



The Tall Tree

Newsletter
of the PALO ALTO
HISTORICAL
ASSOCIATION

January 2017 Volume 40, No 4



Since
1913

PAHA's Public Meetings

GENERAL PROGRAM MEETINGS
are held monthly
2:00–4:00 PM
October – May

For the
first quarter of 2017
meetings will be held at
Palo Alto Art Center
1313 Newell Road

PAHA'S JANUARY MEETING
January 29, 2017
"Mysteries and Discoveries along
Old Page Mill Road"

UPCOMING MEETINGS
March 5, 2017
April 2, 2017
May 7, 2017
June Dinner and Speaker

The PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION presents Mysteries and Discoveries along Old Page Mill Road

PAHA KICKS OFF 2017 WITH A PROGRAM DEVOTED TO LOCAL HISTORY AND ARCHAEOLOGY WITH ITS JANUARY 29 PRESENTER, THE AWARD-WINNING STANFORD UNIVERSITY ARCHAEOLOGIST AND DIRECTOR OF HERITAGE SERVICES. LAURA JONES will talk about her investigations along Old Page Mill Road, including the discovery of an early County jail site, a military training trench complex, and other mysterious features along the road between Junipero Serra Boulevard and Gerth Lane near I-280.



Dr. Jones has excavated historic sites in and around Stanford University, including the Stanford Mansion, the Searsville Damkeeper's Cottage and the ruins of the Men's Gymnasium. In the pursuit of new sites, she leads graduates and undergraduates into Stanford's "hinterlands" in her course Archaeological Field Survey Methods. One of her teams discovered the house of San Francisco's 19th century mayor, Henry P. Coon; another found the remains of a church, cemetery and houses associated with California pioneer, Dennis Martin.

Dr. Jones earned her academic degrees at UC San Diego and Stanford. She has collaborated with the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe to excavate, record and rebury the skeletal remains of their ancestors. The program staff of the Native American

Cultural Center nominated Dr. Jones for the Amy J. Blue Award, noting her work overseeing the excavation of the Men's Gymnasium, the repair of the Angel of Grief, and the restorations of both the Arizona Cactus Garden and the Stanford Family Mausoleum. The Amy J. Blue Awards honor staff members at Stanford who are exceptionally dedicated, supportive of their colleagues, and passionate about the work. Laura Jones received the honor in 2014. She currently serves as President of the Stanford Historical Society.



Discoveries from a recent dig on Stanford property off Old Page Mill Road. Courtesy Stanford Heritage Services.

Artifacts from Stanford's archaeological digs are housed at the Stanford Archaeology Collections and some of the collection is on display at the Stanford Archaeology Center on campus, which is free and open to the public.

GENERAL MEETING
Sunday, January 29, 2017
2:00–4:00 pm
Palo Alto Art Center
1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto

Note
new
location!

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
★ REFRESHMENTS SERVED ★



LAURA JONES
University Archaeologist, Stanford University
President, Stanford Historical Society





PRESIDENT'S LETTER
Ralph Britton

**PALO ALTO
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Ohlone villages circa 1769.
Courtesy Wikipedia.org.



FROM THE DESK OF
Steve Staiger,
City Historian

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 Cubberley Community Center, K-7.

Board meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month (except August) at the Lucie Stern Community Center at 4 pm. General meetings are held the first Sunday of each month (October–December, February–May) at the Lucie Stern Community Center at 2 pm. Meetings include speakers. The final general meeting of the year is held in June and includes a dinner and a program. The public is welcome at all meetings.

Dateline 700 CE: Ohlone settlements begin

SPANISH SETTLERS CAME TO CALIFORNIA IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, WHERE THEY ENCOUNTERED ABORIGINAL TRIBES THAT HAD LIVED IN THE AREA FOR ANYWHERE FROM 3,000 TO 10,000 YEARS.

There is ample evidence of human habitation in the Bay Area extending back thousands of years. Analyses of shell mounds in Newark and Emeryville yield dates in the range of 4000 BCE to 1000 BCE; these are thought to represent a population even predating the Ohlone. However, there is evidence that the Ohlone populated the area from about 700 CE. Historic records document European contacts

with Ohlone people from missions and other sources during the Spanish settlement period. The Spanish missions were established ca. 1770. The missions had a disastrous effect on the foraging (hunting-gathering) customs of the Ohlone as did their efforts to impose their Christian culture on native peoples; as well, disease took a heavy toll, essentially ending the Ohlone period at the end of the 18th century. Mexico ceded California, and its Ohlone inhabitants, to the United States in 1846 after the Mexican-American War. Some small enclaves of native populations remained until mid-19th century, and people who identify with the native populations remain today.



Six Ohlone dancers at Mission San Jose.
Courtesy www.muwekma.org.

