# San Lorenzo Valley USEU San Lorenzo Valley

Sharing History • Building Community
Since 1976

# New Mountain Echo

Summer 2024 • Volume 22 • No. 3

# Dinner, Live, Silent, & Online Auction

August 15, 2024

Join us at Scopazzi's Restaurant and Lounge, 13300 Big Basin Way, Boulder Creek, CA on August 15 for a fun-filled evening supporting the Museum and its programs. It is through events such as this that you can show your support for our programs and help us expand our offerings.

Dinner will be a three-course sit down affair with wine on the table and no-host bar. Tickets are will call and are available for purchase on the <u>Museum's website</u> through <u>Eventbrite</u> or at the Museum. Please call Scopazzi's at (831) 338-4444 to reserve a table for six or more.

The online auction will be live at <a href="https://www.32auctions.com/slvmuseum2024">https://www.32auctions.com/slvmuseum2024</a> between August 2 and August 10. Items that are won in the online auction can be picked up at the dinner, at the Museum Office, or can be mailed to you.

If you or your business would like to support the Museum by donating either an item or gift certificate to the event please contact Laura DeAngelis, Executive Director, by emailing <a href="mailto:laura@slvmuseum.org">laura@slvmuseum.org</a> or calling (831) 338-8382.

We greatly value your support.



# \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

# Veterans Day Dinner Honoring All Who Served

November 11, 2024



Join us at Scopazzi's Restaurant and Lounge on November 11 to recognize our Veterans. This year's national theme is "A Legacy of Loyalty and Service."

As we do each year, we have a full program for you, so bring your voices. Veterans, bring your stories, memorabilia, and uniforms to share as we will have a pop-up museum. If you would like to sponsor a Veteran, please let us know.

#### Our Mission

To preserve and share the history of the San Lorenzo Valley.

## **Board of Directors**

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Laura DeAngelis

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### **Open Volunteer Positions**

Bookstore Manager Museum Docents Event Coordinator Oral History Program Coordinator Grounds Maintenance Coordinator

## President's Letter

On July 10, a piece of logging history, a 1930s era logging arch, was moved from the Gazos Creek area and re-located to the San Lorenzo Valley Museum. Thank you so much to the donors Ainsley Forest, LLC and Alan Hicks for the opportunity to share this artifact.

Thank you to the team who have participated in this project choreographed by Bruce Baker with members of El Viceroy Marqués De Branciforte Chapter 1797 E Clampus Vitus, including Jason Booth of Jason Booth Welding Services, Charlie Brown, and Jason Vincent of Vincent Arbor works, and the San Lorenzo Valley Post.

The arch is an all welded Fairlead Arch with Trackson Co. caterpillar tracks. Amazingly, the lubrication holes were still filled with grease and the tracks were not seized. In order to move the arch across a small bridge, the boom had to be removed. After hours of trying, the two 2-inch castle nuts that attached the boom to the arch body, had to be cut off, as they were too rusted to be removed cleanly. The arch was successfully re-assembled close to the gazebo redwoods at the Grace Episcopal Gallery and impressively documents yet another chapter of the Valley's logging history.

Lisa Robinson

#### San Lorenzo Valley Museum

Grace Episcopal Gallery and Museum Office

12547 Highway 9 Boulder Creek, CA 95006

> Faye G. Belardi Memorial Gallery

> 6299 Gushee Street Felton, CA 95018

**Mailing Address:** 

PO Box 576 Boulder Creek, CA 95006

Phone: (831) 338-8382 Email: info@slvmuseum.org Website: www.slvmuseum.org

## **ECV Donation**

Just before Summer solstice, we received a Museum visit from the E Clampus Vitus Branciforte Chapter 1797, where Noble Grand Humbug Aaron Zalauskas provided us with a generous \$500 check from the Clampers Association of Roisterous Peddlers.

You can imagine our surprise when two more Clampers, Chris Sartain of **Bogner HVAC** and Jason Vincent of **Vincent Arbor Works**, took the opportunity to provide matching business donations. We are incredibly grateful for the support of our local ECV chapter and their "satisfactory" contributions!



