

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:
MILLBRAE LUMBER
BY ALMA MASSOLO



Prior to the days of the “big box” stores like Home Depot and Lowes, Millbrae residents and contractors relied on one place to shop for their lumber and hardware needs – **Millbrae Lumber**. The Millbrae Lumber Company was started by Millbrae Highlands developer **Niels Schultz** in the late 1920s to provide supplies for his new residential subdivision west of El Camino Real. During the following decades, there have been a series of business partners funding

and managing the company. When the home construction activity in the Highlands was completed, Schultz sold the business to **Joseph Hammond**. In the early 1940's, Hammond sold the company to **Albert Guaspari** and **Jack Jones**, who later sold an interest to **Ernest Garibaldi**. In the 1960's **Silvio Massolo** bought in to the firm as an additional business partner. After Jones and Guaspari retired, **Albert Guaspari, Jr.**
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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

It is my pleasure to once again address you as the proud President of the Millbrae Historical Society. On July 4 2009, the Society had our annual “Fourth of July” picnic. Once again, with the dedicated help and hard work of our members, we all had a fantastic time. Thank you to our members who helped with the preparations and setup. Thank you to the **Millbrae Lions** for cooking and

the use of your BBQ equipment and to the **Millbrae Lions Leo's** club for serving and cleanup. Everyone worked so hard to make our annual “Fourth of July” picnic a great success. Thank you to our friends and neighbors who every year make an effort to attend and contribute to our picnic. Hope to see every one again next year in good health and ready to celebrate our nation's birthday.



It was great to see so many friends and neighbors stop by our Millbrae Historical Society booth at the Art and Wine festival. We had a lot of interaction with our visitors who enjoyed looking at the old photos
(continued on Page 2)

VICE-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE PAUL LARSON

Greetings Millbrae Historians!

As I write this blurb to you it is HOT and HUMID in Millbrae! The air is still and the skies are blanketed with clouds. Humidity usually makes me uncomfortable, and I would prefer a dry heat ...but we are so lucky that we live in a place that normally does not require air-conditioning...and we can brag about this fact to the rest of the country. Ha ha!

MHS President **John Muniz** has assigned me the task of generating publicity for the Society. My goal is to "make it known" that the Millbrae Historical Society is the foremost

source for details about Millbrae's rich and interesting past. We have access to a wealth of information at our Millbrae Museum, and our Curator/ Historian **Alma Massolo** has even more details stored inside her lovely head. In addition please know that you are welcome to visit the Millbrae Train Museum for historical tidbits on Millbrae's link to our railroad past. Another plan in the works is to designate various spots around town as historical locations. Currently there are several bronze plaques marking historical sites, including the original location of the 16 Mile House (El Camino Real at Center Street), but more are com-



ing. Guide maps are in the planning stages as well, so very soon you can look forward to putting on your walking shoes and enjoying a great tour of Millbrae's vibrant history.

Thanks for being a part of the history of Millbrae!
— Paul Larson

PRESIDENT'S REPORT (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

of Millbrae and asking many questions about our past. Thank you so much to our wonderful set up & tear down crew - **Joe Teresi & Vern Bruce**. Thank you to our members who staffed our booth - **Joe Teresi, Lois Way, Doris Golder, Anthony Raffanti, Mary Tre-seler, Alma Massolo, Jack and Ann Gardner, Madelyn Richardson, Tom and Faye Dawdy, and Paul Larson**. Next year, I have **big** plans for our booth, so stay tuned.

Saturday, October 10, we are having our annual Millbrae Historical Society yard sale. Our yard sale chairperson, **Dorothy Semke**, has assembled a lot of interesting merchandise and clothing for sale, so please drop by and see what bargains we have in store for you. Our yard sale will be from **10:00 am to 4:00 pm**, in the rear of the Museum. The Museum will be opened for touring, so bring you friends and neighbors along and shop our yard sale, pickup some bargains, then tour our beautiful Millbrae Historical Society museum.

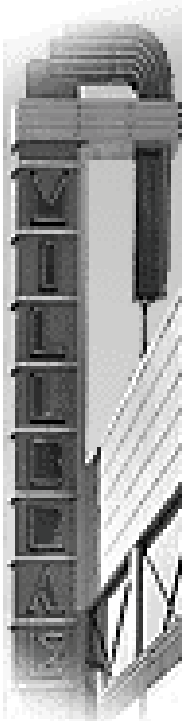
Please mark your calendars for **Wednesday, December 9, 2009** when we will celebrate our annual Millbrae Historical Society Christmas Party at the Millbrae Museum. There is noth-

ing like an old-fashioned Christmas Party with lots of food, caroling, music and good friends to ring in the Holiday Season with the Millbrae Historical Society.

Congratulations to our very own Millbrae Historical Society members who have been honored as this year's "Millbrae Man and Woman of the Year" — **Walter Haag** and **Patricia Realini**. Thanks to both of you for your many years of dedicated service to our community. This year's "Millbrae Man and Woman of the Year" celebration will be held on **Friday, October 9** at the Westin Hotel. I call on our membership to attend this year's event and support and congratulate our winning members.

