

JUNE 2010
VOLUME 33, NUMBER 8

The Tall Tree

PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

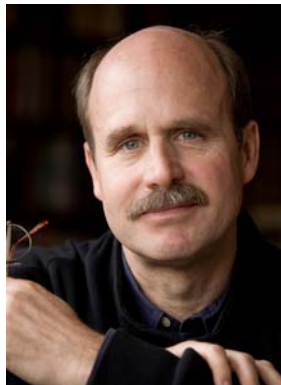
Speaker: Paul Saffo

Wednesday, June 2 at 6:00 PM

at the Sheraton Palo Alto

Innovation and Its Mythmakers:

The Deep Origins of Silicon Valley



SPEAKER: PAUL SAFFO
Scholar & Columnist

WHY DOES SILICON VALLEY CONTINUE TO BE A HUB OF GLOBAL INNOVATION—and for that matter, how did innovation happen in this improbable location? The answer offers a clue to how we might sustain Silicon Valley in the decades to come, and the answer of course is in history, but not the history that one might expect.

Come hear Paul Saffo address Innovation and its Mythmakers. Called the “Seer of Silicon Valley,” Paul Saffo is a sought-after technology forecaster. In fact, when the Apple iPad was introduced earlier this year, Mr. Saffo was interviewed by many media outlets to provide his assessment. Mr. Saffo tracks the future of engineering and the impact of technological change on the future.

Paul Saffo teaches at Stanford University and is a Visiting Scholar in the Stanford Media X research

network. He is a columnist for ABCNews.com, and his essays have appeared in numerous publications including *The Harvard Business Review*, *Fortune*, *Wired*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, and the *Washington Post*.

If you’ve only read his quotes, or heard him interviewed on National Public Radio, this is your chance to hear Paul Saffo live. Join us for the Annual PAHA Dinner featuring Mr. Saffo on June 2nd at the Palo Alto Sheraton Hotel.



1985 aerial view of Stanford Research Park, home of some Silicon Valley companies today. (PAHA Guy Miller Archives)

THE JUNE CABLE program on Channel 30 will be “PAST Heritage Preservation Awards Program and Ceremony.” Shiva Swaminathan, Resource Planner for Palo Alto, provides the story of Hale Street Pumping Station. Tapes of past programs may be borrowed at the Main Library’s History Desk, Tuesday, 6–9 PM and Thursday, 2–5 PM.

The Tall Tree is published eight times a year by the

PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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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.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

NEW MEMBERS

Sheri Furman
Alan C. Davis

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.

The High Wheeler



**FROM THE
DESK OF THE
HISTORIAN
Steve Staiger**

I WAS AT HOOVER SCHOOL THE OTHER DAY WITH MY SLIDE SHOW OF PALO ALTO HISTORY FOR 3 classrooms of third graders. Following my talk, there were numerous questions which I encourage (and try to answer). This year the focus of the questions was on the high-wheeler and safety bicycles of the 1890's. The students seemed fascinated by the differences and dangers of the old high-wheelers as compared to the newly invented safety bicycle, which was really the first generation of the bicycles we ride today.

This first golden age of bicycling coincided with the development of the new town of Palo Alto (and Stanford University). The development of the safety bicycle (essentially a bicycle with two wheels of a similar size) in the mid-1880's as well as the introduction of Dunlop's pneumatic rubber tire transformed the bicycle from a dangerous contraption, suitable only for young men crazy enough to ride them, to a reliable and comfortable machine, useful for every day transportation by children, men of all ages, and especially women.



*A 1920s safety bicycle with Alice Park.
(PAHA Guy Miller Archives)*

The young town of Palo Alto grew up with bicycling playing a major part in daily life. Early photographs of University Avenue reveal the popularity of bicycles. A Palo Alto household was more likely to have a bicycle (or two) than a horse and buggy for daily use. The town was still small enough that walking or bicycling was adequate for most needs. One could always rent a horse and buggy when you needed one.

The first safety bicycles were expensive. The heavy machines were made of expensive machined parts, but soon prices began to drop as certain makers adopted the manufacturing processes of the assembly line and mass-produced inexpensive parts that Henry Ford would adopt some years later. The lower cost of the mass-produced bicycle permitted students and others of modest means to purchase the latest in this new technology.



*High-wheeler bicyclists in Mayfield,
c. 1888 (PAHA Guy Miller Archives)*

The Santa Clara Valley was a nirvana for the growth of bicycling. The weather was ideal and the terrain was relatively flat. Only the roads were less than ideal. In the winter, the unpaved county roads were nearly impassable due to the adobe mud, and in the summer the dusty roads, full of wagon ruts, were equally difficult. Young adults and Stanford students formed bicycle clubs in both Palo Alto and Mayfield, as well as on the campus. Sunday group rides to San Jose with a large mid-day meal, and then cycling home (often after sunset) were popular recreational activities.

San Jose was to become one of the major bicycle racing centers in the country. Its first velodrome opened in 1892. Bicycle racing was so popular that it was one of the events in the first modern Olympics in 1896. Road races were equally popular amongst local bicyclists. Races around the Bay were held several years before the first Tour de France in 1903.

While bicycling has continued to be a popular form of recreation and transportation in the Bay Area, the golden age of bicycling faded, in part due to the increasing popularity of the newest form of transportation, the automobile.

