

Millbrae Life & Times

M I L L B R A E H I S T O R I C A L S O C I E T Y N E W S L E T T E R

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Historical Spotlight	1
President's Report	1
Vice-President's Message	3
MHS Friday Night at the Movies	4
Train Museum News	4
Curator's Report	5
Millbrae Now and Then	5
Calendar of Events	6

HISTORICAL SPOTLIGHT: LIGHT RAIL THROUGH MILLBRAE — THE OLD BECOMES THE NEW BY TOM DAWDY



Towards the end of the 19th century, the **San Francisco and San Mateo Railroad Company** began building a streetcar line down the San Francisco Peninsula. In 1902 a state-of-the-art power station was built just north of Millbrae Ave. The fireproof red brick building was 45 feet x 75 feet, with all modern amenities including a track level lobby for passengers. The electrical substation transformed the incoming 13,200-volt AC power down to 550 volts to run the streetcars.

What was known as the **#40 Line** had several stops in the Millbrae area. The #40 Line was the primary form of public transportation on the Peninsula during its half-century of operation. If you had to get to high school in Burlingame or San Mateo it was easy — just hop on one of the special cars reserved for students only.

In 1907 a two-line service replaced the single-tracks into San Mateo. In anticipation of extending service to San Jose, 12 new larger streetcars were purchased. At this time, most fares were 5 or 10 cents, but in 1915 there was the creation of the Peninsula Rapid Transit Bus

(continued on Page 4)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT JOHN MUNIZ

As a follow up to my June 2015 President's message, I want to bring our members up-to-date on the progress of the **Millbrae Historical Society Carriage House**. At the July Board of Trustees meeting, the Board unanimously approved funding to construct a Carriage House on the vacant lot at the back of the Museum (see site in the picture on the right). The

Carriage House will be architecturally in keeping with the Museum building, with the same color, shingled, and a similar hip roof design. The Carriage House will be 750 square feet, 25-ft wide by 30-ft long. The 9-ft x 10-ft garage doors will allow our **1931 Southern Pacific Fire Engine** and **Larkins Surrey** to be housed inside, along with other exhibits reflecting the history of Millbrae. It has been 30 years since



the Millbrae Museum was moved from Broadway and Ludeman Lane. At that time, the Society intended to build a Carriage House on the property adjacent to the Museum. I have appointed a "Blue

(continued on Page 2)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Ribbon" Committee to work with the City of Millbrae and our building contractor to finalize the plans for the Carriage House. The Committee consists of myself, **Vern Bruce, Tom Dawdy, and Cathy Quigg**. We estimate ground breaking to be in the spring of 2016. We still have a long road to travel, but we are off to a good start!

This year we had another incredible **MHS Rummage Sale** on August 8th. Thanks to **Dorothy Semke** and her crew, we netted \$1,119. We always provide an array of gently-used merchandise which surely attracts a variety of professional bargain hunters. Thank you Dorothy for your hard work and dedication and thank you to our members who helped out. We are now accepting donations for next year's MHS Rummage Sale.

I enjoy our **MHS Fourth of July Picnic** so much and sure appreciate being able to provide our community with a fun Independence Day celebration! After 30 years of annual picnics, I think we've got it right. A big "thank you" to the **Millbrae Lions Club** for cooking for the past 20 years and to the **Millbrae Lions Leo's Club** for serving for the past 8 years. Thank you as well to our MHS Board and members for your help and support. See you next year!!

I'm very excited about our upcoming **2015 MHS Field Trip**. I'm not revealing the details here; I'll let **Joe Teresi** share our destination & date elsewhere in the Newsletter.

Here's our **1931 Ford AA Southern Pacific Fire Engine** being displayed at the **2015 Millbrae Art and Wine Festival**. I tried to take the picture when there were no kids climbing all over it, but that was impossible. This is the Fire Engine that will be housed at the Carriage House when completed. Were you at the Millbrae Art and Wine festival this year? Were you among the thousands of people who packed Millbrae over the Labor Day weekend? The weather was fantastic (a little hot), but in the end it was great day for Millbrae!



