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# CALIFORNIA THE ORNIAN

Magazine of the California History Center Foundation/De Anza College—  
A Foundation Supporting the Study and Preservation of State and Regional History



**Legends, Landscapes and Wisdom:  
An Interview with Author Darryl Babe Wilson**

# DIRECTOR'S REPORT

## Landscapes, Knowledge, Dreams, and Local History?

Photo: CHCF Library



Tom Izu

One evening, while I was trying to get my younger son to bed, he asked me, “Where do dreams come from?” He had just begun his elementary school career then and was not yet versed in the use of *Wikipedia* or *Google* (or whatever existed at that time in the world of instant knowledge) and so could not find a quick and easy answer by himself and was forced to turn to his father who is supposed to know about this sort of phenomenon.

In a perfunctory and calming way, I told him that there were many theories about what dreams are and how the mind works, and that of course nightmares (he had been troubled by some terrible ones at the time) were not real...

Wide awake and not yet ready for bed, he looked at me with wrinkled brow and responded, “No, I mean where *are* they... where do they *really* come from. I know I *have* them, but *where* do I have them?”

Being the literate, literal and modern, sleep-deprived dad that I am, I responded, “In your head – now go to bed” or something like that and I thought I was pretty witty in my half-awake, harried-parent kind of way. I don’t think he was too happy with this answer, but at the time I thought it was too much of a bother to sort it out right then and there and felt it best to let it go. Besides I was busy and had to tend to more serious things such as making sure we had clean underwear for the next day.

Years have passed and I didn’t remember this incident until lately. I had probably filed it away somewhere in my mind as a cute example of mixed up kid logic. But my work here at the center has recently exposed me to the thoughts, stories and wisdom of some special individuals that made me think back to my son’s question and made me realize that I have been the one mixed up. As if in a dream, I have missed the truth of his question – the *where* of it all. I have learned that the *where* is in the landscape.

We are surrounded by landscapes, both physical and abstract, but both very much real, even though we tend to make them disappear or become transparent from time to time, relegating them to the realm of the mundane and ignored. But they make up the “where” of our existence and the basis for our history together and therefore, in a profound way, our origins as a community and as a people. Sometimes we see our valley with its ring of mountains, riparian areas, and the human-made “built environment.” At other times we see the

complex cultural and social elements connecting us to each other and to the land itself. Many times we don’t see any of it. And sometimes it takes dreams to make it real and whole again.

In this issue of *The Californian*, we feature articles about two unique educators, both of whom have taught at De Anza College and have helped us remember the importance of landscapes, both physical and cultural. They have used their dreams and personal visions to interpret the wisdom of the landscape, or even to create new landscapes providing learning and knowledge. Author and professor Darryl Babe Wilson asks, where does wisdom come from, and makes us see the surrounding landscape as a source of a universal knowledge, forgotten and made invisible, but one that through stories, can awaken the dreams that help us see who we are. African American educator Nettye Goddard shows us how to make cultural history visible by creating her own cultural center right on the side of Mount Hamilton – and simultaneously capturing her own unique history and that of African Americans around the world.

Sadly, we pay tribute to one special individual also featured in this issue – the late Dr. Walt Warren – whom we lost this last spring. As the founder of our center he left a legacy that I am only now beginning to comprehend. His dream was to create a local history center that would connect students and community together and end the invisibility of history. He believed that through direct experience of exploring and finding the answers to puzzles presented by local history, we could create a landscape that would constantly remind us of where we came from, who we are and where we are going. He worked with others here in our community to save the “Trianon” building we now use as our center and to make it a permanent part of the local landscape, not to be forgotten. This was his dream and I thank him for it and for creating a unique place for others to dream and to learn to see things as they are.



I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the many members and supporters of CHCF. The last couple of years have been difficult – filled with uncertainties as to what would happen to my position and the entire future of the center. I now ask for your continued patience as I get our center in order, and sort out a way to continue our important local history work in a way that we can sustain with limited resources. I do apologize for getting this issue of our magazine out late to you, but hope you enjoy it and will look forward to the spring issue!

—Tom Izu, Director

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COVER: Painting by Helen Tanner Brodt, 1838–1908 titled “Mount Shasta Viewed Through Trees,” courtesy of Bancroft Library.

# CALENDAR

<b>February 1 – 22</b>	Yaaba Soore: The Path of the Ancestors — The Nettie George Goddard African American Cultural Center and Botanical Garden — exhibit (see page 16)		Native Californians — exhibit featuring the work of artist Frank LaPena, and writer Darryl Babe Wilson (see page 16)
<b>February 6</b>	Reception for Nettie Goddard exhibit, 11:30 a.m. at CHC	<b>March 7</b>	Panel presentation and discussion with artist Frank LaPena and writer Darryl Babe Wilson (see page 16)
<b>February 16</b>	De Anza and CHC closed in observation of Lincoln's Birthday	<b>March 8</b>	Panel discussion and demonstrations on Ohlone culture by Ruth Orta and Ramona Garibay (see page 16)
<b>February 19</b>	De Anza and CHC closed in observation of Washington's Birthday	<b>March 30</b>	Winter Quarter ends
<b>March 1</b>	Where Do You Find Wisdom? Landscapes, Knowledge, and Northern	<b>April 9</b>	Spring Quarter begins

## MEMBERSHIP

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### De Anza College Employee Payroll Deduction

*The following employees of De Anza College have generously given through the college's payroll deduction plan:*

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# EDUCATION

## California History Center State and Regional History Academic Program: Spring 2007

The following courses will be offered Spring Quarter 2007 through the California History Center. Please see the History Department class listings section of the Schedule of Classes for additional information, or call the center at (408) 864-8712.

### **BALLAD OF DOLORES HUERTA**

*Nannette Regua* HIST-54W-95 ■ 1 Unit  
Referred to as the “Dragon Lady,” Dolores Huerta aimed to win rights for farm workers. Alongside local leader, Cesar Chavez, she was involved in crucial aspects of the United Farm Workers union, such as, organizing, negotiating, and lobbying. Field trip will include a tour of Sal Si Puedes in San José.

