



In the late 19th century, the apple industry began to boom in Watsonville. As with every new industry competition grew fierce, with each packing company working to get their product noticed above all others. Eventually,

marketing experts and the most talented artists were hired to create a new means of advertising—the crate label.

Crate labels were originally colorful round labels pasted onto barrels and later onto wooden crates. As more and more companies went to the rectangular crates to ship their goods, the rectangular label became the norm. Crate labels were produced for nearly every type of farm produce, by nearly every packing company both throughout the United States, Canada, and other parts of the world.

These crate labels depicted the area of production, symbols related to the company name, or were based on a theme or lifestyle of that era. Regardless of the image portrayed on the label, it was produced with vivid colors -- all in an effort to catch the eye of the consumer.

During the late 1940s and early 1950s the use of wood crate labels was replaced with less costly pre-printed corrugated boxes. Many paper labels were destroyed, and thus the existing crate labels have taken on a new life as collector's items.

For more information about crate labels:
<http://www.allaboutapples.com/art.htm>

Featured Mural Artists



Arturo Thomae

thomae@cruzio.com
 www.thomaeart.com

Murals: 2, 3, 13, 14



Bonni Carver

bonnicarver@aol.com
 www.carverart.com

Mural: 8



Carol Huboi

yambodeen@aol.com
 www.artforartsake.mosaicglobe.com

Murals: 6, 12



John Ton

john@john-ton.com
 www.john-ton.com

Murals: 1, 5, 9, 10, 11, 15

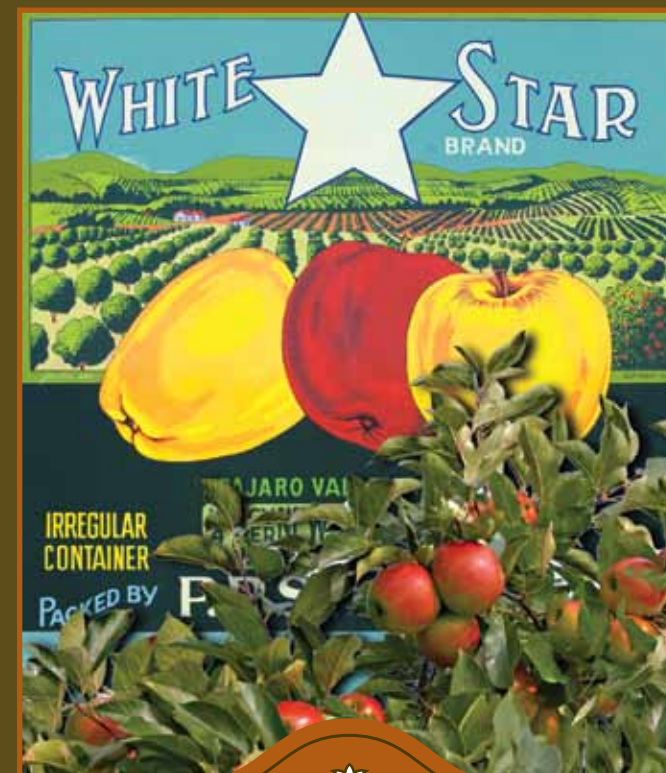


Peter Bartczak

clownbank@sbcglobal.net
 www.clownbank.com

Murals: 4, 7

Historic Label Art Murals of Downtown Watsonville





1. CALIFORNIA MISSION BRAND

Stolich Brothers – The Stolich Brothers apple business initially consisted of three brothers, Mike, Peter and Nicolas, who emigrated from Croatia by the early 1900s. Two of the brothers, Peter and Nicolas, were listed as fruit packers and shippers for the Stolich Brothers business. Stolich Brothers shipped apples to the 1912 World's Fair in England, and the business continued to operate until the mid-1940s under both the Golden Gate and California Mission Brand labels.

2. BERRY BOWL BRAND

Watsonville Berry Cooperative – The Watsonville Berry Cooperative was initiated in 1954 on Salinas Road by a group of strawberry growers who felt they could do a better job of marketing their crops than the produce brokers. The company still operates on Salinas Road.

3. OWL BRAND

Resetar Brothers – the Resetar Brothers packing and shipping business was a partnership of four brothers: Mike, Mitchell, Louis and Antone. Mike was the



first to come to Watsonville from Croatia in 1901. After working as a fruit packer for others, he began his own packing and shipping business in 1909 at Rodriguez and Walker Streets. He then brought his brothers Mitchell, Louis and Antone to Watsonville to join his operation. Theirs was one of the largest growing/shipping operations in the Salinas/Watsonville area.



4. BUTTERFLY CALIFORNIA

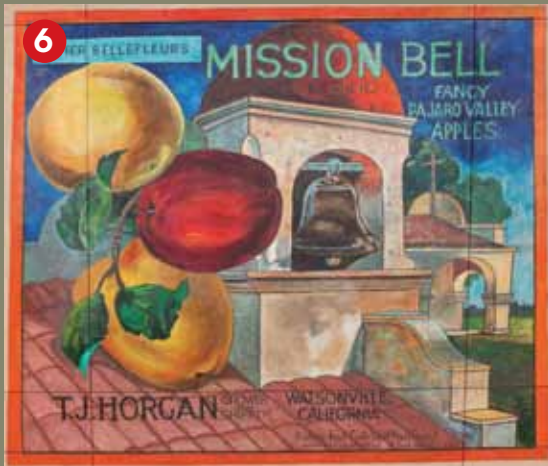
M. A. and Ray L. Travers –

Manuel Travers' father, originator of the Travers operation, came from Portugal, to the Hazel Dell District, in 1878, and began a packing business on Wall Street. Manuel came into the business with him, and after World War II, Manuel's son Ray joined him, continuing the business until the early 2000's. Label art circa 1940s.



