



Apr 3, 2022

Beth Wyman: A lady who knows her history

During her more than 50 years in Morgan Hill, Beth Wyman has created an impressive legacy not only as an educator and author but as a preserver of local history.

Beth's interest in history began during college in the early 1950s and inspired her 20-year career as a teacher of historic preservation at San Jose State University.

Her desire to have a say in Morgan Hill's development led Beth to serve as a City Council member and as Mayor. Her efforts to preserve local history included supporting the protection of Morgan Hill's iconic El Toro Mountain from development.

Beth also volunteered with the Morgan Hill Historical Society and served as Board President for a time. When her friend Addie Walgren decided to sell the historic Hiram Morgan Hill House, Beth joined other Historical Society volunteers to ensure the home would be renovated and preserved for the community's benefit in perpetuity.



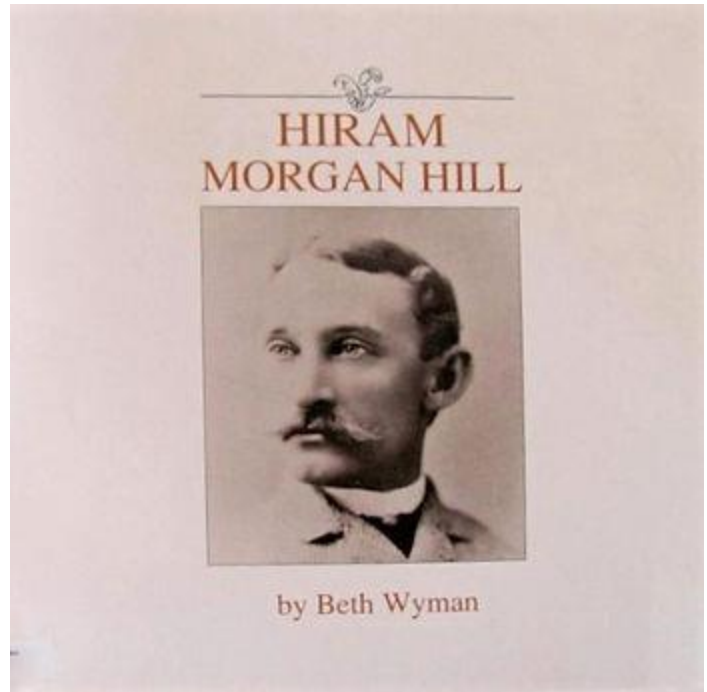
Beth Wyman at the Morgan Hill History Museum when it was on Main Street

According to Beth, “You have to be proactive or these places get bulldozed, and then it’s too late.”

The City of Morgan Hill transferred title to the Historical Society in 1992-93, and Historical Society volunteers led the renovation of the Hiram Morgan Hill House with a grand opening in 1998.

When the historic Acton House was gifted to the City to serve as a community museum, Beth once again joined other Historical Society volunteers to support the effort.

“We set up a foundation, raised funds to help cover the cost of moving the building, led repair efforts, and celebrated having a place where we could share history with the people of Morgan Hill.”



Beth researched Hiram Morgan Hill extensively for her Master’s thesis to fill in some gaps in the city’s early history. She’ll often laugh and say, “I got tired of telling people that Morgan Hill was a man, not a hill!”

She even traveled to Hiram Morgan Hill’s childhood home in Missouri to learn his story.

“I asked around but no one knew of him,” Beth said. “I’d about given up when a woman at the local newspaper suggested I contact Marjorie Groves Mills, a relative of Hiram Morgan Hill’s family.

“I looked her up in the phone book and went for a visit. After dinner and lots of talking, she finally dug a photo of him out of her dresser drawer.”

Beth also traveled to Hiram Morgan Hill’s last home in Elko, Nevada to gather more information on his years as a rancher. Thanks to Beth’s curiosity and careful research, her book, “Hiram Morgan Hill,” provides a rare glimpse into the life of our city’s namesake as well as his wife Diana Murphy Hill and the Murphy family.

To get your copy of Beth's book, "Hiram Morgan Hill," visit [Villa Mira Monte](#) or [BookSmart of Morgan Hill](#), or [shop Amazon online](#).