



# The Tall Tree Newsletter

of the PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Newsletter of the PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION November 2015 Volume 39, No 3

Since 1913

Sunday, December 6 2:00- 4:00 PM

Lucie Stern Community Center  
1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto

## Palo Alto's Treasure Trove: Photos from the Guy Miller Archives

PHOTOGRAPHS HAVE LONG BEEN CONSIDERED THE TREASURE TROVE of every local history collection. Palo Alto is no exception. The Guy Miller Archives of the Palo Alto Historical Association are just such a treasure! Guy Miller had the distinction of being Palo Alto's unofficial City Historian, and the Archives are named in his honor. The photographs in our collection are interesting, invaluable, and truly wonderful. The Archives contain approximately 13,000 images.

For the December program, PAHA's resident historian, Steve Staiger, and technology guru, Brian George, will explore and share a sampling of this marvelous resource. Some of the photographs are more than 140 years old; some, of course, are much more recent. If a photograph is worth a thousand words, we will show a few of those images and tell the tales behind them. You are in for a real treat: powerful images and the fascinating stories associated with them. You may be able to solve some of the questions about specific photographs that Steve and Brian have not quite figured out.

### 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

#### PAHA'S PUBLIC MEETINGS 2015

Sunday, December 6

"Palo Alto's Treasure Trove"

Photographs from PAHA's

Guy Miller Archive

#### PAHA'S MEETING DATES 2016

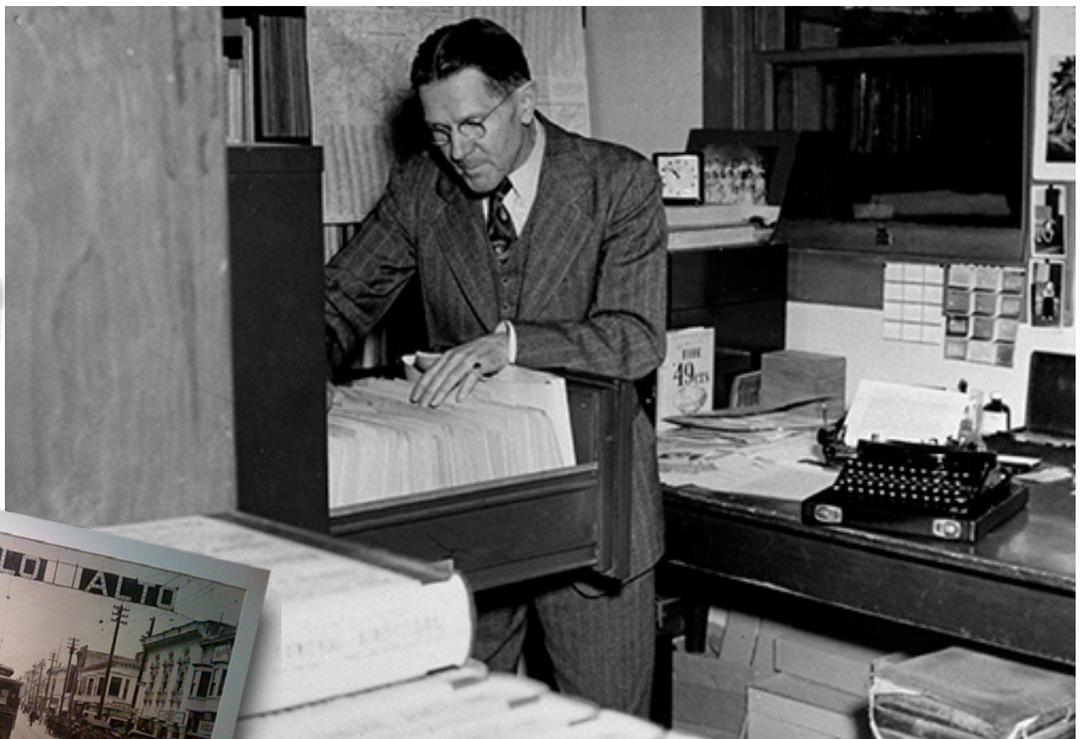
January 31, 2016

March 6, 2016

April 3, 2016

May 15, 2016

June 8, 2016



*Guy Miller, the City of Palo Alto's unofficial historian, at work in the early archives.*

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC \* REFRESHMENTS SERVED

# A new history of Palo Alto?



FROM THE DESK OF  
THE HISTORIAN  
Steve Staiger

TWENTY-TWO YEARS AGO THIS FALL, the Palo Alto Historical Association celebrated the publication of *Palo Alto: A Centennial History*. The book formed the focus of the October 1993 general meeting when its editor, Ward Winslow, spoke to the crowd, and distributed copies of the book to those members of the audience who had pre-ordered it.