I am excited that the Society's Board of Directors has approved a Millbrae History Walk project for this Spring. Chaired by **Joe Teresi**, the project will include the installation of commemorative plaques at several historical points of interest in Millbrae and publication of a map/brochure that will guide visitors on a walking tour of these historic sites.

Thank you all for your support and dedication and best wishes always!
— John Muniz



CURATOR'S REPORT

ALMA MASSOLO



It has been a very slow summer according to our guest book. On August 29th, we were honored with foreign visitors – three persons from Japan, a group from Hong Kong and a family from China. They all spoke English very well and were very impressed with our museum.

Other welcomed visitors were **June Lyerla** and her daughter from Visalia. June's family had lived in Millbrae for over 86 years. June was a very dedicated member of the Millbrae Historical Society since its beginning in the '70s. The bathroom in the Museum was refurbished in the Victorian style by June and her family in memory of her parents, **Mr. and Mrs. Alfred "Bert" Larson**. Mr Larson worked for the Millbrae Dairy, delivering milk by horse and buggy.

Many New Asian residents in Millbrae visit the Museum often, as they are very interested in learning the history and heritage of their new home. The Society is proud to be able to offer historical information.

We are truly grateful to **Martee Thomas** for her donation of 50 years of indexed history



of Millbrae happenings. The historic clippings provide a wonderful window into the way Millbrae was at that time.....from 1938 to 1988.

Our participation in the Millbrae Art and Wine Festival was very successful. Revenue from the sales of the *History of Millbrae* books, photos of historical scenes by **Tom Dawdy**, the book *A Sicilian in America* by **John Brucato**, post cards, and Art and Wine Festival collectors glasses pro-



vides needed fund for the operation of the Millbrae Museum.

We extend a profound thank you to **John Muniz** for his management of the Historical Society's booth for both days of the Festival.

Now that most people have taken their vacations and the children are back in school, we will be back on track and visitors will be reappearing at the Museum each Saturday.

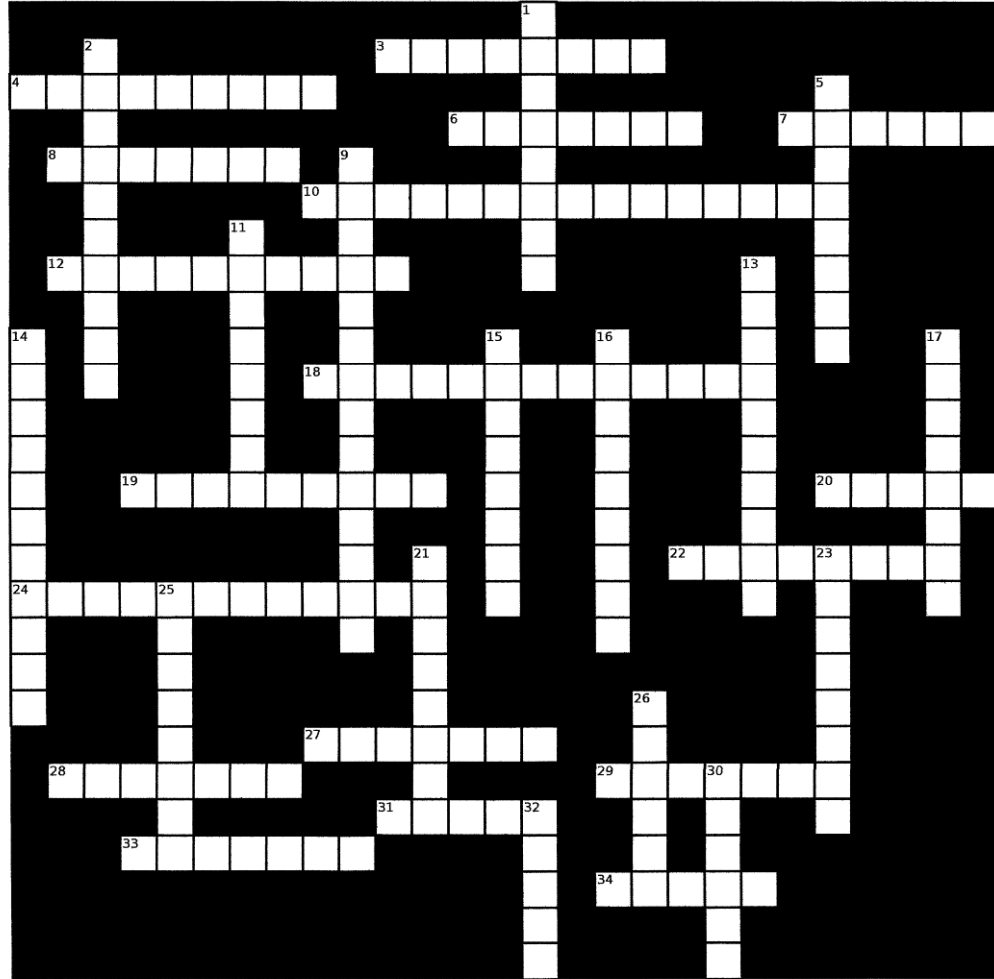
– Alma Massolo



To receive e-mail reminders of Millbrae Historical Society meetings and events, please send your e-mail address to Joe Teresi at jtnia@comcast.net

