

The Tall Tree

NOVEMBER 2012
VOLUME 36, No 2

NEWSLETTER of the PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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

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

Speaker: Bob Moss, Palo Alto Activist

Council Members' Interactions with the Public, Staff, and Each Other



*Bob Moss, Palo Alto Activist
(courtesy of Bob Moss)*



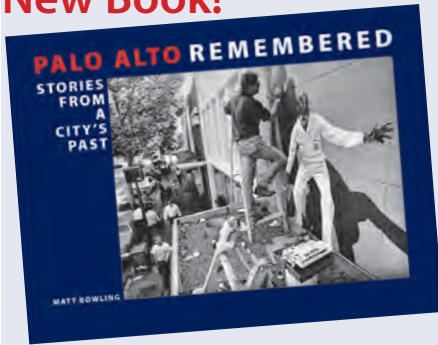
Bob Moss speaking at a city council meeting. (Photo: "Newsmakers of the Year: 2009" from the Palo Alto Weekly online file photos, 2012)

PALO ALTO ACTIVIST BOB MOSS HAS BEEN ATTENDING CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS for almost forty years—more than current councilmembers combined! At the General Meeting on November 4, Bob Moss will offer anecdotes about how City Council interactions have made their impacts felt—to good or ill effect—on our community. Bob has been deeply involved in the affairs of Palo Alto since the 1970s: he has served on the Boards of the Barron Park Association, Cable Co-op, Jordan-Garland Site Disposition Committee, Moffett Field Restoration Advisory Board, to name just a few. In 1984, the Palo Alto Civic League named him Citizen of the Year, and in 1994 the City Council honored him for graffiti removal efforts. Still active, he is presently involved in local planning, land use, development, and city finances. Bob Moss promises to provide a lively and engaging session!

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Liz Carsons and Jon Parsons
Judy Decker
Sandra Hopkins
New Life Member
Mollie Meschke

New Book!



PALO ALTO REMEMBERED
by Matt Bowling —PAHA's new history book, is on sale for \$25 at Bell's Books, Books Inc. and the Village Stationer in Palo Alto and at Kepler's in Menlo Park.

For information, or to order online, see www.paloaltoremembered.com.

A New Lucie Stern Book!

For those of you who have been asking for PAHA's *Lucie Stern* book, the good news is that it is almost here! Out of print for this past year or more, reprints will be available in mid-November—just in time to make a delightful small gift for a local history aficionado.

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 are interested, please send your request (include your preferred email address) to PAHA Secretary Bardy Wallace, at bdgw@pacbell.net.

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

Past News With and Without Answers



FROM THE PAHA PRESIDENT
John Hackmann

preserved property, photos, paintings, letters, and old objects that could be preserved for Palo Alto history, even a whole house donated, if possible.

Methods of scanning improve regularly. PAHA has about 4,000 negatives that need digitizing so scholars and all of us can search and enjoy them, and if a donor wants to make anonymous gifts, this is a category that can use help.

And as a personal suggestion, our recent speaker, Edith Molton, whose topic was *The Last Train*, was injured by a fall and is at Pilgrim Haven in Los Altos, 809 West Fremont Ave., 94024, and most assuredly would appreciate a card or call, 941 5255. Also, call me for lunch or coffee if you have ideas about our community history organization's best options for action, or if you want me to help take away items that would explain Palo Alto for us now and for future generations.

RECYCLING BINS CAN HAVE FASCINATING contents, such as yellow newspapers I found in one that dated from May 1970. One headline was *Radicals Harass Palo Alto Council, Near Bedlam at City Hall, Youths Declare Themselves Communists, Vow to Try the Police Chief.*

In another issue, Lee said he would cancel his pledge to donate land for Foothill Park if the election goes against the downtown hospital.

More stories: A prominent professional and 13 juveniles arrested on dope charges; Apollo 11 danger and how it was handled, and much more.

The wonder I experienced reading that and other articles depended on Serendipity—finding such wonders accidentally. I named my truck Serendipity, which I would like to use to pick up

Museum Opens New Exhibit

THE SAN MATEO COUNTY HISTORY MUSEUM WILL OPEN on Nov. 13 a temporary exhibit, “The People’s Tunnel: Highway 1 at Devil’s Slide,” that celebrates that massive tunnel project, to be completed this winter. Photographs include early attempts to break the Coastal isolation--muddy stage coach roads, the failed Ocean Shore Railroad, rockslides on Highway 1.

Transportation has always been difficult there. The rugged coastline has no natural harbor and is surrounded by mountains. A rough road was built over San Pedro Mountain in 1879. In the early 1900s, there was the Ocean Shore Railroad, closed in 1920. Highway 1, that was cut through Devil’s Slide in 1937, often closed from rockslides and land slippage.

In 1958, California began to replace Devil’s Slide with an inland route over Montara Mountain, the Martini Creek Bypass, which some groups opposed because it bisected a section of McNee Ranch State Park. In 1996, San Mateo County voters approved a measure that changed the preference from a bypass to two tunnels through San Pedro Mountain. The old section of Route 1 and 70 acres of State right of way will be available for public access and recreation when the tunnel opens.

The exhibit will feature photographs and memorabilia of the area and of community activism. The Museum, located at 2200 Broadway, Redwood City, is open every day except Monday, 10 am until 4 pm. For information call the Museum at 650.299.0104 or go to www.historysmc.org.

