

FRIENDS OF SANTA TERESA PARK



The Hidden Springs Trail leading to Coyote Peak

Planning Begins for Fortini Rd. Property

By Ron Horii

Planning has started to develop the Fortini Road Property. On April 5, 2022, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors authorized the purchase of the 47-acre property at Fortini and McKean Roads, adjacent to Calero County Park and Santa Teresa County Park. They authorized \$9.5 million from the County Park's budget to be set aside for this purchase, \$8.5 million for the property itself, \$1 million for closing costs. **Continued on page 6.**



View of the Fortini Road Property from the Stile Ranch Trail. San Vicente Ave. is at the bottom. Fortini Rd. is on the left.

Our Mission

The Friends of Santa Teresa Park (FOSTP) is a volunteer and neighborhood association, founded in 1992 and based in San Jose. Our mission is to help protect, enhance, maintain, and restore Santa Teresa Park and the surrounding neighborhood through education, volunteer involvement, coordination, and communications with the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department Staff, the City of San Jose, and the greater community. We are a diverse group with a wide range of interests. We report on problems and concerns in the park and adjoining neighborhood and recommend changes and improvements. We help out with trail maintenance and park events. If you are interested in helping out at the park or just want to know what's going on, you are welcome to join us. See our website for more information: www.stpfriends.org. You are welcome to visit our Facebook page (STPFriends).

Meetings: 7:00 pm, 1st Thursday of each month.

Zoom meetings since pandemic shutdown.

Formerly: Upper Clubhouse/Banquet Facility, Santa Teresa Golf Club, 260 Bernal Road, San Jose, CA

Website: <http://www.stpfriends.org>.

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/STPFriends/>

Email: fostp@stpfriends.org (email us to request Zoom meeting link)

Officers:

- Mike Boulland, President
- Steve Crockett, Vice President & Treasurer
- Ronald Horii, Secretary, Webmaster, Newsletter Editor

President's Message

By Mike Boulland

Take a look inside this FOSTP Summer newsletter as it includes a rare, updated new article about the history of the Bernal mercury and marl mines written by the leading New Almaden mercury mining expert, Michael Cox, for us. Michael is often sought out for his colorful mining presentations recalling his adventures as a seventeen-year-old teenager wandering in the New Almaden mines when he and his brother were both exploring the vast underground maze of the abandoned mining tunnels.

This year brings us many projects and family activities at the ranch site. Specifically, Park Interpreters Rob McDonnell and Katrina Semene continue to bring the joy of learning about nature and the history of the ranch to our community with their engaging interpretive programs. Rob's presentations are a hit with the children, who love to meet Morticia the kingsnake, and learn more about the fascinating world of nature.

FOSTP volunteers are always needed at the ranch. I want to take a moment now to recognize and express my genuine thanks to all the incredible volunteers who selflessly show up and contribute their time and effort to the FOSTP First Friday of the Month Volunteer event at the historic Bernal-Gulnac-Joice Ranch site. Their work is not just tremendous, it is invaluable. The dedicated group of volunteers, through their efforts, help BeautifySJ and our Santa Teresa neighborhood by maintaining the grounds, making a significant impact on our community. You too can participate by emailing me to join our volunteer group at fostp@stpfriends.org.

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See <http://www.stpfriends.org/#newsletters> for this and past newsletters.

La Fuente Returns September 21, 2024

The La Fuente celebration will be returning to Santa Teresa Park's Bernal-Gulnac-Joice Ranch on Saturday September 21, 2024 from 4 to 7 pm. It is being organized by Park Interpreter Rob McDonnell. It will have folklorico dancing, traditional music, a horse, roping steers, arts and crafts, ice cream, park information, storytelling, and guided walks in English and Spanish. FOSTP will have an information booth with historic displays, newsletters, and games.

For the second year after a 2-year absence due to the pandemic, the last La Fuente was held on 9/23/23. Like this year, it was part of Hispanic Heritage Month and Binational Health Week. Here are pictures from last year's La Fuente: <https://tinyurl.com/tzczdjn7>.



