

The Tall Tree

DECEMBER 2011
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NEWSLETTER of the PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

GENERAL MEETING * FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC * REFRESHMENTS SERVED

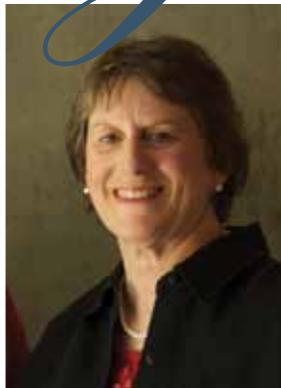
Hosted by Karen Holman

Director of the Palo Alto History Museum and City Council Member

Sunday, December 4 at 2:00 PM

Lucie Stern Community Center, Palo Alto

PALO ALTO *Vignettes*



KAREN HOLMAN
Host of PAHA's annual
"Vignettes" program

PALO ALTO HAS A POPULATION OF APPROXIMATELY 64,000 people. Forty eight percent hold graduate degrees and 78% have college or graduate degrees. Our town can also boast of 32 parks, 35,000 trees, 3,700 acres of open space, two "downtowns," four National Register Districts... and two resident donkeys.

Thanks to the care of Barron Park residents, Perry (of *Shrek* fame) and Niner enjoy a full life in the beautiful setting of Bol Park. Donkeys have been a part of the neighborhood since 1934. Their story is one of philanthropy, compassion, and neighborhood identity.

In response to the closing of downtown grocery markets, especially concerns raised by senior citizens, a group of volunteers ultimately came to found the Downtown Farmer's Market. As one of Palo Alto's most popular venues, the Market is a collection of stories, stories within the story, if you will. Fifty farmer vendors, some coming since the 1981 founding, show up Saturday after Saturday bringing fresh produce. These years have also produced benefits outside our general knowledge.

Please join us for the 2011 version of "Palo Alto Vignettes" as speakers share experiences of these and other pieces of our town's story. Consider giving the gift of your presence to start the holidays.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

New Member
Rose Green

Special Thanks to
Life Members
Margaret Feuer
Carol Mitchell
Raymond Nasr
Christine Baker



Palo Alto History Museum

Progress on restoring the Roth Building on Homer Avenue is impressive. The most recent update notes that the Packard Foundation granted \$250,000, the Peery Foundation donated \$10,000 to produce five fundraising videos, added to their initial generous pledge of two million dollars. Several supporters have committed \$100,000 for the Community Campaign, which Pat Sanders and Georgia Frankel are developing with assistance from others. Restoration is under consideration by the City's Building Department, and construction will begin once a City permit is granted.

Oral Histories

Oral histories are an invaluable method to preserve local history. To volunteer, help record, or give an oral history yourself, contact Carol Mitchell at carolmitchell@sbcglobal.net.



NOTE TO READERS: as the editors of the Tall Tree become more "green," we offer you the option of receiving your Tall Tree digitally. If you're interested, please send your request electronically (include your preferred email address) to PAHA Secretary Bardy Wallace at bdgw@pacbell.net.

Timothy Hopkins, Palo Alto Founder



FROM THE
DESK OF THE
HISTORIAN
Steve Staiger

TIMOTHY HOPKINS' JOURNEY FROM MAINE, WHERE he was born in 1859 to Irish immigrants, Patrick and Caroline Nolan, is one of the most interesting stories of any Californian. He founded Palo Alto, supported Stanford University, and died a wealthy resident of Menlo Park.

His father, Patrick Nolan, moved to California in 1862 and sent for his wife and child. But he died shortly before their arrival, and the young widow and her son found a home with Mark Hopkins and his wife in Sacramento. The young Timothy was treated as a family member by the childless Hopkins couple. When Mark Hopkins died in 1878, many assumed that Timothy would share in the estate, although he had never been legally adopted. Mrs. Mark Hopkins formally did so in 1879, and in 1881, he married her niece. Their wedding gift from Mrs. Mark Hopkins was Sherwood Hall, a large estate in Menlo Park where Timothy and his bride spent their summers.

As a child, Timothy knew Leland and Jane Stanford. As a young man, his summer home was near Stanford's Palo Alto Stock Farm, and Stanford saw him as a young colleague, made him an officer of the railroad; in 1885, Hopkins was appointed a trustee for the newly created Stanford University, a position he held until his death in 1936. With Leland Stanford's support and encouragement, Hopkins purchased the land for the new town of University Park, which was laid out in 1887. The name Palo Alto was not adopted until 1892. Hopkins sold lots in the new town and donated several corner parcels to church congregations ready to build their new churches.



Timothy Hopkins (Photo: <http://home.comcast.net/~james.kellogg/ATT/TimothyHopkins.htm>)

In 1907, Hopkins and his wife gave a strip of land along San Francisquito Creek to the town of Palo Alto. Palo Alto later dedicated the land as a park named in honor of the donor. In 1922 Hopkins sold his remaining town lots to Norwood Smith and William Cranston.

The 1906 earthquake was a financial disaster for Timothy Hopkins. Many of his income properties in San Francisco were destroyed in the fires, and those disasters limited his financial support to Stanford University for many years. His summer home in Menlo Park was damaged so severely that it was never occupied again. He moved his summer residence to the estate's gatehouse, which still stands on Ravenswood Avenue.