5. STAR-PAK BRAND

Peter L. Stolich – Peter L. (Longo) Stolich was the son of Peter P. Stolich. Born in 1909, he began work as a fruit packer in 1939, and opened his own packing and shipping company in 1948, after the death of his father. Peter L. Stolich passed away in 1995.



6. MISSION BELL BRAND

T. J. Horgan

Horgan was a leading Watsonville citizen and philanthropist and a city alderman for 14 years. A native of Massachusetts, Horgan was of Irish descent. He had a packing house in Pajaro, and in 1930, his company shipped over 3,000 train car loads of produce.



7. DEWEY BRAND

P. N. Lettunich & Co.

Near the turn of the century, Peter N. Lettunich and A.B. Lettunich started a fruit packing and shipping business. P.N. Lettunich & Company was the first local firm to use labels for apple boxes. By 1901, they were shipping 100,000 boxes and 110 train cars of fruit to local and eastern destinations.



8. IRIS BRAND

W. E. Higman

William Higman was a fruit broker at 32 West Third Street (currently Beach Street) as early as 1921.



9. LIFE BRAND

B. Pista Co.

Blas Pista arrived in New York in 1900 from Croatia and by 1910 was operating a fruit packing and shipping business in Watsonville. His company was located at several locations near First and Walker Streets. He passed away in 1961. This mural was commissioned by his grandson Mark Pista.



10. LUCKY TRAIL BRAND

P.A. Scurich & Co. – Peter A. Scurich was the youngest of three brothers who operated the Scurich Brothers packing and shipping business from approximately 1892 to 1904. He later established P.A. Scurich & Company which had the Lucky Trails label. The business name was changed to P.A. Scurich and Sons when his sons Tony and Peter Jr. came into the business. His grandchildren and great grandchildren currently farm, making them the fourth generation of Scurich's to farm the Pajaro Valley. This mural was commissioned by Jim Scurich, grandson of P.A.



11. WHITE STAR

P.P. Stolich – Peter P. Stolich came to Watsonville from Croatia around 1897, and began work as a packer. In 1912 he was in business as Novacovich and Stolich, and then later began his own packing and shipping business as P.P. Stolich.

SPECIAL THANKS

With thanks and appreciation to: Jane Borg and the staff of the Pajaro Valley Historical Association; Bill Ringe/Agri-Culture; Tom Ninkovich, Slavic History Project; Blossoms into Gold: The Croatians in the Pajaro Valley, by Donna F. Mekis and Kathryn Mekis Miller; the Agricultural History Project, the mural artists, and all of the many descendants, families and friends of the growers/shippers that generously gave of their time and resources to make this project possible.

The City of Watsonville does not guarantee the information in this brochure is free of errors or omissions. It was developed using the best information available at the time.



12

12. MARTINELLI'S

S. Martinelli & Company was established in 1868 by Stephen Gaspar Martinelli, and has continued as a family business for five generations. Martinelli set up a cider works in his brother's barn on East Lake Avenue, in the vicinity of where the Elk's Lodge is located today. Martinelli's has been in business at its current location on East Beach Street since 1885, and Stephen Martinelli's great-grandson, John Martinelli, currently heads the operation.



13

13. F.B. PAJARO VALLEY

Franich Brothers – John and Martin Franich came to Watsonville in 1904 from Croatia. By the early 1920's, Franich Brothers had become a very successful apple growing and shipping company, with orchard land on East Lake Avenue and Corralitos. The business continued until the early 1940's when it evolved into two separate Franich family businesses.



14

14. GOLONDRINA BRAND

Scampavia Bros. – James and Antone Scampavia were immigrants from Croatia. In 1918, their fruit shipping and packing company was listed at 633 Walker Street.



15

15. AIRSHIP BRAND

Zupan and Lucich – Mitchell Zupan came to the United States from Croatia in the late 1800s, starting in the apple business in 1912. The Airship Brand label was initiated in 1920. He was in the business until his death, after which his son Stephen Zupan took over the operation and continued it until 1983. Mr. Zupan still owns the ranch, which is now leased to strawberry growers. He commissioned the mural.

MURAL LOCATIONS

- 1. CA Mission** – 451 Main Street (Ace Hardware, back wall facing parking lot)
- 2. Berry Bowl** – 11 Alexander (back wall facing Union Street)
- 3. Owl Brand** – 11 Alexander (back wall facing Union Street)
- 4. Butterfly** – 15 Maple Street (Fox Theater, side wall)
- 5. Star Brand** – 175 Second Street, (Pájaro Valley Cold Storage, side wall, Walker Street and Riverside Dr.)
- 6. Mission Bell** – 15 East Beach Street (Plaza Vigil, side wall)
- 7. Dewey** – 15 Maple Street (Fox Theater, back wall facing Union Street)
- 8. Iris** – 523-531 Main Street (building side wall, in parking lot)
- 9. Life Brand** – 175 Second Street, (Pájaro Valley Cold Storage, side wall, Walker Street and Riverside Dr.)
- 10. Lucky Trail** – 175 Second Street, (Pájaro Valley Cold Storage, side wall, Walker Street at Riverside Dr.)
- 11. White Star** – 175 Second Street, (Pájaro Valley Cold Storage, side wall, Walker Street and Riverside Dr.)
- 12. Martinellis** – 440 Main Street (Taylor's Office Supply, back wall, parking lot facing Union Street)
- 13. F.B. PV Apples** – 469 Union Street (Golden State Auto Care, alley off of East Lake Ave.)
- 14. Golondrina** – 558 Main Street (facing Fifth Street)
- 15. Airship Brand** – 850 West Beach Street (Apple Growers Ice and Cold Storage)