## **Executive Director's Letter**

With Summer in full swing, we are gearing up for some exciting new Artist-in-Residence programming. Please join us this August in supporting artist Bailey Rios as he hosts a 2-day oil painting workshop and a final exhibition of work made during his two-month residency. This is our first ever Artist-in-Residence program, so you don't want to miss out on this unique and free arts programming. Special thanks to the **Arts Council Santa Cruz County** for awarding us a Create Grant to bring this program to life.

The outpouring of support we've received from our local community so far this year has been truly inspiring. At the end of May, we were awarded a Community Grant from the **Community Foundation Santa Cruz County**. The CFSCC has been one of our biggest funders over the years and we are so grateful for their generous support in driving our mission forward.

Earlier in June, we were sponsored by **Wild Roots Market** through their Community Roots Program where we benefited from sales at both the Boulder Creek and Felton store locations. Also in the spring, **Boulder Creek Pizza & Pub** and the **Sawmill Restaurant & Ale House** sponsored the Museum with community nights. We couldn't be more thankful to all these businesses for their recognition and contributions to the Museum and its programs.

Support for the Museum comes in many forms and I'd like to give special acknowledgment to our dedicated volunteers who keep our organization thriving. Thank you to our wonderful Board of Directors, dedicated gallery docents, Redwood Mountain Fair parking monitors, event table hosts and land tending volunteers for donating your time and energy to support our important work. We are always seeking volunteers so send me an email at <a href="mailto:laura@slvmuseum.org">laura@slvmuseum.org</a> if you would like to be more involved.

With August just around the corner, we are getting excited for our Annual Fundraising Dinner & Auction that is set to take place at Scopazzi's Restaurant & Lounge on Thursday, August 15. This year, we are honored to welcome back Ronnie Trubek as our Emcee and Lynda Phillips as our auctioneer. We have some fabulous auction items lined up including a 2-Night Pleasure Point Airbnb stay, Monterey Bay Whale Watch passes, a custom Barnwood Birdhouse by artisan Brian Iles and so much more. Help make this event a success by securing your tickets early, bringing your friends

and family, and spreading the word.

Finally, I'd like to recognize and celebrate the life of our friend and long-time volunteer, **Ted Tahira**. Ted was dedicated in his volunteer efforts and made regular stops at the Grace Gallery in Boulder Creek to tend to the Museum grounds. It was truly a pleasure getting to know Ted and we will always remember his selfless contributions to the San Lorenzo Valley Museum.



Laura De Angelis

## A Unique Visitor Experience at Big Basin: An Artist and a Historian Collaborate

By Dr. Traci Bliss

When Robin Lasser, Professor of Art at San Jose State University contacted me in June 2023, I had no idea that I was about to embark on an extraordinary adventure. If someone else, unknown to me, had asked that I become a volunteer history consultant for an untested vision, I might have responded, "I'll have to think about it." But Robin captivated me instantly.

Robin's summary of my book, *Big Basin Redwood Forest: California's Oldest State Park*, showed her careful reading: "I fell in love with your book, how you seamlessly weave many stories together while ensuring that the women's unique contributions stand out. And what you accomplished with photographs shows exceptional commitment." Imagine my joy when a renowned photographer recognized the effort that research historian Charlene Duval and I put into finding 130 images, many quite rare, to document the Park's history.

The book inspired Robin's concept for an innovative art experience at the 2024 Big Basin Art About. I immediately understood that her focus would be on the visionary women who were essential to the Park's creation. She aimed to showcase those who had been previously omitted from the historical record in favor of an exaggerated myth about a white male hero acting mostly alone. Creating the first state park and giving birth to environmentalism in California required a team effort. Robin would contextualize the women players through their own voices captured on imaginative postcards installed at the park.

But when I received various drafts of the postcard texts, based on her interviews of me, I struggled to see her vision. Her wide-ranging stories were impressive yet I failed to envision how her creation of mini tents with expanded postcards would come together on the Park's Redwood Loop Trail. Nonetheless, having recently served as a docent trainer at Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park and supporting docents at Big Basin, I intuitively felt how valuable Robin's "big idea" could potentially be for the visitor experience. Why? I trusted her artistic expertise. Additionally, her energy and willingness to go far beyond expectations for the Art About—committing countless hours—made assisting in any way a top priority.

