

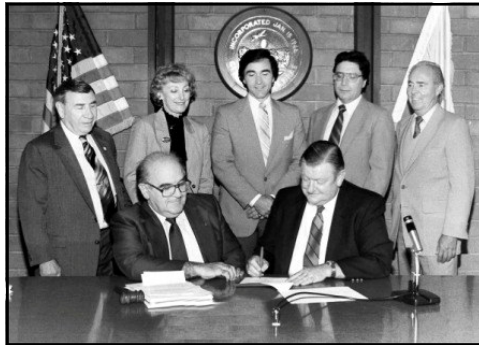
# Millbrae Life & Times

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:  
**MEMORIAL TRIBUTE**  
 TO ALLAN ROBERT "BUD" MASON  
 BY MARY VELLA TRESELER



In 1979, the City of Millbrae purchased surplus land from the San Francisco Water Department together with the structures that the Department had used to house their superintendents. One structure along Magnolia Avenue proved to be of little value and was demolished to make room for Green Hills Park. The other structure was a six-room turn-of-the-century Victorian Cottage with potential, but it

needed much work to restore it to any type of useful purpose.

Beginning in 1982, Millbrae Historical Society President **A. R. "Bud" Mason** led an effort to have the cottage moved to a suitable spot to be used as an historical museum. Bud had lived in Millbrae since 1960, working as the Passenger Service Manager for United Airlines until 1972, when he went into business for himself as a property developer. Bud liked a challenge, and negotiating was at the top of his list. It had long been a desire of the Society to acquire a history museum, but this concept had not come close to becoming a reality until Bud started an active campaign.

Bud knew that the cottage could not remain on Ludeman Lane, because there were plans to build a senior housing project, and - soon!! (continued on Page 4)

**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

Friends and fellow members,

A belated "Happy New Year"! It has been a while since I brought you up-to-date on the happenings of the Millbrae Historical Society.

Last year, the Society was running on all cylinders! At the Millbrae City Council Meeting on September 25th, the Society was presented a commendation by the

City Council and **Mayor Marge Colapietro** for our volunteer efforts to educate, preserve and enhance the rich history of Millbrae. A big "thank you" to our members and Board of Trustees for their unselfish dedication and volunteer efforts to support our Museum and Railroad Museum.

Another home run for the Millbrae Historical Society was hit on October 11th at the Westin Hotel in Millbrae.



Two members of the Society were honored as the "Millbrae Man and Woman of the Year" in recognition for their service to the community at a gala celebration dinner. I want to thank and congratulate Millbrae Woman of the

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Year **Lois Way** for her over 50 years of service to the community and 20 years of service to the Millbrae Historical Society. Lois is a real sweetheart and a wonderful person, and I am honored to be her friend. Oh! By the way, I'm the Millbrae Man of the Year. I encourage all Millbrae citizens to support the annual *Millbrae Man and Woman of the Year* event. This is a wonderful civic event which only occurs in Millbrae - no other city on the Peninsula comes close to recognizing their very own in this special way. I also encourage anyone who knows a deserving Millbrae volunteer to submit their name for recognition as next year's Millbrae Man or Woman of the Year.



On Saturday, December 8th, we had our second annual **Children's Christmas Party** at the Train Museum. **Vern Bruce, Judy Cullina, Kimberly Beliso** and the **Millbrae Leo's Club** provided refreshments, games, holiday caroling, a jumper castle, and Santa Claus himself (**Dan Quigg**). Thank you to all the volunteers and the Millbrae Historical Society Board of Trustees for providing the funding and for making the holiday season a little brighter for the kids of Millbrae.