On Friday night October 16th, we will screen our final installment in this season's **MHS Friday Night at the Movies – The Ten Commandments** (1956) featuring **Charlton Heston, Yul Brenner, Edward G. Robinson**, and a cast of thousands. The movie will be presented on the wide screen in Technicolor with stereophonic sound. Curtain goes up at 6:00 pm at the Millbrae Museum. We are starting at 6:00 pm because the movie is 3.5 hours long. Pizza will be served at intermission. No charge for admission. We will resume in 2016 with more great classics from the "Golden Age of Hollywood".

Thank you to all our members whose hard work and support provide our Millbrae community with a wonderful museum experience. Remember our motto – "The past is our key to the future".

Best Wishes,
John Muniz
Millbrae Historical Society President
2009 - Present

MILLBRAE HISTORICAL SOCIETY FIELD TRIP



Come join us for a guided tour of **Jack London State Historic Park** in Glen Ellen. We will receive a 2-hour guided tour of the park Museum and the London's farm cottage. The tour is tailored to seniors with little walking required. Also includes stops at famous San Francisco vistas and lunch in historic Sonoma.

When: **Friday, October 9 (8:15 am to 6:30 pm)**
Meet at the Millbrae Museum at 8:15 am
Cost: **\$5 tour, pay for your own lunch**

RSVP by Tuesday, October 6 to Joe Teresi
Email at jtnia@comcast.net or call (650) 455-4887

VICE-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE PAUL LARSON

Greetings MHS Trustees, members, family and friends.

It is so nice to see all of our Millbrae Historical Society members around town. I seem to bump into so many of you when I least expect it, and it's a nice surprise for me to say Hi to everyone.

September and October are great months here on the Peninsula because the weather is usually warmer than during earlier summer months. This makes our area unique. Now all we need is rain! The El Niño weather pattern out in the Pacific is supposed to correct all our dry weather later this year... we will have to wait and see what happens.

Speaking of September, here are several noteworthy historical happenings connected with the month:

September 1, 1939 - At 5:30 am, **Hitler's** armies invaded Poland, starting World War II in Europe.

September 2, 1945 - **President Harry Truman** declared V-J Day (Victory over Japan Day) commemorating the formal Japanese surrender to the Allies aboard the **USS Missouri** in Tokyo Bay.

September 5, 1975 - The first of two September assassination attempts on **President Gerald Ford** occurred as a woman pointed a gun at the President in Sacramento.

Two weeks later, a second attempt occurred as another woman fired a shot at Ford in San Francisco. Ford was not harmed in either incident.

September 11, 2001 - The worst terrorist attack in U.S. history occurred as four large passenger jets were hijacked then crashed, killing nearly 3,000 persons. Two fully-fueled jumbo jets, **American Airlines Flight 11** carrying 92 people and **United Airlines Flight 175** carrying 65 people, had departed Boston for Los Angeles. Both jets were diverted by the hijackers to New York City where they were piloted into the twin towers of the **World Trade Center**. The impact and subsequent fire caused both 110-story towers to collapse, killing 2,752 persons including hundreds of rescue workers and people employed in the towers. In addition, **United Airlines Flight 93**, which had departed Newark for San Francisco, and **American Airlines Flight 77**, which had departed Dulles Airport for Los Angeles, were hijacked. Flight 77 with 64 people on board was diverted to Washington, D.C., then piloted into the **Pentagon** building, killing all on board and 125 personnel inside the building. Flight 93 with 44 people on board was also diverted toward Washington but crashed into a field in Pennsylvania after passengers attempted to overpower the terrorists on board.



September 12, 1953 - **John F. Kennedy**, 36, married **Jacqueline Bouvier**, 24, in a ceremony before 750 invited guests at St. Mary's Church in Newport, Rhode Island, conducted by **Archbishop Richard Cushing** of Boston.