City of Millbrae

Common sites and names of Millbrae, California



- Across
- 3 Sister City (2 words)
 - 4 Java joint
 - 6 Sainly educator
 - 7 Neighborhood Nissan negotiator
 - 8 Local keeper of historic knowledge
 - 10 Vikings play here (3 words)
 - 12 For members only (2 words)
 - 18 Weekly fresh food fest (2 words)
 - 19 Nearest ER
 - 20 Pointing padre
 - 22 Do you know the way to San Jose?
 - 24 The King's Highway (3 words)
 - 27 Early Millbrae Settler
 - 28 El Super
 - 29 _____ Mile House
 - 31 Millbrae newcomer
 - 33 Top of the hill neighborhood
 - 34 Darius Ogden _____

- Down
- 1 Tooth doc
 - 2 Famous fracture (2 words)
 - 5 House of cards
 - 9 Local alternative to Home Depot (2 words)
 - 11 Fallen hero
 - 13 He runs Council meetings
 - 14 QFI replacement (2 words)
 - 15 Downtown's main drag
 - 16 24 hour pharmacy
 - 17 Stops at busy corners
 - 21 Millbrae's Best Western (2 words)
 - 23 Apartments galore
 - 25 A Place in the Sun
 - 26 Pot sticker purveyor (2 words)
 - 30 Millbrae's middle school
 - 32 Place to satisfy your sweet tooth

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Stumped? Visit the Millbrae Museum Saturdays 12:00 noon to 4:00 pm to view the answer key.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: MILLBRAE LUMBER (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

purchased their shares. After several years, Ernest Garibaldi and Albert Guaspari, Jr. retired and sold their interests to **Dan Thurstan**. From then on the Millbrae Lumber Company was



operated by Silvio Massolo and Dan Thurstan. **David Massolo** became Manager of the firm and continues in that role today. Throughout the years, the employees have considered themselves as a working family. The rapport among the various owners, manager and workers has always been very harmonious.



lumber and supplies to the Millbrae Historical Society, Millbrae Train Depot Museum, Millbrae Lions Club, Millbrae Recreation Center, and many other Millbrae civic organizations.

Years ago the Millbrae Lumber Company had a "mascot" who lived on the back street of the yard. His name was **Andy Gari-**



baldi and he was so trusted that he was given a key to the back gate to open the gates for the

is part of the Millbrae Redevelopment Agency's "Site One", which includes the area from Millbrae Avenue to Victoria Avenue, between El Camino Real and the Millbrae BART Station. The Redevelopment Agency is seeking a private investor to transform the



area into a transit-oriented, mixed-use, multi-family residential and commercial zone that will tie the BART station more closely to downtown Millbrae. Details of the conceptual plans for the redevelopment area (including Site One) are available online at www.ci.millbrae.ca.us/index.aspx?page=239. Right now, the project is on hold due to the poor condition of the real estate market, but changes are in-



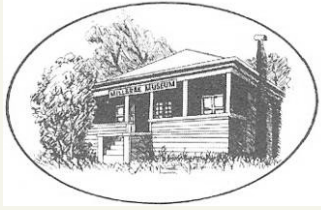
The Millbrae Lumber Company has been managed over the years as a community-oriented firm. For twenty years, the company sponsored and supported a Millbrae Lions Little League baseball team and also the Old Man's Baseball League. The management has always been very generous with donations of

trucks delivering lumber at ungodly hours. Andy was given the honorary title of the "Chairman of the Board". Always at the beck and call of the company, Andy was a loyal friend.

Millbrae Lumber may close its doors some time in the not too distant future. The lumber yard

is inevitable. In the mean time, take a moment to consider that even if Millbrae Lumber Company someday ceases to exist, it will continue to play a role as an important player in the historical development of the City of Millbrae.

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



**MILLBRAE
HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**

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MHS OFFICERS—2009

John Muniz, President
Paul Larson, Vice-President
Lois Way, Secretary
Vern Bruce, Treasurer
Alma Massolo, Curator & Historian

Joe Teresi, Newsletter Editor

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Friday, October 9: Millbrae Man and Woman of the Year Dinner, 6:00 - 9:30 pm, Westin Hotel, 1 Old Bayshore Highway. Invitations are available at Millbrae City Hall. Reservations required – call 697-8288.

Saturday, October 10: Millbrae Historical Society Yard Sale from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Millbrae Museum, 420 Poplar Avenue. All proceeds benefit the Millbrae Museum. Contact Dorothy Semke at 697-7670 for further information.

Wednesday, December 9: Millbrae Historical Society Annual Holiday Party, 7:00 to 9:00 pm at the Millbrae Museum, 420 Poplar Avenue. All members are encouraged to attend!

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