

# 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: NOTABLE MILLBRAEANS BY TOM DAWDY

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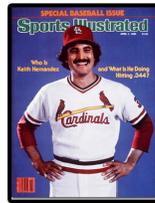
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Kathy Baker



James Van Hoften



Keith Hernandez



Toni Attell



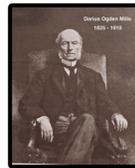
Leslie Maxie



Paul Fanaika



George Kelly



Darius Ogden Mills



Greg Jefferies



Craig Venter



Adam Tafralis

There have been a lot of notable people that have come out of our small town of Millbrae. Every time I discuss this subject with my friends and neighbors, I hear of more people to add to my list. I have picked out a handful of these "Notable Millbraeans" that have achieved fame on a national and international platform.

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT JOHN MUNIZ

Friends and fellow members,

I want to give a big "thank you" to all who attended our annual **Fourth of July Picnic**. It is always great to see our friends and members who every year celebrate our nation's birthday with the Millbrae Historical Society. We are very fortunate to have two fantastic Millbrae-based community service organizations that step up and

make our picnic a successful event. For at least twenty-five years, the **Millbrae Lions Club** has been cooking for our picnic - thank you so much Millbrae Lions. Also, thanks to the **Millbrae Leo's Club** for serving and cleaning up for us for the past seven years.

Our annual **Rummage Sale** was held on Saturday, August 9 in front of the Millbrae Museum. We drew a



big crowd and lots of hungry bargain hunters. We had tons of gently-used items to suit everyone's taste. **Assistant Curator Dorothy Semke** always does a fantastic job organizing, pricing

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

and displaying the donated items. A big thank you to all our members who came out to help with the sale. In recent years, the Millbrae Historical Society has become a greener organization by collecting and recycling gently-used items in conjunction with Millbrae's green policy.

### Restoration of the Larkin's Surrey

Work continues on the restoration of our **Larkin's Surrey**. Our s Surrey is housed at the Millbrae Train Museum and has been totally dismantled. We do have four new wheels for the s Surrey, since the original wheels were in very bad shape and had to be replaced. The next steps will be to powder coat the frame and perform the upholstery work. We are still seeking an appropriate display location in Millbrae for the restored s Surrey.



### Millbrae Museum Exterior Paint Restoration Project

In case you are not aware, the **Millbrae City Council** approved the FY2015 City budget, which allocates \$20,000 for the restoration of the exterior of the Millbrae Museum. Work on the museum exterior has already begun. The exterior siding has been scraped and sanded, and the windows have been re-sealed. If you look at the progress of the work, the Museum has received a preliminary coat of paint. A primer and finish coat still need to be applied. The gutters also have to be re-sealed or replaced. I will keep you posted on the progress of the Museum restoration project as the work continues.

### Millbrae Historical Society Annual Field Trip

Our annual fun **Millbrae Historical Society Field Trip** is scheduled for **Friday, September 12**. I do not know the destination. Tour director **Joe Teresi** said that I will have to read the Newsletter to find out. I'm all excited to find out where we're going. I'll be there! Check out the details of our annual field trip in this issue of the Newsletter.

### Millbrae Lions Car Show

Since the Millbrae Historical Society is all about preserving and educating the public about the history of our great City of Millbrae, I am providing information about the **Third Annual Millbrae Machines** car show presented by the Millbrae Lions Club. The date is **Saturday, August 16**, 8:00 am to 3:00 pm on Broadway in downtown Millbrae. Admission is free! Come on down and see over two hundred vintage cars, enjoy three bands, food, face painting and a jump house. Come on down and bring your friends and neighbors. For more information see the Millbrae Machines Website at:

[www.millbraemachines.com](http://www.millbraemachines.com).