Folklorico dancing, La Fuente 9/23/23

FOSTP Leads History/Nature Hike

The Friends of Santa Teresa Park (FOSTP) led a hike in Santa Teresa County Park on 5/11/24, the day before Mother's Day. It was called the "Mothers and Flowers Hike." The hike was on the Fortini, Mine, and Stile Ranch Trails and included stories about important mothers in the history of the Rancho Santa Teresa area, along with viewing late spring wildflowers. FOSTP members Mike Boulland, Dorene Boulland, Kim Gardner, Joan Murphy, and Ron Horii came to help with the event. Mike, Joan, Dorene and Kim portrayed historical figures. Here are pictures from the hike: <https://tinyurl.com/54zxwz8p>



School Programs at the Bernal Ranch

by Rob McDonnell, Park Interpreter

The school year has started and field trips are just around the corner! Beginning in October, Park Interpreters will lead the Pieces of the Past Program at the Bernal-Gulnac-Joice Ranch on Thursdays and Fridays. The program has taken off in popularity after the 2020 COVID pandemic, and teachers have great things to say about its efficacy in teaching students about local history. A teacher from Santa Teresa Elementary remarked that "it goes great with our First-Grade Unit: Past and Present. It also is walking distance from our school." Another teacher mentioned the program's flexibility in serving different age groups: "Our fourth-grade social studies unit covers the huge transformation of land and diversity of early California. The Bernal Ranch [field trip] is a perfect connection to this piece of history."

In the 2023-2024 school year, County Parks hosted thirty-six field trips in the Bernal Ranch, serving an estimated 900 students. While the program typically serves kindergarten and first grade students, Interpreters have adjusted discussions to ensure that fourth and fifth grade students receive instruction about local history, upon a request from their teachers. The topics covered include a discussion of the people who lived in what is now Santa Teresa County Park, local natural resources, and the different ways people like the Muwekma Ohlone and Californio ranchers used those natural resources as part of their livelihoods. In addition, students have the opportunity to visit Santa Teresa Spring and practice cattle roping on wooden roping steers.

It is a fantastic opportunity for kids to reflect on how much life has changed for the different groups of people that rely on the Santa Teresa Spring and call the area home.



School Program at the Bernal Ranch

Besides school programs at the Bernal-Gulnac-Joice Ranch, the County Parks also has programs at Almaden Quicksilver, Martial Cottle, Chitactac Adams and Anderson. For information about school programs, see: <https://parks.sccgov.org/school-programs>

Mining at the Santa Teresa and Bernal Mines

By Michael Cox

This is a brief compilation from mining references for the Santa Teresa and Bernal mines as well as the author's own observations. Details regarding the mines, including location maps and photographs, are available on the FOSTP website at this link:

https://stpfriends.org/Documents/The_Bernal_and_Santa_Teresa_Mines_Yesterday_and_Today_w_notes.pdf.

Hundreds if not thousands of years ago, indigenous people used stone tools to work surface outcrops of cinnabar (HgS) and ocher (iron oxide) at the Bernal and Santa Teresa mine locations. The first peoples ground up the mined material to make red pigment for adornment and ceremonial use. The mining of pigments by early peoples is a fascinating story of deep time and early history that will have to be left to a future article. Records are scant, but mining in more recent times probably started in the second half of the 1800s. The opening of the New Almaden mercury mine in 1846 and its rapid rise to bonanza status by 1850 encouraged mercury mining exploration throughout the region and even up and down the state. Many people invested (and mostly lost) significant sums of money to find "the next New Almaden."

Except for the New Idria mine in San Benito County, none of the other finds came close to half of New Almaden's size and production. New Almaden production is recorded and reported at about 1,130,000 76-lb flasks of mercury. A flask is a standard unit of mercury commerce, an iron bottle holding 76 pounds of mercury. Some degree of unreported sales of rich cinnabar and refined mercury are likely but remain unaccounted at New Almaden. The author believes New Almaden production is probably closer to 1,200,000 flasks. The Bernal and Santa Teresa, by comparison, had little to no recorded production, certainly less than five flasks.

