



# The Tall Tree Newsletter

of the PALO ALTO  
HISTORICAL  
ASSOCIATION

Since 1913

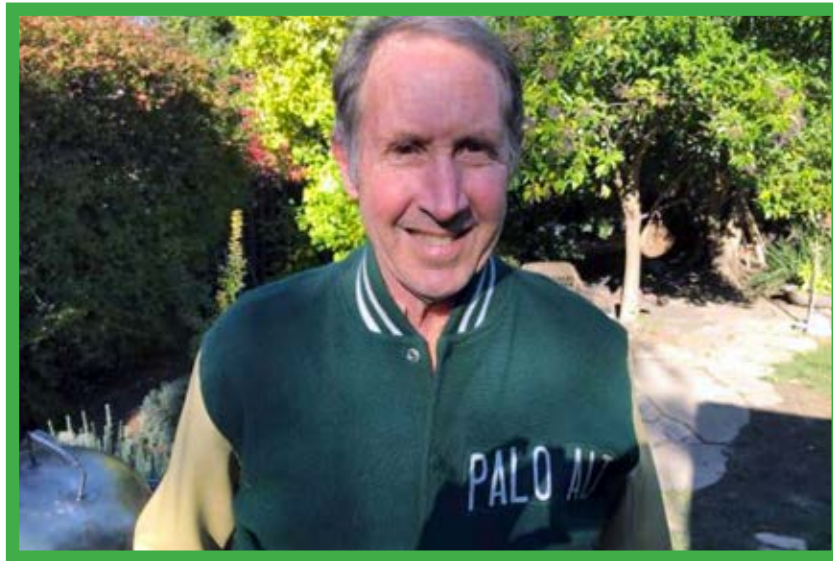
December 2024 Volume 48, No 2

In cooperation with



The Palo Alto Historical Association presents a

# TRIBUTE TO BO CRANE



**Sunday, December 1, 2024 2:00 – 4:00 pm**  
**Palo Alto Art Center ~ 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto**

Join us on Sunday, December 1 when PAHA and other local groups honor “Bo” Crane, PAHA board member, who recently died after battling ocular melanoma for six years. A lifelong Palo Altan, he played an active role in numerous community groups including several local history associations such as PAHA, PAST Heritage, and the Menlo Park Historical Association.

Bo was not just a member of these many organizations of which he joined – he was an active participant in the groups' management and activities. He researched and wrote stories and essays on numerous topics for PAHA, PAST Heritage and MPHA.

He wrote the small book *Ticket to Rock – Palo Alto: Descriptions of '60s – '90s Musicians and Their Neighborhoods*. He researched walking tours for

local neighborhoods and led guests on tours of neighborhoods, from Eichler homes in south Palo Alto to historic sites in Menlo Park

When he discovered the magical powers of old newspapers now searchable digitally, he dived in and discovered stories about our community which had been lost or forgotten for decades.

Robert L. Crane, known to everyone as “Bo,” grew up in Palo Alto, graduating from Paly in 1968 and Stanford in 1972. For many local residents, his name was a familiar link to the “Daily Post” mystery photo column, with Bo submitting numerous photos and guesses.

Our Sunday tribute to Bo will include representatives from several of the local organizations in which Bo was an active participant.

**Free and Open to the Public ~ Refreshments Served**

2024 PALO ALTO  
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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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*The Palo Alto Historical Association, a 501(c)(3) charitable 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, Phone (650) 329-2353.*

*PAHA Board meetings are conducted using Zoom at 5 pm the first Wednesday of each month (except August).*

*Public programs are held at 2 pm on the first Sunday of October, December, February, March, and May at the Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road. Programs include speakers. The final program of the year is held in June and includes a dinner and a program. The public is welcome at all programs.*

# The Kingston Trio: Palo Alto's Pioneers of the Folk Music Renaissance

By Jon Kinyon, PAHA Board Member



First Album Release: June 1, 1958 Label: Capitol Records

The Kingston Trio, formed in Palo Alto, were not just a musical group; they were cultural architects of the late 1950s and early 1960s. This dynamic trio, with their infectious melodies and harmonious tunes, catapulted folk music into the mainstream, transforming the musical landscape in several profound ways:

**Popularizing Folk Music:** The Kingston Trio's success made acoustic guitars and banjos household items, sparking a nationwide interest in folk music, and paving the way for legends like Bob Dylan and Palo Alto grad Joan Baez (and, of course, other locals like Jerry Garcia and Ron "Pigpen" McKernan).