Those who attended our annual **Christmas Party** on December 12th will remember it to be one of our best. Thank you to **Dorothy Semke** and her crew for the beautiful interior holiday decorations, and thank you **Jack Gardner** for decorating the outside of the Museum. Thanks to **Dan Capodanno** for serenading us with his accordion. A big thank you as well to **Paul Baxter** and his group **Side Track**. Paul and his band made this year's Christmas party a very special event. Everyone raved about the band and how well they played. Thank you to Santa (**Joe Teresi**) for entertaining all of us. Finally, I mustn't forget to thank **Paul Larson** for the great punch, **Helen Habeeb** for the meat balls, and **Mary Vella Tre-seler** for chairing our Christmas Party.

Our annual **Installation of Officers and Trustees** will be held on **Sunday, March 17** at 2:00 pm in Library Room "A". **Mayor Gina Papan** will be the installing officer. We will have refreshments and a special presentation on the **100th Anniversary of the Lincoln Highway** (the na-

tion's first transcontinental road), so come on down and join your fellow members for a great afternoon gathering.

Who doesn't like a fire engine? The Society is the proud new owner of a **1931 Ford Model AA Southern Pacific fire engine**, fully restored and operational with a siren and flashing red lights. Our new fire engine is kept at the Train Museum along with our **1929 Ford Model AA REA (Railway Express Agency) delivery truck**. Special thanks to member **David Hannigan** who restored both the fire engine and the REA truck. Come on down to the Train Museum with your camera, children, and grandchildren and get a picture on the fire engine. I guarantee you will feel ten years old again!



The **Friday Night at the Movies** series is returning to the Millbrae Museum on **Friday, April 19** at 7:00 pm. We will be starting the series with a tribute to the musicals produced during the golden age of Hollywood, 1930-1959. Our first showing of the season will be "Broadway Melody of 1940", starring Fred Astaire, Eleanor Powell and George Murphy. The dancing in this movie is incredible - Fred and Eleanor are at the top of their form. So come on down, bring your popcorn, and get a front row seat. No reservations required, always free to all!

Thank you to everyone - our Millbrae Historical Society Board of Trustees, our docents and members - who do so much in support of our museums. We are very fortunate to have museums which are actual living history in our city. Both the Millbrae Museum and Train Museum are over one hundred years old and reflect the past as our forefathers lived it.

Hope to see all our friends and neighbors at one of our upcoming events. Remember our motto, "The past is our key to the future"

**John Muniz**  
MHS President (2008 - present)

## VICE-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE PAUL LARSON

Below is an article I recently wrote for the *Daily Journal*, which I thought would be an interesting item to present in the MHS Newsletter too:

A number of milestones have been crossed recently, including the **Chapel of the Highlands** 60th Anniversary on October 5, 2012. Backtracking a bit, it was in 2007 that the **Millbrae Chamber of Commerce** and the **Millbrae Rotary Club** honored the Chapel of the Highlands as "Business of the Year" during their Chamber Excellence Awards dinner. Now forwarding to January 24, 2013, the Millbrae Chamber of Commerce and the Millbrae Rotary Club have honored the Chapel of the Highlands as recipient of the "Chamber Beautification Award". In addition, that same evening we were proud to witness **Robert Lee**, Secretary/Treasurer of the Chapel of the Highlands, installed as the new Millbrae Chamber of Commerce Board Chairman by **Millbrae Vice-Mayor Nadia Holober**. It was a pleasant surprise to hear many kind words of gratitude expressed by **Millbrae Chamber**

**CEO Ed Banayat**, along with commendations from **Millbrae Mayor Gina Papan**, **State Senator Jerry Hill**, **State Senator Leland Yee**, and **Congresswoman Jackie Speier**, and a nice letter from the **Millbrae Education Foundation**. Well wishes were expressed by outgoing Board Chair **Ron Frediani**, former Millbrae Mayor **Janet Fogarty**, former Millbrae Mayor **Dan Quigg**, and Immediate Past Millbrae Mayor **Marge Colapietro**.



