



The Tall Tree Newsletter

of the PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

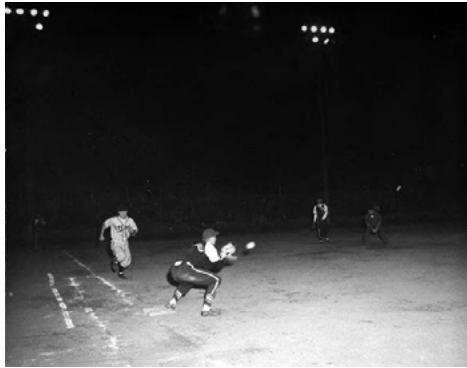
March 2016 Volume 39, No 5

Since 1913



Sunday, March 6 2:00- 4:00 pm
Lucie Stern Community Center
1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto

Palo Alto's El Camino Park: History, Traditions and Renovations



Night softball, ca. 1935.

ON MARCH 6TH, PALO ALTO HISTORIAN and PAHA BOARD MEMBER STEVE STAIGER will facilitate a discussion on the past and present story of El Camino Park. El Camino Park, originally known as Highway, or Community Park, is Palo Alto's oldest, founded by the city fathers in 1914, when they sought an open, inviting entryway to Palo Alto off of El Camino Real. Over 100 years old, the recently renovated park re-opened in December 2015; it comprises open fields for soccer and lacrosse (the Tomahawks' home field), a lighted diamond for softball complete with bleachers, restrooms, and a parking lot. In 1967, El Camino Park hosted the Grateful Dead at a "Be-in" (more on this event on p. 3),

and in the 1980s several redwood trees were planted at the south side to honor Olympic athletes from Palo Alto.

The March 6th program will cover the early history, some of the lesser known features of the park, and highlight some of the events that have occurred in the park. Several speakers will discuss specific events that they remember or that family members participated in. Rob deGeus of the CPA Community Services will talk about the recent history of the park, including the new reservoir under the park, and the future of the park following its rebirth this spring.



Jerry Garcia and friends play in a 1975 concert at El Camino Park. See page 3. Courtesy David Gans.



Palo Alto Mayor Karen Holman (center) re-opens El Camino Park with fellow Council members and city staff on December 8, 2015. Courtesy Veronica Weber.

PAHA's Public Meetings

GENERAL PROGRAM MEETINGS

are held monthly

2:00-4:00 PM

October - May

at the

Lucie Stern Community Center

1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto

NEXT PAHA MEETING:

Sunday, March 6

"History, Traditions, and Renovations of El Camino Park" moderated by Steve Staiger with help from Rob de Geus, and Jerry Tinney

UPCOMING PAHA MEETINGS 2016

April 3, 2016 "World War I Army Training by San Francisco Bay: The Story of Camp Fremont" with Barbara Wilcox

May 15, 2016 "Eichler comes to Palo Alto" presented by Steven Eichler

June 5, 2016 TBD

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC * REFRESHMENTS SERVED



PRESIDENT'S LETTER
Ralph Britton



Preserving your memories

RECENTLY, I WROTE ABOUT OUR FAMILY HISTORY and its preservation. I was motivated to do so when my granddaughter recently had to complete a project for her seventh grade class about family history. Called "Coming to America," it required a family tree with special emphasis on the point at which each identified ancestor arrived in the US. Naturally she turned to her parents and living grandparents to get the information she needed. Fortunately, I had quite a bit, including some material and photos left by my late wife. The good thing was that this documentation existed, but I then had to rely on my memory of discussions Betty and I had had about her parents and grandparents coming from Ireland at the beginning of the 20th century. Since I had to provide information for her to complete her task, I ended up writing down much of what I knew and could glean from the documents I had. If I hadn't had the incentive of satisfying my granddaughter's request, I probably would not have found the time to do it.

My point, again, is that it is really important to get what you know down on paper or in digital media before it's gone forever. It's one of the important legacies you can leave that will inform future generations about their history and add a sense of connection and meaning to their lives. Sit down and talk to your children and grandchildren about who they are and where they came from.

PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Ralph Britton, *President*
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- John Hackmann
- Rachel Kellerman
- Alan Loveless
- Leah McGarrigle
- Jerry Tinney
- Bardy Wallace



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 p.m. General meetings are held the first Sunday of each month (October–December, February–May) at the Lucie Stern Community Center at 2 p.m. 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.

Preview of Coming Attractions!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE SUNDAY, APRIL 3, PAHA PROGRAM: Barbara Wilcox, author of the recently published *World War I Army Training by San Francisco Bay: The Story of Camp Fremont*, will be the presenter. Her historical narrative was awarded the Stanford Historical Society Prize for Excellence in Historical Writing! She tells the fascinating story — not familiar to many local or recent residents — of how, when the United States entered The Great War in 1917, the government leased land from Stanford University to create Camp Fremont. At Camp Fremont, 28,000 American "doughboys" trained on elaborate mock battlefields in preparation for deployment to the Western Front's trench warfare. However, the war ended before the Camp Fremont trainees actually saw much combat in Europe. Some troops from the 8th Infantry Division did participate in the fighting in Siberia. Camp Fremont has long since disappeared, but it once encompassed thousands of acres that now comprise the Dish, SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory, and much of present day Menlo Park. Unexploded live artillery continues to turn up after almost a century.

Be-In at El Camino Park with the Grateful Dead



TO PROVIDE CONTEXT AND TO ENRICH Steve Staiger's presentation on El Camino Park, it is interesting to note that the Grateful Dead performed the "Mary Poppins Umbrella Festival and Be-In" at El Camino Park on July 2, 1967, sponsored by the Free University and The Experiment. On July 4, the *Stanford Daily* offered a detailed review of the afternoon's events. The article began, "Free Sounds, Free Snacks, Free Sun..." and described a "psychedelically painted drum set, along with hippie girls painting people's faces." The *Daily* authors went on, "Beads, flowers, headbands, bells, painted faces, and multi-colored clothing were in abundance on Be-In participants."

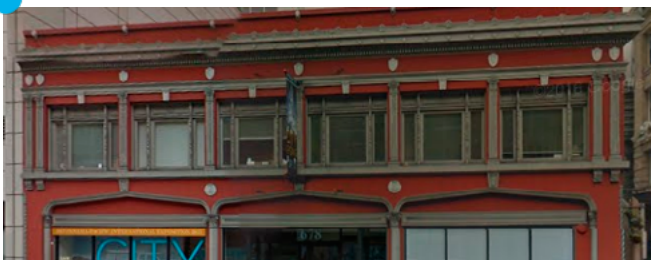


Fans at the Mary Poppins Umbrella Festival and Be-In at El Camino Park, July 2, 1967. Courtesy *Stanford Daily*.



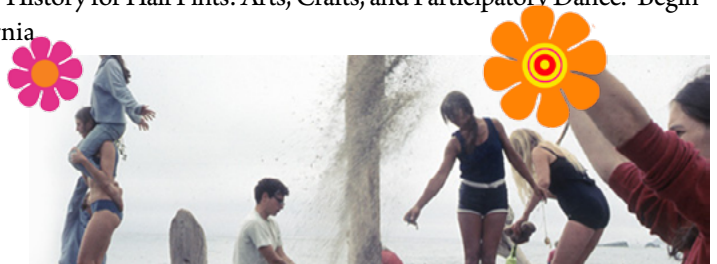
The park continued to be a venue for counterculture music well into the mid-70s. This poster dates from June 8, 1975. Courtesy jerrygarcia.com.

The California Historical Society, inspiring since 1871



The California Historical Society, located at 678 Mission, San Francisco. Courtesy CHS.

It houses a fine permanent collection. A recent program featured a "Day of Remembrance" commemorating President Franklin Roosevelt's 1942 "Executive Order 9066," which led to the forced incarceration of American citizens of Japanese descent. The Society encourages the study of California history with programs such as "History for Half Pints: Arts, Crafts, and Participatory Dance." Beginning January 22, 2016, and running through May, the California Historical Society's main exhibit is entitled "Experiments in Environment: the Halprin Workshops, 1966-1971." The workshops, jointly developed by Lawrence and Anna Halprin, drew from elements of architecture, ecology, music, cinematography, and the like. It brought together a wide variety of participants in an avant-garde environmental, fine arts experience. The CHS is open Tuesday – Sunday, 11:00 am – 5:00 pm. More details may be found at www.californiahistoricalsociety.org.



Halprin dancers, late 1960s, featured in the current California Historical Society exhibition. Courtesy CHS.

History Jaunts

Easter in and around Palo Alto With Easter just around the corner, **March 27, 2016**, the Bay Area sports a wide variety of events and egg hunts. To find an adventure to suit you and your family, visit the website www.seecalifornia.com/events/easter/california-easter.html. In Palo Alto itself is the **Palo Alto Easter Party and Egg Hunt**, March 28, 10:00 am-2:00 pm at Unity Palo Alto Community Church, 2291 Middlefield Road. The party will include crafts, games, egg dyeing, snacks and live bunnies. For more information, call 650-494-7222 or visit www.unitypaloalto.org.

Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University features "Red Horse: Drawings of the Battle of the Little Bighorn: January 16-May 9, 2016." Red Horse, a Minneconjou Lakota Sioux warrior, fought against Custer and the 7th Cavalry at the Battle of the Little Bighorn in June 1876. The exhibit, researched and curated by Stanford collaborators, brings together his 12 ledger drawings. Docent tours are available beginning January 28, Thursdays at 2 pm, Saturdays at 11 am. The Cantor Arts Center is open Wednesday – Monday, 11:00 am – 5:00 pm, Thursday, 11:00 am – 8:00 pm; it is closed on Tuesday. Admission is free to the Cantor Arts Center, located at 328 Lomita Drive at Museum Way, Stanford. For more information, call 650-723-4177.

Repair Café If you missed the Repair Café Palo Alto in October, you will have another opportunity to fix your broken tools, gadgets, appliances, bikes, etc. The Repair Café is a volunteer-run, community service dedicated to encouraging the repair and reuse of goods rather than relegating them to landfill. Other upcoming local venues of the Repair Café include Sun., March 6, 2016– 11 am to 3 pm, Hacker Dojo, 599 Fairchild Drive, Mountain View and Sun., April 24, 2016– Noon to 4 pm Sunnyvale Library, 665 W Olive Ave, Sunnyvale. For more information, visit their website www.repaircafe-paloalto.org.

Palo Alto Art Center "Bird in the Hand" opens at the Palo Alto Art Center on January 22, 2016, and will continue through April 10. The exhibition includes the works of 40 local and international artists and celebrates an exotic aviary of real and imagined birds, in all their "flapping, tapping, singing, preening" splendor. The Palo Alto Art Center is located at 1313 Newell Avenue, Palo Alto. Admission is free; the Center is closed Monday; for more information, call 650-329-2366 or visit www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/csd/artcenter/default.asp.

Welcome New Members!

Nancy Del Grande
Dr. Ruth K. Jakoby
Daniel Johnson
Lawrence Yegge

Heritage Program on Channel 30

PAHA's March 2016 program will feature "A Flight through 80 Years of Palo Alto Airport History" presented by Ralph Britton.

The schedule is

Wednesdays at 8 pm,
Thursdays at 10:30 am, and
Saturdays at 1 pm

on Ch 30.

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

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

In Memoriam

Dr. R. Hewlett Lee
Shulamith Rubenfien

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 make our work possible: we maintain the archives, assist researchers, and disseminate historical information through our publications and public programs. Your generosity will be appreciated for generations to come. Join today!

Individual \$40 Family \$60
Sustaining \$75 Business/Sponsor \$150 Life \$500

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. (Current members should have received renewal notices by post.)



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PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



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