Ice Cream Social — Gateway to the Summer

OUR YEARS AGO Jeanne Bone, our newsletter founder and editor extraordinaire, wrote this headline and following introduction to our most popular annual event, our "social ice cream social:"

"Summer doesn’t really start until we celebrate our annual old fashioned ice cream social. This year will be no exception. On June 22, we will be stepping up to the ice cream bar and creating our own delicious calorie delights. Lil Kavanaugh and her family have spoiled us over the years by loading the counter with ice creams, toppings such as fresh strawberries, caramel and chocolate sauce and whipped cream. We, of course look forward to being spoiled again this year. Various members will be supplying the added treats such as cookies, cakes, punch and other goodies."

These words ring just as true today, three years into the new millennium. Lil Kavanaugh and her family and all our various members will be once again hosting the Annual Ice Cream Social on June 22 under the oaks adjacent to the Library on its east side.

Once again this year we will have our raffle of unwrapped gifts for ticket winner selections. We encourage you to donate an item for the raffle; the donation brings added enjoyment to our day. Some ideas from the past have been gift certificates, flowers, small garden tools, a box of candy. Jeanne pointed out in 1999 a unique gift to be donated is two seedlings from the Hopkins Estate monkey tree, still standing on Laurel and Burgess streets (100 feet tall, and then 125 years old).

Please call Tim Goode at his home, 650-325-3001, if you are able to donate a gift for our raffle.

Last year 75 people enjoyed our ice cream and festivities. We have lots of room under our oak canopy, and always enough delicacies for all our members and friends, and it is a great opportunity to meet those who share a common love of Menlo Park. Come on out and bring your friends.
The following railroad story was suggested by Frank Helfrich and was prompted by recent Almanac articles about Menlo Park considering "grade separations," which separate roads from tracks, especially now with the coming of high speed trains.

In fact, Menlo Park has to make an important decision by June 30 to qualify for funds under Measure A's extension if it should choose to have a separations. If Measure A is extended past 2008, it will provide state and federal funds that make the building of separations far more affordable. The present Measure A tax money from a half-cent sales tax, brings in between $55 to $65 million in tax dollars per year. With state and federal matching funds, close to $100 million dollars is generated for transportation projects. Quite a return on one's investment!

If Menlo Park decides to participate and receives prioritization from the County Transportation Authority, then the historic Menlo Park Railroad Station may be in jeopardy. The railroad station that was so instrumental in the formation and growth of Menlo Park may fall victim to the evolution of the railroad and the emergence of "bullet trains."

Therefore, Frank Helfrich suggested it was timely to return to a speech delivered by Dorothy F. Regnery at the dedication of State Historical Landmark No. 955, the plaque to honor the historical significance of our Menlo Park Station. Excerpts from her talk capture the "fascinating history of this Menlo Park Station." Although there was "one other railroad built in California prior to its construction, it was a short line from Sacramento to Folsom, but nothing remains of it.

"It (Menlo Park Station) was the origin of and remains the hub of the Town of Menlo Park. When the 1850s idea of a railroad stretching the length of the San Francisco Peninsula was conceived there was nothing resembling a community here. A station stimulated subdividers to envision a town. Around the station sprang the town's first businesses — hotels serving summer patrons seeking a few days vacation in the country. Through the years there four hotels adjacent to the station: (east) Golder's Menlo Park House, (south) Oak Grove Villa, (west) Kuck's Menlo Park Hotel and (northwest) the Palm Hotel. Nearby were scattered luxurious summer estates for San Francisco's wealthiest families. The station served as a shipping point for perishable fruits, like delicious strawberries, and fresh vegetables grown in Portola Valley which were in demand at fashionable city hotels in the city markets."

Dorothy Regnery then relates the intriguing and entertaining tale of the San Francisco to San Jose Rail Road, approximately 53 miles. Three counties were involved, and bond elections in the 19th century seemed as popular as bond elections in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Therefore, to boost a bond election, in May of 1861, a formal ground-breaking at the proposed San Francisquito Creek crossing was organized. Construction of the bridge began in February of 1862, but the Civil War delayed the delivery of rails until June of 1863. Then the laying of rails began at Belmont and progressed in both directions.

"By September 1863 a few dignitaries were invited to ride on an open flat car over the completed portion of the track. One newspaper reported that the train (traveled) at "the remarkable speed of 15 miles in 15 minutes. Hats had to be held on with a tightened grasp, while cigars fell from mouths because the speed was so great."

"Another special train celebrated the crossing of Menlo Park. It was made up of all the..."
companies rolling stock—six passenger cars, three baggage cars, two flat cars pulled by two locomotives. This also marked the beginning of daily service to and from San Francisco to Churchill Street crossing in Present Palo Alto.