Lectures: Thursday, April 12, 2007  
6:20 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., CHC  
Field Trips: Saturday, April 14, 2007

### **GOLD RUSH TOWNS OF THE CENTRAL MOTHER LODE**

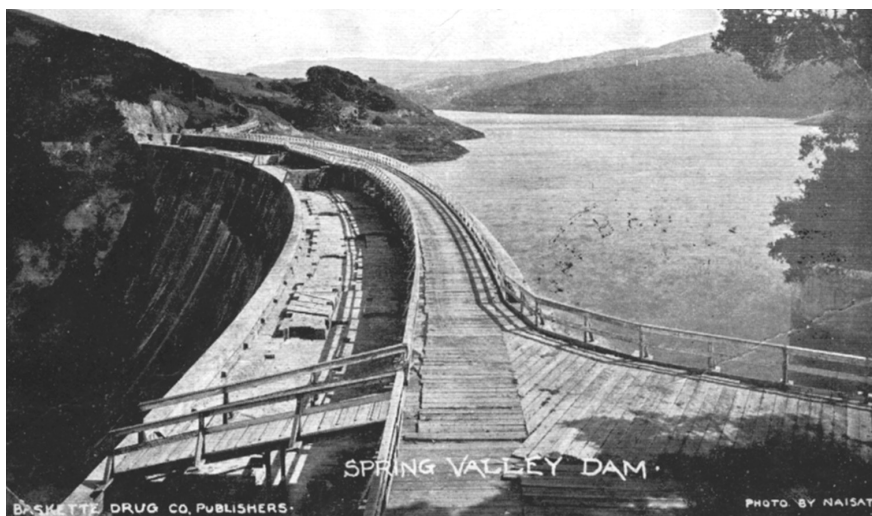
*Chatham Forbes* HIST-107X-97 ■ 2 Units  
Goldseekers by the thousands poured into the Sierra foothills, into raw new towns like Grass Valley, Nevada City, Rough and Ready, Placerville. The story of the California Gold Rush is a social, economic, and political epic in American history. Students unable to take the field study may write a term paper.

Lectures: Thursdays, May 24 and June 7, 2007  
6:20 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., CHC  
Field Trip: Saturday and Sunday, June 2 and 3, 2007

### **PRESERVATION OF THE MARIN COUNTY COMMUNITIES**

*Chatham Forbes*  
HIST-107X-96 ■ 2 Units  
Marin has an outstanding history of locally initiated environmental protection. Completion of the Golden Gate Bridge in 1937 triggered attempts by developers to build large communities on the unoccupied lands. Groups of concerned private citizens rose to resist, with notable success.

Lectures: Thursdays, April 19  
and May 3, 2007  
6:20 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., CHC  
Field Trips: Saturdays, April 28  
and May 12, 2007



*Spring Valley Dam, c. 1904*

### **THE SAN MATEO COAST**

*Betty Hirsch* HIST-107X-95 ■ 2 Units  
In the early 1850s James Johnston fell in love with the Coastside, particularly the open country around Half Moon Bay, and was determined to live there - even though to get into that secluded region one had to either walk or ride a horse. Up to that time no wheeled vehicles had ever been maneuvered over the steep hills. Explore life on the Coastside, past and present, with its sea, hills, farmlands, and beautiful vistas. The class will visit Half Moon Bay, Pigeon Point Lighthouse, the restored home of James Johnston, Año Nuevo, and other coastal sites.

Lectures: Thursdays, April 26 and May 10, 2007  
6:20 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., CHC  
Field Trips: Saturdays, May 5 and May 19, 2007

### **WATER AND THE CALIFORNIA DREAM**

*Betty Hirsch* HIST-51X-95 ■ 2 Units  
In the last one hundred years imported water has transformed the Golden State with land ownership patterns and real estate boosterism, dramatically altering both urban and rural communities. The key to this transformation has been expanded access to water from the Eastern Sierra, the Colorado River and Northern California rivers. This class will examine how the importation of water has shaped the state's population growth and has, at the same time, damaged the environment. The Santa Clara Valley Water District's history will also be covered. Various water sites will be visited as part of the class.

Lectures: Thursdays, May 31 and June 14, 2007  
6:20 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., CHC  
Field Trips: Saturdays, June 9 and June 16, 2007

# Legends, Landscapes and Wisdom: An Interview with Darryl Babe Wilson

by Nancy Olsen and Tom Izu

**A**uthor, educator and storyteller, Darryl Babe Wilson shared his thoughts about wisdom, landscapes, and dreams in an interview with De Anza College instructor Nancy Olsen and CHC director Tom Izu. Wilson is Achumawi and Atsugewi and was born and grew up in the Northeastern part of California with the name, Sul'ma'ejote. His people are often referred to as the Pit River Nation. His lyrical memoir, *The Morning the Sun Went Down* (Heyday Books, Berkeley, 1998) was critically received. Dr. Wilson has taught at a number of universities and colleges including Foothill and De Anza colleges. He has graciously allowed us to publish an original essay of his in our next issue of *The Californian*.

Photo courtesy of Heyday Books



**Where were you born?**

**Will you give the native name for that location?**

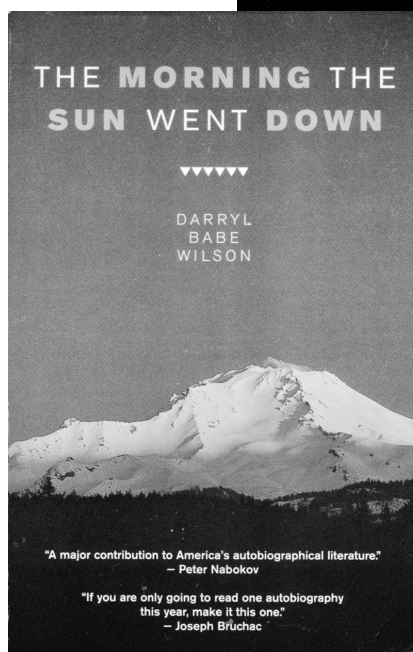
The Fall River Valley, where I was born. In the old days it was *Qatsade*, if you are in the valley or if you are from the valley. *Tijtawa* if you are from south of *It Ajuma* (Pit River), *Qa'jutewi* if you are from north of *It Ajuma*. Anthropology, later, called the language and the people north of the river, *Ajumawi*. They were trying to identify this people as "River People," but it should have been *Ajuma Itam Is*. They also misidentified the people south of *It Ajuma*, *Hatwiwi* (water flowing people) as *Atsugewi*. *Sul'ma'ejote* (Where the Fall River emerges after flowing under *Ako Yet*) is one of the original names of what is now Fall River.

I was born at home on the north side of Fall River at Fall River Mills on November 21, 1939. *Sul'ma'ejote*, therefore, is my native name. Most natives do not know the language, the old laws, or the landscape, or have respect for these things. The native languages are rarely used except as mispronunciations of the bar room set. Natives garble what little language they know, agreeing among themselves that their language and pronunciation are "right on!" Then they have another drink celebrating their indigenous talents. The old people shun them saying their conduct is "disrespects."

