

# The Tall Tree

APRIL 2013  
VOLUME 36, No 6

NEWSLETTER of the PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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

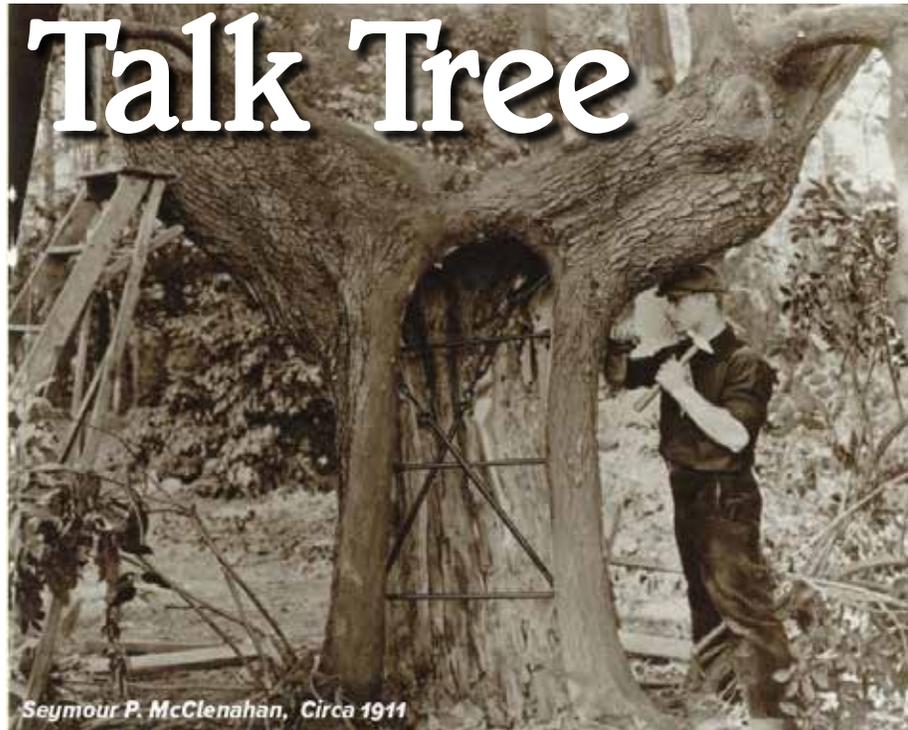
Sunday, April 7 at 2:00 – 4:00 PM  
Lucie Stern Community Center, Palo Alto  
1305 Middlefield Road

*Speaker: John Henry McClenahan, Vice President of S.P. McClenahan*

## Let's Talk Tree



**JOHN HENRY McCLENAHAN**  
Vice President  
S.P. McClenahan Company



*Seymour P. McClenahan, Circa 1911*

**WITH BEAUTIFUL SPRING WEATHER BACK, IT'S TIME TO TALK TREES.** Join arborist John Henry McClenahan for a tree-filled afternoon, sharing stories about historic trees that make Palo Alto and the Peninsula special.

John is a fourth-generation arborist with S.P. McClenahan Company, founded by his great grandfather, Seymour P. McClenahan, in 1911. John has a B.S. in Ornamental Horticulture from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and is an ISA Board Certified Master Arborist and Licensed Pest Control Adviser from Cal EPA's Dept of Pesticide Regulation.

Besides historic trees, John's talk will include information and photos about their arboricultural firm, stories, tree health issues and challenges, and tree pruning practices.



## Heritage Program on Channel 30

The April television feature will be “Poisoned Again: the Cover Up and Murder of Jane Lathrop Stanford,” the Palo Alto Historical Association’s March 3 program presented by John Morrow Hackmann. The broadcast schedule is Wednesdays at 8:00 PM, Thursdays at 10:30 AM, and Saturdays at 1:00 PM.

