

APRIL 2010
VOLUME 33, NUMBER 6

The Tall Tree

PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

GENERAL MEETING, FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
Sunday, April 11 at 2:00 PM at the
Lucie Stern Community Center, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto

Winter Dellenbach & Our Palo Alto Activists



SPEAKER:
WINTER DELLENBACH
Facilitator and Oral
History Interviewer

THE PALO ALTO HISTORY MUSEUM JOINS THE PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION in sponsoring the monthly program on Sunday, April 11, at Lucie Stern. Our speaker and facilitator is Winter Dellenbach, a Palo Alto resident since 1970.

Growing up in southern California, Winter saw “rampant development” destroy the landscape of her home town. Semi-rural Pomona—named for the goddess of fruits and orchards and filled with orange and lemon groves—disappeared!

This trend triggered Winter’s interest in environmental and land use issues. Her experiences in the

1960’s led to a legal career as a public interest law attorney and continued involvement with peace, civil rights, and housing issues. In 2009, she conducted a series of interviews with six Palo Altans whose activism changed our town. They are: Ellen Fletcher, Tom Jordan, Enid Pearson, Emily Renzel, and Ellen and Tom Wyman. On the 11th, Winter will show excerpts from the interviews, and then the interviewees will discuss their activism and answer questions from the audience. The interviews comprise a rich, inspirational treasure trove from some of Palo Alto’s own leading citizens. These oral histories are just the kind of valuable archival material that will eventually be housed in the Palo Alto History Museum.



Two of the six activists whose work and experiences Winter Dellenbach will present: Enid Pearson, above, speaking at a rally, and Emily Renzel, below, at the Baylands. (Photos are from Yoriko Kishimoto and Karen Holman image sets respectively.)



Pomona, goddess of fruits and orchards, courtesy Wilsonalmanac.com



THE APRIL CABLE program on Channel 30 will be “Gamble Garden Celebrates 25 Years!” presented by Karen Olson. She recalls the founding of Gamble Garden and the hard work the Garden Club of Palo Alto did to preserve this beautiful area for the enjoyment of all Palo Altans. Tapes of past programs can be borrowed at the Main Library’s History Desk, Tuesday, 6 to 9 PM and Thursday, 2 to 5 PM.

The Tall Tree is published eight times a year by the

PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 193 • Palo Alto, CA 94302
650.326.3355 • www.pahistory.org

Jeanne McDonnell, Peggy McKee,
Mary Beth Cebedo Lefebvre

Editors

Harriette Shakes, *Design*
Omega Printing, *Printing*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Doug Graham <i>President</i>	Brian George <i>First Vice President</i>
Gwen Barry <i>Second Vice President</i>	Bardy Wallace <i>Recording Secretary</i>
Bob Jack <i>Treasurer</i>	Steve Staiger <i>Historian</i>
Chris Botsford	Matt Bowling
Beth Bunnberg	Vicky Ching
Betty Gerard	Georgie Gleim
Judy Leahy	
Mary Beth Cebedo Lefebvre	
Jeanne McDonnell	Peggy McKee
Carol Clifford Mitchell	
Dick Rosenbaum	Tom Wyman

The Palo Alto Historical Association, is a non-profit organization. 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 PAHA are stored at the Main Library, 1213 Newell Road. See the calendar, p.4, for the schedule of public meetings.



BECOME A MEMBER OF PAHA

- 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 you can join at
www.pahistory.org.

Let us know if you wish to volunteer for a PAHA committee.

Opportunities Opening Up

I AM INVITING ALL PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION MEMBERS to consider volunteering or making recommendations to fill the openings available on our committees and on the Board of Directors. If you are interested in local history or know of someone who is, please pass the name or names to our Nominating

**THE
PRESIDENT'S
VIEWPOINT:
Douglas
Graham**

Committee (Tom Wyman, 325-9483, ellenandtom@sbcglobal.net; Beth Bunnberg, 326-3813.)

The PAHA Board of Directors currently has eighteen members, and our bylaws allow twenty-one. We are eager to be closer to the upper limit so that more of you, members of PAHA, can participate in the organization and serve the community. At this point in our history, the Board has and is open to new ideas and initiatives, so we are actively recruiting former Board members and new faces. We are looking forward to launching new publications, expanding the archives, and streamlining the website.

All Board members serve actively on committees—it is a “working board.” Several committees—Accessions and Archives, Oral Histories, Publications, Programs and Speakers—are seeking new faces with new contacts and new skills. One of the “holes” in the committee organization is the Website where we need a knowledgeable person to be Webmaster. We need a marketing chair to organize and promote sales of publications. We need someone from the business community to be the liaison focal point. Our Acknowledgements Chair is open. Come join a vibrant group of people who enjoy local history and are dedicated to making it more available, accessible, and fun for everyone who shares the interest. It is a great year with great opportunities!

Redwoods Amazed Spanish Soldiers

Jeanne McDonnell

OUR NEWSLETTER TAKES ITS NAME FROM THE VERY TALL TREE WHERE the



Commemorative El Camino Bell, courtesy John Kolstadt

Pacifica chapter of Beta Sigma Phi placed a symbolic mission bell last month. People who believed we should know our past originated these metal sculptures along El Camino in Los Angeles in 1906. The Palo Alto Women's Club installed several here in the 1960s, and a club member composed a song that included these words: “Let the past and present meet/Bring thoughts of ageless faith and courage/With your chimes so clear and sweet.”

