

## San Joaquin Valley Colony

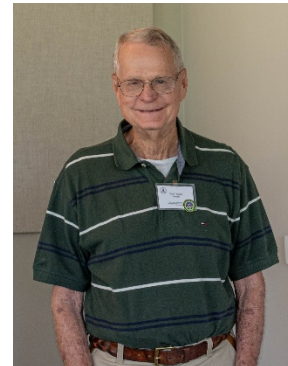
The San Joaquin Valley Colony celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its founding charter, May 18, 1974. This luncheon celebration was held June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at Sunnyside Country Club, in Fresno. The decorations honored this golden anniversary with tables adorned with yellow roses and members were given a memorial pin (as shown).



The theme of the day was honoring our charter members and looking back to events during 1974. The original charter was on display along with several historian books. The historical documents revealed a story behind the covers of the historian books. As the colony's documents began to outgrow its original book, member Betty Dearing, needed to find memory books that would hold the original oversized pages. When finding the size was no longer available, she used her crafting talent and created cross-stitched covers to fit thereby creating three separate books, labeled, "*The Meetings*", "*The Mayflower*", and "*Poetry, Joylify, Kilt & Kin, Necrology.*"



Governor Dianna Saario called the meeting to order, and Chaplain Beverly Wyman led the group in reading of the Lords' Prayer (as the Pilgrims knew it), from the 1602 Geneva Bible; St. Luke XI:2-4. With 35 guests in attendance, the descendant roll call, assisted by State Historian Mandy Dunkle, revealed 70 connections to 35 Mayflower passengers. After conducting colony business Deputy Governor Diane Nitta introduced our honored guests: *Donna Watkins* Author & guest speaker, *Mr. Dale Thomas* founding member, *Diane Douglas* CA Deputy Governor (North), and *Mandy Dunkle* State Historian. Following the reading of the founding charter a slideshow tribute was presented by Historian Diane Brueggemann. A great deal of fascinating details were revealed about the charter members. The colony was made of a diverse, civically minded, group of individuals who lived through WWII and the Vietnam War. Many had professions in the military, farming, teaching, or social work. They were busy, active people supporting their communities, hobbies, and interests. Check on our website for further details on viewing this tribute at <https://sanjoaquinvalleycolony.org>



Mr. Dale Thomas founding co-Historian & Registrar

But wait! That was just the beginning. After lunch the gathering listened to a presentation by Donna Watkins. Many of you have had the pleasure of this sweet author's presentation about the other side of colony history, the judicial side. She presented her knowledge about the strict policies of the colonies and the unfortunate outcomes if you disobeyed them. She spoke of John Billington, John Holmes, Joshua Pratt, Stephen Hopkins, and Dorothy Temple, as well as her 9<sup>th</sup> great grandmother, Alice Bishop and more. She was able to interweave their stories and give context to the colonies legal system. This may be one of her last speaking events, so I suggest you get a copy of her books: *Diverse Gashes: Governor William Bradford, Alice Bishop, and the Murder of Martha Clark, Plymouth Colony 1648*, and *Weaker Vessels, the Women and Children of the Plymouth Colony*.



This momentous day was filled with great conversations and joviality around the room. We are thankful for those who formed the beginnings of this colony and for those who wish to continue its success.



*San Joaquin Valley Colony 50th Anniversary - June 8, 2024*

*Diane Brueggemann  
San Joaquin Valley Colony, Historian*