

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

HISTORICAL SPOTLIGHT:

1958

BY TOM DAWDY

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Historical Spotlight	1
President's Report	1
Vice-President's Message	3
Comic Strip	3
MHS Friday Night at the Movies Schedule	3
Train Museum News	4
Curator's Report	5
Calendar of Events	6

A lot of things happened in Millbrae in 1958, as our young town celebrated its 10 Year Anniversary and completed several major upgrades. Millbrae had just wrapped up an interesting year in 1957. The **Junipero Serra Highway** that was projected to be constructed right through the heart of Millbrae had been rejected, a new **Giants Stadium** planned for the end of Millbrae Avenue with a marina and a helicopter port had been nixed. Millbrae was still reeling from a major earthquake that shut down the business district. The quake broke all the plate glass windows at the **Safeway** store on Broadway and Hillcrest, and knocked all the food off the shelves at **Kilpatrick's** and Safeway. One of the big stories on the 6 o'clock news was the "River of Booze" running down Broadway from all the broken bottles at the

(continued on Page 4)

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT JOHN MUNIZ

Friends and fellow members,

Well, I'm back as your President for another term and proud of it! This is my fifth year, and I have enjoyed every moment and love working with our members and Board of Trustees. We have a lot of items to go over in this issue of our wonderful Millbrae Historical Society Newsletter.....

Our annual **Fourth of July Picnic** is fast approaching! This year, the Fourth of July picnic is on a Friday, at the **Chetcuti Room** starting at 11:00. Please see the enclosed reservation form in this newsletter. We always have a great program and a festive crowd of your friends and neighbors. The **Millbrae Lions Club** will be preparing those delicious burgers and beans and the **Millbrae Lions Leo's Club** will



serve. The raffle prizes are always great and generously donated by the merchants of Millbrae. Don't procrastinate — get those reservations in and join us for a good old-fashioned Fourth of July!

(continued on Page 2)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

All you bargain hunters out there mark your calendars for **Saturday, August 9th** for our annual **Millbrae Historical Society Rummage Sale**, held directly in front of the Millbrae Museum. Our Assistant Curator **Dorothy Semke** has lined up some unusual, gently-used merchandise that is ready to be sold at bargain basement prices. We always have a great time and enjoy seeing all our Millbrae friends and neighbors who come down to shop. If you have any donations for the rummage sale, bring them to the Museum or contact Dorothy and we will pick them up.

At the April meeting of the Millbrae Historical Society Board of Trustees meeting, the Board unanimously voted to provide the funding to restore our cherished **Larkin's Surrey**. We will be purchasing four new wheels, powder-coating the frame, painting the wood, and re-upholstering the seats. Our Blue Ribbon Committee on the restoration of the surrey, **Cathy Quigg** and **Vern Bruce**, has worked diligently to restore our surrey to as close as possible to its original condition. The photo below is the Larkin's surrey as it appeared when it was housed at the **Wells Fargo Bank** in Millbrae.



As I mentioned in the last newsletter's Presidents Message, the Millbrae Historical Society Museum exterior is in deplorable condition and in need of extensive restoration work. After I wrote a detailed letter, including photographs, to the Millbrae City Council and Public Works Director, the Millbrae Museum Exterior Restoration project was placed on the **City Council** agenda for consideration. After several months of budget reviews and consideration, I am delighted to be able to inform you that on June 10th the Millbrae City Council passed their FY 2014-15 budget, which included funding to restore the exterior of our beloved museum. I will keep you informed as to the status and time frame for restoration and painting of the museum exterior.

We have not yet determined when and where our annual **Millbrae Historical Society Field Trip** will be this year. We usually hold it after school starts in September in order to avoid the crowds. I'm sure we will select a great destination, and we will have a wonderful, educational time. We will keep you posted. If you have any ideas about a destination for our annual Millbrae Historical Society Field Trip, please let me know. For example, I will suggest visiting an historic winery in the Napa or Sonoma Valley wine country.

Remember the old **Millbrae Lions Scout House**, built in 1954 by the **Millbrae Lions Club**, located behind **Taylor Middle School** on property owned by the Millbrae School District. Vandalized and abandoned for many years, the building has now found new life as the **Millbrae Community Youth Center**. Through private funding and a herculean community effort by the **Peninsula Chinese Business Association**, the **Central Peninsula Church of Millbrae**, **Rebuilding Together Peninsula**, the **Millbrae Rotary**, **Millbrae Lions Club**, and the **Millbrae Community Foundation**, the building has now been restored to its former glory and brought up to Americans with Disabilities Act standards. Since the City wants sustainability and maximum use of the new center, the plan is to use it for meetings of the Boy Scouts and soccer teams, along with after-school programs. A six-month pilot program to partner with the **Mid-Peninsula Boys and Girls Clubs** to run after-school activities such as cooking, a homework hour, and art classes is underway.