**Describe people and landscape**

**where you were born and grew up.**

The tribe's population is less than five hundred. The people are not tall, but many men are created thick, and we are a variety of complexions from deep coffee to cream, depending, usually, upon the mixture of the Anglo race in our genes. We have thick,



Darryl Babe Wilson

straight, black hair, deep brown eyes, and are of every size and temperament. We are related through ancestry as explained in our lessons and legends. We should be hunters and fishermen, gatherers and "just people" (living in the labor-class). A generation ago a few had special power. The generation before that was laced with power people. Today, within the people, because of the hegemony of "civilization," arrogance, and "progress," appreciating the spiritual connection to earth and the greater powers has diminished in its necessity. In the homeland today, the Bureau of Indian Affairs is, often, the only winter employment. There are few who practice the "old way," the "old law", the "old rule" and none of the practitioners work with the BIA, considering it

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another form of intrusion, and a plot for taking something.

The landscape varies – high mountains, broad valleys, fresh water, “sick” water, flowing water, forested mountains, and buck and rabbit brush carpet high deserts, with four distinct seasons. There is no need for a calendar. Spring arrives with great relief, summer is a time to relax, autumn is a time to prepare for the long winter. Winter is a time to dream of spring. Our legends explain the human-landscape-connection, land use, and the importance of respect for it all. Legends are now a hesitating, inaudible whisper across the evenings. Again, the hegemony of civilization has crushed the life-breath from the native psyche – leaving confusion in its gruesome wake. Not long ago the landscape was personified, balanced, healthy, and “fit.” The earth was of the utmost importance, providing food and shelter and places for meditation. In the mornings the earth and universal landscapes are sweet, fresh, overpowering, humble, and friendly, an eternal promise made visible and a spiritual emotion made tangible. Evenings are often like the most delicate, sovereign-purple negligee, and bird songs are mellow as the ancient powers rest and recover from an often long day. The evening’s journey with brother sun, melting into a glowing forever like a baby dreaming and settling deep into a soft pillow. The sun plans for tomorrow, and eternity is wrapped in a star-blanket of destiny as moon splashes delicate silver across the earth. Blossoms rest, birds sleep, earth breathes slow and soft, and a fresh dawn is only a dream away. Then we think long and deep, realizing that we are products of this continual wonder.

### **How significant is one’s name in relationship to the landscape?**

The old ones say, “Your destiny was scattered in the vast at the time the stars were sprinkled there, long ago.” Therefore, those of us raised in the “old way” by “old ones,” clearly see the human-earth-universe as one living being. Your *wa’tu* and *ah’lo* are, then, precious above all else. The *ah’lo* is your umbilical cord-connection to your mother and to the earth. Your *wa’tu* is your spiritual umbilical cord connecting you with the universe – a type of “tap root,” reaching far into forever.

My connection to my mother and to earth is in the Fall River Valley, there beside the Fall River. Therefore my native name must show that connection. I am *Sul’ma’ejote*. There is only one *Sul’ma’ejote* (the river) recognized by the great universal powers. In the recent past all males were named for the landscape of their birth. In this manner anyone would know you, your birth place, your genealogy, and your history just by your name. Ramsey Bone Blake, at birth, was named *Chuta’puki ahew, jui ajijujuji*. So, instantly one should know who he is and who his people are, and where that mountain is that has seven springs and one of them



*Waterfall on Mt. Lassen*

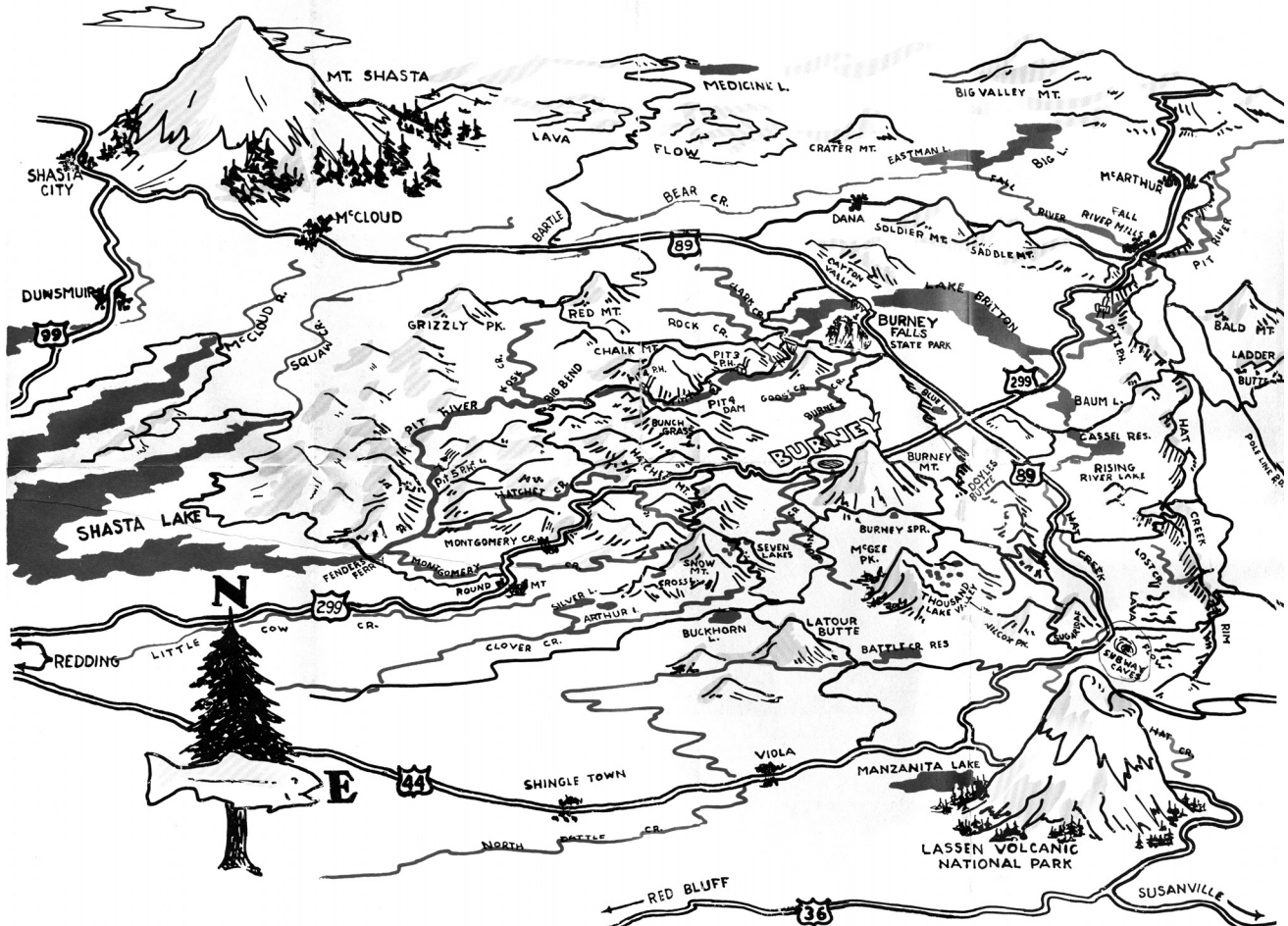
called *Jui ajijujuji* (where the water comes up and the moss and grass are always dancing). In this manner the male person “becomes” an identifiable part of the landscape. So, like my Aunt Gladys said, sweeping her arm around the mountainous landscape, “Our spirits shall endure long after these mountains turn to dust.” That gives us tenure unlimited. She also said, “You must have a “real” name or the Great Powers won’t know who to council.” Therefore, the landscape name is most necessary. It is also a practice terribly damaged by civilization.