September 14, 1982 - **Princess Grace of Monaco** died following an accident in which her car plunged off a mountain road in Monte Carlo. Her daughter **Stephanie**, also in the car, survived and was treated for shock and bruises. Princess Grace (Grace Kelly) was a Hollywood actress who met **Prince Rainier III** of Monaco during filming of the Hitchcock film **To Catch a Thief**. She then gave up a successful acting career and married him in 1956.

September 16, 1620 - The **Mayflower** departed from England, bound for America with 102 passengers and a small crew. The ship weathered dangerous Atlantic storms and disembarked at **Plymouth** on December 26th.

Here are wishes for health and happiness to you, your family, loved ones, and friends.

Paul Larson
MHS Vice President

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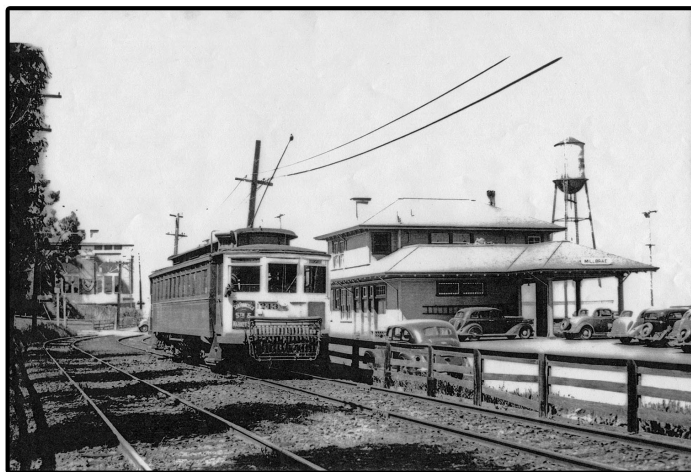
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LIGHT RAIL THROUGH MILLBRAE – THE OLD BECOMES THE NEW (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Line, which created new competition for the street-cars. Furthermore, the **Market Street Railway** was now operating the #40 Line and raising fares. The **Southern Pacific Railroad** had commuter fares of 40 cents round-trip to San Francisco. In 1944, the city of San Francisco purchased the Market Street Railway, including the #40 Line. On January 16, 1949 the line ceased operations.

I don't remember the street-cars, since I was only one-year-old when the last car rolled through Millbrae. I do remember the Power Sta-



Car #1243 travels through Millbrae. Notice the Power Station in left rear and Royal Container on right behind the Millbrae Train Station.

tion, however. The building was torn down in October 1956.

Fast forward to 2015, and **Caltrain** is getting ready to go electric! If plans go well, next year the \$1.5 billion project will begin and overhead poles & electrified wires will be installed through Millbrae and along the 51-mile Caltrain corridor. Old ideas will become new again!

Tom Dawdy
MHS Historian

MILLBRAE HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS FRIDAY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES



WHAT: Come watch classic movies from legendary director Cecil B. DeMille!

WHERE: Millbrae Museum
420 Poplar Avenue

Title	Year	Star	Date and Time
<i>The Ten Commandments</i>	1956	Charlton Heston	10/16/2015 6:00 PM

TRAIN MUSEUM NEWS

ELIZABETH FURBER, EDITOR
VERN BRUCE, REPORTER



Our Mills High School volunteers **Jose Bonavia** and **Jason Brady** have been very busy sanding and repairing an original heavy-duty freight cart that was in the Millbrae Train Station's freight building for many years. It will be completely restored within a month or so.

We thank our new member **Don Grant** for his donation of a complete DVD video system, along with numerous rail-oriented videos. We also thank **Ted Doskaris** for his donation of an original hand-painted sign from the Bayshore (Brisbane) Southern Pacific Railroad yard.

We again thank our docents for their time spent showing visitors our Train Museum. Those volunteers are: **Gino & Gerry Micheli; Robert Gorran; Jason Brady; Joseph Bonavia; Jorge Quezada; Richard Kennedy; and Vern Bruce.**

CURATOR'S REPORT

ALMA MASSOLO
DOROTHY SEMKE

We are very saddened by the sudden loss of **Joanne Kallevig**, a long-time MHS member and Millbrae resident. You may remember her signing you in at our 4th of July Barbecues and greeting you in the Museum as one of our docents at our last Yard Sale on August 8th. We will certainly miss her.