# Jane Lathrop Stanford: We Honor You

IT WAS AN HOMAGE, AND A PLEASURE, TO SEE SUCH AN INTERESTED AND large turnout (164!) at last month’s lecture on the murder by poisoning of Mrs. Stanford. Anyone who missed the lecture or is interested in getting more information is invited to consult Professor



Jane Lathrop Stanford, 1828–1905  
(Wikipedia Commons, photographer unknown)

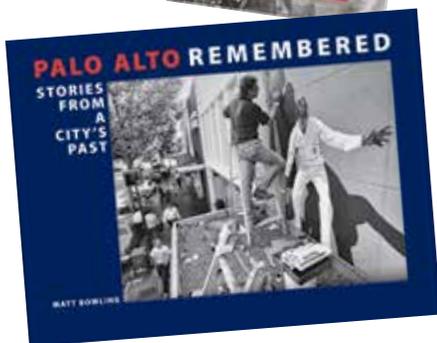
Dr. Robert W. P. Cutler’s readable and researched book, *The Mysterious Death of Jane Lathrop Stanford*. (2003, Stanford University Press). Strychnine poisoning, “a horrible death.”

We are every day in the lap of the legacy of Jane Stanford. Whereas Lucie Stern is the fairy godmother who put the icing on Palo Alto, it was Jane who baked the cake. Jane founded Palo Alto you may say, an intentional community to support a great, Christian endeavor, her University, whose purposes, for the benefit of all Californians, and for all to read, are chiseled in stone in the Memorial church walls, and remain alive. Once I turned to those messages, at a turning point, to guide my own life. Do they inspire you?

In many ways the responsibility she bore was greater than her husband’s, for our town, and our university. History should serve her better than it has, as a woman of vision, perseverance, integrity, and accomplishment.

Will we one day have the historical record righted for Jane? Will we one day solve her murder? —**JOHN MORROW HACKMANN, PRESIDENT OF PAHA**

**BOOKS FROM PAHA**—Lucie Stern and Palo Alto Remembered can be ordered online from Bell’s Books ([www.bellsbooks.com](http://www.bellsbooks.com)) or purchased at Books Inc., Bell’s Books and the Village Stationers in Palo Alto, and at Kepler’s in Menlo Park. Copies are also available at all PAHA programs.



Two floral objects stand outside the mausoleum following Jane Stanford’s death in 1905. One of the objects is a flowered model of the Stanford University Memorial Arch. (PAHA: Guy Miller Archives)

# The Liberty Bell Came Through Palo Alto

I RECENTLY DISCOVERED THAT THE FAMOUS LIBERTY BELL, ON ITS LAST journey outside Philadelphia travelled through Palo Alto – not once but twice.

Some of you may know that I collect bells, I have more than 250 in my collection including one of the El Camino Real bells. All bell collectors have some knowledge of the Liberty Bell, after all it is the most famous bell in America. I have several replicas in my collection, including a pencil sharpener in the shape of the Liberty Bell.



FROM THE  
DESK OF THE  
HISTORIAN  
Steve Staiger

Several years ago, I learned that the Liberty Bell came to San Francisco in 1915 as part of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. Last month, I acquired a souvenir button depicting the Liberty Bell and the words “Philadelphia—San Francisco 1915.” I did some research on the Liberty Bell’s visit to San Francisco and discovered an interesting tale of a cracked bell.

The kind people of Philadelphia had a history of loaning the Liberty Bell to other cities for notable events. The Liberty Bell travels included the World’s Fair in Chicago in 1893 and the 1904 World’s Fair in St. Louis. Each time the Liberty Bell returned to Philadelphia, the crack was bigger and the bell had lost some weight. The request to have the bell travel to San Francisco was initially declined, but when 500,000 California schoolchildren submitted their petition requesting the bell visit California, the City of Philadelphia agreed, in part because thousands of Americans west of the Mississippi would have a chance to see the bell as it moved by train across the country.

The westward journey by train stopped along the route so that residents could see and touch the bell. Included were stops in Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming, Washington and Oregon. The train would have come up the Southern Pacific tracks through Palo Alto before moving by truck to the fairgrounds out in the Marina district of San Francisco. Following its stay in San Francisco, it was loaded back on a train, once again passing through Palo Alto, as it headed back to Philadelphia via southern California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas.

More than 10 million Americans viewed the Liberty Bell on the train during its journey to San Francisco and its return to Philadelphia. It was viewed by another 2 million during its stay in San Francisco. But once again the crack had grown, and more small pieces were chipped off by unauthorized souvenir seekers. Philadelphia decided that the Liberty Bell would no longer travel outside the City of Brotherly Love. In 1939, New Yorkers requested that the bell travel to the World’s Fair in New York City, but even with their schoolchildren’s petition, the Liberty Bell stayed in Philadelphia.

