



VALLEY OF THE MOON STATE PARK

INTERPRETIVE NOTES AND EVENTS

Jack London State Historic Park

Yoshimatsu Nakata, Jack London's Valet Letters to Ranger Lawton from Toshiko Nakata



Toshiko Nakata who is the wife of Edward Nakata (son of Yoshimatsu Nakata, a Jack London's Valet) visited Jack London SHP in July of 2003. During that visit Toshiko was able to see the temporary exhibit regarding Yoshimatsu Nakata, Edward Nakata's wife. Since that time Toshiko and Sheryl Lawton have exchanged correspondences. Below is her reply to a letter seeking more information about the Nakata family.

I'm sorry this correspondence is too late for your July exhibit at the museum on Yoshimatsu Nakata. It was kind of you to send me the photos and the "Moonletter." The family photo with Momoyo in it I was especially happy to receive. Thank you very much.

My association with Yoshimatsu began in April 1946 when I came to Honolulu with my late husband Edward, and Karen, the oldest of our five children.

My family and I remember Grandpa as a soft-spoken, kind, and unassuming man who always had a nice big smile. Ed admired him greatly and he often said his father was the finest man he had ever known. As I write this I recall a letter Ed showed me in 1938. He had written to his father that he had met me and that he wanted to marry me. In this letter Yoshimatsu had replied he was happy for Ed, for finding the person he wanted for his wife was "life finding a pearl in the bottom of a big ocean." Grandpa was such a sweet person!

While Yoshimatsu was establishing his dental practice, he was fulfilling another of his life's goals. He helped educate several of his relatives in their chosen fields.

Around 1950 Yoshimatsu sold the large family home pictured in your photo and bought a smaller house in the area where Ed and I built our house. His leisure hours were spent "puttering" in his little workshop that he had made outdoors behind the house. He loved to tinker and repair things or make useful gadgets of odd assortments of hardware. For example, he made a vacuum cleaner for the car that he could store outdoors. To make this he used a hubcap that came rolling down the street one windy day, two wheels from an old perambulator, an old dental motor, and a hose from a discarded vacuum cleaner. His creative inventions were amazing!

In the back yard he built a good-sized hothouse where he and Shizuyo spent many happy hours tending to their beautiful plants. Shizuyo was known for her green thumb. Their social life was limited to associating with my family and a few relatives living nearby.

Gertrude never married. She worked as a clerk-typist for the military.

Contrary to what is written in your biography of Yoshimatsu, he married his sister-in-law, Shizuyo, around 1934 after Momoyo died. He had helped



Shizuyo become a dental hygienist. She worked by his side until they retired in early 1967. Yoshimatsu passed away suddenly and quietly at home on June 21, 1967 of heart failure. He was 78 years old. These are my memories of Grandpa Nakata. Please feel free to write to me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Toshiko K. Nakata

Pictures: Left Column, (l-r) Nakata Family; Gertrude, Yoshimatsu, Edward, Momoyo
Right column, (l-r) Edward, Shizuyo, Yoshimatsu, Gertrude



Sugarloaf Ridge State Park and Sudden Oak Death

By Ranger Beane`

The problem of Sudden Oak Death at Sugarloaf Ridge State Park has taken its toll on approximately 68 trees of various species (oak, bay and fir). Trees have been removed within the past year, with the most recent tree removal numbering 24 tree during the week of November 24, 2003. The campground, after being closed for tree removal, was opened for three days to allow visitors to enjoy their Thanksgiving holiday surrounded by the beautiful, quiet Fall environment appreciated by many. The tree removal project was completed on Monday, December 1, 2003. Efforts to restore the campsites affected by the extensive removal are being made.

As many of you area aware, the sudden oak death disease is widespread in Coastal California and is found commonly in two forest types: in the under story of coast redwood (*Sequoia semperviens*) forests on tanoak; and in coastal evergreen forests on oaks, madrone, bay laurel and other species. The pathogen, identified as *Phytophthora ramorum*, has also been found on dying tanoak in coastal southern Oregon, just north of the California border.

On oaks and tanoak, cankers are formed on the stems. Cankered trees may survive for one to several years, but once crown dieback begins, leaves often turn from pale green to pale yellow to brown within a few weeks. Black or reddish ooze often bleeds from the cankers, staining the bark, as well as killing the mosses that grow in it. Bleeding ooze may be difficult to see if it has dried or has been washed off by rain. Necrotic bark tissues surrounded by black zone lines are present under affect bark. Because these symptoms can also be caused by other *Phytophthora* species, laboratory tests must be done to confirm pathogen identity.