Fast forward to June 15, 2024: The grand opening of the Big Basin Art About meant that I, like everyone else, would see Robin's art in the park for the first time. Her stunning installations along the trail felt like a treasure hunt, integrating the Park's history, the 2020 fire's aftermath, and the boldly imagined future. However, when other attendees experienced the same difficulty that I did in locating some of the installations, I asked Robin if

together we could meet that challenge. Absolutely! At noon, with good lighting, I captured Robin on video sharing her "dream come true" vision called Tents Talk with visitors. She then added to that overview a visual guide to each of the installations with appropriate music. Our brief 4-minute video is available on Vimeo: <a href="https://vimeo.com/966873923">https://vimeo.com/966873923</a>

Each of the 10 artistic installations tells its own piece of the Park's story in women's voices from today and yesteryear. No wonder I could not fully grasp Robin's vision until its completion! She has gone well beyond the standard for being informative at a state park. Expect your journey along the Redwood Loop Trail to be an immersive experience: inspiring, moving, and memorable.



Artist Robin Lasser. Image courtesy of the author.

Robin Lasser's tents and reproductions of the postcards with QR code links to the accompanying video stories are on display at the Museum's Grace Episcopal Gallery.



Emerita Professor Traci Bliss began her career in public policy at the California Energy Commission. She went on to become an award-winning education professor and state policy advisor to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. She holds BA, MA, and PhD degrees from Stanford University and an MPA degree from the LBJ School, University of Texas, Austin. With this multidisciplinary lens, she captures the true story of Big Basin. Bliss's ancestors, William T. and Jennie Bliss Jeter, were instrumental in saving Big Basin and in creating Santa Cruz County Big Trees Park, today's Henry Cowell Redwoods State Park. Bliss serves as President of the History Forum at the Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History.

Author Traci Bliss (right) chats with Jennifer Soleto Perez and her niece Amy at the Big Basin Art About on June 15. Jennifer took her family on a tour of Robin's installation in celebration of her UCSC graduation. Image courtesy of the author.

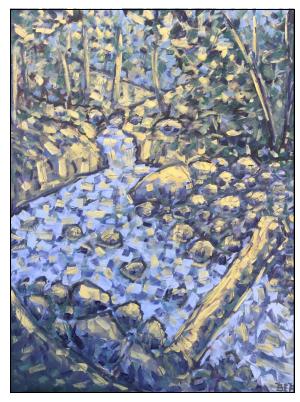
## **Reflections on My Residency**

By Bailey Rios

My time so far working in Boulder Creek's historic Grace Episcopal Church has been both artistically and intellectually stimulating. Being able to talk to, not only visitors, but museum staff has been beneficial to my residency mission to represent the under represented groups of the San Lorenzo Valley. Working towards this goal, I received a tour from Lisa Robinson of the museum's permanent collection, which holds many lifetimes of knowledge and inspiration.

In my painting "Native Lands, Illuminated," I use a photograph from the collection as a reference to reimagine the historical relationship between humans and the land of the San Lorenzo Valley. This work, however, is absent of humans to suggest and highlight the loss of indigenous presence in the area, as well as the historic under representation of these indigenous groups. Similar to my mission, the museum is also working hard to recontextualize and preserve the local history of the majority and minority populations that have historically lived in the valley.

The idea of preservation of knowledge is one that seems to permeate through the museum's physical space and into the minds of those who have become involved in its ancestral mission. It is quite inspiring to be surrounded by those who actively fuel the preservation of knowledge through life, and through death. I feel extremely grateful to be able to paint in a space that holds so much history, and in the company of the individuals tasked to preserve and unbiasedly share this history.



## The History of Año Nuevo State Park · Part II

## By Lucia MacLean, SLVHS Director and Cal State Parks Aide

After the Gold Rush, and the statehood of California in 1850, many American Citizens began acquiring acres of rancho property. One prominent American was Isaac Graham of Santa Cruz, who acquired Rancho Punta del Año Nuevo from the Castro family.

Graham, however, was unable to hold on to this property because of financial difficulties. The land was sold at public auction in 1862 to John H. Baird for \$20,000. Baird then sold the property for \$30,000 to Loren Coburn. Coburn was a shrewd businessman and leased much of the land to a northern California family by the name of Steele.