"Louis Golder capitalized on the opportunity provided by the railroad and opened a saloon near the bridge construction site near San Francisquito Creek. Next he purchased four lots in the town being designated Menlo park. He made an immediate cash return by selling the railroad the right-of-way across his lots from Oak Grove Avenue to Ravenswood Avenue and eventually by selling three lots to the railroad company for its permanent site. On his remaining lot Golder built a large hotel and saloon, known as the Menlo Park House. It was the first business in Menlo Park. Incidentally, Golder became the first station master for the next two decades.

The first station was little more than a shed on the other side of Oak Grove Avenue, but it became a major stop.

Stanford University, World War I and Camp Fremont, and the 1923 electricity and paved parking created the major changes.

Surrounding the station, the original vegetation, a mass of poison oak is gone. Still present but now threatened are the Stanford Oak, so called because the Stanford's carriage waited beneath its shade, and palm trees, which Timothy Hopkins had transplanted from the present Civic Center.

"In 1959 the Southern Pacific closed the station. In 1965 the Chamber of Commerce assumed responsibility for stabilizing the station. Without its care this treasure probably would have been lost. Menlo-Atherton High School students in woodworking classes re-created the 1890s ridge crest ... The station was painted yellow with white trim.

In 1983 with recognition of its landmark status as the oldest railroad station in the State of California, it has a new dress of gray and plum."

Progress ironically may cause our landmark to follow the path of the first railroad in California, the Sacramento to Folsom line.

Underground Treasures

M O S T  M E N L O  P A R K  H istorical Association members are probably unaware of the treasures to be found in the basement of the Menlo Park Library in our very small but extremely efficient History Room. The efficiency is provided by a team of workers who have labored almost anonymously to chronicle the players and historical sites that have marked the evolution of the history of Menlo Park.

One of these treasures is Kathy Restaino, graduate of the College of St. Elizabeth (Morristown, Pa.), who went on to a long and illustrious career in the television industry. She moved to Menlo Park in July of 2001 to be near her family.

She started her career in New York City working for CBS Network as Supervisor of Ratings and worked there from 1970 to 1974; then she became Research Director at KTVU in Oakland for 13 years, and finally finished her career in Chicago as Research Director at WGN-TV.

Currently she is happy to be near her family and new granddaughter Tessa, and she is also happy to be working in our archives, continuing a pursuit she has followed since college. Of course, the Menlo Park Historical Association is extremely happy to have her as a volunteer with all the experience and expertise that she brings to the association as an archivist.

She is not only a grandparent and accomplished researcher, she is also working as a Librarian.
at the University of San Francisco Campus in Santa Clara.

With her many talents, she has taken on some major projects for the M.P.H.A. One project, the Ira Bonde collection, packed into boxes, took months just to sort through the boxes simply to find out what it encompassed. It included years of newspaper clippings, city council and special reports. Now those examined contents are edited for the shelves in a special Ira Bonde collection.

Kathy has also completed the organization and filing of the Elmo Hayden photographs, all but two of the photographs coming to us by way of Don Sumner, resident of Portola Valley, descendant of original land grant owners of Corte Madera, a Lifetime M.P.H.A. member, a former member of the Menlo Park Hardware team, and now a valued volunteer for us.

These two dedicated and gifted volunteers revealed some hidden strength within this organization, the power of personal contact.

For Kathy, why should she, a newcomer to Menlo Park, become an avid and resourceful volunteer for the Historical Association? Kathy answered simply that she had long been interested in libraries, and she, like so many others, met and liked Jeanne Bone. Fate and Jeanne Bone helped to recruit Kathy.

Another amazing tribute to the power of personal contacts, comes from Menlo Park Hardware, a local business started in 1924 but recently closed. Yet the spirit of that respected hardware store is deeply felt in the basement of the library as some of our special volunteer treasures.

Nancy Lanson, for example, is an enthusiastic volunteer who is temporarily taking the place of Kathleen “Suzy” Lorist, who is taking a class. Nancy worked with Don Sumner, the volunteer and Lifetime Member who was responsible for most of the Hayden collection, at Menlo Park Hardware. Also a former employee at Menlo Park Hardware is volunteer Robin Sutton who works on our obituaries. And “Suzy” Lorist is the daughter of Dom Ryan, brother and partner of the founder and original owner, J. William Ryan of Menlo Park Hardware.

We owe many thanks to the power of Jeanne Bone and Menlo Park Hardware for blessing our association with such special treasures, who no longer are anonymous and whose work deserves the highest praise. With their skills, dedication and warm personalities, they have made the History Room an inviting and vibrant work area.

Flag Day
June 14
Membership News

ANNUALLY the Menlo Park Historical Association has published the entire list of its membership in our last edition of the year. In 2002 we did not publish that list, and we believe that oversight might have contributed to a membership discrepancy. In this issue we are publishing our current membership list. We want all of our members to continue as paying members.

Therefore, if your name does not appear on the list (LIFE MEMBERS ARE NOT INCLUDED), please contact us at 858-3368 to correct the discrepancy.

We apologize for our oversight, and we plan to once again return to the posting of our complete membership in our last edition of the year.