Valley of the Moon State Parks is working with the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the Department of Food and Agriculture and other State and Federal agencies to develop a plan to control the spread of Sudden Oak Death and preserve our cherished parks and forests. We have been very lucky, here at the Valley of the Moon State Parks.

A team of researchers from Sonoma State University is consistently analyzing and collecting specimens from our forests. All measures are being taken to understand and study Sudden Oak Death and to find a cost effective and preventative remedy to this ever growing problem.

Jack London Cottage and Dining Room Project

On January 5th, 2004 work on the buildings officially began. The contractors are working 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

As you may have noticed, the area surrounding the back door of the cottage is engulfed in necessary building materials. The contractors are doing an exceptional job of maintaining the cleanliness and order of the construction site.

However, to avoid any mishaps, visitors and volunteers must enter and exit the Cottage from the Garden door. The Cottage will remain open on the weekends only. If you have any questions regarding the project, please contact Ranger Sheryl Lawton.

The Project Committee chaired by Al Stumpf, is completing the work on interpretive panels to be placed on the Beauty Ranch. Five interpretive panels for the Beauty Ranch, Pig Palace and three barns have been adopted. A modern map of Jack London State Historic Park will be furnished by the Ecology Center for a number of uses. The two kiosks will also be updated.

The hard work of the Project Committee, contractors and volunteers who helped with the fencing and Pig Palace restoration are shaping an incredible future for Jack London State Historic Park.



Naturalist Corner

Chuck Whatford

A Brief History of Annadel State Park's Lake Ilsanjo

When I first moved to Santa Rosa in 1984 and discovered Annadel, I initially assumed that the name of the Lake (Ilsanjo) was derived from a local Native American place. Later, I learned that the lake is actually named after Lisa and Joe Coney, former owners of the land now the park. (If you say the words "Lisa and Joe: really fast it comes out sounding like Ilsanjo. Try it!)



Beginning in the 1930's, the Conveys began buying land in this area and eventually acquired over 6,000 acres. . .including most of what is now Annadel as well as the land now occupied by the Wild Oak development between the Park and Oakmont. Known as Annadel Farms, it soon became a sophisticated ranch operation raising hops, fruit orchards, exotic birds, prize-winning shorthorn cattle and Black Angus Cattle.

Joseph Coney was an engineer by training and an entrepreneur by disposition. In addition to design and overseeing the construction of an earth dam at the head of Spring Creek Canyon that captured the flow from the springs comprising the headwaters of Spring Creek (thus creating Lake Ilsanjo), Mr. Coney oversaw the construction of over 35 miles of jeep roads and trails, any of which had started out in the late 1800's and early 199900's as paving stone quarry roads. Much of the road network later formed the basis of what we now know as the Annadel trail system.

The earth dam that resulted in the 26 acre Lake Ilsanjo in the western part of Annadel was built in 1956. The design of the dam and spillway followed standard design standards of the time. The spillway itself appears to have been not so much an actual structure so much as that the corner of the Lake was graded to take advantage of natural low spit in the terrain. During the rainy season the lake level rises until it overflows across this low pint of land and then simply runs downhill, rejoining Spring Creek, the flow of which is determined by opening and closing the gate valve in the dam. Over the nearly 47 years since it was built, the action of the rising lake waters overflowing across the spillway and down the steep slopes has caused extensive erosion and brought large amounts of soil into Spring Creek. Between the extent of the erosion and the amounts of sediment washing downstream and harming migrating fish, park managers finally managed to procure the necessary funding to begin the repairs that are now underway.

According to John Futini, a history graduate student at Sonoma State University who wrote "Annadel the History Behind the Park" in 1976 as his Master's thesis, the lake was built in the hope that a public golf course would be established nearby. By the 1960's Joe Coney was considering building his own housing development in the center of Annadel, one similar to Oakmont. Houses. Lake Ilsanjo was in the center of 4,100 unit subdivision.

IN 1969 businessman Wayne Valley acquired the land and in 1970 proposed a development called "Santa Rosa Lakes" with 4,000 units. However, part of this land was located in the city limits of Santa Rosa, and the city did not approve the expense of police, roads and schools. Consequently, the project was rejected.