Frederick Steele was the first Steele to come to California. He was stationed in California when he was in the US Army. He decided that he liked California. At the end of the Mexican War, he sent for his brothers and their families in Ohio, and they slowly and methodically began leasing property in Sonoma and Marin Counties. They were cattlemen and began making cheese. Their cheese was so popular in San Francisco that they needed to expand their dynasty. In 1862, the Steeles leased 17,763 acres from Coburn for \$6,000 per year for ten years, plus all taxes. A stipulation allowed the Steeles to buy 7,000 acres of the ranch south of Gazos Creek when the lease expired. Various Steeles and extended family members acquired different portions of the ranch to run.

The demand for cheese in California was high. It could be sold for as much as \$.25 per pound (equivalent to about \$6.12 today). The Steeles became well known for their cheese when a 3,850 pound block produced at Cascade Ranch (part of the Año Nuevo land grant) was displayed at the Mechanic's Fair in San Francisco in 1864. (The Mechanic's Fairs between 1858-1909 hosted, displayed, and promoted the products of local entrepreneurs and investors.) The block was sold for \$2,820 with the proceeds donated to the Sanitary Fund of the Union Army.

The Steele ranches along the San Mateo Coast extended from Gazos Creek in the north to the Santa Cruz County line in the south. They included Green Oaks Ranch, Pocket Dairy, Cascade Ranch, White House Ranch, and the Cloverdale Ranch. All of these ranches are in the vicinity of, or are a part of, Año Nuevo State Park. By 1867, these ranches consisted of approximately 15,000 acres and 750 cows. There were also about 2,000 steers, calves, and young cattle, as well as hogs. Wild grasses and oats generally provided enough food for the animals, although occasionally they were supplemented with grain, hay, and straw during periods of extreme drought.

The Steeles bought 45,000 acres in San Luis Obispo County. This purchase ended up being tied up in litigation because of title disputes. Meanwhile, the Steeles purchased the 7,000 acres motioned above, while the northern portion of the land reverted to Coburn and Clark (a business associate of Coburn). By the early 1870s, the Steele Brothers were reportedly the second largest owners of milk cows in the state. In 1872, the Steel Brothers dissolved their partnership, although each of the members continued in the dairy business.

Eventually, the properties were sub-divided among Steele descendants. One of the Steele daughters married Edwin Dickerman, and took over the portion that now houses the Año Nuevo Park headquarters area. To construct a large dairy barn they used timbers that were formerly used on William Waddell's wharf which was constructed to serve lumber from Waddell's canyon and lumber and cheese from the Steele properties. The wharf was constructed in 1864. A 700 foot pier with a swinging chute allowed deep water schooners to dock in order to ship the lumber and dairy products. The wharf was in use from mid-1864 and lost in a storm in 1873.

The dairy barn building now houses the Marine Education Center and gift shop, and the timbers are still doing their job holding the building together.

The San Mateo Coast was a dangerous coast for shipping. There were numerous shipwrecks along this stretch of the coast, which has many rocky outcroppings. Point Año Nuevo was described aptly by Col. Albert Evans: "It is a place where black reefs of rock rear their ugly fangs, like wild beasts waiting for their prey" (as quoted in

Le Boeuf 1981:37). The first known shipwreck was in 1853, with the shipwreck of the Carrier Pigeon. Several other wrecks quickly followed as shipping in this area increased. A lighthouse station was desperately needed, but where? After several surveys, with both Franklin Point and Whale Point (now named Pigeon Point after the Carrier Pigeon shipwreck) as contenders, Año Nuevo Point was the designated spot. This was the island that Sebastian Vizcáino had sighted back in 1603.

In 1872, the federal government purchased Año Nuevo Island from Coburn, who still owned it. Initially, only a very loud steam-powered fog whistle was established. A keeper's house was also constructed to house two keepers, along with a



Año Nuevo Today. Courtesy Jan Chaffin, Bookstore Manager

tramway to ferry supplies from the mainland. But wrecks still kept happening. To try to improve the situation, a lighthouse was constructed, initially consisting of an oil lens lantern mounted on top of a water tank. But maintenance of the buildings on the island was a constant problem as a result of the sea air. Fences were built to prevent the sea lions from coming into the gardens and the houses. The fast-growing herds of seals however, often over- ran the house. In 1914, a larger lens was installed on a steel tower, 73 feet above the water.

