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The Tall Tree

PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

GENERAL MEETING

Sunday, December 2 at 2:00 p.m.
Free & open to the public

Lucie Stern Community Center
1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto

Story Becomes Lore Becomes History



EMCEE for meeting:
Karen Holman
Executive Director
Palo Alto History
Museum Project

Elephants in Palo Alto? (Detroit) Tigers at El Camino Park? Cows on Middlefield Road? Beetles at the Cabana Hotel? With many thanks to the individuals who have previously contributed to Palo Alto Vignettes, this year we continue to learn about growing up in Palo Alto, about the war years, our built environment, and more modern times of life in our fair city.

Palo Alto's history is rich in innovation, advocacy, ingenuity, environmental leadership, diversity, architectural landmarks,

and many other aspects of life here on the peninsula that have shaped not only our lives but life around the world.

With so much interest on the part of museums and educational institutions in oral histories, the importance of capturing the stories of individuals and communities is apparent. Palo Alto Vignettes has been active in the recordation of short stories about our town for several years now. We hope you will join us as we continue this tradition. If you have a five-minute story you would like to tell, contact me at kcholman@sbcglobal.net.



Can you hear the moo? Middlefield Road in its rural days. (Palo Alto Historical Association archives.)



Which room of the Cabaña (Hyatt) Hotel was "infested" with Beatles during the 1960s? (Palo Alto Historical Association archives.)

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PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 193 • Palo Alto, CA 94302
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The Palo Alto Historical Association, a non-profit organization, was established in 1948 as successor to an earlier organization founded in 1913. Its main objectives are:

- Collect, organize, and preserve materials pertaining to the history and heritage of Palo Alto.
- Spread information about Palo Alto's history by means of programs, displays, and publications.
- Recognize and preserve historic sites and structures.

The Guy Miller Archives of the Palo Alto Historical Association are stored at the Main Library, 1213 Newell Road.

Board meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month (except for August) at the Lucie Stern Community Center at 4 p.m.

Schedule of public meetings on page 4.



Treasures Make Their Way On-Line

For many years the Archives has sought donations of material to add to the collection, items such as photographs, postcards and other articles that document Palo Alto's past. Occasionally we have found items at garage sales or estate sales and

FROM THE DESK OF THE HISTORIAN

STEVE STAIGER

have purchased material at a nominal fee when the request for donation was denied. However we have always assumed that there was a great deal of material that we were missing because we were not at the right place at the right time.

Today the internet is changing the way many of us conduct our lives. It provides information, entertainment and for some of us, it has become an integral part of our economic life. Manufacturers and retailers now market their products and services

directly to consumers via the internet. For access to certain markets businesses and individuals use sites such as Ebay to sell and buy products.

Recently members of PAHA have begun to bid and buy Palo Alto material on Ebay. With advice from me, Board member Brian George has successfully bid on a number of Ebay auction items. We have acquired such items as a set of 14 Palo Alto postcards; a copy of Palo Alto's first annual report (1910); two May Fete ribbons; and a Palo Alto Military Academy uniform patch, all at very reasonable prices. Earlier this year we bought a doctor's bag, complete with paraphernalia, owned by a Dr. Wood, a Mayfield doctor in the 1920s and '30s. Some of these items will be passed on to the History Museum when it is ready for them.

We think this is a good way to "rescue" Palo Alto's history. We are hoping that others will agree and join us in recapturing more of Palo Alto's past. But please do not try to bid on these items, you may be bidding against us. Instead, Brian and I are hoping to attract cash donations to the Association that can be used to acquire additional material. If you are interested in helping with this project, please contact Brian or myself. If there is interest, we hope to report in the future on some of the recent acquisitions to our collection.

PAHA Heritage Programs

Program TV and Tapes: Brian George videotapes all General Meeting programs and produces the monthly program *Heritage* which you can see on local Comcast cable Channel 30. Steve Blank in November described the growth of Silicon Valley as having derived in part from government investment in universities and businesses for research and production of electronic equipment for purposes such as searching out the locations of radar dishes in Russia during the Cold War. His presentation will be broadcast during December on Wednesdays at 8 p.m., Thursdays at Noon, and Saturdays at 1 p.m. You can also see a streaming video version at the same times on the Media Center website www.communitymediacenter.net. Videos of past meetings can be borrowed at the History Desk of the Main Library Tuesdays 6-9 P.M. and Thursdays 2-5 P.M.

