

The Tall Tree

MAY 2012
VOLUME 35, No 7

NEWSLETTER of the PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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

Speakers:

Susan Rosenberg, co-founder of Canopy

Gary Fazzino, former mayor

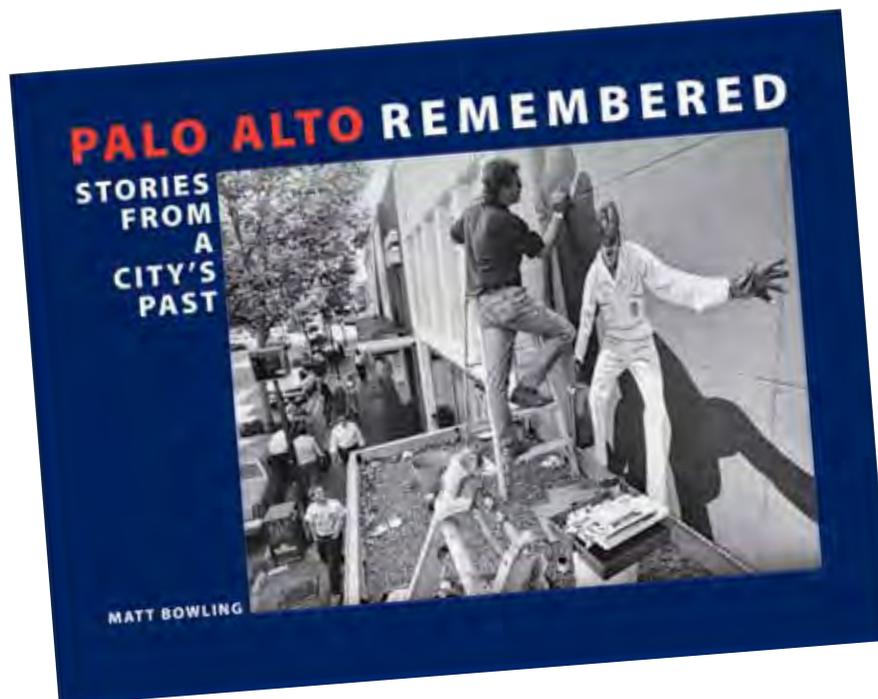
Peter Drekmeier, former mayor & conservationist

Greg Brown, artist

Sunday, May 6 at 2:00 – 4:00 PM

Lucie Stern Community Center, Palo Alto

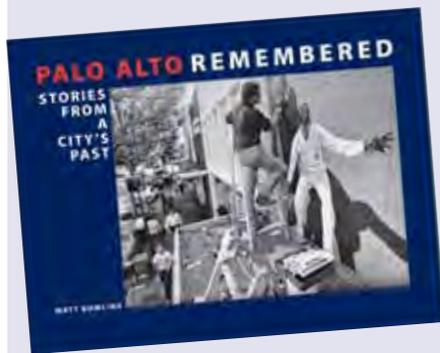
A New Book! PALO ALTO REMEMBERED



DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN THE CIRCUS CAME TO TOWN? The Beatles stayed at the Cabaña? Oregon Avenue was widened? The Yacht Harbor was closed? Author Matt Bowling takes a fresh look at Palo Alto—long ago and not so long ago—in his new book, *Palo Alto Remembered: Stories from a City's Past*, a collection of 43 short stories published by the Palo Alto Historical Association.

PAHA invites you to a special program celebrating the launch of the new book. Our speakers, including the artist shown at work on the cover, will read excerpts from *Palo Alto Remembered* and reflect on the past... Visit with friends... and peruse the new book! (See the article on page 2 for more information about the book.)

About the Book



Palo Alto Remembered: a collection of 43 absorbing stories accompanied by over 200 images from PAHA's archives—not your usual history book! A sampling of story titles includes “Winter Lodge,” “The Circus,” “Drive-in,” “Cubberley Closing,” “Save the Oaks,” “Venceremos” among others.

