

The Tall Tree Newsletter

of the PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

February 2014 Volume 37, No 5

General Meeting • Free and Open to the Public • Refreshments Served

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

Speaker: Cornelia Pendleton, CFO of University Art

UArt The Story of University Art

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU BROWSED through the array of treasures at University Art and the Annex to find creative inspiration or the perfect gift for a family member or friend?



Speaker: Cornelia Pendleton, CFO of University Art. [YouTube]

Did you know that “UArt” earned a Congressional Certificate of Special Recognition as a green business in 2010 and was awarded a “best of” by the Palo Alto Weekly

in 2011? University Art was one of the Tall Tree honorees. Alas, after 65 years, University Art—long time signature Palo Alto business and institution located at 267 Hamilton Avenue—will close its doors and move to Redwood City this spring. At the Palo Alto Historical Association meeting on March 2, University Art CFO, Cornelia Pendleton, will tell the story of how her mother, her aunt, and her grandparents launched the business in 1948, moving into the Hamilton Avenue location in 1964. ✎

Above: view of University Art, July 2013 [H. Shakes], Congressional Certificate [C. Pendleton]



PAHA's Public Meetings

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM MEETINGS

are held
2:00–4:00 PM
October – June
at the

Lucie Stern Community Center
1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto

CALENDAR OF MEETINGS

2014

March 2

UArt: The Story of University Art
Speaker, Cornelia Pendleton

April 6

Palo Alto Data
Speaker, Wayne Martin

May 4

Jung in Palo Alto
Speaker, Dr. Thomas Kirschs

June 4: Annual Dinner

To see a video clip of Michael Killen's interview of Cornelia Pendleton and her colleagues, Charlie Affrunti, and Todd Ayers, visit: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YUKyLHPFK4o>

The "Juana Briones y su California" exhibit is open until June 8. See the CHS website for information: <http://www.californiahistorical-society.org/>.

PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- John Hackmann, *President*
- Harriette Shakes, *Vice President*
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- Rich Green
- Rachel Kellerman
- Mary Beth Cebedo Lefebvre
- Marilyn McDonald
- Jeanne McDonnell
- Leah McGarrigle
- Kent Stormer
- Jerry Tinney
- Tom Wyman

For a YouTube clip that showcases the present Paly gyms and the need for renovation, visit: <http://peninsulaappress.com/2013/12/11/palo-alto-high-school-athletic-center/>.

Schematics of the new designs, are online at <http://www.paloaltoonline.com/news/2013/09/11/new-paly-sports-center-to-echo-historic-campus>.

Announcement flyer: for more information and a complete list of sponsors, visit the Farewell Paly Gym page at www.paly.net.

PAHA Goes to San Francisco to See Juana Briones

IN PLACE OF A REGULAR SUNDAY PROGRAM, PAHA LAUNCHED THE NEW YEAR by joining in a special event held at the California Historical Society. Members carpooled to San



The only known photograph of Juana Briones. [Photo: Point Reyes National Seashore Archives]

Francisco to celebrate the opening of the new Juana Briones exhibit. The exhibit includes many artifacts from Juana Briones life and times. PAHA's own Jeanne Farr McDonnell has researched deeply and written definitively on the life of this remarkable woman, publishing *Juana Briones of Nineteenth-Century California*, in 2008, and advocating mightily for the preservation of Juana Briones' original Palo Alto home. McDonnell, a historian of women's history, is also a founder of the Women's Heritage Museum, available online at the International Museum of Women, <http://www.imow.org/home/index>.

Juana Briones and author, McDonnell are in the news elsewhere too. On April 5 the San Mateo County History Museum will present



Author of *Juana Briones of Nineteenth-Century California*, Jeanne Farr McDonnell (far left), poses with Briones descendants at the opening celebratinn of the California Historical Society exhibit about her life. A wall salvaged from her home in Palo Alto stands behind the group. [Photo: John Hackmann, President of PAHA]

Jeanne McDonnell speaking about "The Joy of Research: When Suddenly You Get It from People, Books, Files and Objects," based on her experience researching and writing about Briones, once referred to as the "preeminent woman of Hispanic California." This program, part of the Courthouse Docket series, will be held in the historic Courtroom A. See p.4, "Jaunts," for times and location about this event.

