In 1961, the 1914 church was demolished and a new, modern style church was constructed.



[55] **Rinconada Golf Club, 1950-1955.** In 1928, W.C. Sprague, a retired Standard Oil executive and a group of Los Gatos businessmen purchased property on Clearview Drive for the La Rinconada Country Club. In May 1929, the first round of golf was played. The facility is for members only and houses a clubhouse and swimming pool overlooking the hills and valley.



[56] **Billy Jones Wildcat Railroad, 1965.** Originally located on Daves Avenue, Billy Jones Wildcat Railroad was constructed on the property of William "Billy" Jones. He assembled a one-third-scale steam railroad in memory of his two sons who were killed a year apart during WWII. He named it the Wildcat Railroad and gave hundreds of children rides on his train until his death in 1968. Today, the train continues his legacy at Vasona - Oak Meadow Park in Los Gatos.