**Influential Album Releases:** Their insistence on releasing long-playing records (LPs) at Capitol Records set a trend followed immediately by icons like Frank Sinatra and the Beatles, significantly impacting the music industry's preference for album formats over singles.

**Commercial Success and Chart-Toppers:** With 19 albums hitting Billboard's Top 100, including five that reached number one, they held the record for the most albums in the top 10 simultaneously for over 50 years. Their hit "Tom Dooley" won a Grammy for Best Country and Western Recording in 1959.

**Fashion Trendsetters:** The Trio's distinctive striped-shirt look was so influential that

even the Beach Boys adopted it, showcasing their impact on pop culture beyond music.

Despite their commercial triumphs, the Kingston Trio faced harsh criticism for diluting traditional folk with a pop veneer, staying politically neutral during turbulent times, and drawing ire from traditional folk circles for their commercial success. However, their contributions cannot be understated. They not only commercialized folk music but also revitalized interest in traditional songs, aiding in the rediscovery of folk legends like Pete Seeger and Woody Guthrie.

Discussing his earliest musical influences in a 2001 Rolling Stone interview, Bob Dylan remembered, "There were other folk-music records, commercial folk-music records, like those by the Kingston Trio. I never really was an elitist. Personally, I liked the Kingston Trio. I could see the picture...the Kingston Trio were probably the best commercial group going, and they seemed to know what they were doing."

In 2024, the Kingston Trio continued to enchant audiences with their "Keep The Music Playing" national tour, returning to California, underscoring their enduring legacy in music history. Their journey from college graduates to folk music kings exemplifies how music can bridge gaps, influence generations, and keep the spirit of an era alive through melodies.

## In Memoriam. Two famous musicians who once lived in Palo Alto recently passed:

**Phil Lesh** was a founding member of the Grateful Dead. The influential bass player and vocalist passed on Oct. 25 at the age of 84. His home at 1012 High St. was the band's original practice location.

**Kris Kristofferson**, singer-songwriter and actor, lived for a time with his family on Roosevelt Circle. Tracy and Kris, Jr., the children he had with his first wife and high school sweetheart, Frances Beer, attended Palo Alto schools. Kris passed on Sept. 28 at the age of 88 at his home in Hawaii.

# John Adams Squire House

By Bo Crane (1950-2024), PAHA Board Member



The Squire House at 900 University Avenue

Those who drive back and forth to Highway 101 on University Avenue pass by an imposing Classical Revival situated on a palm-lined half-circle driveway. It's known as "the Squire House," as if owned by a country squire other than Leland Stanford, whose original country house was torn down in 1959.

Squires in the Middle Ages were drawn from the gentry, serving knights. Squires eventually became elevated landowners. As Knight is a surname, so is Squire. The house at 900 University Avenue was owned by John Adams Squire.

His Squire genealogy can be traced back to an ancestor in Millbrook, England, before emigrating in the mid-1600s to Boston. The "Adams" part of Squire's name came from his grandfather's wife, whose father was born in 1714 in Massachusetts. John Adams, the second president, born in 1735, and Samuel Adams, a second cousin, born in 1722, were both younger than John A.'s great-grandfather Adams, whose parents remain unknown.

In 1888, John A. married Georgianna Richardson, the last remaining daughter of the village blacksmith, right out of a Longfellow poem, both having lived in the same town just north of Boston for some twenty years. Squire had received his college prep school degree from Boston Latin School in 1880 and an AB from Harvard in 1884. His own father had gone from being a butcher to a pork dealer, eventually with his own large company, assisted in 1884 by two of his other sons, one older and one younger than the Harvard grad. There was no room for the middle son, even if the Latin scholar had been so inclined.

John A. and his wife came to California on their honeymoon in 1888. Adams was 31 and Georgianna 27. Moving to San Jose, the couple had twin girls born in September 1889. One survived; the other didn't. Both the parents and two daughters are named on the same gravestone at San Jose's Oak Hill Cemetery. By 1896 he and his family were in Palo Alto at 417 Emerson Street.