### MHS Friday Night at the Movies

#### MHS 2014 Movie Schedule

Free movies start at 6:30 pm at the Millbrae Museum

July 20 - *The Godfather* (1972) with Marlon Brando  
 August 15 - *The Godfather Part II* (1974) with Al Pacino  
 September 19 - *Patton* (1970) with George C. Scott  
 October 17 - *Gandhi* (1982) with Ben Kingsley

### Millbrae Historical Society Newsletter

I know many of you have commented on how great and informative our quarterly newsletter is for our members. Of course most of the credit goes to our members who submit articles and to Newsletter Editor **Joe Teresi**. Now our Millbrae Historical Society Newsletter is available electronically via e-mail. If you would like your newsletter e-mailed instead of sent via US Mail, please let Joe know by e-mailing him at [jtnia@comcast.net](mailto:jtnia@comcast.net). If the newsletter is e-mailed, you see it in color and can save a copy on your hard drive or in the cloud for further reference. I have switched to e-mail instead of snail mail. Remember, back issues of the newsletter are available on the Millbrae Historical Society website ([www.millbraehs.org](http://www.millbraehs.org)).

Thank you to the Millbrae Historical Society Officers and Board of Trustees for your dedication and hard work to keep the Millbrae Historical Society moving forward to protect and preserve the colorful history of Millbrae and the surrounding area.

Best Wishes,  
**John Muniz**  
**Millbrae Historical Society President**  
**2009 - Present**

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

Greetings MHS Trustees, Members and Friends!

Since this Newsletter issue is for the month of August, I thought it would be fun to look back at several interesting historical milestones:

August 1<sup>st</sup> (Birthday) - *Star-Spangled Banner* author **Francis Scott Key** (1779-1843) was born in Frederick County, Maryland. After witnessing the British bombardment of **Fort McHenry** on the night of September 13-14, 1814, he was enthralled to see the American flag still flying over the fort at daybreak. He then wrote the poem originally entitled *Defense of Fort McHenry* which became the U.S. National Anthem in 1931.

August 2, 1923 - **President Warren G. Harding** died suddenly in a hotel in San Francisco while on a western speaking tour. His administration had been tainted by the Teapot Dome political scandal, and his sudden death prompted many unfounded rumors. He was succeeded the next day by **Calvin Coolidge**.

August 3, 1492 - **Christopher Columbus** set sail from Palos, Spain, with three ships, *Nina*, *Pinta*, and *Santa Maria*. Seeking a westerly route to the Far East, he instead landed on October 12th in the Bahamas, thinking it was an outlying Japanese island.



August 6, 1945 - The first atomic bomb was dropped over the center of Hiroshima at 8:15 a.m., by the American B-29 bomber **Enola Gay**. The bomb detonated about 1,800 ft. above ground, killing over 105,000 persons and destroying the city. Motivating the eventual Japanese surrender, it is estimated that the war was shortened by five years and the lives of millions were saved.

All my best to you, your family and loved-ones,  
**MHS 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	Year	Star	Date and Time
<i>The Godfather</i>	1972	Marlon Brando	07/20/2014 6:30 PM
<i>The Godfather—Part II</i>	1974	Al Pacino	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

## NOTABLE MILLBRAEANS (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

I can't list them in order, but Number 1 has to be **Darius Ogden Mills**. Mills bought part of the Rancho Buri Buri and built an estate named Millbrae. He founded the Bank of California in 1864, his grandson built Mills Field (now SFO), and many local institutions, including Mills Hospital, Mills Estate, and Mills High School, were named for him. Mills died of a heart attack in 1910 at his Millbrae home, leaving an estate worth \$36,227,391.

**George "High Pockets" Kelly** played most of his Major League Baseball career with the New York Giants. Kelly was a two-time World Series Champion (1921 & 1922), led the NL in home runs (1921) and runs batted (1920 & 1924), and was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1973. Kelly, a Millbrae resident, suffered a stroke and died at Peninsula Hospital on October 13, 1984.

