



Theme: Life in San Mateo County: 1900-1909

Background Information Sheet

ALL POSTERS MUST SHOW A CLEAR CONNECTION TO THE THEME

Here are some of our suggestions for possible content:

- Transportation
- Fashion
- Inventions
- Major Events

Participants are welcome to come up with their own topics for content as long as they are historically accurate to the time period.



During California's first automobile meet in 1902, people drove "horseless carriages" From San Francisco to San Mateo's Crystal Springs Dam. SMCHA 1971.156.002.

More Information:

Transportation:



Transportation is a way to carry people or goods from one place to another, especially over long distances.

Streetcars and cars on B Street in San Mateo, SMCHA 1978.058C.017

The following are examples of transportation that were used in San Mateo County in the period from 1900-1909:

Trains: In 1864, train service started running from San Francisco to San Jose. Construction began on the Ocean Shore Railroad in 1905. The original plan was to have a two-track, electric railroad, however, the



1906 Earthquake caused so much damage that the plans were simplified to a one track railroad run by a steam engine. The line ran from Daly City to Tunitas and from Swanton to Santa Cruz, with a roughly 30-mile break between Tunitas and Swanton.

Ocean Shore Railroad between mountain and sea, SMCHA 2001.138.036.

Model T: Henry Ford and the Ford Motor Company released the Model-T car in October of 1908. This car, along with automobiles in general, was so popular in San Mateo County that it led to a business boom of auto-related businesses, such as mechanic shops and car dealerships.



Bicycles: People rode on bicycles.



Streetcar: The streetcar reached San Mateo in 1903. It allowed people to travel from San Francisco to San Mateo and was less expensive than the train.

Horse and carriage: Many people still traveled by horse and carriage.



Top of the Hill Daly City, 1971.058B.006b.

Stagecoach: The San Mateo – Half Moon Bay stagecoach ran until 1909, when it closed after more than fifty years of service.

Ships: Ships were used to transport people and goods across the San Francisco Bay.



Stagecoach on the Coastside in 1909, 1972.0184.003.

Fashion:

Fashion is the type and style of clothing and accessories that are popular at a given moment. Fashion can be different based on gender identity and age.

The following are examples of what was fashionable in the early 1900s:



A photograph (left) and a picture (right) of couples wearing clothing of the era.

Both men's and women's fashion in this era emphasized dressing for the time of day (meaning that you would wear a different outfit at night than you would during the day) and dressing for specific activities (for example, you would wear different clothing for playing golf, for going to the theater, and even for riding a bicycle).



Men: Three-piece suits – trousers, a waistcoat, and a jacket – would have been a typical outfit for men at this time. They also wore hats such as homburg hats, bowlers, and cloth caps. Generally, older men would have worn beards while younger men wore neat mustaches.

Women: Clothing was modest, with long skirts, long sleeves, and high necklines, however, society ladies often wore large, extravagantly decorated hats with wide brims. They would have their hair styled in special ways in order to help support the hat and keep it on their head!

A young woman poses with a parasol (left).

Children: Children's fashion looked a lot like the outfits that adults would wear, though young boys would have worn shorts instead of long pants and girls would have worn knee-length skirts instead of floor-length dresses. All children would have had their legs covered by shoes and stockings. Sailor suits, like the one worn by the boy in the picture, were also popular.

In this family photograph (right), the subjects illustrate more common, everyday outfits of the time, contrasting the fancier clothing in the above pictures.



Inventions:

An invention is a new machine or object that has never been made before.

The following are examples of inventions made in the early 1900s:



Crayola Crayons: The first crayons were invented in 1903 by Edward Binney and Harold Smith. They were sold in the same yellow and green packaging that we would recognize today.

This picture shows a box of Rubens no. 500 Crayola Crayons from the early 20th Century.



Teddy Bears: The Teddy Bear was created after President Teddy Roosevelt refused to shoot a bear cub while on a hunting trip. The toy became very popular all over the country.

The image on the left shows two young girls holding Teddy Bears.



Cornflakes: William K. Kellogg founded the Battle Creek Toasted Corn Flake Company on February 19, 1906, and began manufacturing and selling the highly successful Kellogg's Toasted Corn Flakes.

The image on the left is an advertisement for Kellogg's Toasted Corn Flakes from 1909.

Sources for the "Inventions" images: Crayola Crayons: "File:Rubens500.jpg," by Ed Welter (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rubens500.jpg>) is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 1.0 Generic. The photo is from Ed Welter's Private Collection and no changes were made to this file; Teddy Bears: Carl Heinrich Stratz: *Der Körper des Kindes und seine Pflege*. 3rd edition. F. Enke, Stuttgart 1909. Public Domain, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Stratz_-_K%C3%B6rper_des_Kindes_34.jpg; Corn Flakes: Kellogg's Toasted Corn Flakes Advert 1909. University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections ADV0187. Public Domain: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kellogg%27s_Toasted_Corn_Flakes_\(1909\)_ADVERT_426.jpeg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Kellogg%27s_Toasted_Corn_Flakes_(1909)_ADVERT_426.jpeg).

In San Mateo County:

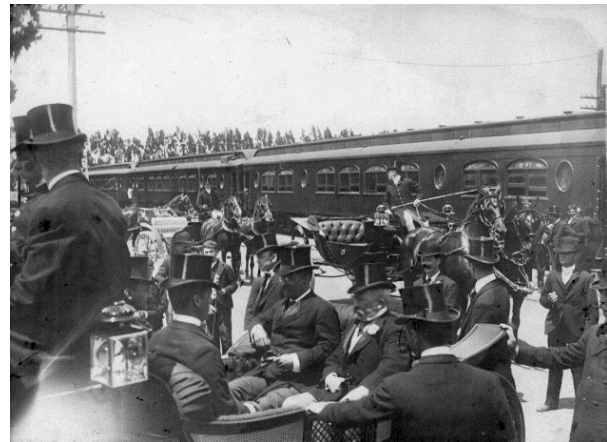


1906 Earthquake: In the early hours of April 18, 1906, an earthquake struck Northern California and wreaked havoc across the Bay Area. It measured at an 8.25 on the Richter Scale and killed 450 people officially, though many more lives were likely claimed. Most brick buildings in Redwood City were damaged or destroyed, including the newly-built county courthouse and Sequoia High School.

County Courthouses, 1906, SMCHA 1965.050A.18.

Teddy Roosevelt's Visit: On May 14th, 1903, President Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt had lunch with Union Iron Works president and Hillsborough founder Henry T. Scott at the Burlingame Country Club. Roosevelt is in the carriage facing the camera, on the left of the man with the white flower in his lapel.

Roosevelt at Burlingame Train Station, SMCHA 1686.007.



Immigration: In the early 20th century, the two largest immigrant groups arriving in San Mateo County were people from Italy and Japan.

Not in 1900-1909:

- **Airplanes:** While the Wright Brothers took their first successful flight in 1903, the first airplane flight in San Mateo County took place on January 24, 1910. Planes were not used as a form of public transportation until 1914.
- **Paved Roads:** The first section of paved road on in the California State Highway System was in San Bruno in 1912.
- **World War I:** The First World War did not start until 1914.
- **The *Titanic*:** The RMS *Titanic* did not sail and subsequently sink until 1912.

Questions?

Any questions regarding the poster contest can be directed to education@historysmc.org. Good luck!

Happy San Mateo County Day is sponsored by the Redwood City Arts Commission.