Sunday, March 16 12:30 - 4:30 PM



Farewell Paly Gym

Celebrating 85 years of fond memories

Enjoy a vintage afternoon with multi-generational activities reliving eight decades of Paly's sports highlights and student life.

1:00 PM Campus Tours & Memorabilia displays
2:30 PM Special program in the Gym

For more information: www.paly.net



SPONSORED BY: Palo Alto High School, Paly Alumni Association, Paly Sports Boosters, PAUSA, The Palo Alto Weekly, City of Palo Alto and the Palo Alto Historical Association

Farewell to the Paly Gym

Many PAHA members either went to Palo Alto High School or sent children and grandchildren there. Like much else in Palo Alto, Paly's venerable gym, now 85 years old, is undergoing renovation, or indeed transformation. Designed by Birge Clark, Paly's main gym dates to 1920, with a smaller one added in the 1960s. The new athletic center will have an expanded seating capacity and will include state of the art athletic structures. Pending city approval, demolition will begin later this spring with a target date for the facility's completion in June, 2015.

Sponsored by both PAHA and the Palo Alto History Museum, a celebration will take place March 16. Mark your calendar. There will be food trucks and memorabilia displays from 12:30-4:40, campus tours at 1:00 and a special program in the old gym at 2:30. Celebrate the fond memories and say farewell to the old Paly Gym.

The Battle of Palo Alto, May 8, 1846

This month I want to look at a Palo Alto little known to most residents either of Palo Alto or of the Mid-Peninsula. In the spring of 1846, California was not a state, and the Mid-Peninsula was a land of grazing cattle and small population. However, many Mexicans and Americans were focused on events along the Rio Grande, the disputed border between Mexico and Texas, which had become the 28th state in 1845. In May, 1846, the dispute erupted into the Battle of Palo Alto.

For many years, American-born residents of Mexico's northern territories presented problems to the government. In 1836, although Mexico's army under Santa Anna defeated a group of American-born men at the Alamo, Texas won the war and existed briefly as an independent republic. Texas joined the union as part of President Polk's vision of extending the nation to the Pacific coast. The two countries engaged in what we call the Mexican War because of the border dispute between the two countries, in which the United States pursued its "Manifest Destiny."

President Polk sent General Zachary Taylor's army to the southern tip of Texas (near present day Brownsville,) only a few miles from the disputed border. Mexican troops crossed the Rio Grande into Texas. On May 8, 1846, the two armies engaged in battle on the plains of Palo Alto. They fought an artillery duel, the Battle of Palo Alto. Military historians agree that the American forces "won" the battle, although the Mexican army was not defeated. Five days later, Congress declared war on Mexico, and the fighting continued for another two years, ending with an American victory, and the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo.

Mexico agreed to the disputed border with Texas and to sell much of its northern territory (including Alta California) to the United States. Zachary Taylor "rode" his victorious war record into the White House in 1849; and future President U.S. Grant had his first experience in war as a recent graduate of West Point (he would be stationed in California in the early 1850s.) The new state of Iowa named a number of its newly formed counties for war heroes and battles of the Mexican War, including Palo Alto County in northwest Iowa.

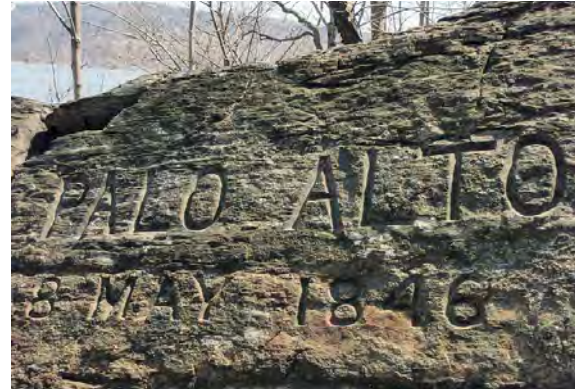
The Palo Alto battlefield was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1960, and became the Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Site, part of the National Park Service, in 1978. A few years ago, a man contacted me requesting that I send him a container of Palo Alto dirt since he was a collector of battlefield soils. Sadly I had to inform him that our Palo Alto dirt would not be of interest to him (although there was a "skirmish" in Santa Clara in 1847, the only Mexican War battle in Northern California). For more information, [visit www.nps.gov/paal/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/paal/index.htm) or for a dramatization of the Battle, visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=4QAHWp_mDPO.