Published by the Palo Alto Historical Association, the book will go on sale for \$25 (includes tax) at the May 6 event and in local bookstores beginning May 7. To find out more, please visit www.paloaltoremembered.com.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Karen Bartholomew
Coralee Branson
Wendy Crowder
Leah McGarrigle
Craig Syverson

Oral Histories

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

Heritage Program on Channel 30

The TV cable program, *Heritage*, on Channel 30 in May, is “Escape on the Last Train: Journey to Safety” with speaker Edith Molton from the April 1 meeting. It will be broadcast Tues., 4–8 PM, Thurs. 1–5 PM. DVDs of previous programs may be borrowed at the History Desk of the Palo Alto Main Library, Tue., 4–8 PM & Thur., 1–5 PM.

Book Preview—Historian’s Foreword

PAHA Historian, Steve Staiger wrote the foreword to *Palo Alto Remembered: Stories from a City’s Past*. It is reprinted below to provide a “taste of the new book”—



FROM THE
DESK OF THE
HISTORIAN
Steve Staiger

The Palo Alto Historical Association is pleased to publish this collection of Palo Alto stories by Matt Bowling. Each story is a delightful example of Matt’s storytelling skills. Most of the stories previously appeared in the *Palo Alto Daily News* during the years 2007–2008. We thank the newspaper for allowing us to publish them in this collection. Some of the stories have been written just for this book, and others have been revised or updated to some extent to reflect changes in the Palo Alto community since the story originally appeared in print.

The Palo Alto Historical Association has a long history of writing and publishing books on local history. Beginning in the 1950s, we have produced booklets on numerous topics such as schools, Indians and Spanish explorers. Our history of *Mayfield* was published in 1976 and reprinted twice. The books *Streets of Palo Alto* and *Parks of Palo Alto* continue to be popular in their revised editions.

We published the comprehensive *Centennial History of Palo Alto* for the City’s 100-year celebration in 1994. It took a team of researchers, writers and editors more than six years to complete the book. It has recently gone out of print.

Matt’s book is a different kind of history book. It is a collection of tasty treats rather than a full-course meal. While some readers may read the book cover-to-cover, it is designed to welcome the reader who wants to jump in and read only a story or two at a time. The individual stories stand alone and certainly do not need to be read in any specific order. There are stories from several decades, involving Palo Altans from different neighborhoods who participated in a wide range of historic events.

As a reader of local history, I have enjoyed Matt’s stories, especially for the way that he connects local history to events beyond Palo Alto. All too often local history writers fail to make the association between the lives of the people in their community to what was happening on the larger stage of state, national or international events. In each of his stories, Matt does a masterful job of placing the Palo Alto story in its broader context, showing how Palo Altans of the past reacted to a time and events so unlike those of today. Too often we study history in a vacuum, with world history in one class, American history in another, with perhaps additional exposure to art history or music appreciation. Seldom was there an attempt to link all of these histories. Matt and his stories present some of those links. President Eisenhower’s plan for the interstate highway system; the United States Supreme Court’s decision on obscenity; or the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor all had their impact on people and events in Palo Alto. And Matt’s stories examine our local community’s reaction to the broader history. [Foreword reprinted from *Palo Alto Remembered: Stories from a City’s Past* by Matt Bowling.]

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>.

From Author to Press—An Adventure

Every book is an adventure for those involved in bringing it to a community of readers. It begins in the mind of the author and proceeds from there to take on a life of its own involving many people as it winds its way to press.

For the Palo Alto Historical Association's Publication and Marketing Committees, this was most certainly the case with what we came to know as "Matt's Book," and this is an excellent moment to acknowledge the hours of volunteer work by members of the committees. Betty Gerard, Editor-in-Chief, of all of us she probably knows the various drafts and re-drafts best. She and Bardy Wallace edited the initial drafts. Later, Betty took charge of editing the entire book—start to finish—through many iterations.

Images... There are more than 220 images in the book, most of which are from PAHA's archives. At one point last spring, the full board gathered to comb the files to find them, but it was Brian George, Image Curator, who searched and re-researched through 10,000 digital images for those that would best serve. This became an exercise in perseverance when we realized a key archival disc was damaged. At one juncture in the image-adventure, he grabbed his camera and went out and took photos!

Steve Staiger, our historian, was a guiding light for Matt and for all of us too. Often, it was his knowledge that pointed to the right folder, the key information—just when it was most needed. And Doug Graham, president of PAHA, shouldered the difficult questions and guided the conversation when we stalled. His quiet, capable leadership is an inspiration. John Hackmann, Vice President and chair of PAHA's Program Committee, inspired us with creative ideas. Always gracious, he simply smiled when he found he had a major community event—a new book launch—for a spring program.