As the summer weather approaches and the days are longer, please get out and enjoy all the wonderful things Millbrae has to offer. Check out the **Millbrae Historical Society Museum** and our **Southern Pacific Railroad museum**. Have a picnic in one of our beautiful parks. Hope to see you at the **Millbrae Art and Wine Festival**, where our award-winning Millbrae Historical Society **Southern Pacific Fire Engine** will be on display. Don't forget the **Millbrae Machines Car Show** on August 16th. Most of all, please patronize the great variety of Millbrae restaurants and remember to "Shop Millbrae".

Thank you to the members of the **Millbrae Historical Society Board of Trustees** for your dedication and hard work, and to the entire Millbrae Historical Society for continuing to move forward to protect and preserve the colorful history of Millbrae and the surrounding area!

Best Wishes,
John Muniz
 MHS President (2009- present)

**VICE-PRESIDENT'S
MESSAGE
PAUL LARSON**



Greetings Millbrae Historical Society Trustees, Members, and Friends,

We are all looking forward to our wonderful **July 4th BBQ** which takes place at the **David Chetcuti Community Room** every year at this time. The taste of hamburgers and goodies that go along with this festive occasion is making me hungry right now... and I've just finished eating. Ha ha! I've made requests to a number of great Millbrae businesses to provide spectacular raffle prizes for our 4th of July attendees to win. I'm grateful to have help from **Dorothy Semke, Mary Vella Treseler, and Helen Habeeb**, who each have been chasing and retriev-

ing these raffle prizes from here and there.

This year, however, I will be celebrating our country's "Independence from England" **IN England**. This trip has been planned for a while, but has come up very quickly. I wish everyone from the MHS could come with me. We are starting off in **London**, but from there are voyaging off to sea... so I will be somewhere in that area of the world on Friday, July 4th. I'm not sure of my schedule, and I don't know if they have hamburgers wherever I will be, but whatever I'll be eating on the 4th of July, I'll be saying a star-spangled prayer before my meal.

Thanks for your continued support of the Millbrae Historical Society. Whether you are a very active member, a mildly active member or not so active, the fact that you belong to the MHS shows that you value Millbrae's historical place on the Peninsula, in-turn making YOU a valued member of our community!

All my best to you, your family and loved-ones, and Happy 4th of July!

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	Year	Star	Date and Time
<i>The Godfather</i>	1972	Marlon Brando	07/20/2014 6:30 PM
<i>Mutiny on the Bounty</i>	1962	Marlon Brando	08/15/2014 6:30 PM
<i>Patton</i>	1970	George C. Scott	09/19/2014 6:30 PM
<i>Gandhi</i>	1982	Ben Kingsley	10/17/2014 6:30 PM

1958

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)



Highlands Liquor Store. In the Fall, the City purchased some 1957 Chevy police cars from **Smallcomb Chevrolet** in San Bruno (I'll bet the Millbrae Historical Society would give anything to have one of those '57 Chevy Millbrae Police Cars in our collection!). But in the end, Millbrae survived 1957, and the calendar pages turned to 1958

In January 1958, the City of Millbrae was ready to unveil its new **Civic Center** and **Police Station**. Everything was ready for a big celebration! A huge parade took place downtown and several thousand people turned out to celebrate

Millbrae's new City Hall, Police Station, and the Fire Station (that had opened in 1956). **San Francisco Mayor George Christopher** dedicated the modern "State of the Art" facilities.

January 1958 was a very busy month for Millbrae, as the **Millbrae Municipal Water System** was also finished and dedicated. This accomplishment had been set in motion in 1952, when Millbrae voters approved an \$850,000 bond measure to build the big water tank up on Skyline Boulevard (next to the Chevron Station) and combine the two previous water districts into one.

Millbrae took another big step forward in 1958 when they dedicated their new **Sewage Treatment Plant**. This project was made possible through the passage of a \$400,000 bond measure in 1952 by a margin of 8 to 1. In the early 1950's, most cities around the bay still pumped raw sewage along the

shoreline, and the shores around the bay were lined with dumps that allowed folks to dump garbage with no restrictions for a small fee. Some people just dumped right along the shoreline at the end of Millbrae Avenue. I remember smelling the stench in the air like a backed-up sewer, and my Mom saying "It must be low tide". And she was right! The treatment plant was a big step in the right direction towards cleaning up the bay.

Mills High School was finished in 1958, but was formally dedicated on January 25, 1959. **Safeway** opened up their supermarket in 1958, and the **Stanaways** opened up their family market at the corner of Hillcrest and Broadway.

There have been a lot of changes in Millbrae over the past 65 years, but it will be hard to beat 1958!

Tom Dawdy
MHS Historian

TRAIN MUSEUM NEWS

ELIZABETH FURBER, EDITOR
VERN BRUCE, REPORTER

Our Board of Trustees voted to restore the **1895 Larkin's Surrey** recently. The Train Museum volunteers are currently taking it apart in order to restore/repaint it. Additionally, since the wheels are too far gone to repair, we have new ones that were custom-made in South Dakota. Although not a 'train' item, it is something that would have

regularly ferried passengers from the train station to homes and businesses on the Peninsula. Look to this newsletter in the future for further history on this fine example of transportation history.