## When and where was it that you found you could express yourself in the English language?

In the late '50's, at Enterprise High School, Redding, I had a writing assignment for my English class. The teacher, Mr. Grossen, noted that I was trying to tell a very interesting story – but my poor English presentation and lack of adequate word-selection barred a normal person from attempting to decipher it. He counseled me, giving me his English book with appropriate chapters marked for me to study – misplaced modifiers, dangling participles, run-on sentences, and punctuation. He also gave me his dictionary and said to look up each word in my paper that he had underlined, and to study its definition, and to “Memorize it so you won’t have to look it up throughout your career.” “Career” almost knocked me down like a flaming arrow through my heart. Up until that moment I had no idea that “career” had anything to do with the future of any native in this land. I thought those things were for somebody

else! That was the beginning of my drive to understand sentence structure and the everlasting search for a “better” word, the “perfect” word, the word that was alive, breathing. Later I was in jail for 60-days. There was nothing to read but “Tower” booklets that the missionaries brought on Sunday, and a neglected book called The Complete Works of Robert Service. We read about Robert somebody in our English class and I thought that this might be that guy. But, upon reading it I became exposed to poetic storytelling rhythm, word choice, color, sound, and action. I memorized that book and can still quote entire poems. But Service expressed like that with color and action, so I knew that I could, too. The clear, clean expression became a lifetime pursuit.

At the University of California, Davis, I majored in English with a minor in Native American Literature. With the help of great instructors, the poet Gary Snyder being one of them, I was encouraged to keep pursuing the perfect word, a clearer meaning, a better



Illustrated map of Burney and surrounding areas by Doug Burrichter from an early brochure published by the Burney Chamber of Commerce.

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approach, color, sound. The buckskin hide that I carried to college dry and stiff was worked to softness, something that many people longed to touch. At the University of Arizona I was introduced to many native authors as I continued my literary drive. My final credentials there are through the English Department.

### **What do you feel is most important about your work and the lessons it teaches about landscape?**

The most important aspect of sharing my thoughts about landscape and the spirit of the land is to somehow, with enough velocity, show the audience that many of the native lessons and legends are a wisdom born from universal “understandings,” maturing into dreams, then appearing as an oral presentation. The landscape is a fragment of the greater dream – and so are all other forms of existence. *Respect* for earth and *responsibility* for life is a mandate emitting from the great universal powers. Natives being created “last” must honor their elders in the ecological chain. Anthropology has firmly established the indigenous oral literatures of the ages as myth, made up, accept-or-reject fairy tales. That is not true. Legends, knowledge, and wisdom, have been handed down through the ages – ever since humanity began to think and speak. Wisdom usually appears in a dream and the dream takes on substance and realities. Every element in nature thinks and dreams.

According to one legend, “Before there was something there was nothing.” This world (universe) was made by song and dream. Voice appeared in the “vast.” Voice thought it should be beautiful, so changed into an amazing song. That beautiful song changed fragments of ether into a physical presence. Today, fragments of that dream are all around us even though God-based-religion, technology, and rote education, abhor its presence. I strive to express the need for “understandings,” through landscape images and the precious spirit of the land.

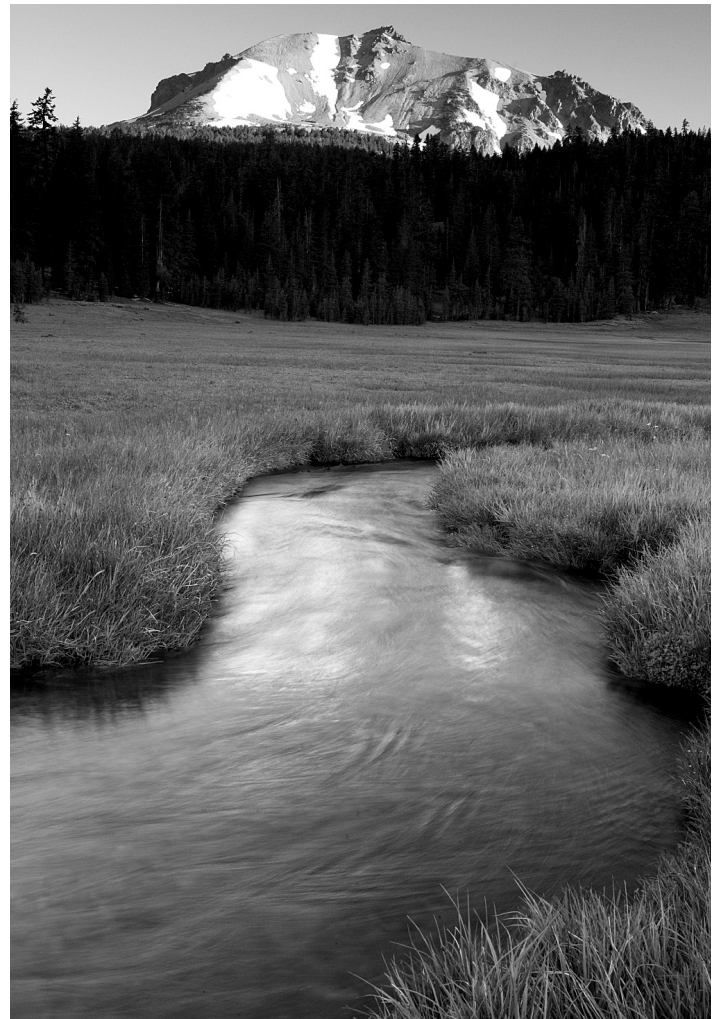
### **What can we learn from your experience and wisdom of your native people and the land?**

The *Pukamukas* (wonderful wise people of our past) told us how this earth is going to be consumed and destroyed. Our legends address how this world came into presence. They never said, as far as I understand, that there is another earth being prepared, but there certainly is a great change approaching. Not an ending of all of life, but a drastic “changing” to earth as we know it. The Elders call this part of our instructions, “warnings.” They say, “Many people will not listen and your words will blow away with the wind.” More and more I am learning that my own people are included with the masses not listening because the hegemonic society moves their understandings and habits closer to the civi-

lized, and away from the autochthonous fire.