The story of the book's publication began 6 ½ years earlier when a group of us met to plan an update to the 16 page 1960 history "Palo Alto: its background beginnings and growth" by Elinor V. Cogswell, a longtime member of PAHA, employee and then editor of the *Palo Alto Times* from 1938-1954. Palo Alto

renamed City Hall Park in 1955 in her honor by creating Elinor Cogswell Plaza. Elinor Cogswell's slim volume expanded to an impressive 340 page book.

For several years the group of historians met to work on the book in Gain John's kitchen. Our efforts included soliciting chapters from community members and leaders: Gary Fazzino wrote one on Palo Alto's political history; Jay Thorwaldson wrote the chapter on health; and I contributed the chapter on transportation. We sent the manuscript out for review, and the consensus was that our book was full of interesting facts, but it read as if written by a committee – the absolute truth.



*Elinor Cogswell, Palo Alto Times editor, wrote the first city history in 1960.*

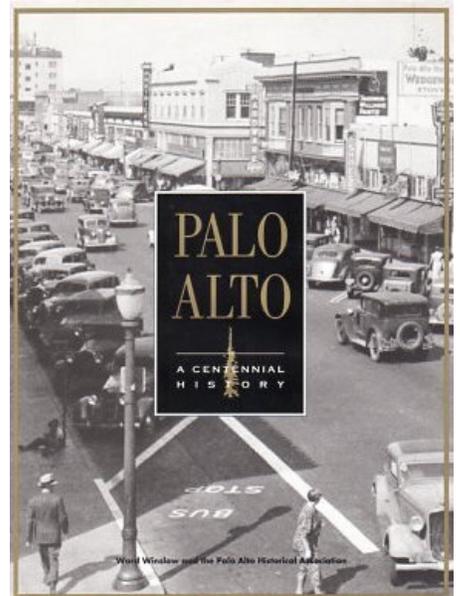


We invited Ward Winslow, who had recently retired as editor of the *Peninsula Times-Tribune*, to wordsmith the manuscript. He was an experienced journalist with a long interest in local history. Ward did a wonderful job, including writing an introduction and epilogue. Photographs were chosen and captions written to accompany the text.

*Ward Winslow, former Peninsula Times-Tribune editor completed the manuscript.*

An appeal to the community to help fund the production, printing and bindery costs was made, and numerous interest-free loans were offered to cover most of the costs. I recall that 7500 copies were printed. In the fall of 1993 our book was on the local bestseller list for several weeks. Sales covered costs by the next spring (1994 was Palo Alto's actual centennial celebration year), and the loans were paid off ahead of schedule. The title continued to sell until it became "out of print" a few years ago.

It may be time to think about a new history of Palo Alto, a lot has happened in the last 22 years!



*Published in 1993, now out of print. Courtesy Amazon.com.*

## 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 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.*

# The Cardinal Hotel celebrates 90 years



*Then...the Cardinal Hotel lobby upon opening in 1924. PAHA archives*

**PALO ALTO'S CARDINAL HOTEL, 235 HAMILTON AVENUE, IS CELEBRATING ITS 90TH ANNIVERSARY WITH A FESTIVE EVENT ON DECEMBER 3!** It would definitely be worth your while to stroll into its beautiful lobby, through either the Hamilton or Ramona entrances, and admire the details that make it both special and unique. The Hotel opened its doors in 1924, as part of the Palo Alto Improvement Company's plan to encourage commercial development in the downtown area. The San Francisco firm, William H. Weeks, designed the building, but Palo Alto's own Birge Clark was the supervising architect. His signature "Spanish Revival" touches are evident throughout. The Hamilton Street entrance is framed by a decorative terra cotta marquee and spiral columns with Corinthian capitals. Birge Clark was proud of his whimsical designs of 1920 vintage touring automobiles in the 'Renaissance' pilasters on either side.