A Palo Alto Coloring Book

Judy Gittelsohn is an artist who "loves and lives in Palo Alto." Through her Art for Well Beings, Judy offers classes "tailored toward people with developmental disabilities... and at-risk youth." Her recent coloring book, *This Is Palo Alto*, is available at her website, www.artforwellbeings.org, and at Books, Inc. In October, at Gamble Garden's Community Day, in a shady nook, Judy was surrounded by children coloring in the pictures. *This Is Palo Alto* is a perfect gift for a young person on your holiday list, and it contains information about Palo Alto's history beginning with the Ohlone up through and including the "Dish." For adults, the book contains fascinating tidbits of Palo Alto lore, such as, "The Duck Pond was originally the Palo Alto public swimming pool," and another, "1,700 Paltans... choose two wheels instead of four for their daily commutes." Judy thanks the Palo Alto Library for encouraging her in her project and has dedicated her coloring book to the children of Palo Alto.

Places to Go:



Gamble Garden Does December: Holiday Teas are at 2:00 on Dec. 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8, and also on December 8, at 9:00 a.m. will be Holiday in the Garden Greens Sale. There is a Children's Holiday Tea on Dec. 9 at 1:30. The Holiday Puppet show on Dec. 8 is sold out. Contact Gamble Garden, 1421 Waverley Street, for reservations or more information at 650.329.1356 or www.gamblegarden.org.

Founders Day, San Jose: Thursday, November 29, 1:00, at the Peralta Adobe, 125 W. St. John Street, will honor the small group of families who created San Jose in 1777, the first California pueblo. Some prominent

citizens of early Mayfield were descendants of several Anza pioneers who became founding residents of San Jose. Contact Mike Ford for more details at 831.262.7393 or mjfr@netzzero.net.

Visit State Plaque on Old Adobe Road: The former Juana Briones Heritage Foundation applied to the state Office of Historic Preservation for the plaque. Clark Akatiff arranged the entertaining and informative ceremony at Esther Clark Park, down the hill from the Briones house and on the former Briones ranchland.

Cranston Family History: John Ralston will tell about the life of U.S. Senator Alan Cranston's father, William Cranston, a pioneer Palo Alto realtor who opened his office in 1916 at 130 University Avenue. University Realty erected significant buildings such as the Decker Oak building at Waverley and University. Some fascinating connections, such as his friendship with Fremont Older, San Francisco newspaper editor, make this life one to know about. Sponsored by Los Altos Hills Historical Society, Sunday December 2, 3 to 5:00 p.m. (You can hurry from the PAHA meeting to this one for a rich afternoon of history) Los Altos Town Hall, 26379 Fremont Rd.



November 1: Mayor Yoriko Kishimoto speaking at the Juana Briones State Historic Marker dedication, Boyd deLarios right, Jeanne McDonnell seated, children on curb danced in costume to the mariachi band's music, a Raging Granny lower right.

Overheard at November newsletter mailing: "That was the best \$350 I ever spent, for a Life Membership. No more reminders, no more checks, and I helped PAHA do its job," said Carolyn Caddes.

Palo Alto Historical Association Membership Application Form

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP: Individual \$25 Family \$40 Sustaining \$60
 Business \$100 Sponsor \$100 Life \$350

Name: _____

Address: _____ City/State/Zip _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

Total Amount: \$ _____ Payment Method: Check Mastercard Visa

Card # _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

Please make payment to PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION. Mail it with this form to PAHA at P.O. Box 193, Palo Alto, CA 94302. *Thank You!*

PAST's 20th Annual Holiday House Tour



Every December Palo Alto Stanford Heritage hosts a **Holiday House Tour**. This year, on December 9 from 1 to 4:00, the public may tour four elegant homes by architect Charles Kaiser Sumner. In the 1920s and 1930s, he designed nearly 100 homes in Palo Alto and Stanford. In 2006, the Stanford Historical Society sponsored a tour of four of his signature homes in the Stanford San Juan district. The PAST tour this year will be in Crescent Park, each house a scenic stroll from the other, and with light refreshments along the way.



One of the Sumner houses to be toured.

Many Palo Altans look forward to PAST's House Tours as a kind of kick-off to the holidays. Obtain more information by calling 650.299.8878 or checking the website at www.pastheritage.org. Tickets are \$20 each, \$25 after December 1. By becoming a member of PAST at the \$25 level, you receive one free ticket and the quarterly newsletter. A \$40 family membership entitles you to two tickets. Tickets may be purchased on E. Crescent Drive the day of the tour.

PAHA General Meetings

December 2:

Palo Alto Vignettes; Brief Remembrances & Stories by Palo Altans

January 27, 2008:

John Kolstad of the California Bell Company will speak about the El Camino Real bells.

March 2, April 6, May 4: Programs TBA

June 11: Annual Dinner Meeting

Please check your calendar, two dates have changed: the February meeting is now in January, and the date for the Annual Dinner has been moved forward a week.

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NEXT MEETING:

December 2, at 2:00 p.m.
followed by a social hour
and refreshments