Mining at the Bernal and Santa Teresa after 1900 is better documented and saw organized operations at both. Owing to a lack of rich ore discoveries, these mines were never developed to any significant production of mercury. Mining for marl, a decomposed form of limestone, was significant but took place only at the Bernal mine. The marl operation, mining for soil amendment and fertilizer, took place mainly in the years 1915 to 1938, under the ownership of Pedro Bernal, who passed away in 1938. Pedro's father, Ygnacio Bernal tried mining quicksilver in 1896, but again, the ores were not rich enough or plentiful enough to sustain the operation. Periods of high prices, especially during WW-II and the technological boom of the 1960s, encouraged further exploration and assessment at both properties, but the work failed to yield any significant ore.

Ygnacio Bernal's son, Pedro, founded the Bernal California Marl Fertilizer Company in 1915 to produce soil amend-

ment for the area's burgeoning agricultural industry. The mine exploited limestone deposits in today's county park. Reportedly the mine produced 50 tons of material a day during the heyday of mining. A large processing plant and product storage and shipping facilities at the mine are largely gone, but a few remnants remain. The business folded when Pedro died. The San Jose Public Library California room has information James Delgado compiled regarding the Bernal family and its holdings. Some of these items are accessible online in the Bernal Family Collection online archives at <https://digitalcollections.sjlibrary.org/digital/collection/sjplbernal/search>.

With respect to the mercury operations, William Forstner, Engineer of Mines for the California State Mining Bureau provides the following description on page 171 and 172 in the 1903 Bulletin 27 of the Bureau, "Quicksilver Resources of California."

"Bernal Mine.—This is situated on the east slope of the Santa Teresa hills, about 8 miles southeast of San José and near Edenvale station, on the Southern Pacific main line. Ygnacio Bernal, No. 207 Balbach street, San José, owner. This property is traversed by a ravine having a northeasterly course, draining into Coyote Creek; on both sides of this ravine, but especially on the northwest side, where the workings are located, are found some very prominent croppings. The latter are entirely surrounded by serpentine, but as far as ascertained do not connect with those on the southeast slope of the ravine. The direction of these croppings is about northwest. A tunnel, course nearly west, about 215 feet long, is run on the contact of the "alta" and the serpentine; about 30 feet from the breast a good exposure of the formation shows the vein to dip slightly northeast, with a clay gouge on both sides. A short crosscut to the left shows that the overlying gouge is at least 15 feet wide. The gangue is of a very calcareous nature. Nearly 200 feet above this tunnel, on the top of the ridge, a shaft 65 feet deep has been sunk on the croppings, showing some good ore on the dump. About 20 feet southeast of this shaft a shallower shaft, not over 20 feet deep, on the same croppings, shows a more ochreous vein material."

On pages 186 and 187 of Forstner (ibid.) the following description of the Santa Teresa mine is provided: "Santa Teresa Mine.—This is situated on the east slope of the Santa Teresa hills, about 8 miles southeast of San José, near Edenvale station, on the Southern Pacific main line. The Santa Teresa Quicksilver Mining Company, owner; R. B. Harper, of San José, superintendent. Three tunnels have been run in the mountain. [See Fig. 62.] The lowest tunnel, 700 feet long, reached the vein at 550 feet from the mouth; its course is nearly south."

"It turns to the left on the vein and is driven in toward the territory under the two upper tunnels in order to reach the pay shoot in the vein, which apparently dips east ward. The middle tunnel, no feet above the former, course S. 8° W., 325 feet long, is in serpentine. It cuts the ledge 228 feet

from the mouth. There is no selvage or gouge between the ledge and the serpentine. The ledge stands nearly vertical; the tunnel has not yet passed through the ledge into the opposite wall. The upper tunnel is 85 feet above the middle tunnel, course S. 22° W. It cuts the contact of the serpentine and the ledge at 220 feet from the mouth, and a few feet farther turns to the right in the ledge and runs 187 feet in this direction. About 50 feet from its turning point is a vertical shaft, which connects with the middle tunnel about 90 feet from the point where the latter cuts into the ledge, showing that the ledge dips north. Between these two tunnels, farther on, a raise goes from the upper level to the surface 110 feet, all in ledge matter.”