Finally, if you find this book in a bookstore, on the web or through a friend... Well, it's due to Larry Christenson, co-chair with myself of the committees. While the rest of us focused on bringing the book to print, he wanted the community to know about it and read it! His phenomenal energy and organizational skill galvanized us all to take a larger, more generous view of our goals. And, finally, myself... my part of this adventure began two years ago with a task to design the book. Since then, as a new chair of the Publications Committee, my tasks have extended to every aspect of each of PAHA's publications. Watch for more!

PAHA is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to "collect, preserve and disseminate to the public" information about the history of Palo Alto. This book represents the culmination of two years' effort on the part of the author, Matt Bowling, and a host of volunteers. A remarkable adventure indeed. Join us May 6 as we launch *Palo Alto Remembered: Stories from a City's Past*. —Harriette Shakes, chair of the Publications Committee

Nominations to PAHA's Board

PAHA's Board of Directors accepted the proposed list of nominees to the Board for fiscal year 2012-2013: Marilyn McDonald, Alice Wilder Hall, Diane Rolfe, Leah McGarrigle, and Jerry Tinney. In addition, current Directors, Georgie Gleim and Carol Mitchell, have agreed to stand for re-election for an additional 3-year term.

The nominees will be presented to the membership for election at PAHA's Annual Meeting on June 6. If members have additional nominations, please forward them to the PAHA secretary, Bardy Wallace, bdgw@pacbell.net, prior to the May 6, 2012 General Meeting.



Each image became a story in itself as the book went through succeeding drafts. Above are a few of many that especially stood out: Josina Bol and donkey; a 1906 earthquake shaken building; a man staring at "KKK" painted on a Palo Alto street corner; a kitty conversing with the head of the Humane Society; a Sea Scout committed to democracy; Anna Zschokke, founder of Palo Alto schools, with her children; a WWII rubber drive and a white-painted stable statue [photo by Brian George]. Look for them in the book!

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

History Jaunts

Celebrate Preservation Month with Palo Alto Stanford Heritage Association.

On Sunday, May 20 from 1–3 PM, PAST will hold its 17th Annual Preservation Awards ceremony at the Palo Alto Woman's Club, 475 Homer/Cowper.

Mayor Yiaweh Yeh proclaimed May as National Preservation Month in Council chambers on April 23. On May 5, 12 and 19, PAST conducts Walking Tours of Homer Avenue, Professorville and downtown Palo Alto.

For more information, see: www.pastheritage.org.

"Gardens Full of Life!" Elizabeth Gamble Garden 27th Annual Spring Tour

April 27 and 28, from 10 AM – 4 PM: The tour this year presents five gardens created to incorporate edibles along with flowers. Tickets are \$30 for members, \$35 for non-members; lunch is an additional \$15. Information: 650-329-1356, www.gamblegarden.org.

Spring Lecture Series at the Museum of the American Heritage

Livermore Learning Center, 351 Homer Ave., Palo Alto, 94301

Wednesday, May 9 at 7 PM: "Solving a Pirate Mystery." Historian Fabio López-Lázaro will discuss the adventure tale, *The Misfortunes of Alonso Ramirez*.

Cantor Art Center at Stanford

"Storytelling in the Galleries" on April 28: 9:30–10:15 AM or 10:30–11:15 AM. Join storyteller Margaret More for a playful and whimsical introduction to art. This program is designed as an activity for children and their adult companions to enjoy together. Stanford Family Room. Free for members, reservations required (650-723-3482)

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

Sundays at the
Lucie Stern Community Center
1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto

MAY 6

"PALO ALTO REMEMBERED"

New Book Celebration

**Speakers: Susan Rosenberg,
Gary Fazzino, Peter Dreke-meier
and Greg Brown**



Save these dates in 2012

JUNE 6

ANNUAL DINNER at Ming's

Speaker: Bill Johnson

Publisher of the Palo Alto Weekly

OCTOBER 7

**CELEBRATING THE GIRL SCOUT
CENTENNIAL**

PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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The Tall Tree is published eight times a year
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Jeanne McDonnell, Peggy McKee,
Mary Beth Cebedo Lefebvre
Editors

Harriette Shakes, *Design*
Omega Printing, *Printing*