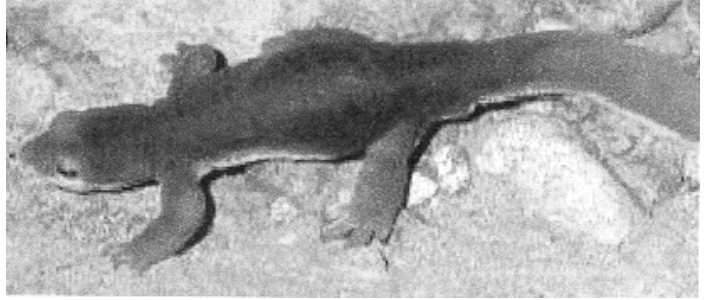
After this unexpected rejection of his project, Wayne Valley decided to try and sell the property. He Conferred with Santa Rosa Businessman Henry Trione about the thousand of acres he had acquired from Joe Coney. After a complicated series of financial transactions and with the help of the California State Parks Foundation and Henry Trione, title to much of what was once Annadel Farms was transferred to the California Department of Parks and Recreation. In 1971 Annadel officially became a State Park. Henceforth and hopefully for all time Annadel including Lake Ilsanjo will remain open to the people of California to enjoy.

Since we humans have a tendency to take things for granted all too often, the next time you visit Lane Ilsanjo an are enjoying the pastoral scene before you, consider that this lovely place nearly became a subdivision and by 1971 could easily have contained as many as 4,00o + homes and up to 20,000 people.

Naturalist Corner

Chuck Whatford

NEWTS



Last month's column was about tree frogs, so I thought I'd continue that amphibian theme by looking at newts. Actually a type of salamander, newts are the most conspicuous salamanders in California. [As retired Ranger Bill Krumbein was fond of saying, "All newts are salamanders; but not all salamanders are newts."] Newts have brown backs and, depending on the species, an underbelly of bright yellow, orange or red. They are commonly active during daylight hours--especially during the wet season--apparently not fearful of predators. Their skin secretions are toxic to most animals and when they encounter other animals (including humans) they often arch their backs and expose the bright color of their belly. [In the natural world, bright colors are often warnings.]

Not sedentary salamanders, newts spend the summer investigating under rocks and logs or in cracks. When the first rains of the fall arrive the adults migrate to water in large numbers. These migrations often occur in daylight hours, so when you're in the woods it's not unusual to encounter great numbers of them. [In Tilden Park in the Berkeley Hills, for example, you'll see signs along the paved road that read "Watch for Newts Crossing."] Being amphibians, once they are adults they have to return to water to mate and remain aquatic throughout the breeding season.

Two species of newts that live in our local state parks are the Roughskin Newt (*Taricha granulosa*) and the California Newt (*Taricha torosa*). As its name suggests the Roughskin Newt has light brown to black warty skin on its back that sharply contrasts with its yellow to orange belly and small eyes with dark lower lids. The California Newt resembles the Rough skin but its eyes are larger and the lower eyelids are light-colored. Its back tends to be tan to reddish brown with a yellow to orange belly.

R Roughskin Newts tend to breed in quiet waters between December and July. Fertilized eggs are laid singly on aquatic plants or submerged twigs and hatch in 5-10 weeks. The California Newt's breeding season is a little shorter (December - May). In contrast to the single eggs of the Roughskin, female California Newts lay 1-2 dozen eggs in spherical masses on aquatic plants or submerged pieces of forest litter.

B Both species prefer similar habitats such as ponds, lakes and slow-moving streams with submerged vegetation. The Roughskin Newt is found in such habitats adjacent to humid forests or grasslands, while the California Newt is found in such aquatic habitats surrounding evergreen and oak forests. The range of the two species overlaps slightly: Roughskin Newts are found along the Pacific Coast from Santa Cruz County in California to southeastern Alaska while one subspecies of California Newts ranges along coastal California from San Diego to Mendocino County, another subspecies is found on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada up to 7,000 feet above mean sea level.

L Look for both types of newts in aquatic environments and near such environments at all three of the Valley of the Moon State Parks. In the wet season it's common to find them migrating to water and/or foraging for invertebrates in the woods (their main food). One memorable winter day some years ago I remember hiking along Ryolite Trail in Annadel SP near Ledson Marsh encountering dozens of newts migrating along the trail....there were so many of them on the trail that it was hard to walk without stepping on them!

Wildflower Hikes in March

Saturday, March 6, Jack London with Edith Newsome

Saturday, March 13 Annadel with Dave and Bill

Sunday, March 28 with Eleanor in Annadel

Please refer to the enclosed Hike Schedule for exact time and locations