



## All That Jazz

One hundred and forty-nine years ago, a man named Alvin Shedd donated two acres of his flat, sandy farmland so that there could be a local place for people to bury their dead. Flash forward to the slightly larger historic East Union Cemetery that we are familiar with today, found at the corner of Louise Avenue and Union Road. Many early pioneers interred here shaped our community in significant ways, though only a few are still well-known.

Two of the volunteers who work at the cemetery would like to re-introduce Manteca to its origins, one person at a time. Janet Fiore has spent the last several years researching the backgrounds of many of these pioneers. She has collected stories, pictures, and obituaries of people who are buried at EUCA. She and Janice Zacharias will highlight various characters who were noteworthy, unique, or even notorious, and share them here on the pages of the Bulletin.

Featured today, in the first installment of “Tombstone Tourists”, is David Rosenbaum [Rosen], who was a noted record collector and dealer, producer, and authority on the history of jazz.

A San Francisco native, Mr. Rosenbaum was a graduate of Commerce High School and the University of California at Berkeley. During World War II, he served in the Pacific with the Army Air Forces. After the war, David, who was a lifelong jazz enthusiast, went into the retail record business in San Francisco.

He owned and operated the Melrose Record Shop on Fillmore Street and Rhythm Records on Sutter Street, in an area known as the “Harlem of the West”. Before the hippies swarmed in to reshape America’s counterculture, the Fillmore District in San Francisco was a primarily Black cultural bastion, teeming with jazz, rhythm & blues, and soul from the 1940s to the 1960s.

Both of David’s shops were meccas for lovers of jazz and black spirituals. He even published some jazz music under the Rhythm Records label. He would certainly have had acquaintance with some of the great artists of the day, such as Billie Holiday, Dizzy Gillespie, Charlie Parker, and John Coltrane, who regularly played nightclubs in the area.

An interesting side note to his history is that one of David’s clerks at the Fillmore Street shop was a young Mission High schoolgirl named Marguerite Johnson – better known later by the name Maya Angelou, famous writer and nationally recognized poet. David Rosenbaum spent his last few years in Manteca, near his daughter.

Stay tuned for the next installment of Tombstone Tourists, where we will introduce another one of the cast of characters interred at our own East Union Cemetery.