It is well known that the Chapel of the Highlands has a reputation for being a caring ally to turn to for those who've lost a loved one, and



for those who need our guidance in planning for the future. Because of our good character and high standards, we've been honored time and time again by receiving a good number of awards and accolades. I understand that this is a way for the community to say "thank you" to us for doing a good job, but I feel that it is my responsibility to express thanks many times over back to the community for supporting the Chapel of the Highlands since 1952. It is my honor to give back and serve where I can to continue in making the community a better place.

Attached to this newsletter are my best wishes for your health and happiness,

**Paul Larson**  
Vice-President  
Millbrae Historical Society

## 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	Year	Star	Date and Time	
<i>Broadway Melody of 1940</i>	1940	Fred Astaire	04/19/2013	7:00 PM
<i>Singing in the Rain</i>	1952	Gene Kelly	05/17/2013	7:00 PM
<i>The Barkleys of Broadway</i>	1949	Fred Astaire	06/21/2013	7:00 PM

## TRAIN MUSEUM NEWS

ELIZABETH FURBER, EDITOR  
VERN BRUCE, REPORTER

Our Train Museum has recently received a magnificent donation. Life members **David and Dianne Hannigan** have once again donated a fully-restored vintage Ford truck. (In November 2011 they donated a **1929 Ford Model AA Railway Express Agency delivery truck.**) This time they have donated a **1931 Ford Model AA fire engine** that replicates one that the Southern Pacific Railroad would have used. As with the 1929 Ford, every detail was paid meticulous attention to in the restoration

process. The project even includes all the hoses, axes, nozzles, water pump, lights and siren that were used on such fire apparatus.

Many thanks go to our docents that have volunteered numerous hours of their time to show visitors our wonderful museum. These



volunteers are: **Joseph Bonavia** (our newest member); **Robert Gorran; Gino and Gerry Micheli; Richard Kennedy;** and **Vern, William and Theresa Bruce.**

Please do come by and visit us on a Saturday to see both trucks, as well as the museum and Pullman car. We're open from 10 am to 2 pm.

## TRIBUTE TO BUD MASON (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

Bud was confident that if they could raise the funds to move the cottage, the rest of the funding would fall into place when everyone realized what a great asset the museum would be to the community. He and the Society achieved the first big step when they negotiated a donation of \$25,000 to move the cottage ten blocks through Millbrae streets and traffic. The civic center complex near the library was selected as the site for the new Millbrae Historical Museum.

The initial fundraising hurdle had been overcome. Now, the hard task of getting community leaders and business people involved needed to be addressed. Here was where Bud's business and negotiating skills were of great advantage. Money was needed, but labor would be the highest cost in the restoration. Therefore, he concentrated his efforts on asking local firms for their help in donating material and labor.

Bud began making telephone calls and more telephone calls. Unfortunately, during the early stages of the project, most of the contractors and business people were not interested or could not afford to donate their labor or funds. Bud noted that, by

far, the majority of labor was being contributed by members of the Society itself. Thousands of hours were volunteered. Finally, after many disappointments, bit-by-bit a few contractors and suppliers of materials began to respond and give assistance to the Society. There is a plaque with the names of contributors displayed in the Millbrae Museum.

Once the cottage was moved, Bud oversaw and coordinated all the activities and labor, such as construction of the building foundation, installation of all new plumbing, electrical, roof, rain gutters and sidewalks, as well as the restoration of all floors, walls, ceilings, and lighting fixtures throughout. All summed up, a total of \$184,000 in donated labor and materials went into this project.

Bud noted that due to the outstanding efforts of Society volunteers, as well as the support from the community and contractors that came forward, a "beautiful gem of a museum" came into being - one for which the Millbrae Historical Society and all of Millbrae can be exceedingly proud. The opening of the

Millbrae Museum in 1987 was the centerpiece of the Millbrae Historical Society after long hard years of work and dedication.

The following obituary appeared in the *Daily Journal* on August 24, 2012 following Bud's passing:

Allan Robert "Bud" Mason, born April 6, 1926 in Genoa, Nevada, died suddenly August 4, 2012 in Burlingame.