The land and landscape, the non-human life in a beautiful array of species, is being attacked and some species are destroyed out of existence each day. Progress refuses to admit that nature is anything other than a nuisance or a substance to use up or discard. The history books display natives stampeding bison over a cliff and the student cannot understand the cave-man tactic of mass death and destruction. Yet, the civilization the students are a part of, in its rush to prove its arrogant superiority over nature, silently constructs the cliff that entire civilizations must stampede over, soon.

The ancient ones spoke of a time when a “great understandings” will appear, following knowledge and wisdom. “It will be like the dawn moving across the land.” Each morning I go out at dawn. I dream about “understandings, wisdom, and knowledge



*Mt. Lassen*



approaching, dancing to the sound of gourd and deer-hoof rattles. As the sun rises and a new dawn splashes across the land I pray that “understanding” comes with it today. Then, I wait for the next dawn, and the next.

For those of you who doubt the magic, come stand on a little mountain top with me and as first light appears and we are deep in thought, we might learn a great deal about the old wisdom of the *Pukamuka*, the magic and wonder of life in the landscape of earth, and about truth and knowledge, while we decipher our “understandings,” and discover our genuine destiny, too.

### Places of power. What may we know about them? What different powers are there? How can we use them to know about the landscape around us?

There are Places of Power and Power Places. Places of Power are known places in the landscape where a person or groups of people have access, and Power is apparent. It can be felt and experienced: A certain mountaintop, a roaring water such as Burney Falls, or a vibrating silence like Medicine Lake. In the old days the Places of Power were guarded and protected by all people with the deepest respect. They were not off limits, but one must be very careful and very quiet while there.

Power Places are somewhere in the landscape where a person has arranged as a meeting place for council with his *Tinihowi* or *Damagoomi*. *Tinihowi* and *Damagoomi* are a part of the landscape rock, mountain, bird, animal, tree, cloud, thunder, lightning, etc., that has “adopted” a person and agrees to become his personal “helper” through this perilous life. Without a “helper,” the Elders say, a person is “naked before all of the powers of the universe.” That Power Place may have power only to the person and his *tinihowi*, and it could be anywhere. The *Damagoomi* is the same as the *tinihowi*, but *Damagoomi* is strictly for medicine men/women because they have power enough to control the strength of his/her *Damagoomi*. A *Damagoomi* power might kill a normal person not prepared for its often-contrary spirit.

What different powers are there? There are special powers, hunting power, fishing power, gambling power, warrior power, dream power, finding power, singing power, a power for almost every cultural endeavor. Most of the powers have a power song just for it and the person it helps. These powers are guarded. In a more “normal” arena everything in nature has its own power and is the helper-power of a person, his *tinihowi*.

How can we use them to know about the landscape around us? The homeland has two western “cornerstones,” *AkoYet* (Mt Shasta) and *Yettajenna* (Mt Lassen). From Lassen it goes east to *Watakjosi* (Warner Range), then north to Fandango Peak (just south of Oregon). Within that area, any place could be a Place of

Photo: Meredith Rosendahl



Medicine Lake

Power or a Power Place — sacred. Therefore, the old ones caution, “You must approach the land with silence and respect. Do not break a branch or turn a leaf. The spirits know you are there. They watch.” So we are cautioned not to make noise in the landscape but to be respectfully silent and to listen. “Listen long and you will hear the power, *Mis Misa*, singing. *Mis Misa* lives in the great mountain. That is your best power.”

Today, because the callous, arrogant, posture of progress, if one listens in the dawn from a mountain top, one will hear the angry growl of power saws assaulting a forest, maybe killing someone’s *tinihowi* — that is disrespectful in so many ways. If we turn off the saws and cease our murdering, arrogant habits and stop listening to a progress that creates its own necessity, and silently listen, we will have accomplished several lessons from the beautiful and precious spirits living in the landscape.

*Sul’ma’ejote*, (a.k.a.) Darryl Babe Wilson, 2006, Nevada

## Where Do You Find Wisdom?

### Landscapes, Knowledge, and Northern Native Californians

A CHC exhibit featuring the work of nationally recognized artist Frank LaPena and author Darryl Babe Wilson.

February 22, 2007 through March 29, 2007

Reception, panel discussions and demonstrations on March 7 and 8.

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*The Nettye George Goddard African American Cultural Center and Botanical Garden*

## **Nettye Goddard's 50 Years of Civic Engagement**

by **Cozetta Guinn**

**N**estled high in the hills above San José, California, halfway to Mt. Hamilton's Lick Observatory, is one of Santa Clara County's newest treasures, The Nettye George Goddard African American Cultural Center and Botanical Garden.

Nettye Goddard is an African American woman educator, activist, and advocate for helping students achieve through the *Black Experience*, an approach to education to which she has devoted her career. Professor Goddard believes that African American students who are steeped in their own culture through-