**Keith Hernandez** moved to Millbrae in 1968 and was a star athlete at Capuchino High School. He was the starting first baseman with the World Series champion St. Louis Cardinals (1982) and New York Mets (1986). Keith was a five-time MLB All-Star, won the NL Batting Title, and was NL MVP. Hernandez also has a acting career, most notably starring as himself in "The Boyfriend", a two-part episode of *Seinfeld* in 1992.

**Tony Attell** (my childhood friend) went through all the Millbrae schools and became well-known as "Toad the Mime" in San Francisco before moving to LA. Tony is a Emmy-nominated actress and was named "The Best New Comedienne" by *Us Magazine*. She directed choreography in many music videos, including Kim Carnes in "Bette Davis Eyes". Tony has been

the opening act for Jay Leno, Steve Martin and Robin Williams. She is also the author of two books, with a third one coming out soon.

**Kathy Baker** (Mills High Class of 1968) made her screen debut in the 1983 drama film *The Right Stuff*. She has appeared in over 50 films. On television, Kathy starred as Dr. Jill Brock in the CBS dramatic series *Picket Fences*. Kathy has received three Prime Time Emmy Awards for outstanding Lead Actress in a Drama Series, a Golden Globe Award, and a Screen Actors Guild Award.

**Craig Venter** (Mills High Class of 1964). Some argue that Craig is the most famous person to come out of Mills High School. He was one of the first scientists to sequence the human genome, and the first to transfect a cell with a synthetic genome. Craig was listed in *Time Magazine's* 2007 and 2008 lists of the 100 most influential people in the world. In 2010, the British magazine *New Statesman* listed Craig 14th on their list of "The Worlds Most Influential Figures". Venter is currently seeking to patent the first life form created by humans.

**Leslie Maxie**, outstanding Mills High School Track and Field Athlete. While still at Mills, she set the still-standing World Youth Record of 55.20 seconds in the 400 meter hurdles. Maxie competed in the 1988 Summer Olympics, where she just fell short of a medal. Leslie also enjoyed a very successful career in sports broadcast journalism.

**James van Hoften** (Mills High Class of 1962). After logging over 3,300 hours of flight time mostly as a Navy fighter pilot, James was selected as an

astronaut candidate by NASA in 1978. He served as mission specialist on Space Shuttle flights in 1984 and 1985. He logged 338 hours in space. Van Hoften has been awarded many medals for his service in Vietnam and in outer space.

**Gregg Jefferies** came from one of Millbrae's oldest families, the Fagnani's. Jefferies attended Serra High School and was drafted by the New York Mets right out of high school. He was a two-time MLB All-star and had a 14-year MLB career.

**John Strzykalski** played on the first San Francisco 49er team in 1946 and raised his family and lived in Millbrae for most of his life.

**Bob St. Clair** was an outstanding 49ers offensive lineman (1953-63) and long-time Millbrae resident. He entered the NFL Hall of Fame in 1990.

More notable Millbraeans? You bet, but I'm out of space! Don't forget **Tony Tantillo**, the Fresh Grocer. **Greg Suhr** (SF Police Chief) raised his family in Millbrae. **Joanne Hayes White** (SF Fire Chief) was a former Millbrae Parks & Rec. Director. **Adam Tafrales** (Mills High Class of 2002) took San Jose State to a victory in the New Mexico Bowl and was signed by the Indianapolis Colts in 2008. **Paul Fanaika** (Mills High Class of 2004) played as starting Guard for the Arizona Cardinals. **Joe Montana** loved Millbrae and bought his folks a home here.

If you know of more notable Millbraeans, please visit our website [www.millbraehs.org](http://www.millbraehs.org) and let us know so I can add them to our list

**Tom Dawdy**  
MHS Historian

## CURATOR'S REPORT

ALMA MASSOLO  
DOROTHY SEMKE

Our **Annual Yard Sale** along with the **Friends of the Millbrae Library Book Sale** was held on **Saturday, August 9**. A HUGE "Thank You" to all those who donated items and helped to make it once again a big success.