Husband of the late Virginia Vance Mason for 54 years. Father of Bruce Allan Mason (his wife Becky) of Houston Texas and the late Carol Virginia Mason.

Founding member and chairman of the Millbrae Lions Club White Cane Days. Received the 1997 Millbrae's Living History Award for significant historical contributions and community service. He donated time tirelessly to help establish the Millbrae Historical Museum and was the president of the Millbrae Historical Society from 1982-1987. Bud was also honored as 1998 Millbrae Man of the Year.

Let us never forget the contributions of Bud Mason to MHS and Millbrae.

## CURATOR'S REPORT

ALMA MASSOLO  
DOROTHY SEMKE

On September 12th, local resident **David Hartley** donated a beautiful 100-year-old Dresden-like figurine that once belonged to his mother-in-law and was inherited by his wife around 50 years ago. It is a must-see item located in the bookcase in the Fran Baxter Room. He also donated a coffee drip-a-lator, circa 1920s. Thank you David for helping to enhance our Museum!

It was a great pleasure to have **Ron Ucovich**, a member of the Alameda Museum, visit us on September 15. It was so nice to compare notes with him. For information on the Alameda Museum, visit their web site at [www.alamedamuseum.org](http://www.alamedamuseum.org).

The display case of the **Millbrae Police Department** has been revamped. The exhibit on **Frank Palmieri**, the legendary first Police Chief of Millbrae, has been up-

graded with the addition of the original badge he wore during his service and the beautiful silver and brass belt buckle given to him in 1932 by **Ogden Mills**, grandson of **Darius Ogden Mills**. We thank **Jim Palmieri**, son of Chief Palmieri, for this wonderful donation to our Museum. Thanks also to member **Clay Priola** for his help in setting up the display case.

On September 27, Kevin from **State Senator Leland Yee's** office visited the Museum and was greatly impressed. We enjoyed his visit. Our lovely **Mayor Marge Colapietro** also came to visit the Museum as it was National Museum Day.

A thank you to **Paul Larson** for his donation of old Chamber of Commerce records.

On Friday, September 19, we



opened the Museum for the **Mills High School Class of 1962** in celebration of their 50th High School Reunion. All of our Mills High School yearbooks were on display for the visitors to enjoy. **Alma Massolo** and **John Muniz** served as Museum curators for the special event.

Our annual **Yard Sale** was a great success. A profound thank you to all who donated articles and those that worked so hard setting up the displays and pricing the articles.

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

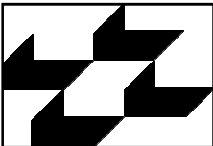
### MHS 2013-14 OFFICER/TRUSTEE NOMINEES

The MHS Nominating Committee has placed the following names into nomination to serve as MHS Officers and Trustees for the year 2013-14:

President: John Muniz  
Vice-President: Paul Larson  
Secretary: Alicia Espinoza  
Treasurer: Vern Bruce

Parliamentarian: Mary Vella Treseler  
Trustees: Paul Larson, John Muniz, Madelyn Richardson, and Joe Teresi

**Please patronize our Millbrae Historical Society Lifetime Business Members:**



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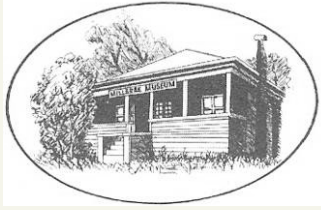


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Post Office Box 511  
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**MHS OFFICERS—2013**

**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**

**Sunday, March 17:** Millbrae Historical Society Installation of 2013 Officers and Board of Trustees, 2:00 pm, Millbrae Library Community Room "A", 1 Library Avenue.

- featuring a presentation on the 100th Anniversary of the Lincoln Highway (nation's first transcontinental road), light refreshments, and good company.

**Thursday, 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.

**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!!

**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