Our thanks again go out to our docents that have volunteered their time for the past several months.



Their efforts enable our organization to provide a wealth of information, as well as a fun time for kids, to our community.

Please come for a visit real soon!

HAPPY 4TH OF JULY!

The Millbrae Historical Society

Proudly Presents

An Old Fashioned Independence Day BBQ



Featuring

- Appetizer
 - BBQ Sirloin Hamburgers with all the trimmings
 - Green Salad
 - Chili Beans
 - Ice Cream & Cookies
- In Addition
- Entertainment
 - Raffle Prizes
 - Beer, Wine, Soda, Water



Where can I find this wonderful event?

On Friday, July 4th, 2014 simply go to the Dave Chetcuti Room at Civic Center Plaza: 450 Poplar Avenue between the Millbrae Library and the Millbrae Museum — 11:00 AM until 3:00 PM. \$14.00 is the cost & \$5.00 for kids under 12 years old. The Millbrae Lions Club will be serving an expertly prepared lunch at High Noon.



Please join us for this fine Independence Day tradition — Everyone is welcome

Please use this handy coupon to RSVP or call (650) 697-3319 (deadline for reservations is Monday, June 23, 2014)

Number attending MHS BBQ _____ Name (s) _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____ **RSVP's Only. Sorry, No Walk-In's**

Checks Payable to:
Millbrae Historical Society
P.O. Box 511
Millbrae, CA 94030

MHS YARD SALE

SPRING CLEANING ? ? ?

The Millbrae Historical Society welcomes any un-needed items you may want to get rid of
(no clothes or books please)
for our yearly YARD SALE to be held
in conjunction with the
Friends of the Millbrae Library Book Sale

Saturday, August 9
10:00 am to 4:00 pm

in front of the Millbrae Museum
420 Poplar Avenue

Yard Sale proceeds benefit the
Museum's building fund.

Contact Dorothy at (650) 697-7670
or bring items to the Museum
on any Saturday from 12 noon to 4 pm

THANK YOU

CURATOR'S REPORT

ALMA MASSOLO
DOROTHY SEMKE

Recently we had a visit from **Vanessa Poland** of El Granada, who originally contacted us through our website. She had three dolls she wished to donate to the Museum. Two of the dolls dated back to the 1970s. The third doll belonged to her grandmother and is approximately 150 years old. It is a beautiful 16-inch hand-crafted porcelain doll along with a cedar chest full of homemade doll clothes. Vanessa's father had a UV-protected glass case with a back mirror made to exhibit this lovely doll. We thank Vanessa very much and appreciate this addition to the Museum.

We also want to thank **Penelope Martell** of San Jose for mailing us numerous old articles from Millbrae's past.

A new addition donated by **Charles and Wendy Maynard** of Millbrae can be seen in our kitchen. It consists of three pieces, two of which

are over 100 years old. They donated a cast iron pot for making corn bread and a stove top cast iron waffle iron. The third piece is over 50 years old and is a cast iron pot used on Halloween mainly to make donuts for the children. We thank the Maynards so much for these items.

We have a baby doll donated by former Trustee and Woman of the Year **Lois Way** on display in the **Heritage Room** in an antique buggy. It is described as a **Lily** doll purchased in Hollywood in 1926-7 in her original clothing. This is a must-see item! Mrs. Way has also donated a Santa Fe plate. It is called **Navajo Silver-smith** by E. Martin Hennings (1886-1956), who was famous for paintings of Western Indians. This piece can be seen in the **Fran Baxter Room** near two replica antique die-cast cars - a Mercedes and a Rolls Royce, donated by our own Vice President **Paul Larson**.



Our thanks to **Vanessa Poland** and **Kevin** (our Recreation Department Superintendent) and **Sandra Sved** for becoming members of the Millbrae Historical Society--Welcome!

On **Saturday, August 9th**, be sure and join us for our annual **Yard Sale** along with the **Friends of the Millbrae Library's Book Sale**, held in front of the Museum. Donations are welcome for this event. No books or clothing, please. You can drop off your usable items at the Museum on Saturdays from 12 to 4.

Thank you,
Alma Massolo, Curator
Dorothy Semke, Assistant Curator

Special thanks to Rudy Alva at Allied Security Alarms for providing alarm service at the Millbrae Historical Society Museum free of charge for many years. Thanks, Rudy!

Rudy Alva

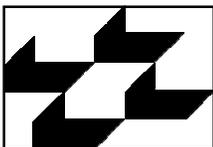
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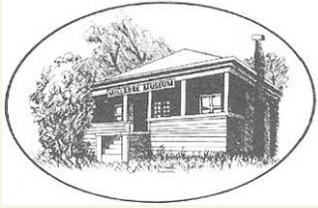


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MHS OFFICERS—2014

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

Saturday, August 9: 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*, 6:30 pm,
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