“On the level of the upper tunnel several drifts and cross-cuts have been run in the ledge matter, showing the latter to be very extensive. The country rock is all serpentine. The ledge matter varies greatly in character. It is apparently an alteration product of serpentine through silicification, subsequent to a fracturing of the material. The fissures have been filled by quartz and calcite, the silicification varying in different zones of the ledge, probably due to a varying degree of fracturing. In places inclusions of nearly unaltered serpentine are found. In others, as for instance, in an intermediate short level run from the shaft 37 feet above the middle tunnel, the rocks contain a great amount of cavities. Considerable ochreous material is found, probably due to the oxidation of iron pyrite. A 50-ton Scott furnace is in course of construction.”

The author believes prospecting at the Santa Teresa mine, other than that of the first peoples, probably dates to the 1870s. Three prospect tunnels were excavated to explore at depth an outcropping of so called “quicksilver rock” near the top of the hills. The scientific name for quicksilver rock is silica-carbonate rock. The work was likely abandoned after the rich veins of ocher occurring along fractures in a rock outcrop near the top of the main ridge of the Santa Teresa hills were found to be iron ore rather than mercury ore. The mine title was reported to be in litigation and disputes from 1875 until about 1902, when the mine came under the control of an east coast syndicate that operated the property from 1902 until dissolution about 1908. Capitalization of \$300,000 (\$5/share) was raised to reopen the mine in 1903 and extend the workings. The work was done under the direction of R.B. Harper, a mining engineer who probably first learned his trade at New Almaden in the 1870s. Harper also managed the Hillsdale mine, located on the north side what we today call Communications Hill, out in the center of the valley. Highway 87 cuts the hill in two and exposes the asbestos-rich weathered green serpentine that has quicksilver rock along its northern edge.

The Santa Teresa mine never produced any mercury but it certainly put on a grand show, with three main tunnels and a large ore reduction (roasting furnace) plant visible from the valley to the east. The mine closed in 1904 after reportedly spending \$250,000 on development work that failed to pro-

duce any mercury. The author believes the actual expenses for the tunneling and furnace plant were less than \$100,000, and that the mine was merely a promotion used to raise capital for the Hillsdale mine. The Hillsdale had difficulty finding investors due to past litigation and mismanagement. There is a report of eight flasks of mercury having been produced at the Santa Teresa, but the author has found no evidence or record to substantiate the claim and believes the reported production came from the Hillsdale. It is a fact that when the Santa Teresa Mining Company dissolved it transferred its assets to the Hillsdale mine. The Santa Teresa land reverted to private ownership. Today that land remains privately held, so please don't trespass.



The mine locations. Farthest to the left is the marl (decomposed limestone) mine operated mainly under Pedro Bernal. From left to right, next is the main adit of the Bernal mine, a hilltop bulldozer trench excavated in WW-II to look for ore, and the Santa Teresa mine farthest to the right.

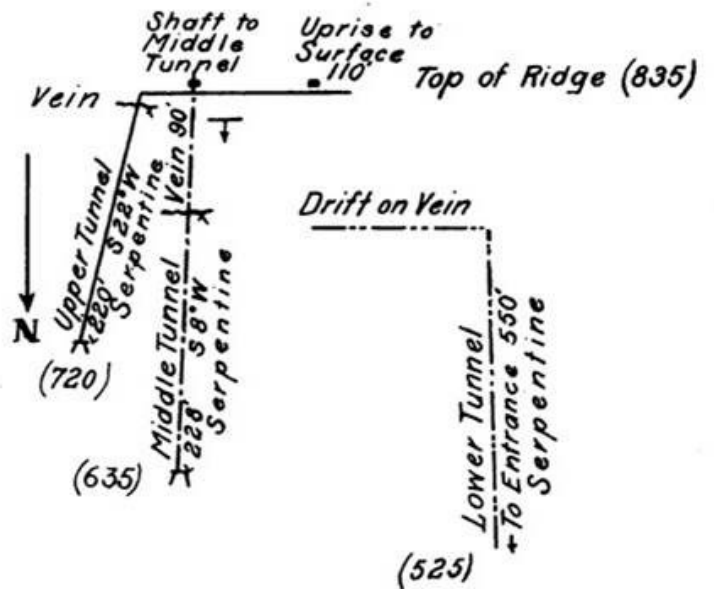


FIG. 62. Sketch of works in the Santa Teresa Mine. Scale, 1" = 200'.