By 1948, the Coast Guard determined that the expense of maintaining the island was too great, and a marker buoy with automatic light, sound, and radar reflector replaced the fog signal and light. In 1955, the federal government sold the island to the State of California and the State classified the island as a scientific preserve. Año Nuevo State Natural Reserve was created in 1958, and handed over to the Department of Parks and Recreation to oversee. Thereafter, the buildings on the island were largely left to deteriorate. Visitors lit fires, vandalized the remains, and generally wreaked havoc. Many of the remaining structures were burned (including the boat house, tramway, and various sheds).

In 1955, the first elephant seal was sighted on Año Nuevo Island.

During prehistoric times, northern elephant seals (the classification of those along the Western coast of the California all the way up to Vancouver, Canada) were thought to have existed in the same migration routes as in present day. But they had been hunted nearly to extinction so that by the 1860s it was rare to find any. Elephant seal oil was said to burn "better than whale oil." This led to their near-demise with only a small colony left on a remote island off of the coast of Mexico. On a scientific expedition, several more were taken for research leaving even fewer. By 1960, thirty-five elephant seals were seen on the island, and the following year, they were observed birthing and breeding. An upward population growth pattern was seen and it is from this small colony that today's population of Northern Elephant Seals numbers around 200,000.

Researchers from Stanford, the California Academy of Sciences and various other colleges and research institutions began seriously studying the animals. It was hoped that a permanent research station could be established, using the abandoned buildings of the lighthouse station. However, vandals kept that idea at bay.

In 1967, Stanford and the other research institutions completed their studies, and the State declared the island closed to the public and only to be used for research. In 1968, the University of California Santa Cruz obtained a 10-year lease to conduct research on the island fauna and develop observation facilities. In 1969, the University of California made Año Island part of its Natural Reserve System.

Continued from page 5.

But it was the winter of 1973-74 that changed everything. Word had gotten out to a reporter of *Sunset Magazine* about the size of the colony and a three-page article was written about the colony, including directions to the location. Overnight, thousands of people throughd to the area curious about the animals. Over 60,000 people visited the area between January and March of 1974.

By this time, the elephant seals had made their way from the island to the mainland, and it became obvious that they, as well as the flora needed protection from the public. The small staff of rangers and other staff was not enough to protect the animals and people who wanted to see them.

It was proposed that the UC Santa Cruz institute a tour program, and in 1975 student interns acted as guides, leading people on guided tours.

Each fall, an Año Nuevo Natural History course was taught, with 40-70 student guides leading up to 20 people per tour. In 1976, the Department of Parks and Recreation instituted a tour reservation system, and by 1979 over 2,3000 tours were conducted, about a quarter of them were organized school groups from central California. It is very rare that a State Park and a public university work together to foster research and public outreach.

In the mid-1980s, the State of California became interested in acquiring the mainland property largely to protect the elephant seals now gathering there, but also to preserve and protect the substantial acreage on the western slope of the Santa Cruz Mountains inland from Año Nuevo Point.

Today there are approximately 2,896 acres on the eastern side of Highway 1 that are not yet developed for public use. This land was the former ranches of the Steele family and descendants and much is still under cultivation today.

Elephant seals spend most of their time at sea, returning to the same place they were born twice a year. One trip is during winter when the adult seals come to mate, give birth, and nurse their young. Females who gave birth in December return in mid-March. Females who gave birth later return to the preserve later. Juveniles of both sexes as well as some young sub-adult males join the females. The highest numbers of molting seals occurs in late April at Año Nuevo. The various molting cycles each take about two months.

The migrations are long and deep; the seals dive as deep as 2,000 feet. While male elephant seals travel up to 2,976 miles in their migration path, females travel up to 3,374 miles. Females forage widely in a north easterly direction, while males travel in a straighter, northerly direction. They make this enormous journey twice a year.

Today, there is an average of 156,000 annual visitors to see the elephant seals and visit the park. There are 180

docents trained to interpret the park and the fauna and flora to visitors. The population of elephant seals at Año Nuevo is around 6,000-7,000.