We welcome a new family as members. **Christopher Del Nagro** of Millbrae brought his two children, **Isabella** (Age 5) and **Simon** (Age 3) into the Museum after they found an arrowhead at the **Meadows Park**. We were very happy to receive it and it is now in our Indian display case in the **Fran Baxter Room**.

We also would like to welcome the **Terrance Fisher** family from Pacifica as new members.

Former MHS Secretary, Trustee and Woman of the Year, **Lois Way**, donated a 1920-era baby bonnet for the doll she donated recently. She also donated a doll tea set belonging to her and her sister as children, along with a small metal toy WWII ambulance. Thank you Lois!

A pocket watch and spectacles (circa 1700) were given to the Museum by **Dario Pieraccini**. You can view these items in the glass display case in the hallway. Thank you very much for your many donations Dario.

On July 24, we opened up the Museum for **Ward Hall** to research old photos of the **Mills Mansion** for a book he is working on. We are excited to see this project when it is completed.



On July 19, five MHS members attended a tea given by the **South San Francisco Historical Society** as a fundraiser. Thanks to their members for a lovely afternoon and a glimpse into the past.

A friendly reminder to all of you to come and visit the Museum on any Saturday from 12 to 4 as there is always something new to see.

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

## MILLBRAE HISTORICAL SOCIETY FIELD TRIP



Come join us for a walk through historic downtown Half Moon Bay hosted by a docent from the Half Moon Bay History Association, followed by lunch at Half Moon Bay Joe's Restaurant and a drive through the new Tom Lantos Tunnel (Devil's Slide Bypass).

When: **Friday, September 12 (9:00 am to 3:30 pm)**  
Meet at the Millbrae Museum at 9:00 am  
Cost: Free tour, pay for your own lunch

RSVP by Friday, September 5 to Joe Teresi  
Email at [jtnia@comcast.net](mailto:jtnia@comcast.net) or call (650) 455-4887

## TRAIN MUSEUM NEWS

ELIZABETH FURBER, EDITOR  
VERN BRUCE, REPORTER

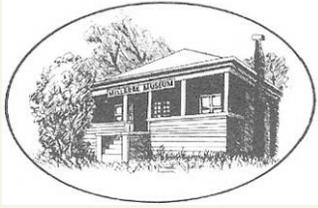
Our volunteers have successfully removed every nut, bolt and screw from the **1895 Larkins Surrey**. All parts, wood and metal, are ready to be restored and painted. Within a few months, we will begin the re-assembly of all those parts, with completion of the project scheduled by the end of the year.

Also, our **1931 Southern Pacific Fire Truck** will be on display at the **Millbrae Art & Wine Festival** on **Saturday, August 30<sup>th</sup>**. It will be with the other antique and classic cars in the Farmers' Market parking lot, located in the 200 block of Broadway.



Many thanks again go out to docents: **Gino & Gerry Micheli; Robert Gorran; Jason; Joseph Bonavia; Jorge Quezada; Richard Kennedy**. Their volunteer spirit keeps our organization going strong!

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—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, September 12:** Millbrae Historical Society Field Trip, 9:00 am to 3:30 pm  
Walking Tour of Historic Half Moon Bay (Meet at Millbrae Museum at 9:00 am)  
- RSVP by 9/5 to Joe Teresi by e-mail at [jtnia@comcast.net](mailto:jtnia@comcast.net) or by phone at (650) 455-4887.

**Friday, October 24:** Millbrae Man & Woman of the Year Awards Dinner  
Green Hills Country Club, 500 Ludeman Lane

- No-Host Cocktails at 6:00 pm
- Dinner at 7:00 pm

- Reservations required — call Jack Gardner at 777-0061 for an invitation

**Wednesday, December 10:** Millbrae Historical Society Annual Holiday Party, 7:00 to 9:00 pm  
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