



HISTORY CENTER

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY

Ignace Paderewski
Resident of Our Fair County





This photo was taken in London in 1897. The autograph is original, and this print is in the archives of the History Center

For eight years, the world's greatest living pianist at the time, Ignace Jan Paderewski, lived in our county. He and Mme. Paderewski and a large entourage domiciled at the aristocratic and elegant Hotel El Paso de Robles.



Hotel El Paso de Robles, pictured on a postcard

And how did this come about? In 1913, Paderewski was giving a concert in San Francisco when he became so ill with pain from the arthritis in his left arm that he had to leave the stage. A great medical specialist was called to his aid and finally said: "I can give you opiates and pain killers but they will not cure you. But I understand there is a spa in Paso Robles that has helped some people in your condition and I advise you to go there".

So Paderewski came by train and went to the hotel where he drank of the warm sulphur waters and took the mud baths and hot sulphur baths with massage treatments and they did bring him relief and a surcease from pain. He was so grateful that he stayed for eight years and his health returned to him.

In the meantime he bought an almond orchard on the Adelaida Klau Road out of Paso Robles for a divertissement. He was so enthralled with the orchard, to which he had added various fruit trees, that it is said he went out almost every day to watch the development of the trees with their buds and flowers and fruits. He later purchased an almond orchard for Mme. Paderewski across the road and further out from his. This was called Rancho Santa Helena for his wife and you may still see the sign today beside the entrance.



Paderewski became a familiar figure in the town but remained aloof in many ways. However on great occasions he was called upon to take part and responded. Perhaps the most memorable was when he addressed the townspeople from the steps of the hotel on the evening of Armistice Day, November 11th, 1918. With tears running down his cheeks, he said: "With the terms of this armistice, there will be another war fought in Europe in twenty to twenty-five years". How prophetic his words were.

He later became premier of Poland, his native land, but this was after he left Paso Robles. He was also featured on an issue of US stamps, "Champions of Liberty".

The entire time of Paderewski's sojourn, a charming little drama occurred each day. An unknown admirer in San Francisco sent down two dozen long stemmed American Beauty roses for the world famous pianist. They arrived on the afternoon train and people went down to see them lifted out of the baggage car in their long box, cut out on the end, for the long stems. The half open buds were placed on Paderewski's table in the dining room and the full blown ones of the day before were moved to the lobby. There were sometimes as many as

four bouquets, in different stages of bloom, throughout the hotel.

Written by Louisiana Clayton Dart in 1978.

Tour the Dallidet Adobe

Starting next Thursday, June 11th, we will be giving virtual tours of the Dallidet Adobe every Thursday at 1:00 pm.

The Dallidet family lived in San Luis Obispo from the 1850s through the 1950s. Hear their stories while visiting the family home.

Please register by noon on Thursday, and we will email you a Zoom invitation to join that week's tour.

[Click here for more information or to register](#)



Looking for more to do?

- Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), or [Instagram](#). In addition to our regular Theme Monday and Throwback Thursday posts, we'll now be posting every weekday with photos from our collection that will inspire activities you can try in your very own homes.
- Take a [virtual walking tour](#) of historic San Luis Obispo. These video series feature short vignettes about significant local landmarks.

If you have any ideas of content you'd like to see, share it with us! And if you enjoy what we share with you, and if you are able to, would you please consider [supporting us](#)?

Thank you for being a part of our community. Everybody stay healthy and safe.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'TK'.

Thomas Kessler
Executive Director

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