World Records for Men's High Jump

WHILE I WAS CASTING ABOUT FOR A TOPIC FOR THIS MONTH'S column, I came across the fact that the first world record in the men's high jump was recognized by the International Association of Athletic Federations in 1912. This world record was established by George Horine who jumped 2.0 meters on May 28, 1912 while competing in the Western U.S. Olympic tryouts—in Palo Alto! It turns out that Palo Alto (including the Stanford campus) has



FROM THE
DESK OF THE
HISTORIAN
Steve Staiger

been a major player in the history of the men's high jump world record, beginning with George Horine who began his training in the backyard of his family home on Channing Avenue.

The IAAF has ratified 40 world records in the men's high jump in the last 100 years. New records have been set three times in both Philadelphia and Los Angeles; five times in both Palo Alto and Moscow; and even one time in Fresno and Bakersfield. Four of the five Palo Alto events were track meets at the Stanford Stadium, including Valeriy Brumel's new record of 2.26 meters set during the famous US-USSR track and field meet at Stanford in July 1962.

George Horine developed the Western Roll, a new jumping technique, while growing up in Palo Alto. Until Dick Fosbury's Fosbury Flop (used when he won the Olympic gold medal in 1968), all world record jumpers used some variation of Horine's Western Roll. Walter Marty, a Fresno State jumper, broke his own world record in a Stanford-Fresno State dual meet at Stanford in 1934, the second world record set in Palo Alto.

Lester Steers set the California state prep high jump record while a student at Paly before graduating in 1937. He went on to jump at the University of Oregon. In April 1941, he set the world record at a meet in Seattle, and then broke it two more times in Los Angeles in May and June. Many high jump fans believe that Steers would have been the first jumper to clear 7 feet had his career not been interrupted by World War II. He did jump 7 feet at an exhibition in Oregon that year, but it was not officially recognized.

John Thomas was a young American jumper who broke the world record five times in 1960 including twice in one day (July 1, 1960) at the US Olympic trials at Stanford Stadium. The current world record was set by Javier Sotomayor of Cuba in 1993, 19 years ago.

I am always looking for topics for my monthly columns. Since coming up with a topic is the most difficult step in the process, I would welcome your suggestions for future topics. You can always pass along your ideas to me at Steve.Staiger@cityofpaloalto.org or see me at the History Desk.

Heritage Program on Channel 30

The November television program will be about the Palo Alto Girl Scouts and the Centennial of Girl Scouting in the United States by longtime Scout leaders Marion Mandell and Leslie Burchyns. The broadcast schedule is Thursdays at 10:30 AM and Saturdays at 1 PM. DVDs of previous PAHA programs can be borrowed at the history desk at the Main Library Tuesdays 4–8 PM and Thursdays 1–5 PM.



George Horine, 1912 (courtesy Wikipedia)



"Les" Steers, 1941 (elatleta.com)



University Avenue parade 1912 (Guy Miller Archives, PAHA photograph collection)



Palo Alto Train Station 1912 (Guy Miller Archives, PAHA photograph collection)

PAHA on Facebook PAHA's Facebook site is up! On Facebook, search for Palo Alto Historical Association. There you will find the latest news on upcoming programs, speakers and publications, as well as photo images from the Guy Miller Archives. Click if you "like" what you see and to receive updates in your Facebook Newsfeed. For more information, contact Matt Bowling <mtb324@gmail.com>.

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

History Jaunts

Canopy Tree Walk: Saturday, Nov. 10, 10:00 to Noon. Arborist Heather Booty's tour begins on Lincoln Avenue between University and Hamilton in Crescent Park. The trees she will talk about include: London Plane, Tulip, Ginko, Fern Pine, Saucer Magnolia, Red Horsechestnut, and Purple-leaf Plum. Knowing these will enliven your future walks!

Sign up for the tour at info@canopy.org or call 650 964 6110 ext.1. For those who cannot attend, the Canopy website, www.canopy.org, provides an informative map you can follow on your own.

Palo Alto Stanford Heritage's 25th Annual Holiday House Tour:

Sunday, Dec. 9, 1-4 PM. Tickets for the Crescent Park tour are \$25 before November 27 and \$30 after. For more information, go to www.pastheritage.org. To order by mail, please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope with check payable to PAST Heritage, P.O. Box 308, Palo Alto, California 94302.

San Mateo History Museum: Children's Free First Fridays:

Nov. 2 and Dec. 7, 11:00 preschoolers. The November program focuses on trains. Children will make their own conductor's hat. In December, they will see the display about house building and listen to *The Little House*. Admission free that day, adult tours begin at 2:00. More information at: 650 299 0104 or www.historysmc.org.

Stanford Historical Society: Tuesday, December 11, 5-7:00 PM, Oak West Lounge, Tresidder Union. The Program in Human Biology at 40 Years: What Made This Start-up So Successful? Carol Boggs, Bing Director in Human Biology, will moderate a discussion by five prominent biologists in honor of this anniversary.

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. (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 meeting is:

NOVEMBER 4
Council Members Interactions with the Public, Staff and Each Other
Speaker: Bob Moss



Save these dates for Fall 2012

DECEMBER 2
Vignettes

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
Alice Wilder Hall
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*