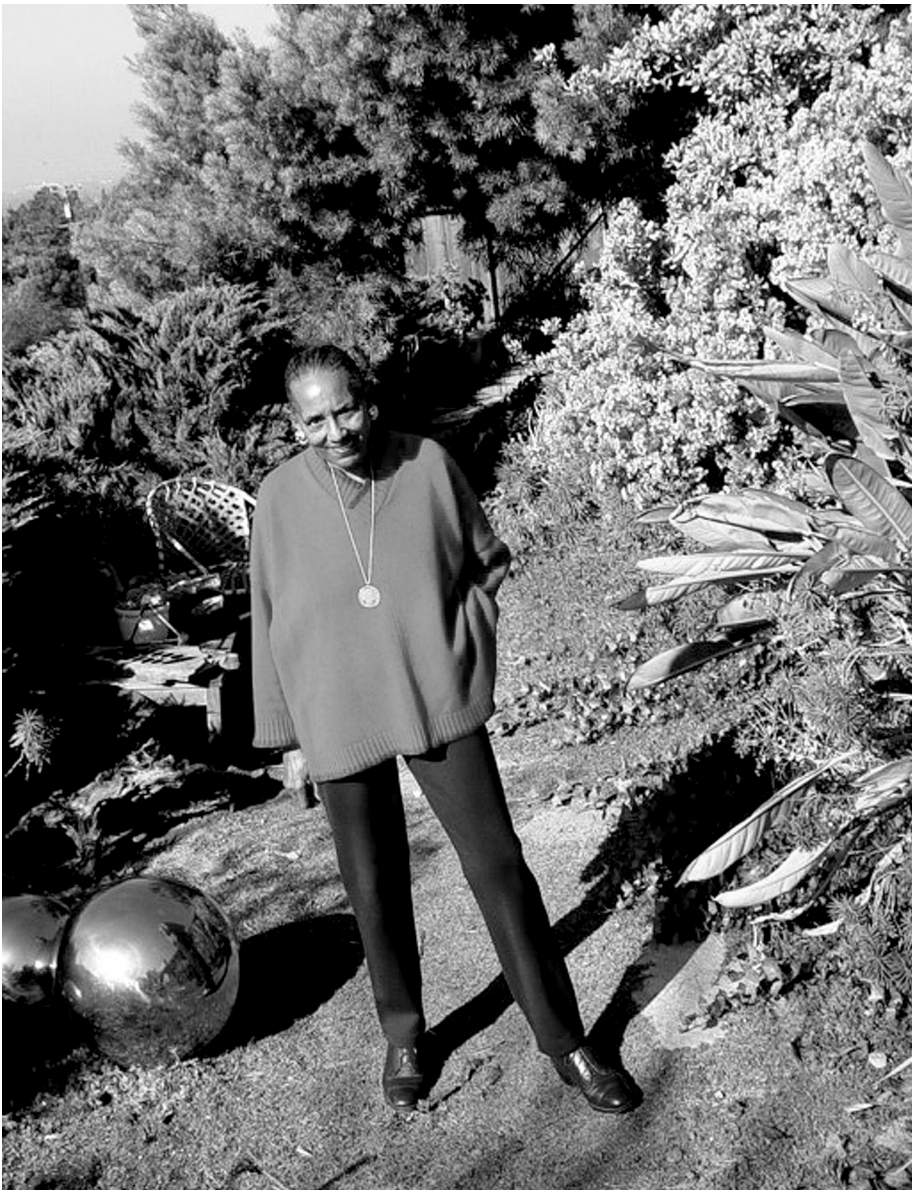
out their lives are academically and socially better for the experience. Nettye Goddard currently accepts the title of Professor Emeritus, having taught at San José State University, Santa Clara University, California State University, Hayward (now called California State University, East Bay), the University of Oxford, and De Anza College. Her long and varied background in education has made her a proponent for education inside – and outside – of the classroom. Her avid collecting of African American cultural and artistic works has led to her work as curator. The story following tells of her latest venture – an African American cultural center in the east foothills of San José, for study, research, training, enlightenment, and networking in African American scholarship, culture, history, and community.

The Nettye Goddard African American Cultural Center and Botanical Garden overlooks the vast Silicon Valley floor with its artery of highways, El Camino Real, 101, 280, and 680 stretching like veins across the back of one's hand. This amazing facility is located on one acre of a terraced hillside where, on a clear day, one can truly see for miles. From the west deck of the Center there is a spectacular view overlooking downtown San José, Moffett Field, and Stanford University. Also from this vantage point it is easy to see the Diablo Range to the north and south, the Mt. Umunhum tower to the west and Sutro Tower in San Francisco.

The single level home housing the Center was constructed in 1966. It sits in the middle of the lot on a hillside slope. Above and below the home, a lush evergreen and deciduous botanical garden thrives. Many plants on the plot are native to California and the Americas while others have their origins in Africa, Asia and Australia. Here one can see bay trees, aloë plants, poinsettia (a member of the Euphorbia family) and the very fragrant Brugmansia, or "Angel's Trumpet," among literally hundreds of other varieties. The deciduous plants have been placed in the garden to provide for maximum shade in the summer and sun in the winter. Murals and sculptures – beautiful, humorous, and provocative – are found at every level.

At this elevation of the San José hills, several wild animal and bird species are

Photo: Redcliffe Goddard



*Educator and activist Nettye Goddard*

frequently seen on the grounds and hovering in the sky above. They include deer, foxes, raccoons, wild turkeys, hawks, and skunks. A tame, neighborly, big white cat patrols for rodents on the hillside.

During the summer of 2006, the Center burst forth in full blossom. Museum, library, research center, arboretum, and home, every square foot of space is a reflection of someone who, over a period of many years, has held a deep interest in mankind and in nature.

The founder of the Center, Nettye G. Goddard, is a multi-talented African American woman, an educator with an extremely keen sense of civic responsibility, a history of civic engagement, and a commitment to the preservation of African American culture. She was born in Gadsden, Alabama, a small town in the northern part of the state about forty miles from Tuxedo Junction, the renowned 2-block area of west Birmingham. Tuxedo Junction was known for its nightlife and its tuxedo and zoot suit-clad men and sequin-dressed women. The Birmingham Electric Company's Wylam and Pratt streetcar lines intersected at the "junction" which was made even more famous by Erskine Hawkins's tune, *Tuxedo Junction*, later popularized by Glenn Miller and others.

A graduate of Talladega College, Alabama, Nettye earned a B.A. degree with a major in English and a minor in



*Nettye's mother, Virginia Kent.*



*George and Nettye Goddard moved to San José with their two young daughters in 1955, where Nettye became the first African American to be hired to teach for the San Jose Unified School District.*

history. While matriculating at Talladega, she was fortunate to have seen and heard numerous Black scholars of that era. One of her fond memories is that of taking classes in the same building in which Hale Woodruff painted the mural *The Amistad*. She also has a long history of being involved with music. Says Goddard "Growing up, there was always music in our house." Her mother, who attended Tuskegee Institute during the days of Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver and held a degree in nursing, had seen to it that there was a piano in the home and was Nettye's first piano teacher. "Mother was also a fine gardener," says Nettye.



*Nettye's father, General Lafayette Kent in his twelve-chair barbershop in Gadsden, Alabama. The shop also served as the local barbers' college.*



*Plants from Africa, Asia and Australia, as well as plants native to California and the Americas adorn the botanical gardens.*

Nettye would follow her mother as she worked. “Flowers were always on the table. Not only was our garden ornamental, it also provided food and was a great source of our abundance.” Her father, who had a third grade education, owned a twelve-chair barbershop and the local barbers’ college. He was also the African American who booked Black musicians and entertainers of the “chitlin’ circuit” to perform in Gadsden. Although well known and highly professional, these men and women were barred from living in local hotels, all of which were white-owned. Nettie’s childhood home was their place to stay when they came to town. Included in

that group were Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Bessie Smith, Jimmie Lunceford, Langston Hughes, Roland Hayes, and Paul Robeson, among others.

