

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
Juneteenth Celebration	3
Lifetime Sponsors	3
Curator's Report	5
Train Museum Report	5
Millbrae Works app	5
Calendar of Events	6

**HISTORICAL SPOTLIGHT:
MILLBRAE'S FOUNDING FAMILIES—PART 1
BY TOM DAWDY**



Much has been written about the **Mills Family**, which most people consider Millbrae's founding family. This does have some truth in it because **D.O. Mills** named his estate "*Millbrae*", but in the village of Millbrae and later in the City of Millbrae there were many families that formed the great little city where we live today. Of course, it would be extremely hard for me to name all of these families, so I will apologize now for missing some of the "Millbrae Pioneers". I have been very fortunate to have known many of these people growing up in our town. In fact, in the early days of the Millbrae Historical Society if I had questions about our history, I would often talk to them directly and ask questions. Unfortunately, most have passed away along with their memories of the Village of Millbrae. As I continue, I will be focusing on the early families that settled here in the late 1800's and early 1900's.

Mildred Cavanaugh Wilson — it's a fact that Mildred comes from the real "first family of Millbrae". Mildred's great-great-grandfather was **Jose Antonio Sanchez**. Sanchez owned all the land from South San Francisco to Burlingame. Upon his death, he gave the land to his ten children. Mildred's mother (**Rose Mangini Cavanaugh**) was the granddaughter of **Jose de la Cruz Sanchez**, one of the sons that inherited the land that is now Millbrae. In 1987, **Congressman Tom Lantos** honored Mildred with the first **11th Congressional District Bicentennial Award** for founding families. The award named her as one of San Mateo County's founding families. Mildred was also a friend of mine. When the Millbrae Historical Society produced our Historical Coverlets,

(Continued on Page 4)

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT
JOHN MUNIZ**

Featured on Page 2 is a 2017 photo of the City-owned **1936 American La France**, a 500 gallon per minute pumper, which was Millbrae's first real fire truck. An outstanding history of the **Millbrae Fire Department** can be found in the July 2022 edition of the Millbrae Historical Society Newsletter, written by **Tom Dawdy**, our Historian. The American LaFrance has been neglected and

has not been run or started since this photo was taken. Finally, back in June, I had a crew from **Central County Fire's** maintenance department come out to the Carriage House to take a look at the LaFrance.

The LaFrance was formerly housed at **Central County Fire Station #38**. In 2016, it was moved to the Carriage House, which became its



permanent home. The conclusion was "It needs work" to become operational. The extent of the work required will be determined after firing up the engine. City Manager **Tom Williams** is behind the effort
(continued on Page 2)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

to get the LaFrance back in operation, and so is Santa Claus. I will keep you posted on the progress.

Pictured at right is the **Pan American Flight 7 Memorial** on the grounds of the Millbrae Museum. Pan Am Flight 7 departed San **Francisco International Airport** bound for Honolulu on November 8, 1957, then disappeared into the Pacific with the loss of forty-four souls. The memorial was paid for by the **Pan Am Flight 7 Memorial Committee** and placed on the Museum grounds as a joint effort with the City of Millbrae and the Millbrae Historical Society. The Pan Am Flight 7 Memorial Committee is composed of family and friends who lost their loved ones on that tragic flight. Next time you are in **Constitution Square**, come by and check out the Pan Am Memorial.



1936 American LaFrance Fire Engine

At Lower Right: April 4th, 2023, The Pan American Flight 7 Dedication Ceremony. **Ken Fortenberry**, Pan Am Flight 7 Committee chairperson, is speaking at the podium. News media covering the event included KRON Channel 4, CBS Channel 5, ABC Channel 7, and MCTV. Following the ceremonial dedication, lunch was served in Library Rooms "A" and "B", hosted by the Pan Am Flight 7 Committee. The Flight 7 Committee also donated \$1,200 to the Millbrae Historical Society. Below, **Millbrae Mayor Ann Schneider** opens the Pan Am Flight 7 dedication ceremony.



Pan American Flight 7 Memorial

Thank you! I hope you had a safe and fun **4th of July**. Hope to see all of our friends and neighbors on **Sunday, July 16th**, for the **Millbrae Historical Society History Walk** to celebrate Millbrae's 75th anniversary.

All the best to everyone,
John Muniz
Millbrae Historical Society President
"The Past is our Key to the Future."



Pan Am Flight 7 Memorial Committee Chair Ken Fortenberry

VICE-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
PAUL LARSON

Greetings Millbrae Historical Society Trustees, members and friends!

What do you know about Millbrae? Below are a number of simple questions that you may (or may not) know the answers to. Try your best to test your knowledge without looking at the answers on the right.

QUESTIONS:

1. What does "Millbrae" mean?
2. When did BART open in Millbrae?
3. Who is the mayor of Millbrae?
4. When did Pape Meats open?
5. When did Chapel of the Highlands open?
6. When did the Millbrae Pancake House open?
7. Name of the people who originally inhabited Millbrae and the Peninsula?
8. What is the name of Millbrae's golf course and when did it open?
9. What was the name of Millbrae's original hometown newspaper?
10. Name the founder of Millbrae.

ANSWERS:

1. The estate became known as "Millbrae" from "Mills" and the Scottish word "brae," which means "rolling hills" or "hill slope."
2. BART service began on June 22, 2003. The station was initially served by the Pittsburg/Bay Point line, plus a shuttle service to San Francisco International Airport station.
3. **Ann Schneider** was re-elected as Mayor in December 2022.
4. 1958 by **Ron Pape** and still run by Ron and his family.
5. October 5, 1952 by **Clarence Larson** and still run by his son **Paul Larson**.
6. The Millbrae Pancake House has been owned and operated by the same family (originally as Uncle John's Pancake House) since Mother's Day 1959.
7. The **Ohlone** people have been living in the Bay Area for thousands of years. The closest villages to what is now Millbrae were located by the banks of San Bruno Creek, and they are known as **Ure-bure** and **Siplichiquin**.
8. Green Hills Country Club" was built in



1929 and designed by famed golf course architect **Dr. Alister MacKenzie** (who designed other noteworthy courses such as Augusta National, Cypress Point, Royal Melbourne, Pasatiempo, and many more).

9. **The Millbrae Sun**.

10. **Darius Ogden Mills** purchased land in the 1860s from **José de la Cruz Sánchez** and family of Rancho Buri Buri to build a country estate.

All my best to you and your family, from **MHS 1st VP Paul Larson**

MILLBRAE'S 1ST ANNUAL JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION



The City of Millbrae and its community partners celebrated the **First Annual Juneteenth Celebration on Saturday, June 17th**. The celebration kicked off at 11:00 am at the Millbrae Recreation Center and throughout Central Park with a welcome from local elected officials and community leaders. On **June 19, 1865**, enslaved African Americans in Texas were told they were free. The annual commemoration of the end of slavery in the United States after the Civil War has been celebrated by African Americans since the late 1800s. A century and a half later, the day is now observed as a federal holiday. The Millbrae event was celebrated with food, live music, special performances, and much more! The day had something for all ages and is destined to become another Millbrae tradition!

Please patronize our Millbrae Historical Society Lifetime Business Members:



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MILLBRAE'S FOUNDING FAMILIES – PART 1
(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)



I invited Mildred into my studio for a portrait using the coverlet for the background. Mildred's father **Bert** built a family home on a ten-acre parcel they owned in Millbrae. In the early 1930's, they sold five acres to the **Cozzolino Family** — another of Millbrae's founding families. **Natalie and Salvatore Cozzolino** bought and leased several acres of land in Millbrae for their flower farms and raised their five children here in Millbrae.

Many early Millbrae families grew flowers and vegetables in the lower Millbrae Hills. In 1902, **Antonio Massolo** rented 20 acres in the lower **Silva Tract**. In 1912, he married his wife **Maria** and raised three sons in Millbrae. **Alma** (Antonio's daughter-in-law) was the Millbrae Historical Society Historian for many years. **Dave Massolo** is currently one of our Trustees carrying on the family's tradition of dedication to Millbrae history.

Henry Lovegreen is a name not mentioned much in Millbrae history, but he opened Millbrae's premier **General Store** in 1905 on the corner of El Camino Real & Millbrae Avenue. The store also housed Millbrae's **Post Office** and of course a bar. When you visit our Museum, be sure to see the great photo of this historic store displayed on the wall.

On January 12, 1880, **Johann Frederick Ludemann**, who had a nursery business in San Francisco, purchased 72 acres from **Maria Sanchez** for \$5000 to develop a flower growing nursery to supply the San Francisco Market. In 1915, his son **Adolph** sold the property and moved to San Mateo. Another early family that came to

Millbrae was the **Dal Don Family**. **Caesar Dal Don** worked on the Mills Estate as a gardener after the 1906 earthquake. In 1910, Caesar and his brother-in-law purchased five acres of land to start a nursery. Several years later, the family purchased another five acres and built the first greenhouses in Millbrae. Caesar passed away in 1944, and the land was sold for the development of new housing.

I could not write this article without mentioning the **A. F. Green Family**. **Alfred and Mary Green** moved to Millbrae in 1865 when Alfred became partners with D.O. Mills in the **Millbrae Dairy**. They raised their five children in Millbrae. Alfred managed the Mills Estate during Mills' absence. He also supervised the construction of **Crystal Springs Dam** and served as a San Mateo County Supervisor for 30 years. The A.F. Green house still stands today at 1 Lewis Avenue. The Mills and Green partnership lasted 20 years, and they both passed away in January 1919 — only 10 days apart.

In this article, I have talked about the families that settled in Millbrae in the 1800's and around the turn of the century. In my next article, I will discuss more founding families of Millbrae, concentrating on the next generation of Millbrae Pioneers. I want to remember and thank author and historian **Darold Fredricks**, who had the foresight to interview Millbrae families in the 1980's. Also for the readers of this article: If there are any other families that deserve a place in Millbrae history, please contact the Millbrae Historical Society at info@millbraehs.org so that I can continue to document Millbrae's history for our readers. See you next time!



MILLBRAE History Walk

**SUNDAY
JULY 16, 2023
12:00 - 3:30 PM
.....
FILM VIEWING
AT 2:30**

CELEBRATE MILLBRAE'S HISTORY

Join the Millbrae Historical Society on a 2.2 mile walking tour of historic sites of Millbrae as part of the City of Millbrae's 75th Anniversary Celebration.

Please meet at the Millbrae History Museum, 420 Poplar Avenue, Millbrae, for the walk. RSVP requested.

Following the walk, watch a historic film about Millbrae in the Recreation Center at 477 Lincoln Circle.

for more information about the history walk, please call Joe Teresi at (650-455-4887).

SCAN TO RSVP



SHUTTLE



A shuttle has been made available for those unable to walk or who need assistance. Please request the shuttle when you register for the walk.

FOR HELP WITH RSVP CONTACT US:

(650) 259-2360

recreation@ci.millbrae.ca.us

bit.ly/milrec

MILLBRAE COMMUNITY UPDATES

密爾布瑞市社區聚會

Reunión de actualización de la comunidad

@ Millbrae Community Center

477 Lincoln Circle, Millbrae

FRIDAY, AUGUST 4, 2023 6PM-10PM

JOIN THE FUN! BE INVOLVED!



ENTERTAINMENT & DINNER PROVIDED

entretenimiento y comida gratis 提供娛樂節目及晚餐

**RSVP starts on 7/5/23.
Seats are limited.**

Las reservas comienzan el 5/7/23.

Los asientos son limitados

座位有限, 7月5日開始接受報名, 先到先得



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TO RSVP

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QR para reservar

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millbraeculture.org



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CHASE



Saturday, August 19, 8 am to 3 pm on Broadway in
Beautiful Downtown Millbrae

Millbrae Recreation Presents...

Millbrae Goes to the Movies

Millbrae Recreation Center (Great Hall)
477 Lincoln Circle

April 14

Movie begins at 6:30pm

Millbrae Central Park

June 9

July 14

August 11

September 8

Movies begin at dark

***Vote for our upcoming movies
from March 17-April 21 at:***

bit.ly/millbraemovies



CURATOR'S REPORT

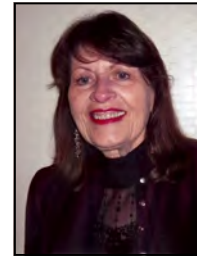
DOROTHY SEMKE

We would like to welcome our newest docent **Phyllis Kilgore**, who recently joined us. She has lived in Millbrae most of her adult life and has much to offer.

Welcome to our new members **Randy & Vera Swanson, Mei-Ly Lin, Woody Mansergh, Tom McNichol, Mark & Judy Shu** and **Otto & Trudy Hofmann**.

It is always so nice when visitors come in to donate items, sometimes treasures of theirs, to the Museum for all to enjoy. A big thank you to

an uncle of docent **Zoe Evanchik** for four large prints of the San Francisco Airport in its early days, and thank you so much to **Otto and Trudy Hofmann** for a beautiful like-new complete set of 39 volumes of Time-Life World War II books, which can be seen in our Dining Room. Also thank you to the family of **Ray Bianchi** for donating a Cricket Lighter with **Roy and Ray's Gas Station** printed on it, labeled for the two brothers who owned and ran the station on Millbrae Avenue for many years.



Stay well,
Dorothy Semke
Curator

TRAIN MUSEUM NEWS

VERN BRUCE

Hello everyone!

We have a lot of things going on at the Train Museum these days. **Elijah Cabatic, Ben Guzzardi** and **Peter Sheerin** have been doing extensive work on our security/surveillance systems, as well as outside lighting. Our newest volunteers are father-and-son team **Andy and Lucas Tsang**. Seven-year-old Lucas has been helping Ben and Peter in the office, while Andy has been doing a lot of paint removal on one of the two soon-to-be restored outside benches. Additionally, **Matthew O'Malley** has been coming by on weekdays to remove paint from one of the benches.

One of the other larger projects we are doing is the ongoing restoration of the **Pullman** sleeping car '**Civic**

Center'. We were able to convert an industrial transformer, donated by the late **Dave Hannigan**, to power the entire electrical systems of the car. In fact, it is capable of powering at least three similar cars! All of the electrical systems seem to be working fine, even though the car is over 80 years old. **Vern Bruce, Charlie Heggarty** and **Jay King** have been involved in those parts of the project. In addition, Jay and Vern have been working on structural parts of the car, including the vestibule doors, accordion gates at each end, and many other various details.

Don't forget! We're always open between 10:00 am and 2:00 pm on Saturdays, so come by and get a guided tour, or give yourself a self-guided tour.



Cheers,
Vern Bruce
Train Museum Director

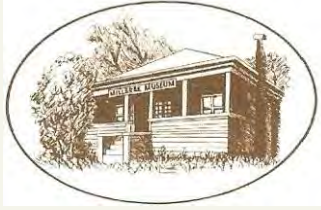


MILLBRAE WORKS
Report | Track | Connect

iOS and Android Phone Apps are now available for download!

The City of Millbrae has launched the new request management software **Millbrae Works** powered by SeeClickFix. The application is available for all residents to download on any Apple or Android device. The **Millbrae Works** app allows Millbrae residents who identify community repair or service request needs to submit photos, location information, and details directly to City of Millbrae administrative staff members.

WE'RE ON THE WEB AT
WWW.MILLBRAEHS.ORG



**MILLBRAE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

Post Office Box 511
Millbrae, CA 94030

Phone: 650-692-5786

MHS OFFICERS – 2023-24

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Dorothy Semke, Curator

Tom Dawdy, Historian & Carriage House Curator

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Joe Teresi, Newsletter Editor

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

Sunday, July 16: 2023 Millbrae History Walk

- 12:00 noon; Millbrae Museum, 420 Poplar Avenue, Millbrae
- Please join us for a 2.2-mile walk to visit some of Millbrae's historic sites (a shuttle bus will also be available for those unable to walk)
- Following the Walk, there will be a screening of an historic film about Millbrae curated by Tom Dawdy in the Recreation Center, 477 Lincoln Circle, beginning at 2:30 pm
- RSVP requested. Register online at bit.ly/milrec or call Joe Teresi at (650) 455-4887

Friday, August 4: Millbrae Community Updates

- 6:00 - 10:00 pm; Millbrae Recreation Center
- Entertainment and Dinner provided by the Millbrae Cultural Committee
- RSVP requested. Register online at millbraeculture.org

Saturday, August 19: Millbrae Machines

- 8:00 am - 3:00 pm; along Broadway in Downtown Millbrae
- Classic car show presented by the Millbrae Lions Club

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!
(Please note that Board meetings are being held online via Zoom until further notice)