Palo Alto History Exhibit at the Caltrain 150

Members of PAHA and the Palo Alto History Museum set up a joint Palo Alto history display at the Caltrain 150 event held January at the Santa Clara train station. Steve Staiger, Chris Botsford, Rich Green, and Bardy Wallace created a strong interpretation promoting the history of Palo Alto—and they took it down at the end of the day. It was a large lively crowd, and people from all over were amazed at our photo collection. One man, working on a book about the 1906 Earthquake, was amazed by photos he had never seen that Brian George retrieved from glass slides in the PAHA archives. We all appreciated the supportive visit to the booth by Steve and Nancy Player. Thanks also to Margo Schmidt who provided table coverings in case of need and Harriette Shakes who kept us connected with CalTrain planners. —Beth Bunnenberg. *Note: We thank Beth for all her organization and incredible work gathering a wealth of materials for display. It would not have happened without her.* —PAHA

PAHA Treasurer, Chris Botsford working at the PAHA-PA History Museum booth during the Caltrain event, January 2014. [Photo: Beth Bunnenberg]

FROM THE DESK OF
THE HISTORIAN
Steve Staiger



Palo Alto Battlefield National Historic Landmark, in Texas, became part of the National Park Service in 1978. [Photo: Wikipedia]



History Jaunts

Farewell to the Paly Gym, Sunday March 16, 12:30–4:30 PM in front of gym near the playing fields. Campus tours will leave at 1:00, and a commemorative program will be held in the gym at 2:30. Food trucks, music and meeting old friends all day. Mark your calendar and plan to celebrate the fond memories and say farewell to the venerable Paly Gym. This event is sponsored by PAHA and the Palo Alto History Museum among others. (See article and invitation, p.3.)

The San Mateo County History Museum presents, Jeanne Farr McDonnell who will speak about “The Joy of Research: When Suddenly You Get It from People, Books, Files and Objects,” April 5, at 1:00 PM in the museum’s historic Courtroom A. Ms McDonnell will share her experiences researching and writing about the extraordinary Juana Briones (see article, p.3). This program is part of the museum’s monthly Courthouse Docket series. Free with the price of admission, \$5 for adults and \$3 for students and seniors. For information, go to www.historysmc.org, email Mitch Postel, mitch@historysmc.org or call 650.299.0104

SHS Walking Tour Brochures and 2014 House Tour: the Stanford Historical Society (SHS) will sponsor the next Historic House & Garden Tour, “Through the Decades,” Sunday, May 4, 2014. The tour will showcase the history and architecture of campus homes built in different decades before WWII.

In addition, the SHS Historic Houses Committee is launching an exciting new project: walking tour brochures highlighting historic residential neighborhoods on the Stanford University campus. The printed guides will include maps and information about historic houses and gardens along the routes. The Stanford Historic Houses Committee plans to augment the self-guided walks with periodic docent-guided tours of various Stanford neighborhoods. Look for the release of the first tour brochure by Winter 2014. For more information, see <http://histsoc.stanford.edu/hhouses.shtml>.

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 \$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.)



WELCOME
to a New Member
Janet Peacock

Heritage Program on Channel 30

PAHA’s 2008 program, “Juana Briones: A Life Across Eras,” by Jeanne McDonnell, author of Briones’ biography, will be on television in March. Broadcast schedule:

Wednesday: 8 PM
Thursday: 10:30 AM
Saturday: 1 PM

DVDs of previous programs can be borrowed at the Archives which are temporarily located at Cubberley, Room H-5. Hours:

Tuesdays, 4–8 PM, and
Thursdays, 1–5 PM.

Unless otherwise noted, photographs reproduced in the Tall Tree are from the Palo Alto Historical Association archives.

THE PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION
Our mission is to collect, preserve and make available to the public information about the history of Palo Alto.



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