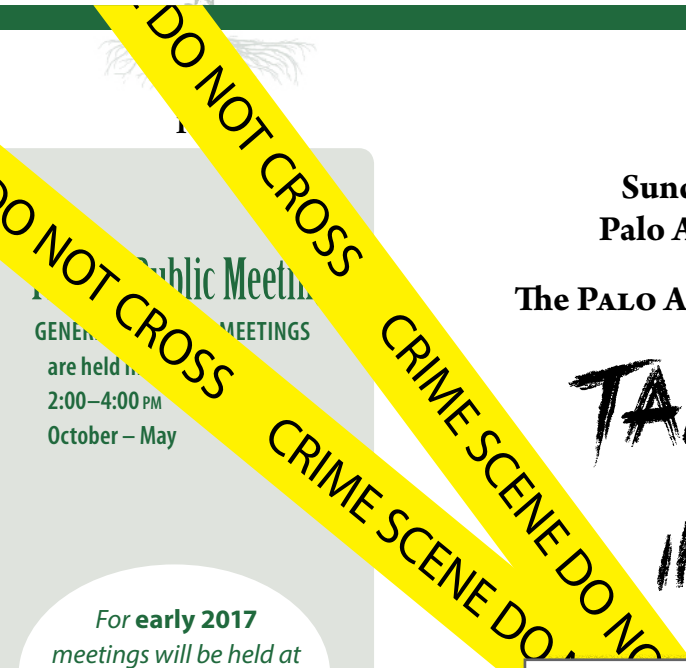




The Tall Tree Newsletter

of the PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

April 2017 Volume 40, No 6



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

Note
winter
location!

The PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION presents

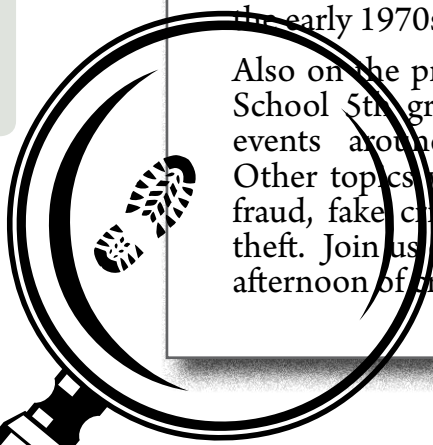
TALES OF CRIME IN PALO ALTO



For early 2017 meetings will be held at Palo Alto Art Center 1313 Newell Road

THE APRIL PROGRAM WILL FEATURE A VARIETY OF CRIMINAL STORIES, highlighting some interesting events that occurred in Palo Alto. Speakers will include a few PAHA Board members talking about their favorite crimes. Scott Herhold, columnist for the *San Jose Mercury News*, will speak about a murder that occurred in the Stanford Church in the early 1970s.

Also on the program will be an Addison School 5th grader who has studied the events around Jane Stanford's death. Other topics will include stories of land fraud, fake crimes and criminal identity theft. Join us on **April 2** for an enjoyable afternoon of crime and passion.



FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
* REFRESHMENTS SERVED



UPCOMING MEETINGS
May 7, 2017 Historic Preservation
June 7, 2017 Dinner and Speaker

Public Meetings
GENERAL MEETINGS
are held in
2:00–4:00 PM
October – May



FROM THE DESK OF
Steve Staiger, City Historian

**PALO ALTO
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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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.

Lucie Stern: Our Fairy Godmother

LUCIE STERN, THE WOMAN KNOWN AS PALO ALTO'S "FAIRY GODMOTHER," IS THE SUBJECT OF THIS MONTH'S COLUMN HIGHLIGHTING PALO ALTO'S "CREATORS OF THE LEGACY." Lucie Stern was born in Lorraine in 1871. Shortly after her birth, her birthplace was lost to Germany as the result of the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War. Soon thereafter, her Jewish-French parents chose to come to America. By 1874, they were living in San Francisco where her father was a merchant.

As a young woman, San Francisco newspapers described Lucie as a "beautiful and charming girl," and later as a "prominent society belle." She met Louis Stern, one of the four nephews of Levi Strauss, in 1898; he and his brothers would later inherit the company in 1902. Lucie married Louis in January 1899, when she was 27, and he was 39.

For a time, they lived in New York, where Lucie had four children; unfortunately, two died in infancy and a daughter later died at the age of five.

Her daughter Ruth was born in 1906, and soon the family returned to California and lived on an estate in Atherton.