Nettye Goddard, her husband George, and their two daughters moved to San José in 1955. George was stationed at the Presidio in San Francisco. Nettie was hired to teach in the San José Unified School District that same year, the first African American to be hired to teach for the district. George, a World War II veteran, was a chemist and linguist who spoke five languages fluently. A graduate of the University of Michigan with a masters’ degree in chemistry, he had been drafted into the U.S. Army and studied at the Army Language School (now called the Defense Language Institute) at Monterey, California. Before coming to San José, George had served as an interpreter on two different occasions in Japan. Nettie and the children accompanied George to Japan — the first time for three years and the second time for a one-year stay.

It was George, who, with his background in chemistry, helped Nettie to become more ardently aware of growing and caring for plants.

George and Nettie both were music lovers. There was a grand piano in their living room and there were recordings that included classical, jazz, blues, and later, hip-hop. George was once a jazz disc jockey at a Los Gatos radio station.



*Nettye and her husband George were music lovers.*

Both Nettye and George became engaged in civic affairs very soon after moving to San José's Willow Glen district. They were affiliated with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). George, who passed away in 2000, worked with Byron Rumford to put into law the Fair Housing Act of 1963. They were also members of civic organizations, and served on many boards.

In 1973 Nettye Goddard graduated from San José State University with an M.A. in Education (Supervision). Later, she was a graduate intern, Human Resources Management University Associates/University of California Extension, San Diego, California.

Photo: Radcliffe Goddard



*Quiet areas throughout the garden offer seating for visitors.*

Photo: Radcliffe Goddard



*The Cultural Center's art collection consists mostly of works by African and African American artists.*

Nettye Goddard spent twelve years as a junior high school English teacher, and fifteen concurrent years as a lecturer in English at the college and university levels, including a teaching engagement at Oxford. Among her many different educational assignments was a period of fourteen years of successful experience as an administrator/manager of a professional development center with broad responsibilities including coordinating and supervising certificated personnel, and developing programs in a 50-school unified school district in Santa Clara County. Nettye Goddard designed the Multicultural Program for the Stanford Institute in Cross Cultural Communication. Nettye was also a contributor to McGraw-Hill's, *Teaching English Today* and *Contemporary English*, published by Silver Burdett, among other works.

Just what inspired Nettye Goddard to officially transform her home of forty years into an African American cultural center? The answer is that the residence actually began not only as a family home, but also as a repository of a variety of memorabilia, which has grown and transformed over the years. There are hundreds of books of literature, music, poetry, history, anthropology, art, culture and cooking written about African Americans, most of which are also written by African Americans. The art collection includes both two- and three-dimensional works, the majority of which are made by African and African American artists. Works of art are located both inside and outside the facility. There are traditional and contemporary African sculptures, prints, canvas paintings, and murals in a variety of media as well as photographs of famous African Americans, and local artists and individuals known only to friends. There are hangings of mud-cloth from West Africa, and paintings from South Africa. A visitor will encounter Senufo rhythm pounders, turn-of-the-century documents from Black colleges, and



*Former De Anza College student Sean Clay works in the garden.*

numerous pieces of pottery. Oh yes, there is a Hale Woodruff print.

Steps make up the circular pathways that take visitors to the upper and lower levels of the garden. Along the paths are vegetables, numerous flowering plants including orchids and roses, cacti and citrus fruit, murals, brick ovens, and a barbecue pit. There are quiet areas offering seating for individuals and small groups with sculpted miniature animals in close proximity. One of the murals has a mirror with an inscription that reads “Kent’s Barber Shop.” The mirror came from Nettye Goddard’s father’s business.

Seeing the gardens is a must. Should anyone take the tour of the one-acre plot, neither he nor she would wonder why Nettye Goddard chose to share this site with the public. Her collections are the reflection of a life of inspiration and accomplishment to be shared with others now and in the future.

Since retiring from teaching at San José State University, Professor Emeritus Goddard has taught African American literature at De Anza College. Upon completion of her course, students are invited to her home for a final seminar. It was on one such occasion in 2005 that students who attended exclaimed “Wow! Look at all the books! Have you read all of these?” Nettye replied “Yes” and told them that she was a college professor and that task came

with the position. Later she observed one young man sitting in one of the reading rooms. “Now this is a place where I could really study!” the student said. The student, whose name is Sean Clay, along with others, told her that they would like to return and help her. Sean went on to say that it was hard for him to study where he lived. When he got out of school he did not want a job that required him to wear a tie. He wanted to work in a different atmosphere. He thought that he might want to learn more about plants. Since then Sean has come on a regular basis to work in Nettye Goddard’s botanical garden. He now knows the scientific and common names for many plants and he assists with planting and transplanting. Plant naming and migration history are future projects. At first he worked as a volunteer. She is happy to report that he now is paid for the time that he works. This episode was the catalyst for Nettye Goddard to commit to the African American Cultural Center.

Why would Nettye, who has already given so much to San José and other local communities, continue this task in her retirement years? The answer would probably be “If not me, who?” As with many others, she is aware of current statistics that indicate that a high percentage of Americans demonstrate skills at the lowest literacy level. She states, “As a teacher, one has to think of many avenues to reach students. Students who do not read at a desirable level tend to get information not conducive to critical thinking, and reading critically helps students solve problems and understand values.” Being able to analyze information is necessary in all disciplines. Although great strides have been made since the 1954 *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education* decision, there are far too many American children left behind. They are more likely to drop out of school and become trapped in a perpetual state of social, economic, and academic despair.

Today, Professor Emeritus Nettye Goddard is living testimony to an individual’s dedication to making a difference in the lives of young people who fall in the above category. She believes strongly that by opening the center, a potential pathway to success has been made, especially for students at De Anza College who would enhance their literary and life skills by experiencing her Center’s library and botanical garden.

### **YAABA SOORE: The Path of the Ancestors**

Don’t miss this fascinating exhibit at the California History Center highlighting the Nettye George Goddard African American Cultural Center and Botanical Garden and Nettye Goddard’s 55 years of civic engagement in Santa Clara County as an educator and activist.