Amsbaugh, Mr. & Mrs. Allen
Anderson, Peter
Angus, Mr. & Mrs. Richard
Anstead, Mr. & Mrs. L. M.
Augustin, Elizabeth D.
Backlund, Dorothy & Fred
Barbour, Mr. John H.
Barker, Charles
Barker, Gordon
Bethard, Mrs. Glenn A.
Blackmarr, Lois
Blunden, Denis
Bogel, Betsy
Bohler, Mary
Bohnert, Rev. Edward
Boucher, Lee
Brauman, Mr. & Mrs. John
Bryner, Frances A.
Bryner, Dr. Sergius
Buckhout, Blanchard
Bugna, Ester

In Memoriam

Brian G. Kestner, Menlo Park Historical Association Life Member, has recently passed away. To date, the Gate Post has no details.

Bunnenberg, Leta Beth
Carroll, Kathryn H.
Carter, George T.
Cassell, Louise
Ciardella, Mr. Louis
Cooper, Dorothy Shepard
Curulis, Olga T.
Cutting, Mr. & Mrs. Lester
Dahlberg, Mary
Demeter, Michael
Devincenzi, Mrs. Olga
Dickey & family, Mrs. Maureen
Diebels, Paul
Dobberpuhl, Mrs. Dan
Douglas, Mr. & Mrs. Earl S.
Durfey, Mr. & Mrs. George
English, Dr. Jo
Eshleman, Wallace B.
Fablinger, Mrs. Flora
Feldman, Carl
Fenner, Nancy
Fockler, Mary
Froll, Melvin R.
Froll, Richard
Galinnetti, Christine
Gary, Jeanne
Genevro, Mr. & Mrs. Al
Godfrey, Dr. Lorraine
Goettel, Jean
Goode, Timothy D.
Goode, Lauren
Goodwin, Ann Morey
Gordon, Ms Leslie
Harding, Mike & Diane
Harrison, Harry A.
Hatfield, Patricia
Helfrich, Dr. Philip
Herren, Elizabeth J.
Hjelm, Patricia C.
Holding, Rosemary C.
Hoss, Mrs. Harold
Inglis, John & Joan
Jacimo, Louise
Janczewski, Mrs. Claudia
Johnson, Mr. John R.
Johnson, Mrs. Francis
Johnston, Mr. Larry
Jones, Alan C.
Jones, Calvin
Kavanaugh, Lil
Kelly, Claire
Kennedy, Alanna C.
Kiesling, Lolu
Knapp, Mr. Willis
Lancestremer, Mrs. Eloise
Larable, Marie R.
Latoire, Helen M.
Laurie, Robert
Lawrence, Sr. Lorraine
Leonardl, Mrs. Mary
Leonardl, Ursula
Lopez, Dr. Carlos
Massard, Mrs. Carol G.
Matas, Louis
Matthews, Mr. & Mrs. Michael
Mattingly, S.S., Rev. John F.
McCarthy, Raymond M.
McLinden, Mrs. Hugh G.
McLoughlin, Bernie & Yvette
Meissner, Ernst
Merrill, Mr. Mark
Miller, Mr. & Mrs. Steve
Morgan, Patrick R.
Morey, Nancy J.
Morris, Frank
Morrow, Ms. Nancy
Narlesky, Betty J.
Nicoli, A. H.
Norris, Barbara
Notthoff, Arthur
Oakford, Mr. & Mrs. Robert
Olive, Mrs. Josephine
Patterson, Mr. John
Pattin, Marian
Pease, Caroline A.
Reavis, Jane
Reavis, Nancy
Reese, Elena Lyn
Roach, Mrs. James
Robbiano, Mr. Paul
Robinson, Mr. Kelsey
Rothman, Ruth
Russ, Mr. & Mrs. C. Wm.
Sakuda, Nancy
Searles, Dorothy
Seccombe, Mr. & Mrs. Roger
Smith, Matt
Smith, Raymond
Sonnichsen, Mr. & Mrs. D.C.
Stock, Jim
Stone, Marjorie & Herbert
Sutherland, Susan & Kenneth
Taft, Elizabeth
Thompson, Catherine
Tona, Jeanne Bettini
Treadwell, Ann Classen
Waaland, Mrs. Charlotte A.
Wagstaffe, Mr. & Mrs. William
Walcher, Mr. Bruce
Walker, Rita A.
Walker, Mr. Sandy
Ward, Adrian L.
Webster, Harriet & Jeffrey
Weeden, Mrs. Patty
Whitehead, Mr. Warren
Wood, Elinor E.
Workman, Mr. Gil
Zarcone, Julie

Please Note New Telephone No. for MPHA:
330-2522
Deliver before May 10, 2003

TIME DATED MATERIAL

Phone: 650/838-3368
Menlo Park, CA 94026-1002
P.O. Box 1002

M E N L O      P A R K

MEMO PARK, CA
Permit #870
FINAL-
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Non-Profit Org.

May 11th
Remember Mom

June 15th
HAVE U HUGGED DAD 2-DAY

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