Squire would briefly serve as an assistant professor at the university, teaching Latin. Trained in meteorology at Harvard, he supplied daily forecasts to the Palo Alto Times. Squire began his house at 900 University Ave in 1904, occupying it in 1905 with his wife and three daughters. Twenty years later all three Squire daughters, Stanford grads, had married, the last in 1924.

Squire's father died in January 1893. Both of John A.'s brothers took over the company, both passing in the 1920s. In December 1931, his father's former company and decrepit plant were put for sale at \$9,993, soon acquired by Swift & Company. John A., born in 1857, had already died, December 22, 1930.

Georgiana Squire, his widow, continued living alone until she died in 1959 at age 98. The vacant house was eventually sold and scheduled for demolition, which was resisted by those who began a donation campaign. The city used the donated funds to purchase the house in Spring 1972. That October, the three married Squire daughters led an open house sponsored by PAHA. The neighbors objected to using the house, situated on a busy street and flanked by quiet streets, for a public purpose. With more funds needed for repairs, in May 1976, the City Council approved a design façade easement for the house's exterior and grounds, requiring City approval for any changes proposed thereof. In January 1977, the property was sold for \$135,000. The \$90,000 previously raised by residents for the purchase was returned and the house remains privately owned.



## Palo Alto Stanford Heritage

Our citizens' group that supports the value of our buildings' and neighborhoods' heritage

### NEEDS VOLUNTEERS

Do you have an interest in our local history?  
Do you have time available?  
Skills that could help us reach out and connect, educate, research, communicate?

Qualifications may include other historical work, active communication or teaching experience, or just the ability to make yourself heard... Interested?

Send us an email –  
[president@pastheritage.org](mailto:president@pastheritage.org)



The recent installation of the historic Juana Briones adobe wall

## Update on the Palo Alto History Museum

By Rich Green, PAHM, Board President & PAHA, Vice President

Things are going great for the Palo Alto History Museum. We're on the home stretch of the Roth Building rehabilitation and plan to occupy the building starting January, 2025. Vance Brown Builders has kept us on budget and on schedule. Museum buildout will happen through 2025 with our grand opening scheduled for January, 2026. Interior spaces are already taking shape and the wall from the historic Juana Briones Adobe home has already been installed in the main lobby. It is magnificent.

PAHA will find its new home on the second floor in one of the most beautiful spaces in the building. Darla Secor, Steve Staiger and our army of PAHA volunteers will be

managing the move from Cubberley in the early part of 2025. Stay tuned for many more exciting announcements.

The Museum needs your help to accomplish our ambitious mission. We are actively seeking financial support from donors and eager to recruit volunteers. We would also love to hear your stories and thoughts about what our Museum can become. We have plenty of ideas cooking and would be delighted to hear about your dreams for this venerable institution. Help us tell the amazing stories and global impact of the Palo Alto and Stanford community.

Visit us at [www.paloaltomuseum.org](http://www.paloaltomuseum.org).

### PAHA's Fall Membership Drive Is Chugging Right Along!



Palo Alto train depot, 1895

Please take the time to renew your PAHA membership now at [pahistory.org/membership](http://pahistory.org/membership) or by mail to Palo Alto Historical Association P.O. Box 193, Palo Alto, CA 94302.

We appreciate your loyalty and support!

### Welcome Our New Members!

Deborah Goldeen, Dawn Hood, Claire Peeps, & Christy Roberts.  
Life Member: Beth Schmoller

### Upcoming Program Dates

- Dec 1 • Feb 2 • Mar 2
- May 4 • June 4

Unless otherwise noted, programs are held in person on the first Sunday of the months we present programs. Check our website at [www.pahistory.org](http://www.pahistory.org) for program information.

### Previous PAHA Programs

You can find PAHA program videos on Vimeo by following this link: <https://vimeo.com/user94620231>

## Got Jaunts?

Our "Jaunts" column needs you! If you're passionate about the Bay Area's trails, history, and hidden spots, you could be a valued contributor to the Tall Tree Newsletter.

- ❖ Share your love for local adventures 6 times a year.
- ❖ Curate 2-4 must-visit places each edition.

Contact: [jon.kinyon@gmail.com](mailto:jon.kinyon@gmail.com)

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