

## History San José



Preserving Our Heritage

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## Reasons against the Thomas Fallon Statue coming to History Park

As our slogan says “Welcoming All Since 1971,” History Park is known as a place where all of the cultures and heritage of the Santa Clara Valley are celebrated. We currently have 5 museums dedicated to different ethnic groups, whose story was not told too long ago. These groups now have spaces to tell their stories, in their own words, celebrating the rich cultural diversity of the Santa Clara Valley. The Thomas Fallon statue is seen by many as a symbol of racism, oppression and conquest which I think would take away from HSJ’s message of inclusiveness. Some of HSJ’s affiliates might take offence at the statue being relocated to History Park, especially the La Raza Historical Society, which celebrates the Mexican heritage of San Jose.

The Thomas Fallon statue is very large and History Park only has so much land and most of it is needed for when we host large events and festivals. HSJ also has three projects on the planning board already that are earmarked for areas on the property. We are planning to build the Muwekma Heritage Center, for a future affiliate/partnership with members of the Olhone tribe, we are in negotiations with the Southern Pacific Railroad to bring the Coyote Canyon Train Depot to History Park, one of the oldest remaining train depots in the Santa Clara Valley and we are working with a catering company to develop part of the site as a semi-permanent tented area for events and wedding to bring in more earned revenue for HSJ. These three important projects alone will further shrink the available land the Park will have for events, without adding an additional monument.

Due to the location of History Park, HSJ already has security problems, the Park is open every day, free of charge, which mean we have no control over who may wander into Park. During the day there is staff on the grounds, who might notice if someone was trying to vandalize the statue, but it would be not fair or right to ask HSJ’s staff to intervene, they are not trained security personnel. Once the Park is closed for the evening the statue would be ever more vulnerable. The fences around the Park are completely useless. We already have a homeless issue with people stealing items, breaking into buildings and vehicles. During the last protest at the statue, the protestors tied to burn the statue down. If that occurred at History Park, it could become a disaster since most of the historic buildings are made of wood and house priceless collections of museum artifacts, which if lost could never be replaced.