A. B. Clark: A Father to Legacy

AFTER STUDYING ARCHITECTURE AT SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY, ARTHUR B. CLARK WAS INVITED TO TEACH ART AT STANFORD. He and his wife Grace moved to the area in 1892 and built their first house in the College Terrace neighborhood. Soon thereafter their first child, Birge, was born in San Francisco where Grace had gone for

the delivery. Birge, followed by his three younger siblings—Esther and the twins Donald and David—grew up in College Terrace where the family kept a cow to ensure a steady supply of fresh milk. In 1910, A. B. Clark designed and built a new house for his growing family on the campus.

In 1903, the residents of Mayfield voted to incorporate, and A. B. Clark was elected to the Board of Trustees. During his term as mayor, a law was passed prohibiting saloons in the new town (but not the two breweries, one of which was owned by a fellow member of the Board of Trustees.) There was some concern whether the saloon keepers would obey the new law, but they did, and the town was mostly dry, as in neighboring



Arthur B. Clark with son Birge and daughter Esther in 1924.

Palo Alto.

Professor Clark found time to design various buildings in Mayfield, Palo Alto, and on the Stanford campus. According to his autobiographical family history, he designed a church, a bank, a store, two "frat houses," and numerous private residences. His best known work as an architect is the Hoover House. While he was the architect of record for the house, Lou Henry Hoover had a major influence in its design. His son Birge, as a newly graduated architect, worked on the project as well.

From the 1920s, A. B. Clark was an active member of the Palo Alto Planning Commission and served two terms as president of the Palo Alto Mutual Building and Loan Association. He participated in numerous campus and community activities until his death in 1948.

Perhaps A. B. Clark's greatest contributions to Palo Alto's legacy (along with that of his wife Grace) are his children. David was a creative architect, who died young, and his twin brother Donald had a successful business career in southern California; their siblings, Birge and Esther, have been honored as fellow members of Palo Alto's Creators of the Legacy. Their stories will be told in future columns.

JUANA BRIONES Y SU CALIFORNIA: PIONERA, FUNDADORA, CURANDERA.

Jeanne Farr McDonnell, former PAHA board member and author of "Juana Briones of 19th Century California," (Univ. of Arizona Press, 2008), researched and documented the extraordinary life of Juana Briones de Miranda (1802-1889) of Yerba Buena and later Mayfield. As one of the few Californian women of the era to own property in her own name, Briones distinguished herself as a noted healer, skilled farmer, rancher, and businesswoman. Here McDonnell reflects on her subject and the archaeological discoveries that shed light on Briones' life and times, the subject of a major exhibition at the California Historical Society in 2014.



A representation of Juana Briones, based on her reported likeness to her niece. Courtesy of the Los Altos History Museum.

WHEN MY FAMILY AND I MOVED TO PALO ALTO IN THE 1970S, THE AREA'S ECOLOGY FASCINATED ME. I QUICKLY BECAME INVOLVED IN AND A DIRECTOR OF NATURE EXPLORATIONS TULEYOME. A friend told me about El Polín Spring at the San Francisco Presidio. Water that originates about a third of the way up a steep hillside flows straight to lower ground. One day, hummingbirds lined up in the air, tasting spring water, one after the other. I learned that Juana Briones lived there from about age ten until she married Apolinario Miranda in 1820.

During my research at Berkeley's Bancroft Library for my biography of Juana Briones, I rented a room in Berkeley. One night, the phone rang. Presidio archaeologist Barbara Voss, who now teaches anthropology at Stanford, said excitedly, "We found it!" "It" was the site of the home of Marcos Briones—father of Juana—and his family at El Polín Spring. After his wife died at Branciforte, now Santa Cruz, Marcos



A team led by Stanford archaeologist Barbara Voss conducts a dig at the early Briones home site near El Polín. Courtesy Stanford University-Tennessee Hollow Watershed Archaeology Project at the Presidio of San Francisco.

Briones moved to a home next to one of his daughters, her husband, Candelario Miramontes, and their children.

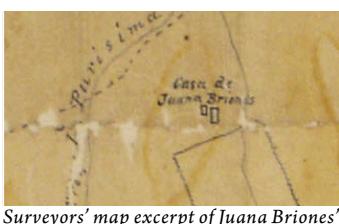


Juana Briones' mid-1840s home, a rare construction of earthen adobe material encased inside wooden framing, sat at the end of today's Old Adobe Road in the Los Altos hills. Courtesy California Historical Society.

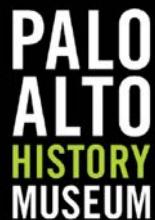
In her dissertation, Barbara Voss listed materials found at El Polín. Most of the pottery was of US manufacture. Trade ships from the East Coast, staffed by English-speaking sailors, got to know local people who bought their wares. Ships stayed for months, stocked up on food for the long return trip, and purchased goods to sell elsewhere. Sailors' lives were difficult: some wanted to stay in California, even though desertion was a criminal offense. Juana helped them hide and sent them to work for her brother across the Bay until their ships departed.