Some contingent of elephant seals are always there: the breeding and birthing season runs from December 15 to March 31, and guided tours are required for visitors to go and see them. From April 1 to November 30, visitors can walk out to the preserve themselves after obtaining a free permit, without needing to be on a guided tour; docents are stationed in the preserve to answer questions and help people navigate. The preserve is closed from December 1 to December 14 to allow the



Elephant seal colony during breeding and birthing season. Courtesy of Mike Merritt, State Park Interpreter 1

males to arrive and stake out their territory. To make a tour reservation go to ReserveCalifornia.com or call 1-800-444-4445.

Resources: The Natural History of Año Nuevo, ed. by Burney J. Le Boeuf and Stephanie Kaza; Año Nuevo State Park Docent Manual; Año Nuevo General Plan, 2008 (available at: <a href="https://www.parks.ca.gov/?">https://www.parks.ca.gov/?</a>
<a href="page-id=24617">page-id=24617</a>).



Lucia Maclean is a member of the San Lorenzo Valley Historical Society board of directors. Soon after moving to the Valley she became entranced with the natural and cultural history of Santa Cruz County, and became a docent at Henry Cowell Redwood State Park. She also became the historical interpreter at Alba School in Ben Lomond where she was provided access to the archives and compiled the history of the school. She is currently a park aide at Año Nuevo and Butano State Parks.



# Flora - Adopt-a-Native-Plant-Bed Program

As we finalize the details of the Adopt-a-Native-Plant-Bed Program for the fall planting season we wanted to share a few of the details. See our website for more information <a href="www.slvmuseum.org/adoptflora">www.slvmuseum.org/adoptflora</a>.

#### Guidelines

The bed or planter should be adopted for one complete growing season (tentatively April through October depending on the weather).

Adopters may either be an individual or a group, however groups must identify one person to be the contact person. Youth groups must have appropriate adult supervision.

## Volunteer Responsibilities

Attend a workday in the spring to prepare the beds after the winter season.

Remove and dispose of litter and weeds. Visit the site frequently to ensure good health of plant material (we suggest every two - three weeks). If a volunteer is out of town for an extended period of time, they can opt out of this maintenance by donating \$25 per month of absence and the Museum will take over the maintenance of the bed during that time. These monies will be allocated to the program.

Provide own hand tools for bed maintenance.

Plant and move plants approved by the Museum liaison as requested.

## Museum Responsibilities

Acknowledge the adoption through signage placed by the bed or planter and/or provide signage of dedication if the adopter so desires.

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Acknowledge the adoption in the Museum newsletter. Invite all adopters to the Museum's annual Volunteer Party. Honor the adopters with a certificate of appreciation.

Provide information about the native flora to the adopters and visitors to the space, including historical/present day uses.

Monitor and adjust water requirements.

Maintain the beds during the winter season.

## Sponsor a Student

An adopter can donate \$400 per year to adopt a bed. This money will be used to provide a student who is looking towards a career in anthropology, native plant science, natural history, horticulture, park management, or related discipline with a stipend. The student will assume the responsibilities of Volunteer as described above.

If you would like additional information or to have the Museum liaison come and speak to your group, please contact us at flora@slymuseum.org or call (831) 338-8382.

## **Become a Part of Our Community Today**

The San Lorenzo Valley Museum is owned and operated by the San Lorenzo Valley Historical Society, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Membership dues and donations are 100% tax deductible. We are solely funded by our members, our supporters, and grants, and depend on the goodwill of our community volunteers' time and skills.

Name:Address:	<b>Membership Options</b> Membership benefits include, membership card, printed newsletter, 15% Museum store discount, reduced pricing to fundraising events, member only events.			
	Individual		\$25	
City: Zip:	<b>Dual/Family</b> (2 adults + Children under 18)		\$40	
Phone:	Business		\$40	
Date:	Supporting (Dual/Family benefits + NARM benefits)		\$100	
Email: Please make checks payable to the San Lorenzo Valley Historical Society. For payments by credit card please visit our website www.slvmuseum.org.  For more information call us at (831) 338-8382, or email us at info@slvmuseum.org.	Individual Lifetime		\$250	
	<b>Dual/Family Lifetime</b>		\$400	
	<b>Business Lifetime</b>		\$400	
	Donation		\$	
Interested in volunteering?   Check out our volunteer opportunities at www.scvolunteercenter.org				

Check our website for open hours.
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Website: www.slymuseum.org

The Museum Callerles are Open