Historic Preservation and High Speed Rail

THE CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED RAIL AUTHORITY (CHSRA), AS YOU PROBABLY KNOW, has selected a route for construction across Pacheco Pass and along the Caltrain corridor from San Jose to San Francisco. Various construction alternatives are being considered for each segment along the right of way. For the Palo Alto segment, PAHA has been concerned about potential impacts of the high-speed rail (HSR) system on historic features, structures and ambiance.

**THE
PRESIDENT'S
VIEWPOINT:**

**Douglas
Graham**

Most critical is the fate of El Palo Alto. The surviving half of our namesake tree, which may be 1,000 years old, stands close to the Caltrain tracks and the steel truss bridge. Investigation has found that its roots are entwined in the concrete bridge abutment. It is difficult to see how a new bridge can be constructed without damaging the tree and threatening its continued survival.

The Palo Alto Historical Association, represented by Board Member Beth Bunnenberg, has testified at several public meetings of the CHSRA and identified historic structures and neighborhoods most directly threatened by the project. In addition, Beth, in her role as a Palo Alto Historic Resources Board (HRB) member, has assisted the HRB in preparing its input to the CHSRA.

Structures threatened include, besides El Palo Alto: the 1902 steel truss bridge, eligible for the National Register, the Southern Pacific Railroad Depot, which is listed on the National Register and the City's Historic Inventory. The University Avenue (1941) and Embarcadero (1936) Underpasses, both eligible for the National Register, the Mariposa Avenue component of the potential National Register "Southgate" historic district, and 3905 Park Boulevard (1905), eligible for the California Register, and the Greenmeadow historic register district (Eichler homes).

The Project EIR has been modified to consider a wider swath of land, now about 0.4 miles on each side of the proposed route. Ambiance of historic sites is to be considered also, including the El Palo Alto Park area and the surroundings of the Sarah Wallis home site on La Selva Drive in Barron Park. The PAHA Board is considering a draft resolution to request the CHSRA to consider all of the above plus additional information. A detailed list would be appended.



*Train passing El Palo Alto, 1951
(PAHA Guy Miller Archives)*



*University Avenue train depot, 1895
(PAHA Guy Miller Archives)*

Advancing Preservation of a Unique Asset

by **Jeanne McDonnell**

ON MAY 19, IN PHILADELPHIA, THE NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION HELD a media event to announce their choice of the 11 Most Endangered Historic Places in America this year. On May 19, in Palo Alto, PAST and many local supporters announced at a press conference on Old Adobe Road, down the street from the property, the thrilling Bay Area news that the Trust has named the Juana Briones House as one of those Eleven.

The designation has been a powerful tool for raising awareness and rallying resources to save endangered sites from every region of the country. At times, that attention has garnered public support to quickly rescue a treasured landmark, while in other instances, it has been the impetus of a long battle to save an important piece of our history. The list has been so successful in galvanizing preservation efforts across the country and rallying resources to save endangered places that, in just two decades, only seven sites have been lost.

Clark Akatiff, who first became involved in the 1980s as a docent who led public and school tours of the Briones house, recently gave three reasons for saving the structure: The Antiquity and Uniqueness of the Structure, Its Association with an Important Historical Person, and Its Relevance to Contemporary Cultural Concerns.

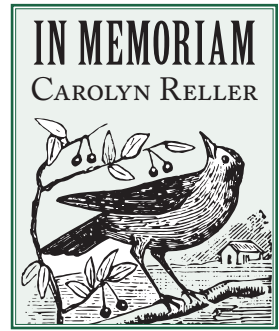


*Recent photo of Briones house showing how house is left open to the elements.
(Courtesy M. Blum)*

The Forerunner of Stanford Sports Camps

by Tom Wyman

The Winter 2010 issue of *Sandstone & Tile*, published by the Stanford Historical Society, features the article, "Coach Harry Maloney and the Genesis of Stanford Sport Camps," by Thomas Wyman, longtime PAHA Board member and past president. He describes the Saturday morning gym classes that were held each spring and attracted boys from Palo Alto, Stanford, and Menlo Park in the 1920s through the early 1940s. Harry Maloney's weekly gym classes were the forerunner of the highly-regarded live-in Stanford sport camps that today attract thousands of youngsters each summer. This issue of *Sandstone & Tile* appears online on the website of the Stanford Historical Society (<http://histsoc.stanford.edu/STbackfiles.shtml>).



- History Jaunts -

PICTURE THIS: A HISTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Exhibit opened April 23 runs until October 3:
Museum of the American Heritage, 351 Homer Avenue, Palo Alto
www.moah.org, 650-321-1004

CYPRESS LAWN LECTURE-WALKS

Colma Memorial Park, Saturdays, first tour April 17, runs until
October 30. Call: 650-550-8810 for information on topics and dates,
or visit www.cypresslawnheritagefoundation.com/events.html.



PAHA's Public Meetings to Come

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 2 AT 6:00 PM
ANNUAL MEETING AND DINNER
Innovation and Mythmakers
Speaker: Paul Saffo

Have a good summer. PAHA's next regular meeting will be October 4. See you then!

The Tall Tree

JUNE, 2010

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SPEAKER: PAUL SAFFO
INNOVATION & MYTHMAKERS
Wednesday, June 2, 6:00 PM
Sheraton Palo Alto