Mrs. Hopkins gave Sherwood Hall to Timothy Hopkins and his bride when they married in 1882. Damaged in the 1906 earthquake, it burned down in the early 1940s. (Photo: Carolyn Zinko, Staff Writer, SF Chronicle)

When his finances improved, Hopkins resumed his support for the University. He and his wife helped organize the Stanford Home for Convalescent Children on the site of the former Stanford summer home, which he continued to support until his death in 1936, with the provision that entire estate go to Stanford University upon her death. Hopkins' liquor reversionary clause on all property in the original University Park also passed to the University, although I am not aware that Stanford ever benefited from gaining title to any of the town's properties through enforcement of the clause. ☘

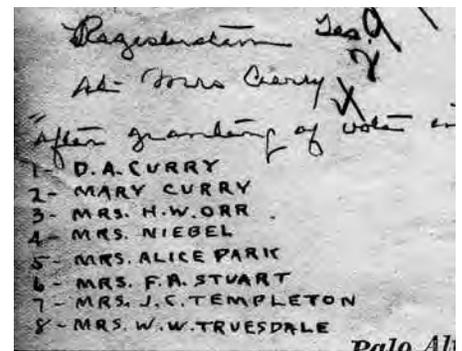
A First: Register to Vote



FROM THE *PALO ALTO TIMES* ARTICLE ABOUT THE EVENT IN THE PHOTOGRAPH, we can now harvest political and cultural hints that then would have seemed fairly routine. Women in 1912 expected to be called by their husband's name, submerged in his identity, so the event was at the home of Mrs. W. H. Deal. Probably all the guests called her Mrs. Deal, even if they worked with her in the Women's Christian Temperance Union. She was president of the local branch.

"The affair was open to all the new-made citizens of Palo Alto, and about a hundred ladies were present, some of whom had previously registered. The deputy registrar of voters, Miss Diele Haugh, enrolled 37 new names on the great register ready for the coming elections."

The article then described the decorations and refreshments, "tea and dainty wafers," but some serious political information followed to explain a reason why women should vote, that "any foreign-born man with a residence of five years could marry a foreign-born woman without a day's residence, who could at once become an American citizen with all the privileges of a voter, yet an American-born woman would lose her citizenship if she should choose to marry a foreigner unnaturalized." So women got refreshments and an idea of why they should register and vote. —Beth Bunnenberg



Registration Tea: this photo (top) is one of those rare treasures that families sometimes donate to the Palo Alto Historical Association. A handwritten note (detail shown) on the back names, from right to left:

Mrs. David A. Curry Mary Curry
Mrs. H. W. Orr Mrs. Niebel
Mrs. Alice Park Mrs. F.R. Stuart
Mrs. J. C. Templeton Mrs. W.W. Truesdale

A February 1912 newspaper article about the voter registration event places the house at 349 Hamilton Avenue. (Guy Miller Archives)

Paly Bell Tower's Long Life Reveals Its History

It was Dec. 24, 1918, and Palo Alto High School had shut down for six weeks due to the Spanish influenza epidemic. In the meantime, construction had been completed at the new high school campus, built to compensate for the overcrowded conditions in the two-story school on Channing. Finally, on Christmas Eve in 1918, Palo Alto High School opened the doors of its new campus for the first time. Students paraded down the streets from the Channing school to the new campus, helping to celebrate the grand opening in a style equal to the beauty of the Bell Tower building. (For the full article, access the Paly hub for student publications at <http://palyvoice.com/node/28476>.) —Katy Abbott



The new Palo Alto High School (Guy Miller Archives)

Our mission is to collect, preserve and make available to the public information about the history of Palo Alto.

History Jaunts

PAST's 24th Annual House Tour will be held this year on Sunday, December 11, and will feature a wide variety of architectural styles which include the College Terrace Library and seven houses that range in size from a cottage of 625 to a house of 4,000 square feet. The structures were built between a Queen Anne style in 1896 that is on the Historic Resources Inventory, to the Library designed by Charles Sumner and constructed in 1936.

Tickets are available for \$30 the day of the tour at the College Terrace Library, 2300 Wellesley St. If purchased before December 1, tickets are \$25 per person. Make checks payable to PAST and mail to P.O. Box 308, Palo Alto, 94302, and please include a self-addressed envelope for return of your tickets.

Santa Clara County Parks In 2006, voters approved the Park Charter Fund that ensured funding through 2021 for acquiring, developing, operating, and maintaining the County's 28 parks on 46,000 acres. Fifteen percent of the funding is allocated for land acquisition within urban areas for parks, trails, and open space. For more information about places to visit, go online to parkhere.org.

Heritage Program on Channel 30

The TV cable program, Heritage, on Channel 30 in December will be Barbara Babcock's November 6 program on California's first woman attorney, Clara Foltz. DVDs of previous programs can be borrowed at the history desk at the Palo Alto Main Library, Tuesday 4-8 PM and Thursday 1-4 PM.



Become a Member of PAHA

We invite you to become a member of the Association and join those who care about Palo Alto and enjoy learning about its history. Your dues support the preservation of our archives, assistance to researchers and dissemination of Palo Alto historical information through our publications. Join today!

Individual \$25 Family \$40
Sustaining \$60 Business/Sponsor \$100 Life \$350

Make check payable to PAHA and mail to: PAHA Box 193, Palo Alto, CA 94302. Or join online at pahistory.org. Let us know if you wish to volunteer for a PAHA committee.

If you are already a member, you will receive an annual renewal notice in July.

PAHA's Public Meetings

Sundays at the
Lucie Stern Community Center
1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto

DECEMBER 4 AT 2:00:
"VIGNETTES OF LOCAL
EXPERIENCES"

Hosted by
Karen Holman

JANUARY 15 AT 2:00:
"SEA SCOUT CENTENNIAL"
Host: Josh Gilliland



Save these dates in 2012

MARCH 4

APRIL 1

MAY 6

JUNE: TBA, ANNUAL DINNER

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