The lobby features a gleaming glazed tiled floor, large wrought-iron sconces, Art Deco chandeliers, and boxed beamed ceiling. Originally there were paintings between the beams on the ceiling. One of the most striking parts of this elegant lobby is its massive, eight feet wide Batchelder fireplace. Ernest Batchelder was a premier designer of quality ceramic tiles in the Arts and Crafts period. What looks like an elaborate, carved wood facing is, in fact, made of tiles.

The Cardinal Hotel quickly became a social gathering place in pre-Depression Palo Alto. The 17 piece Cardinal Band played at popular evening suppers and afternoon tea dances. The Hotel offered a dining room, Wilson's at the Cardinal, which could seat seventy-five guests. The menu featured entrées such as liver and bacon for less than 50 cents.



*....and now. The Cardinal's lobby radiates warmth of another era. PAHA Archives*

## Local historical associations - San Mateo County



*The Sanchez Adobe in Pacifica, one of three well-preserved sites operated by the San Mateo County Historical Society. Courtesy SMHC*

The San Mateo Historical Society states its mission, "To inspire wonder and discovery of the cultural and natural history of San Mateo County." It oversees three historical sites: the San Mateo County History Museum in Redwood City, the Woodside Store in Woodside, and the Sanchez Adobe in Pacifica, as well as running school programs at the Folger Stable in Woodside. For information on its events and activities, visit <http://www.historysmc.org/>. If you haven't visited Sanchez Adobe, plan to do so; you have missed a Bay Area treasure!

## In Memoriam: Dick Rosenbaum

The City of Palo Alto, PAHA, the History Museum, along with his family and many friends regret the passing of Dick Rosenbaum (1934-2015.) He sat on the City Council (1971-1975, 1991-1999) and was mayor (1998); he supported open space. He served as both president and treasurer of PAHA, and he took a leadership role in the early days of the Palo Alto History Museum. Dick was an inspiration to all of us who worked to preserve and document Palo Alto's unique contributions and heritage. *Photo courtesy of the Rosenbaum family.*



Dick Rosenbaum  
1934-2015

## History Jaunts

**The Rengstorff House**, Mountain View's oldest home, is one of the finest examples of Victorian Italianate architecture on the West Coast. Fully restored in 1991, the 12-room, two-story, 3955 square foot house is furnished with ornate brass chandeliers, Victorian plaster rosettes, push-button light switches, Bradbury & Bradbury wallpaper designs and Eastlake furniture. 3070 N. Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View 94043, call (650) 868-7708 or visit <http://r-house.org>. Public tour hours: Tuesdays & Wednesdays 11-5, Sundays 1-4.

**CuriOdyssey at Coyote Point** is a science and wildlife center for children of all ages that encourages curiosity through interactive science exhibits, animal encounters and education programs. A 3 acre preserve that opened in 1954, CuriOdyssey currently features a "Backyard Science" exhibit that allows investigation of air, sound water, and light. Admission is free for members. 1651 Coyote Point Dr., San Mateo 94401, open Tuesday - Sunday 10-5. For more information call (650) 342-7755 or visit [www.curiodyssey.org](http://www.curiodyssey.org).

**"Double Exposure: Russia's Secret Police under the Last Tsars"** opens Thursday, October 29, 2015 and runs through March 12, 2016. The exhibition is open to the public, free of charge, Tuesday - Saturday from 11-4 in the Herbert Hoover Memorial Exhibit Pavilion (next to Hoover Tower) on the Stanford University campus. Parking on campus is free on Saturdays.

## Heritage Program on Channel 30

PAHA's December 2015 program will feature a repeat of PAHA's 2004 "The Cardinal Hotel" presentation with Bjarne Dahl. This year the hotel is celebrating its 90th anniversary.

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

Dick Rosenbaum  
1934-2015

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



Peggy McKee,  
Georgie Gleim, *Editors*  
Györgyi Kapala, Jon Gifford, *Design*  
Omega Printing, *Printing*

## 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](http://pahistory.org). Let us know if you wish to volunteer for a PAHA committee. (Current members should have received renewal notices by post.)