FOSTP First Friday Work Days

The Friends of Santa Teresa Park have been holding a First Friday Work Day on the first Friday of each month, weather-permitting. It normally runs from 9 am to 12 pm, starting at the Bernal-Gulnac-Joice Ranch. The County Parks' Volunteer Office recruits volunteers to help us or schedule work events at the same time. Sometimes they get volunteers from corporations, like Apple or Google. We work with park maintenance and park interpreters on what work to do. We work primarily around the ranch buildings, the barns, the walkways, and Santa Teresa Spring. We do weeding, mulch spreading, landscape watering, dirt removal, leaf raking, and general cleanup. Below is a picture from one of our work days. See our website for more pictures.

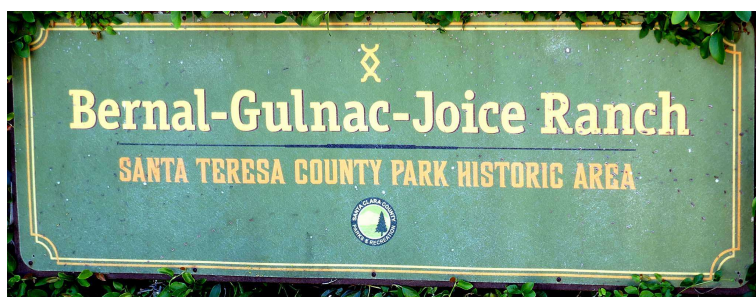
To volunteer for these work days, contact the Volunteer Office at <https://parks.sccgov.org/volunteer-opportunities>. If you come to the work days, bring work gloves. Long sleeves, long pants, and a hat are recommended.



Santa Clara County Heritage Resource Inventory, Part 1

By Mike Boulland

Have you ever read the small letters below the Bernal-Gulnac-Joice Ranch sign? Have you ever wondered what "AREA" refers to in the park? Does it mean one "AREA?" I have found an excellent book in my bookcase called the *Santa Clara County Heritage Resource Inventory* that explains it.. The book, printed in 1999 by the County of Santa Clara Historical Heritage Commission, has a record of all the historic properties in Santa Clara County that are "important to promote and encourage the appreciation, recognition, and preservation of heritage, resources in Santa Clara County."



The term "Area "in the above picture refers to the HHC's designated special Historic Conservation District, which Rancho Santa Teresa Historical District area is labeled "H4."

I remember Kitty Monahan, a past HHC Commissioner and FOSTP Vice President, and myself encouraging the commission to establish the district to make obtaining local, county, state, and national grant funding easier.

She said the New Almaden Historic District H1 was the first district recognized by the County of Santa Clara. She also encouraged the Friends of Santa Teresa Park to have the county establish a new H4 district for Rancho Santa Teresa. The new district goal is to have HHC "promote and encourage the appreciation, recognition, and preservation of heritage resources in Santa Clara County."

Listed in the Santa Clara County Heritage Resource Inventory book, printed in 1999, is the description of the Rancho Santa Teresa Historic District. The book includes four HHC Santa Clara County Conservation Districts:

1. New Almaden Historic District H1
2. Portuguese Orchard Historical District H2
3. Sakai Ranch Historical District H3
4. Rancho Santa Teresa Historical H4

The district labels each "Area" of four County Historic districts beginning with the letter "H," and the Rancho Santa Teresa label is H4, with the four meaning the fourth "Area." I applaud the HHC for taking the initiative and foresight to approve the addition of Santa Teresa County Park Historic "AREA" for future generations.

I found each of the eight historical descriptions fascinating and want to share them with our readers. In subsequent issues of the Friends of Santa Teresa Park newsletters, I plan to describe each of the H4 historical preserved sites as a series.