Thank you to everyone who helped at our recent annual **Yard Sale** to make it a huge success. A special thanks to **Judi Sullivan** for once again allowing us to share the spotlight with the **Millbrae Library Book sale** and including us in her event publicity. At the end of the day, we were able to add over \$1,100 to our Museum Building Fund from the sales. Thanks to **Marge Colapietro**, City Councilwoman and former Mayor, later selling the remaining costume jewelry, we added another

\$40 to the total. Mark your calendars for the second Saturday of August next year and we will do it again.

Representatives of **Green Hills Country Club** are writing a book on the progression of the Green Hills property prior to it becoming a country club. If you have any pictures or aerial photos of the area, we would appreciate it if you could let us know at the Museum.

Thanks to **Carol (Camicia) Fields**, former Millbrae resident, for her donation of a beautiful Dresden figurine. This lovely piece was mailed to her mother by her grandmother during World War II.

We want to thank Trustee and Docent **Ray Gier** for all his hard work in restoring and refinishing five of



the six dining room chairs. The beautiful Duncan-Phyfe style mahogany dining room set and cabinet were built in 1936 by **W.M. Bassett Furniture Co.**, Martinsville, Virginia for Redlicks Department Store in San Francisco. It was donated to the Museum soon after opening in 1985 by **Tony Medar**, former dedicated MHS member and longtime Millbrae resident. He was also responsible for installing the drainage system surrounding the Museum.

Alma Massolo, Curator
Dorothy Semke, Assistant Curator

MILLBRAE NOW AND THEN

A PHOTOGRAPHIC RETROSPECTIVE



Then

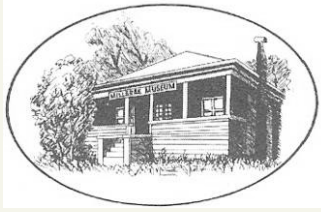
Mills Estate Mansion built in 1870, owned by Darius Ogden Mills (1825-1910), burned down in 1954.



Now

Spring Valley School, built in 1957, on the site of the Mills Mansion.

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**MILLBRAE
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MHS OFFICERS – 2015-16

John Muniz, President
Paul Larson, Vice-President
Gaetane Andrews, Secretary
Vern Bruce, Treasurer
Mary Vella Treseler, Parliamentarian

Alma Massolo, Curator
Dorothy Semke, Assistant Curator
Tom Dawdy, Historian
Joe Teresi, Newsletter Editor

C A L E N D A R O F E V E N T S

Friday, October 9: Millbrae Historical Society Field Trip , 8:15 am to 6:30 pm,
Guided tour of Jack London State Historic Park (Meet at Millbrae Museum at 8:15 am)
- RSVP by 10/6 to Joe Teresi by e-mail at jtnia@comcast.net or by phone at (650) 455-4887.

Friday, October 16: Final installment of *MHS Friday Night at the Movies*
Millbrae Museum, 420 Poplar Avenue. 6:00 – 9:30 pm.
- Bring a spouse or friend for a viewing of the Cecil B. DeMille classic ***The Ten Commandments!!***

Friday, October 23: Millbrae Man and Woman of the Year Dinner
Green Hills Country Club, 500 Ludeman Lane
• No-Host Cocktails at 6:00 pm
• Dinner at 7:00 pm
- Reservations required — call Jack Gardner at 777-0061 for an invitation

Fourth Wednesdays of the Month: Millbrae Historical Society Board Meetings, 7:00 pm,
Millbrae Museum, 420 Poplar Avenue. MHS members and guests are welcome to attend!

Millbrae Historical Society Museum Operating Hours

Millbrae Museum: Saturdays, 12:00 noon to 4:00 pm

Millbrae Train Museum: Saturdays, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm