

# 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

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## HISTORICAL SPOTLIGHT: JOSEPHINE WAUGH - MILLBRAE'S FIRST FEMALE MAYOR BY JOE TERESI



Mayor Josephine Waugh

Although today's Millbrae City Council has a female majority (featuring **Mayor Marge Colapietro** and **Council members Gina Papan and Nadia Holober**), the early governing bodies of Millbrae and most American cities were dominated by men. Starting with the city's incorporation in 1948, the first fifteen Millbrae mayors, including well-known individuals such as **Mel Massolo, Earl Wilms, and Marvin**

**Churchn**, were men. It was not until the year 1962 that a woman, **Josephine Waugh**, was able to break through the gender barrier to occupy the City's highest elected office, Mayor of Millbrae. Who was this special woman, the trailblazer who created a path for those to follow?

Josephine Waugh was born in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, on May 2, 1910. She was a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh. Some years after her marriage to **Kenneth Waugh**, they moved to Millbrae in 1942. Josephine and Kenneth raised three children in their home on Ashton Avenue. She was first elected to the Millbrae City Council in 1958, becoming the City's first woman Council member. Four years later, her Council colleagues made the momentous decision to select (continued on Page 5)

## P R E S I D E N T ' S   R E P O R T J O H N   M U N I Z

Fellow Members and Friends,

Since the March Newsletter, I have had the honor of being installed as the President of the Millbrae Historical Society for my fourth term. I have made so many wonderful friends and neighbors who are dedicated to preserving the history of Millbrae and surrounding communities.

Let's review what the hard work of our members has accomplished in the past four years:

Thanks to our Newsletter Editor, **Joe Teresi**, we now have an updated Millbrae Historical Society website. Please check it out at [www.millbraehs.org](http://www.millbraehs.org). For our technologically savvy members, we can also be found on *Facebook*™.



Joe also brought to the City of Millbrae one of best programs to interest and educate people about our history, the three-mile *Millbrae History Walk*. If you have not gone on the *Millbrae* (continued on Page 2)

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

*History Walk*, get your friends and family together, pick up a *Millbrae History Walk* map at the Museum, Library or City Hall (or download a copy from the MHS web site) and take the tour. You will not be disappointed!

On the third Friday of each month, at the Millbrae Museum, commencing at 7:00 pm, the Millbrae Historical Society presents "Friday Night at the Movies". We present a free movie, on the BIG screen, from Hollywood's Golden Age, from 1930 to 1959, so come on down and bring your popcorn - the loges fill up fast!

We now have Millbrae Historical Society field trips at least once a year. On our first trip, we visited the **Calistoga Sharpsteen Museum** in the Napa Valley. We have also traveled to the **California State Railroad Museum** in Sacramento via Amtrak's *Capitol Corridor* train. Last year, our field trip was to the **San Francisco Airport Museum** at the SFO International Terminal. All of our field trips are designed to be senior citizen friendly. Our next Millbrae Historical Society field trip will be held on **Friday, July 20** when we travel to the **Hiller Aviation Museum** in San Carlos.



The Hiller Aviation Museum is an incredible venue, suitable for all ages. We will meet at the Millbrae Museum at 10:00 am sharp. Transportation to and from the Hiller Museum will be provided via car pools. The Hiller Museum entrance fee is \$7.00, and the guided tour will last about 90 minutes. Afterwards, we will lunch at **Izzy's Steak House** adjacent to the Hiller. Please let me know if you are interested in attending by calling me at (650) 455-3472 or e-mailing me at [jfmflash@flash.net](mailto:jfmflash@flash.net).

Please don't forget our annual **Rummage Sale**, headed up by Assistant Museum Curator, **Dorothy Semke**. This year our annual Rummage Sale will be held on **Saturday, August 11th**, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, in front of the Millbrae Museum. The **Friends of the Millbrae Library** will also be holding their annual book sale on the same day, so come on down and pick up a good book. If you have something you would like to donate, please bring it to the Museum, or call me at the phone number listed above and I will be happy to pick it up.

Last but not least, thanks to the efforts of our Millbrae Train Museum Director **Vern Bruce**, the Millbrae Historical Society is the proud owner of our 1929 Ford Model AA pickup truck. Come on down to the Millbrae Train Museum and check out the Model AA pickup truck—the kids will love it!

Also, I want to mention our newest activity from the Millbrae Historical Society, our **Children's Christmas Party**. We had our first Party last December at the Train Museum, and it was a rousing success! We had games, caroling, and even Santa came by for a visit. As the holidays approach, look for information about this year's Millbrae Historical Society Children's Christmas Party in our next newsletter.

I hope to see all our friends and neighbors at the Millbrae Historical Society's **Fourth of July BBQ**, to be held on **Wednesday, July 4** in the Chetcuti Community Room, starting at 11:00 am. It's the best Fourth of July celebration in town! See the insert in this newsletter for more information and the RSVP form.

As we celebrate the Millbrae Historical Society's forty-second year, we can look back at a legacy and reinforce our shared belief that exploring our past is important in appreciating what we have today. Thanks to our Board of Directors, docents and members who take time out of their busy lives to support our little museum. These are challenging times in this country; but as always Millbrae and its residents embrace our challenges and move forward for the good of the community as a whole.

Thank you and best wishes,

**John Muniz**

MHS President (2008 - present)

"The past is our key to the future."

## VICE-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE PAUL LARSON

Greetings members, trustees and friends of the Millbrae Historical Society,

Our **4th of July BBQ** lunch is coming up fast, and I am in charge of the raffle prizes. I was pleasantly surprised at how many businesses and organizations have donated prizes to the MHS in the past. Last year I inherited this project from **Mary Vella Tre-seler**. It is all a simple matter of sending out letters to prospective community leaders and asking them for their support in the form of a raffle prize or gift certificate. It will be interesting to see who comes through in supplying these interesting items. We had a great grouping of wonderful prizes in 2011, so if you are one of those who donated a prize last year then **THANK YOU SO MUCH** ...and if you donate a prize for 2012, then I **APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT!!**

Now I will put on my Lions Club hat: On **Saturday, July 14th** at Green Hills Country Club I will be installed as President of the Penin-

sula Council of Lions Clubs (PCL). The PCL is an important part of our Lions District 4-C4 in which Past Presidents of local Lions Clubs are invited to serve as PCL Officers. As a Past President of the Millbrae Lions Club, I started out as PCL Secretary / Bulletin Editor, 2nd & 1st VP, and now have climbed to the top position. Lions from clubs all around the Peninsula and San Francisco join in for the monthly PCL dinner meetings. Attending Presidents of the local Lions Clubs each give a report on their upcoming events & projects. Therefore the PCL gives Lions from different clubs an opportunity to meet each other and learn about what their fellow Lions Clubs are doing. The big project for the PCL is the **Police & Fire-fighter Awards Banquet**. This event honoring police officers and firefighters for their service, valor or heroism will take place at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Foster City. Awardees are selected by their Chiefs, and Millbrae Officers have been regularly honored at this annual affair. As President of



the PCL I am also expected to attend monthly meetings of the San Francisco Coordinating Council of Lions Clubs, which means I will have to miss out on our Millbrae Historical Society Trustee meetings taking place on the same nights. I am torn about this ...but it is only for one term, and I know our MHS President **John Muniz** will keep me up to date and informed.

Thanks to everyone who will be attending the 4th of July BBQ at the Chetcuti Community Room. Your attendance is important and will make for a spectacular Independence Day!

All my best to you and your family,  
From Millbrae Historical Society  
Vice President,

**Paul Larson**

## MILLBRAE HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESENTS FRIDAY NIGHT AT THE MOVIES



**WHAT:** Come watch classic movies from the Golden Age of Hollywood.

**WHERE:** Millbrae Museum  
420 Poplar Avenue

Bring your own popcorn and a spouse or friend for a fun Friday night on the town!!

### Title

*Red River*

*She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*

*Fort Apache*

### Year

1948

1949

1948

### Star

John Wayne

John Wayne

John Wayne

### Date and Time

07/20/2012 7:00 PM

08/17/2012 7:00 PM

09/21/2012 7:00 PM



## TRAIN MUSEUM NEWS

ELIZABETH FURBER, EDITOR  
VERN BRUCE, REPORTER

As Summer approaches, we are seeing a marked increase in the number of visitors to our Train Museum. Everyone from retired folks to parents with young children come to us for fun and educational information about train and rail history. Over the years we have developed several things for kids to do here. We have a 'rocking train' that was built as an amusement ride back in the 40's or 50's. Our Lifetime Members **Jay King** and **Dave Hannigan** built and donated a mock-up of a vintage diesel locomotive cab, using real control parts. Needless

to say, the kids all love it!

For the adults we have quite a collection of mounted photos of various vintage trains taken on the Peninsula and around the Bay Area. Additionally, we have many artifacts, books, videos, magazines, etc.



If you haven't made it to the Train Museum yet, please come out and visit us this Summer!

A hearty thanks go to our docents that have kept the Millbrae Train Museum open this year. These volunteers are: **Robert Gorran;** **Gino and Gerry Micheli;** **Richard Kennedy;** and **Vern, William and Theresa Bruce.**

## FAREWELL TO MARGARET RUGGLES

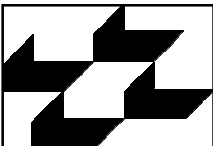
JULY 12, 1921 - MAY 15, 2012

**Margaret Ruggles** was a member of the Millbrae community for 63 years. Her volunteer activities are too numerous to list. She was an accomplished painter and teacher. Margaret was instrumental in the founding of the **Millbrae Arts Association**, serving on

the Board in a variety of jobs. Twenty-two years ago, she was one of the founders of the **Chadbourne Senior Activities Center**, where students are taught crafts and oil painting. She also taught oil painting at the Millbrae Rec Center for thirty-five

years. Margaret was a member and docent for the Millbrae Historical Society. She was honored as **Millbrae Woman of the Year** in 1992. She was a fun-loving, generous, and kind woman and will be sorely missed by her friends and family.

Please patronize our Millbrae Historical Society Lifetime Business Members:



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## CURATOR'S REPORT

ALMA MASSOLO  
DOROTHY SEMKE

Again we find ourselves mourning the loss of yet another friend, member and docent of the Millbrae Museum — **Margaret Ruggles**. She will be sadly missed.

On March 16, **William Goebner** brought in photos of the original **17 Mile House** (also known as the **Millbrae Hotel**). This landmark building was located on the northwest corner of El Camino Real and Millbrae Avenue. Mr. Goebner's grandfather was pictured in front of the building standing with his bicycle club. We thank you Mr. Goebner for this beautiful addition to the Museum.

On March 31, **Barry Goyette** came with a "just released" copy of the San Mateo County recorded marriages dated to the 1940's. This will be added to the list of marriages we now have going back to the 1800's. Thank you so much for this information Mr. Goyette!

On April 14, **Joanne Garrison** of the **Burlingame Historical Museum** came to research our collection of pictures of the Mills Estate. How nice it is to share with other museums. We really enjoyed your visit, Joanne!

On April 25th, we were very excited to host a visit by **Jim Palmieri** and his wife **Joan**. Jim is the son of Millbrae's first police chief. He donated his father's police badge and a beautiful silver and brass-trimmed belt buckle engraved with the inscription "To **Chief Frank Palmieri**, June 21, 1932, from **Ogden Mills**". These articles will greatly enhance the Millbrae Police Department display in our Museum. We thank you Jim and Joan with great appreciation!

On June 9th, a group of walkers from the **Walking Thru the Valley of Heart's Delight** and



**Hiking Around** club enjoyed the **Millbrae History Walk** with their leader **Kathleen Jarvis** and ended their visit to Millbrae by viewing the Museum. This is a group that has members from Marin County all the way to Gilroy. If you are interested in joining this group, visit [www.meetup.com](http://www.meetup.com) on the web and enter the group name.

Remember ...mark this date down ...**August 11th** for our **Annual Yard Sale**. Donations other than clothing needed. Call **Dorothy Semke** at (650) 697-7670.

**Alma Massolo**, Curator  
**Dorothy Semke**, Asst. Curator

## JOSEPHINE WAUGH—FIRST FEMALE MAYOR (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

her as the sixteenth Mayor of Millbrae. She served a second term as Mayor in 1965. Josephine Waugh's signature political position was her intense opposition to the construction of a multi-lane highway, the Junipero Serra Highway, that the State of California Division of Highways planned to construct right through the middle of Millbrae. Mrs. Waugh, her fellow Council members, and the community at-large eventually convinced the State to terminate the highway project. The abandoned highway route was later acquired by the City, and is now home to the Spur Trail, enjoyed by local walkers and bicyclists young

and old. Mrs. Waugh and her husband passed away in 1978. In honor of Mrs. Waugh's valiant battle against the highway juggernaut, the City dedicated a section of the property as **Josephine Waugh Soroptimist Park** in 1987.

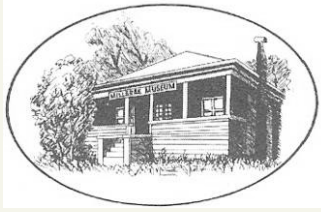
Following the historic precedent established by Josephine Waugh,



Dedication of Josephine Waugh Park

several other women have gone on to serve Millbrae as its mayor, including **Mary Griffin** in the 1980s, **Janet Fogarty** and **Doris Morse** in the 1990s, and **Linda Larson**, **Nadia Holober**, **Gina Papan**, and **Marge Colapietro** in the 2000s. In honor of these notable women and their individual achievements, I will be interviewing several of Millbrae's past female mayors as part of the program at our Annual Fourth of July BBQ. Please plan on attending this festive event for good food, good company, and a little bit of history. And while you're eating, take a moment to thank Josephine Waugh.

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—2011**

**John Muniz, President**  
**Paul Larson, Vice-President**  
**Alicia Espinoza, Secretary**  
**Vern Bruce, Treasurer**  
**Alma Massolo, Curator & Historian**

**Joe Teresi, Newsletter Editor**

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

**Wednesday, July 4:** Annual Fourth of July Barbeque and Family Picnic, 11:00 am to 3:00 pm,  
David Chetcuti Community Room, 450 Poplar Avenue.

- Co-sponsored by the Millbrae Historical Society and the Millbrae Lions Club.

**Friday, July 20:** MHS Field Trip to Hiller Aviation Museum & Lunch at Izzy's Steak House

Meet at Millbrae Museum, 420 Poplar Avenue, at 10:00 am

- Reservations required—Call John Muniz at (650) 455-3472.

**Saturday, August 11:** Annual Millbrae Historical Society Yard Sale, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm,  
Millbrae Museum, 420 Poplar Avenue

**Third Fridays of the Month:** *MHS Friday Night at the Movies*

Millbrae Museum, 420 Poplar Avenue. See schedule on Page 3.

- Bring your own popcorn and a spouse or friend for a fun Friday night on the town!!

**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