In 1918, Ruth suffered a grand mal seizure and was brain-damaged for the rest of her life. Louis Stern became an invalid and died in 1924. Lucie was very protective of her daughter, and became socially isolated with her on the Atherton estate. Her doctor, Russel Lee, and others encouraged her to move to

Palo Alto to foster a social life. In 1931, she met Birge Clark who designed the houses for Lucie and Ruth at 1950/1990 Cowper Street in 1932.

Lucie thoroughly enjoyed the process of building the residences, including having her French chef feed both workers and visitors. As the project was finishing, she looked for opportunities to keep "her" workers employed. She approached the City, offer-

ing to build a new community theater since the existing one (today's MacArthur Park restaurant) was too close to the railroad tracks. Eventually, she funded the construction of the entire Lucie Stern Community Center, including the Children's Library.

With her great wealth (people continued to buy Levi's during the Depression), she supported a number of community endeavors. In the Baylands, she funded the Sea Scout Building and the public swimming pool (now known as the Duck Pond.) Even after her death in 1946, the community benefited from notable

gifts from her estate, including the Lawn Bowling Clubhouse and a major donation to finance the Municipal Golf Course in 1956. Lucie Stern also made significant gifts to Stanford University.

Palo Altans have honored Lucie Stern with the title of "fairy godmother" for her generosity over the decades, and during the 1994 Centennial Celebration, she was selected to the elite membership as one of the "Creators of the Legacy."



A young, angelic Lucie Stern, date unknown, before she settled in Palo Alto. Courtesy Jewish News of Northern California.

Japanese American commemorations

The **48th Annual Manzanar Pilgrimage**, with the theme, "Never Again, To Anyone, Anywhere! 75th Commemoration of Executive Order 9066," will take place on the weekend **April 28-30**, at the Manzanar National Historic Site, located on U.S. Highway 395 in California's Owens Valley, between the towns of Lone Pine and Independence.

The weekend kicks off with a reception on site from 4 – 6 pm. On Saturday, the events include Taiko drumming at 11:45 and remarks by Warren Furutani, former California State Assemblyman

and activist. Manzanar at Dusk will take place, 5 – 8 pm, at Lone Pine High School (538 S. Main St., Lone Pine.) Both the Manzanar Pilgrimage and the Manzanar At Dusk programs are free and are open to the public. A citizenship ceremony will take place on Sunday. Throughout the weekend, visitors may see photos by Paul Kitagaki at the visitor center and the "Only the Oaks Remain" exhibit about the Tuna Canyon Detention Station.

For more information, call (323) 662-5102 or visit manzanarcommittee.org.



Donkeys return to Barron Park's Bol Park

by Karen Holman

Donkeys have been a part of the landscape in Barron Park since the Depression Era when Cornelis and Josina Bol's 13 acres of farmland included a donkey pasture. When Cornelis Bol died in 1965, the neighbors taxed themselves to create Bol Park. The park opened in 1974, a year before Barron Park was annexed into Palo Alto.

When Josina Bol passed away in 1996, neighborhood volunteers "adopted" Mickey and brought Niner and Perry to be his new compan-



Pictured with a human handler, Perry, left, was the inspiration for the Donkey character in the Shrek film series, pictured far right. Courtesy the Palo Alto Donkey Project and DreamWorks Animation LLC.

ions. Donkeys have served as Gunn High School mascots at football games, are Sunday regulars in Bol Park for personal visits with children, and Perry is famous as the model for Donkey in the Shrek movies.

The community was reminded of how important the donkeys are when passersby kept asking when Perry was coming home after the recent passing of Niner; and at the memorial for Niner on November 20 when some 120 or so neighbors came to pay their respects; and by the excitement of both children and adults to get a look at Perry and his new friend Jenny who both arrived at the pasture on November 15. Perry and Jenny can now be visited beside Bol Park near the creek and are always eager to greet visitors at the gate.

The donkeys are supported by individual donations, and in December 2016 the City Council approved a challenge for \$10,000 with another \$5,000 pledged once the \$10,000 challenge is met.

You may support the tradition of donkeys in Palo Alto by making a tax-deductible donation to "ACTERRA — Palo Alto Donkey Fund" and send to: The Palo Alto Donkey Project, ACTERRA, 3931 E. Bayshore Rd., Palo Alto, CA 94303. You may also donate online at [bitly/2m9YJqt](https://bitly.com/2m9YJqt), indicating in the comments section your support for the donkeys.