**January 23, 2007 through February 22, 2007**

## FOUNDATION NOTES

### Dr. Walter G. Warren II, 1926 – 2006

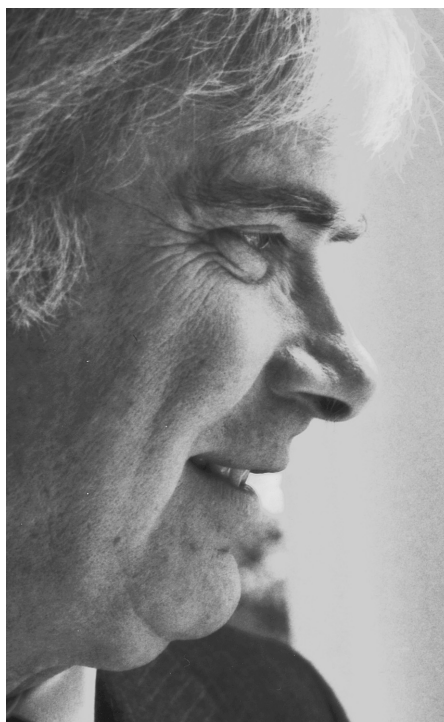
**D**r. Walter G. Warren, II, founder of the California History Center and former political science instructor at Foothill and De Anza colleges, passed away on May 17, 2006 in Monterey, California. He was 80 years old.

Warren served as instructor of political science at Foothill College, beginning his tenure with the district in 1965. He, along with his colleagues, created innovative teaching methods designed to involve students in the political institutions and activities of the local community. Dr. Warren helped to champion a “learning-by-experience” or case study method of instruction using field study and projects based on actual problems and issues faced by local government and organizations in the region.

He began teaching at the newly established De Anza College in 1967, working closely with the students of the De Anza Evening College to found the campus’s student body government and write its first constitution. Dr. Warren continued his case study approach applying it to local history at the urging of Dr. Walter Travis, Dean of Social Sciences. He created a unique opportunity for his students to write and then publish their research papers exploring various topics on local and community history and institutions. It was from this close relationship with De Anza’s first students that the idea and support for establishing a history center was born. College president Dr. Robert DeHart encouraged Warren and his students to create the center, which received its first funding from the Student Body Association of the De Anza Evening College and later a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1972-73.

As the Center continued to grow, offering local history courses, oral history and local community research activities, and the publication of a quarterly local history book series, the need to find a permanent place to house research materials

Photo: Lois Jenkins



and to create and display exhibits became a pressing issue. Temporarily, the center was housed in a cottage near the current center. Dr. Warren sought the support of various community and city leaders, and with the help of City of Cupertino Historian Louis Stocklmeir, Sr., founding Foothill-De Anza College District Board members, Mary Levine and Dr. Robert Smithwick, and other influential members of the community, he helped to found the “Trianon Foundation” in 1969, as a private, non-profit organization. As its first goal, the Foundation sought funds and support for the restoration of the “Petit Trianon” building on the campus. After a successful community fundraising campaign, the building was restored in 1979 and became the new home of the California History Center. The Trianon Foundation later modified its mission, and became the California History Center Foundation.

He served as the Executive Director of the CHCF from 1969 to 1980 and then

continued to serve on its Board of Trustees until 1982. Dr. Warren retired in 1983.

The campus and local community owe Dr. Warren a debt of gratitude for his tremendous effort in establishing the California History Center and championing the popularization of local history through the promotion of student publications and an innovative “hands-on-history” approach in teaching and field studies. His belief in the need for direct involvement of students in the civic life of the local community anticipated the current acceptance of civic engagement as an important educational tool.

***“Regardless of his approach or educational philosophy, every teacher hopes somehow to get inside the student – to get under his skin – to affect him and leave a permanent mark. Without this hope we would be merely baby sitters and entertainers.”***

—Walt Warren

In an interview Dr. Warren once stated, “Regardless of his approach or educational philosophy, every teacher hopes somehow to get inside the student – to get under his skin – to affect him and leave a permanent mark. Without this hope we would be merely baby sitters and entertainers,” (from *California Historical Quarterly*, winter 1974, “History as Community Education: The California History Center at De Anza College”, by Charles Wollenberg).

Dr. Warren is survived by his wife Loretta K. Warren, son John L. Warren, and four grandchildren; Catherine Warren Lapid, Michael Walter Warren, Patrick Warren, and Spencer Warren.

# Upcoming Exhibits at the California History Center

**JANUARY 23, 2007 THROUGH FEBRUARY 22, 2007**

## **YAABA SOORE:**

### **The Path of the Ancestors**

*The Nettie George Goddard African American Cultural Center and Botanical Garden*

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An exhibit highlighting Nettie Goddard's 55 years of civic engagement in Santa Clara County as an educator and activist.

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Nettie Goddard was the first African American teacher in the San José Unified School District and had a distinguished career in higher education which included teaching at San José State University and De Anza College. She founded the Nettie George Goddard African American Culture Center and Botanical Garden in San José to continue promoting educational opportunities and cultural understanding for youth.

*Sponsored by CHCF and the Peninsula Bay Chapter of The Links Incorporated.*

**MARCH 1, 2007 THROUGH MARCH 29, 2007**

## **Where Do You Find Wisdom?**

*Landscapes, Knowledge, and Northern Native Californians*

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An exhibit featuring the work of Frank LaPena and Darryl Babe Wilson

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### **Reception, panel discussions, and demonstrations at CHC:**

■ **Wednesday, March 7, 2007, 10:30 a.m.** — Artist Frank LaPena and author Darryl Babe Wilson on landscapes and knowledge

■ **Thursday, March 8, 2007, 10:30 a.m.** — Ruth Orta and Ramona Garibay on Ohlone heritage and culture

Artist Frank LaPena is a nationally recognized artist, California State University, Sacramento professor emeritus of ethnic studies and former director of the university's Native American Studies Program. LaPena is also an active poet and dancer and was selected by the Smithsonian Institution as one of the advisors for the creation of its new national museum dedicated to American Indian life, languages, literature, history and arts. LaPena is author of *Dream Songs and Ceremony: Reflections on Traditional California Indian Dance* (Heyday Books, Berkeley, 2004).

Darryl Babe Wilson is an award winning author, storyteller, and professor. Dr. Wilson has taught at De Anza College and California State University, Hayward (now known as CSU East Bay). He is the author of the critically acclaimed, *The Morning the Sun Went Down* (Heyday Books, Berkeley, 1998) and has been featured in a number of documentary and educational films.

Ruth Orta is of Ohlone descent. She works to preserve her Ohlone heritage giving talks and presentations about the geographical and historical knowledge of her people.

Ramona Garibay is the daughter of Ruth Orta and volunteers as a Native American docent for the Coyote Hills Regional Park. Ramona is registered by the California State Native American Heritage Commission to serve as a monitor for archaeological work conducted on site or in the laboratory pertaining to California Native Americans.

*Sponsored by CHCF with funding provided by DASB.*

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*For more information about any of these exhibits and events, please contact Tom Izu at (408) 864-8986.*



## *California History Center & Foundation*

*A Center for the Study of State and Regional History  
De Anza College*

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or call for an appointment.

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## CALIFORNIAN

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