

December holiday program including the Chorale's annual Sing-it-Yourself Messiah, Durufle's Requiem, Lauridsen's Lux Aeterna, and finally Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the Livermore Amador Symphony at the Bankhead Theater in downtown Livermore. The Chorale is seeking experienced singers with sight-reading skills who enjoy singing exciting and challenging music. The Chorale performs a wide variety of music ranging from classical to contemporary, and folk to jazz. To schedule an appointment, call (925) 462-4205.

MOVIES

Classic films at the Pleasanton Library, Las Positas College and the Pleasanton Public Library present the series. Theme this year is "Three Great Directors." Admission is free. The series is hosted by Candace Klaschus, Professor of Media Studies at Las Positas College. Klaschus offers a brief talk about each film prior to the screening. Refreshments are served. Movies will be shown the first Thursday of each month through June 7, 2012. No registration required. The library is located at 400 Old Bernal Ave., Pleasanton. For more information, call Penny Johnson, 931-3405.

Tri-Valley Film Showcase, June 9, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Dublin Heritage Park and Museums. Showcase of short films by Arcbound, local student filmmakers. Three viewings followed by Q&A sessions with the filmmakers. 556-4500.

CHORAL

Cantabella Children's Chorus, Annual Spring Concerts, *The Pure, The Bright, The Beautiful*, Saturday, June 2, 2012, at 1:00 featuring the training and performing choirs with a pre-concert reception, and at 4:00 featuring the performing choirs and the CCC Alumni Choir with a reception following. Bankhead Theater, 2400 First Street, Livermore. Repertoire includes the world premier of a piece especially commissioned by Cantabella and supported in part by a grant from the City of Pleasanton Community Grant Program. The work is by Emeritus Professor Frank La Rocca of California State University, East Bay. Other repertoire include two more world premiers by Paul Shin and Jungsun Lee, and works by Bach, Mozart, Britten, Rutter, Faure, Copland and other contemporary composers as well. Folk songs from the United States and around the world will be sung in Latin, German, Korean and Finnish. CCC Alumni may contact Bee Chow at director@cantabella.org to participate in the Alumni Choir. For more information, call 925-292-2663 or visit Cantabella.org. Tickets will be available for \$15 - \$25 /

At the southeast corner of Carnegie Park, a bronze plaque by a small flagpole was dedicated on 10 May 1958 as a memorial to the officers and men of Company I (a capital letter i, not a Roman number one), Fifth Infantry, California National Guard, active in Livermore from 1900 to 1917. Fifty-two young men were sworn in during the official organization of the company on 20 April 1900 in the IOOF Hall. Captains of the company through the years were Carl M. Warner, J.O. McKown, Earl J. Inman, Chester Young, Louis J. Nissen, Bruce H. Painter, Joseph S. Concannon, and Henry A. Mehrmann. At the time Livermore was the smallest community in California to support such a company. Local newspaper editor Maitland R. Henry believed that three factors influenced the city's decision to have a National Guard unit: the young men in the small town would have an activity, the state would pay, and a strong feeling of patriotism was in the air because of the recent Spanish-American War.

The men met weekly for drills and at a rifle range to practice their shooting skills. Most years they participated in a state encampment for several weeks, often in Santa Cruz or Atascadero. After August 1904, the Sweeney Opera House was their headquarters. They gave the proprietor, John Sweeney, the honorary title of "colonel."

Company I was called into service four times. Earl J. Inman had been promoted to captain in November 1905. After the San Francisco earthquake on Wednesday, 18 April 1906, Inman waited impatiently for orders, expecting his company to be sent to

Do You Remember?



By Anne Homan
Livermore City Historian

National Guard, Company I, and Battery E

the stricken city. Finally, he got through to the Adjutant General in Sacramento, who told him to take the men to San Francisco on Friday. Inman, unwilling to wait that long, "rented" the Livermore Local, a Southern Pacific train, and used it for transporting the company into the city on Thursday evening. The men remained on duty from April 19 to May 19, helping to police the stricken city. Guardsmen Chester, Archie, and Fred Young as well as their nephew Norman Sweet all went to the city with the company. They wrote home on anything they could find. One message arrived on a tomato can label and another on a box cover. With a return address of "Jefferson Square," Norman wrote in a letter to his mother, Alice Young Sweet, on April 29: "We were on guard duty Friday night and Saturday. We go on for 24 hours and usually get 48 hours off. We have battalion drills from 4 to 5:30 every afternoon." He and a fellow guardsman climbed up to the top of Russian Hill, where they could see the entire burned district. Lt. Clarence Beck wrote home that he had to "confiscate every wagon I could find at the point of a pistol and looted 15 grocery stores and hauled the goods to

camp" to be distributed to the homeless by the Red Cross.

In 1913 the company helped to fight a large fire on Mt. Tamalpais from July 17 to July 20. A third call, this one from the federal government, came in 1916. From June 25 until October 10, the company was stationed at Nogales, Arizona, where President Wilson had called out a military force to quell the activities of bandits on both sides of the Mexican border. Livermore sent three officers and 83 men in response. The company's last call came on 24 September 1917 when it was consolidated with Company A, also of the Fifth Infantry, to form Company A, 159th Infantry, 40th Division, at Camp Kearny, prior to service in World War I. Fourteen members of the company served as officers in the war. Over the 17 years, a total of 414 men were members of the company, according to Maitland Henry's history.

The unit sponsored numerous community activities in Livermore. On Thanksgiving eve, they held an annual ball. In 1900 at the first ball, the *Herald* noted, "Mr. and Mrs. J.O. McKown headed the grand march and under their leadership some intricate and pretty

evolutions were executed. There were a hundred couples in the march, and it presented a brilliant spectacle with the uniforms and evening clothes of the gentlemen and the costumes of the ladies." The entertainment continued until four in the morning. Once a year the company held a play, with male cast members chosen from the guard, and women from the community. The first one, called "Santiago," was held on 2 May 1904 in the Sweeney Opera House. The company also sponsored community basketball games.

Another National Guard unit was started in Livermore on 14 February 1922; this was Battery E, 143rd Field Artillery. It was transferred to Santa Barbara at the end of May 1930. Robert Livermore, the original Robert Livermore's great-grandson, served in Battery E from 1922 to 1940 and ended his career in the National Guard as a captain. The Barn was built as a warehouse for the unit.

The popularity of the original Company I continued. A number of reunions were celebrated in Livermore by the "Old Guard" from 1928 until 1981, when age and death had thinned the ranks down to three—Robert Livermore, John Jensen, and Chester Anderson. The small memorial flagpole of 1958 in Carnegie Park was replaced in 2005 by a 60-foot pole composed of three 20-foot remnants of the original wooden town flagpole. Carole Vercellino still has her grandfather's (James Conniff) medals and other memorabilia from Company I. Does anyone else out there have similar keepsakes?

(Readers can reach me at am50homan@yahoo.com.)