Palo Alto Yacht Club: a 69 Year History (1928-1997)

by Anita Delaney

From out of the mists the spring yacht opener with boats in full sail comes into view. In April 1980, about 80 boats sailed out of the Palo Alto Yacht Harbor behind their elected commodore, Alan Ferguson. A crowd on shore including city and county government representatives were on hand for the 52nd opening day. For many years, the Palo Alto Yacht Club was a presence in the Baylands.

In September 1928, 50 boat-minded people (including duck hunters) came together to form the Yacht Club. Charter members included Dr. Russel V. Lee, Ed. C. Thoits, and John F. Byxbee. The group elected J.F. Byxbee as Commander. At that time, marshland was purchased and a harbor and recreational area laid out.



Sailboats moored at the Palo Alto Yacht Club in 1940.

Over the years, the Yacht Club played an important recreational and social role in the Palo Alto community. In 1933 the Yacht Club sponsored the Sea Scout Ship 58 and granted them the use of the clubhouse for their meetings. Then in 1944 the Women's Auxiliary was formed. Tragedy struck in 1985 when the club house burned down and many historical mementoes were lost or damaged.

Through silting, Mother Nature contributed to the demise of the Yacht Club. By 1980, increased silting conditions combined with new regulatory rules and consequent uncertainty of dredging became the major concern of the club. In November 1980, ballot measure D was listed. A yes vote would continue dredging the harbor, and a no vote would eliminate dredging. The no vote won, and it spelled the beginning of the end of the Palo Alto Yacht Club. In 1987, the club rented

premises which resulted in the establishment of the Club Room on Bair Island Road. The space served as the club's headquarters for the next nine years.

The Palo Alto Historical Association recently received several boxes filled with the history of the organization. Newspaper clippings from local newspapers describe the social events hosted

by the club. Included in the boxes are minutes from their meetings, membership rosters, photographs, junior division history, a cook book, as well as the charter and constitution.

Today when you go to the end of Embarcadero Road and look out over the tranquil marsh lands, imagine the space filled with boats with white sails dotting the bay.

History Jaunts

On **Thursday, April 6, at 7 pm**, Betsy Fryberger—McMurtry Curator Emerita of Prints and Drawings at the Cantor—will discuss the **historic bearded iris** in the **Ruth Bell Lane Memorial Garden at the Museum of American Heritage (MOAH)**. On **Thursday, June 8, at 7 pm**, the **MOAH Summer Concert Series** kicks off the new season with The Peralta Consort. MOAH is located at 351 Homer Ave., in Palo Alto. For more information on these events, call (650) 321-1004 or visit moah.org.

“**Gather in the Garden**” is the name of the **32nd Gamble Garden Spring Tour, April 28 and 29, 10 am – 4 pm** at various locations in Palo Alto. In addition to the events and activities at Gamble Garden itself, the tour features five private gardens for your viewing and horticultural pleasure. For more information, call (650) 329-1356 or visit gamblegarden.org. Gamble Garden also offers its **annual Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, April 9** at 1431 Waverley St. in Palo Alto. Visit the website (address above) for details and time sign-up.

Check out “**It Was a Dark and Stormy Night**,” an exhibit focusing on beloved Peanuts character Snoopy, at the **Charles M. Schulz Museum and Research Center**, 2301 Hardies Lane, Santa



Peanuts images courtesy schulzmuseum.org.

Rosa. The exhibit takes visitors on a “breathtaking and fascinating trip down memory lane” with Charlie Brown, Lucie, Snoopy, and the gang, including a re-creation of Charles Schulz’s studio. As well, Santa Rosa hosts 70 colorful Peanuts statues scattered throughout the town. For more information visit schulzmuseum.org.

The **San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles** is sponsoring the “**American Tapestry Biennial**,” **January 20 - April 16, 2017**, showcasing artists from eight countries, featuring six tapestries and highlighting a variety of artistic expressions and concepts. The museum, located at 520 S. First St, San Jose, is open Wednesday – Friday, 11 am – 4 pm, Saturday – Sunday, 11 am – 3 pm. For more information, call (408) 971-0323, or visit sjquiltmuseum.org.

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. (Annual renewal notices will be mailed in September.)



.....➤.....➤.....➤ **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.



Welcome New Members!

Anita Delaney
Andrea B. Smith

Heritage Program on Channel 30

The Heritage Program for May 2017 will feature

“Remembering 9066: The Japanese and Japanese-American Experience”

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

In Memoriam

Ruth Lacey
Roger W. Lowther

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



Luana Staiger, Peggy McKee,
Jon Gifford, Georgie Gleim, *Editorial*
Jon Gifford, Györgyi Kapala, *Design*
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Photographs courtesy of PAHA Guy Miller Archives unless otherwise noted.