## Melons in Mayfield?

From the *Mayfield News*, July 3, 1913: “Shorty has opened his watermelon parlor on Lincoln street and is now ready to serve ice cold melons to anyone wishing to enjoy a feast. He has on hand a supply of choice melons and would be pleased to have you call at any hour of the day or night.”



**NOTE TO THE READERS:** Lincoln street was renamed California Street when Mayfield was annexed by Palo Alto in 1925. Curious items such as these will be found in the Mayfield book to be published by PAHA next year.

Image from [picasaweb.google.com: @Anton Gvozdkov-Fotolia](http://picasaweb.google.com/@Anton_Gvozdkov-Fotolia)



Liberty Bell visits Everett, Seattle and Tacoma on July 14, 1915 (from [www.historylink.org](http://www.historylink.org)).



Liberty Bell souvenir button from Steve Staiger’s collection.

## WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Robert Crane  
James Feinstein  
Andrew Hernandez  
Edward Paulin

**Oral Histories:** are an invaluable method to preserve local history. To volunteer, help record, or give an oral history, contact: Carol Mitchell at [carolmitchell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:carolmitchell@sbcglobal.net).

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

## History Jaunts

**Vintage Dance Party, April 21:** Music from 1900–1935 by PAHA's recent speaker, Paul Price and his Society Orchestra. The monthly vintage dance, at the Palo Alto Masonic Center, 461 Florence Street in Palo Alto features waltz, tango, polka, etc. \$20 admission. More info on [www.paulpriceorchestra.com](http://www.paulpriceorchestra.com).

**Stanford Historical Society Walking Tour Brochures:** This year, there will be walking tour brochures with maps and information about historic houses and gardens along the routes in lieu of the traditional house tour. The first brochure, coming in Fall 2013, will present Stanford's historic Alvarado Row. Information: [stanfordhist@stanford.edu](mailto:stanfordhist@stanford.edu) or call 650-725-3332.

**9th Annual Vintage Vehicles and Family Festival: May 4, 9:30 AM–2:30 PM.** This free event is hosted by the Museum of American Heritage (MOAH) in collaboration with the City of Palo Alto's 91st May Fete Parade & Fair. Unique vintage cars will be on display. MOAH is located at 351 Homer Avenue, Palo Alto. Also, a MOAH open house will feature Meccano models, hands-on science demonstrations, and other family friendly activities. The museum's feature exhibition, "From Fiber to Fabric: A History of American Textile Production," will be open. Information: [www.moah.org](http://www.moah.org) or 650-321-1004.

**San Francisco Bay History, "Curating the Bay, Crowdsourcing a New Environmental History,"** will be on display until August 25 at the California Historical Society, 678 Mission St. in San Francisco. The exhibit celebrates the Year of the Bay regarding America's Cup yacht race and the opening of a new Bay Bridge span. The exhibit reflects the environmental and cultural history of the Bay with more than 150 articles from the Society's collections.

## 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](http://pahistory.org). Let us know if you wish to volunteer for a PAHA committee. (Note: current members will receive renewal notices in July.)

## PAHA's Public Meetings

Meetings, free and open to the public, are held on Sundays at the Lucie Stern Community Center 1305 Middlefield Road.

The next meetings are:

APRIL 7

*Let's Talk Tree*

Speaker: John McClenahan,  
Vice President,  
S.P. McClenahan Company

MAY 5

TBA

JUNE 5

PAHA Annual Dinner  
Save the date!

### PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

John Hackmann, *President*  
Gwen Barry, *First Vice President*  
Joyce McClure, *Second Vice President*  
Bardy Wallace, *Secretary*  
Chris Botsford, *Treasurer*  
Steve Staiger, *Historian*  
Matt Bowling      Larry Christenson  
Brian George      Betty Gerard  
Georgie Gleim      Douglas Graham  
Mary Beth Cebedo Lefebvre  
Marilyn McDonald  
Jeanne McDonnell      Leah McGarrigle  
Carol Clifford Mitchell      Diane Rolfe  
Harriette Shakes      Kent Stormer  
Jerry Tinney      Tom Wyman

The Tall Tree is published eight times a year by the PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Jeanne McDonnell, Peggy McKee,  
Mary Beth Cebedo Lefebvre  
*Editors*  
Harriette Shakes, *Design*  
Omega Printing, *Printing*