The first description from this series' Santa Clara County Heritage Resource Inventory is 298 Curie Drive. It preserves the last one of three Rancho Santa Teresa original Hacienda areas. The Rancho Santa Teresa Historic District H4 includes eight historic sites:

1. 298 Curie Drive - Rancho Santa Teresa Hacienda
2. Santa Teresa Spring
3. Bernal Mine
4. Bernal-Gulnac-Joice House
5. Bernal-Johnson-Norred Ranch
6. Jacoba Bernal Fisher House
7. Pedro Bernal House
8. Ygnacio Bernal House Site

298 Curie Drive - Rancho Santa Teresa Hacienda
Rancho Santa Teresa Site Site Description

"No Spanish or Mexican period structures are extant; only the foundation of adobe structures remains. 298 Curie Drive is the approximate center of the Hacienda. The original rancho was 9,647 acres, located 13 miles south of Pueblo San Jose. Today it is the home to County parkland, two golf courses, thousands of residences and business among which

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Planning Begins for Fortini Rd. Property - continued from page 1

Santa Clara County Heritage Resource Inventory Part 1 - continued from page 5

include IBM Corporation. It is roughly bounded by Santa Teresa County Park to the south, Hellyer Avenue to the north, Pearl Avenue to the west and Coyote Creek to the east. Hacienda headquarters were near the intersection of Manila Drive and Manila Way, 500 feet below the current Santa Teresa Springs.“

Historic Information:

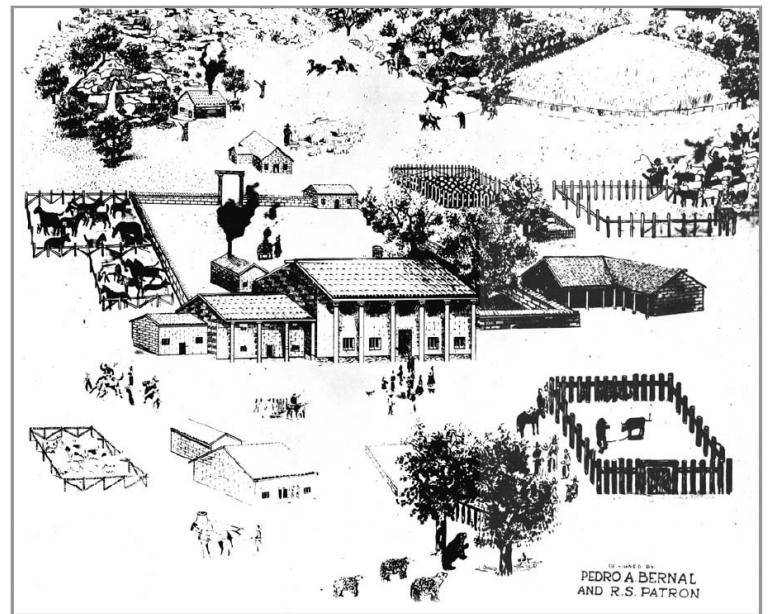
“The land was deeded to Jose Joaquin Bernal (1762-1837) as a Mexican Land Grant, in return for Bernal's service as a Spanish soldier in the Bay Area. Bernal came to San Jose and Presidio San Francisco as a 13-year-old poblador (populator) on the Juan Bautista de Anza Expedition of 1775-76. In 1826, he began Rancho Santa Teresa along these foothills. He chose this terrain because it contained an ever-flowing spring and fertile land, which had also attracted native Americans for thousands of years prior to Spanish settlement. For a complete listing of 35 resources of the Rancho Santa Teresa Historic District please consult the 1993 update in the Clerk of the Board Library, 10th Floor, 70 West Hedding Street, San Jose." (Source: Santa Clara County Heritage Resource Inventory, County of Santa Clara Historical Heritage Commission, County Government Center, 70 West Hedding Street, San Jose, California 95110, Copyright 1999.)



Fortini Road Property Project Map

The north end of the property is across San Vicente Avenue from the Stile Ranch Trail entrance to Santa Teresa Park. The south end is across McKean Road from the Rancho San Vicente entrance to Calero County Park. The purchase will allow connecting Santa Teresa to Calero and expand parking for either or both parks.

Planning has started to develop the property. There was a tabling event presenting the plan and asking for public input on 8/24/24 at the Rancho San Vicente staging area. They had an online survey. Mike Boulland and Ron Horii attended the event and talked to the planners about the background of the parks and suggestions for developing the property. FOSTP will continue to stay involved with the planning. Here's the plan: <https://parks.sccgov.org/fortini-property-site-plan>



Bernal Hacienda 1875

Visit our website: <http://www.stpfriends.org>

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Fortini Road Property Project Presentation