If you visit the place where the railroad tracks cross San Francisquito Creek, you may be surprised to find a gully rather than a gentle creek bed. When the first settlers and missionaries came, funded by Spain, some thought that this would be California's northern border, so they bestowed the name to honor Saint Francis. When they realized that the water in

the gully would be virtually inaccessible for most purposes, they changed the name to Little Francis and looked for better mission sites.

Putting one of the El Camino Bells near El Palo Alto recognizes one of the few places still identifiable as an encampment of the first, daring, European colonizing expedition, led by Gaspar de Portola in 1769.

Thank you Beta Sigma Phi, an international women's organization founded in 1931, for caring about California history.

Palo Alto Street Names Have History

PALO ALTO'S STREET NAMES HAVE SOME INTERESTING HISTORY in their origins. The street names in the original University Park were mostly English and American authors, supposedly from books in the library of Timothy Hopkins. The College Terrace neighborhood streets were named for eastern colleges, appropriate for the new development adjacent to the new university.



FROM THE
DESK OF THE
HISTORIAN
Steve Staiger

It may surprise you to learn that Lytton Avenue was named for Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton, a 19th century English novelist best known for the two phrases, "the pen is mightier than the sword..." and "it was a dark and stormy night..." San Jose State University honors his name with their annual contest to "compose the opening sentence to the worst of all possible novels."

Did you know that Lytton Avenue and Lytton Plaza were named for two different Lyttons? Bart Lytton was a southern California financier whose collection of savings and loan institutions (including Lytton Savings) had its northern California headquarters in Palo Alto. Unsuccessful in his plans for a high-rise bank building on University Avenue at Emerson Street, Lytton used the empty lot there to build a home for his private art collection. The City later acquired the property and dedicated it as park land. Interestingly, Bart Lytton was born Bernard Shulman and, in his adult years, changed his name to Bart Lytton, in honor of the English novelist. So, indirectly, the Lytton place names are related!

Dick Rosenbaum's favorite street name is Churchill Avenue. Yes, it was named for Winston Churchill, not Winston Churchill the famous British Prime Minister, but for an American writer born in 1871. When Alfred Seale named the street, as part of the Seale Subdivision in 1898, he was continuing the tradition of Timothy Hopkins of naming new streets for literary personages. The now-forgotten American Churchill was popular in the early 20th century. And, the more famous Winston, born in 1874, for awhile felt the need to include his middle initial, "S," to avoid confusion with the other Winston. Eventually this distinction became unnecessary.

Our publication, *Streets of Palo Alto*, contains the history of street names and their origins. The 2007 revised edition is for sale at our meetings, local stores, and at the History Desk.



from Matt Bowling, paloaltohistory.com



DID YOU KNOW?

Palo Alto's first airport was located near the corner of Stanford Avenue and El Camino Real where Escondido Village now stands? Yup, from 1928-1935, planes landed and took off from a grass runway there until complaints from College Terrace residents led to a new airport at the Baylands.

Check out what was in your neighborhood!

PAHA's Google Earth Map has over 3,000 old photographs of more than 1,000 buildings and places in Palo Alto. Go to Paloaltohistory.com to download it to your computer!



Bart Lytton,
courtesy BrandlandUSA.com



Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton,
courtesy Wikipedia



Winston Churchill (the author),
courtesy Wikipedia



Timothy Hopkins, courtesy comcast.net

Aldersgate United Methodist Church Celebrates Its 100th Anniversary


Beth Bunenberg, Archives Chair

Congratulations to the Aldersgate United Methodist Church on the occasion of its centennial. This Japanese-American church began 100 years ago on Ramona Street near downtown Palo Alto. A new book, *The Street that Dreams Are Made Of*, written by Brad Shirakawa, chronicles the history of the church in 100 pages of feature stories and photographs. The stories move from the early efforts of its founders, to the struggles of internment during World War II, to modern stories of dreams realized. The Aldersgate United Methodist Church is now located at 4243 Manuela Avenue, Palo Alto.

Not to Miss in April!

ELIZABETH F. GAMBLE GARDEN SPRING TOUR: "MASTERFUL GARDENS"
Friday and Saturday, April 23 and 24, 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Tickets are \$30 for members, and \$35 for non-members. Send your check to Gamble Garden, 1431 Waverley Street, Palo Alto 94301. For more information, call 650-329-1356, x306 or www.gamblegarden.org.

THE STANFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL HOUSE AND GARDEN TOUR, Sunday, April 25, features three pre-1930 houses and two fascinating modern residences. Advance tickets are \$20. For more information, contact Charlotte Glasser: 650-725-3332; <http://histsoc.stanford.edu/programs.shtml>. (Right: photo of one of the houses on the tour, courtesy of Stanford Historical Society.)



PAHA's Public Meetings to Come

At Lucie Stern Community Center
2:00 PM

APRIL 11: *Winter Dellenbach & Palo Alto Activists*
Speaker: Winter Dellenbach
Jointly sponsored with Palo Alto History Museum

MAY 2: *Pumps and Plaques*
Jointly sponsored with PAST Heritage

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2 (TOPIC TBA)
Annual Meeting & Dinner
Speaker: Paul Saffo



The Tall Tree

APRIL 2010

PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

P.O. BOX 193
PALO ALTO, CA 94302
www.pahistory.org

THIS MONTH'S PUBLIC MEETING:
Sunday, April 11, 2:00 PM
"Palo Alto Activists"
Speaker: Winter Dellenbach
Lucie Stern Community Center
Refreshments will be served.