Linguists claim that people exposed to several languages in early childhood can easily learn new ones. Archaeology shows that Indians lived at El Polín. From birth, Juana lived in a multi-lingual community, including indigenous ones. The Santa Cruz Mission housed Indians. Some locals spoke Castilian and Spanish. A priest negotiated for what he wanted from the California governor because they both spoke Castilian. Language fluency later helped Juana manage her 4,000-acre ranch. Throughout her life, her skill at medicine was widely known and appreciated. Visitors commented that she cared for sick Indians. At her brother's Bolinas community, she separated sick from well during a flu epidemic; she taught medicine to her nephew. Later, Juana Briones moved to Mayfield to be near her daughters and grandchildren. Her grandsons opened businesses in the area.

On Old Adobe Road, Juana Briones' (now) torn-down home had rich archaeological potential. The ranch house itself was built partly from local lumber; later, nearby redwood lumber was hauled to the Mayfield train station for shipment to an expanding San Francisco.



Surveyor's map excerpt of Juana Briones' Rancho La Purisima Concepcion, near Materdero Creek. Courtesy University of Santa Clara Library Archives.



In November, the **Palo Alto History Museum** hosted supporters and community leaders at the historic MacArthur Park Restaurant to share progress and vision for the Museum. The event featured displays of the layout and design for various galleries, as well as a number of artifacts that will become part of the museum. While fundraising is still ongoing, construction is scheduled to begin next year, and the Museum is expected to open in 2018.

In the meantime, the Museum will sponsor a number of events, including two in the coming months that will explore Palo Alto's unique heritage. In February, the program will feature **The Garage: From Humble Beginnings to Global Impact**. In March, the Museum is excited to offer **Lesson Plan: the Story of the Third Wave – a Daring Social Experiment in Palo Alto**. This program will include a viewing of the film of the 1967 experiment created by teacher Ron Jones of Cubberley High School. This will be the first screening in Palo Alto of the film that has received worldwide attention. A panel discussion will include the filmmakers, who were former students at Cubberley, as well as their teacher, Ron Jones.

Please visit the Palo Alto History Museum website, paloaltohistorymuseum.org, for current information on the dates and locations of these events. Details will also be provided to PAHA members for whom e-mail addresses are available.

History Jaunts

An exhibition of works by **Nick Cave at the Anderson Collection** features a number of his Soundsuits, full-body-sized sculptures that are sometimes worn as costumes and performed in. This stunning exhibit "challenges the boundaries between multiple artistic and creative disciplines." The Anderson Collection, located at 314 Lomita Drive, Stanford, is free and open to the public Wednesday – Monday, 11:00 am – 5:00 pm, Thursday, 11:00 am – 8:00 pm. For more information, call (650) 721-6055 or visit anderson.stanford.edu/exhibitions-programs/.

The **Beat Museum** is dedicated to the literary genius of the Beat Generation and the cohort of artists, poets, writers, and musicians who came of age in an iconic moment of 1950s San Francisco history. It is located at 540 Broadway, San Francisco and open daily 10:00 am – 7:00 pm. For more information about the museum, as well as Saturday walking tours of North Beach, call (800) 537-6822 or visit www.kerouac.com.

As a follow-up to PAHA's January program, pay a visit to "**Before Stanford: Founding Communities, Present Pasts**" at the Stanford Archaeology Center, Bldg. 500, 488 Escondido Mall, Stanford campus. The exhibit highlights multiple narratives and connections between past and present, examining for example, Ohlone tribal people, Mexican and Spanish colonists, and generations of laborers. Admission is free, and the Center is open weekdays. For more information, call (650) 723-5731 or visit stanford.io/2hKzix9.

.....>>> **Ride Share to Meetings:**
We are aware that some of our members have difficulty getting to meetings and might be able to attend more frequently if there was a convenient service to provide rides. If this is something of interest to you, either as a driver or passenger, please let us know by contacting Ralph Britton at ralphbritton@comcast.net.



Images here and on page one are courtesy of the Stanford Archaeology Department's current dig off Old Page Mill Road.

Welcome New Members!
Diane Allen
Joyce & Greg Schmid

Heritage Program on Channel 30

The Heritage Program for January 2017 will feature

"Mayfield Vignettes"

The schedule is

Wednesdays at 8 pm,
Thursdays at 10 am, and
Saturdays at 1 pm
on Channel 30.

DVDs of previous programs may be borrowed from the PAHA's Guy Miller Archives, which are located at Cubberley, Room K-7.

Hours: Tuesdays, 4-8 pm,
Thursdays, 1-5 pm

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



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Photographs courtesy of PAHA Guy Miller Archives unless otherwise noted.