

# The Tall Tree Newsletter

of the PALO ALTO  
HISTORICAL  
ASSOCIATION

Since 1913

May 2019 Volume 42, N° 7

The Palo Alto Historical Association and Palo Alto Stanford Heritage present

## The 24th Annual Centennial Plaque and Historic Preservation Awards



Sunday, May 5, 2019

2:00 – 4:00 pm

Palo Alto Art Center Auditorium  
1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto



381 Lincoln Avenue, built in 1894

Palo Alto Stanford Heritage (PAST) in cooperation with the Palo Alto Historical Association (PAHA) will host its 24th annual presentation of Centennial Plaques to owners of 100-year old homes. We will also recognize preservation projects that renovate, rehabilitate, or restore local historic buildings. This yearly celebration is part of PAST's mission to promote the importance of preservation of the historic architecture, neighborhoods, and character of the greater Palo Alto and Stanford areas.

This year's program is especially meaningful since it coincides with the 125th anniversary of Palo Alto's founding in 1894. As part of PAST and PAHA commitments to participate in the anniversary events, we are pleased to have local architect Dan Garber, FAIA, and partner at Fergus Garber Young Architects as our speaker. Dan's program is called "Palo Alto at 125", the perfect topic that helps us appreciate the architecture of local homes and buildings from 1894 to today.



3322 Waverley Street, built in 2019



**Dan Garber, Architect**  
Our speaker

Daniel Garber, FAIA, is a partner at Fergus Garber Young Architects. Dan is the past co-chair of the City of Palo Alto Citizens Advisory Committee on the Comprehensive Plan Update, chair of the Palo Alto Planning and Transportation Commission, trustee of TheatreWorks Repertory Theatre in Palo Alto and Mountain View, and President of the Friends of the Palo Alto Junior Museum & Zoo.

Free and Open to the Public ~ Refreshments Served



**PRESIDENT'S LETTER**  
**Ralph Britton**

**PALO ALTO**  
**HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**

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*The Palo Alto Historical Association, a non-profit organization, was established in 1948 as successor to an earlier organization founded in 1913. Its main objectives are:*

- *Collect, organize, and preserve materials pertaining to the history and heritage of Palo Alto.*
- *Spread information about Palo Alto's history by means of programs, displays, and publications.*
- *Recognize and preserve historic sites and structures.*

*The Guy Miller Archives of the Palo Alto Historical Association are stored at Cubberley Community Center, K-7, Phone (650) 329-2353.*

*Board meetings are held at 4pm on the first Wednesday of each month (except August) at the Guy Miller Archives. Public programs are held at 2pm on the first Sunday of each month (October-December, February-May) at various locations in Palo Alto. Programs include speakers. The final program of the year is held in June and includes a dinner and a program. The public is welcome at all programs.*

# Historic Estates of the Peninsula

The Peninsula has long been an outpost for the wealthy seeking a warm and rural location for a home away from San Francisco. Many large estates were constructed at the end of the 19th and early 20th centuries in Woodside, which still remains the choice of a number of well-known wealthy families.

Early residents included sugar heir Adolph Spreckels, coffee company owner James Folger, and spice magnate August Schilling, as well as the family of Swedish-born shipping entrepreneur William Matson.

Schilling was originally a partner with Folger, but ultimately Schilling moved more into spices and the two separated but are said to have remained friends.

Schilling bought land from pioneer Dennis Martin, along Dennis Martin Creek which supplied power to run Martin's saw mills.

In 1914, Schilling had 150 acres upon which he built a four-story mansion with ten fireplaces. It was probably the most elegant estate of that era and one mentioned by my parents when we would go for a drive around Woodside in the 1940s. Folger had an estate not far away.

The Matson-Roth property is now the show piece, Filoli.

Images and information about the Shilling estate can be found at

[www.allelementsdesign.com/schilling/history/residences/portola.html](http://www.allelementsdesign.com/schilling/history/residences/portola.html)

# Transcontinental Railroad Sesquicentennial



**FROM THE DESK OF**  
**Steve Staiger**  
**City Historian**

Territory, linking the West Coast with the rest of the nation to the East.

For its first nineteen years of statehood (including the years of the Civil War) California, and later Oregon and Nevada, had been isolated from the rest of the Union. Communications took months, but was speeded up with the introduction of the Pony Express and later the telegraph, greatly reducing the communications gap. However, it still took many weeks

This month 150 years ago, on May 10, 1869, the Central Pacific and Union Pacific railroads met at Promontory Summit, Utah

to travel from California by steamship to Central America, crossing the isthmus by train, and then continuing through the Caribbean and Atlantic via steamship to reach the East Coast.

Railroad travel across the Plains, the Rockies, the Great Basin, and then the Sierras took days, a week or more from Omaha. Trains would average 15-20 miles per hour, equal to what a wagon could do on a good day.

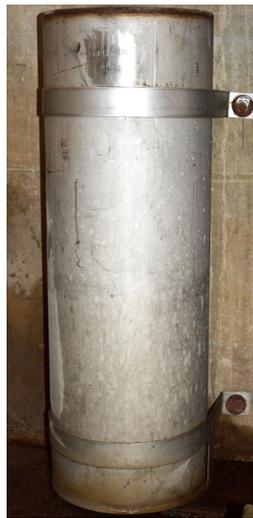
The railroad brought goods from factories in the East in far less time than sailing around the southern tip of South America. Within a few years, California agricultural products were heading eastward to new markets. The California citrus industry developed because fresh oranges and lemons could reach eastern cities, especially in the winter months. (Continued on page 3)



**Jerry Keithley update from Steve Staiger:** A recent article I wrote on one of the Creators of the Legacy recalled the history of Palo Alto's first City Manager, Jerry Keithley. He became the City Manager in the early 1950s. I had made several attempts to confirm his whereabouts, without success. However, Crystal Gamage recently informed me that he died on March 5, 2019 in southern California. He was 102 years old.

# PAHA to open Time Capsule on Sunday, April 28, 2019!

The Celebration of Palo Alto's 125th anniversary (1894 – 2019) includes events throughout 2019. The City of Palo Alto, along with many other organizations including PAHA and PAST Heritage, are planning 125th anniversary themed events and projects throughout the year, including the May Fete Parade, the Chili Cook Off, and the Black and White Ball. The first official event is Palo Alto Day, a Palo Alto birthday party, on Sunday, April 28 at 2:00 p.m. at the King Plaza in front of City Hall, 250 Hamilton Avenue.



The 2019 capsule to be unveiled on April 28th

The party will feature short presentations about Palo Alto's 125th birthday, entertainment, refreshments, and the opening of a time capsule placed in the City Hall basement during the 1994 Centennial.

PAHA is celebrating the 125th anniversary in several ways. The opening of the 2019 time capsule will be done by PAHA's Time Capsule Committee in cooperation with the Department of Public Works. Committee members include Brian George, Steve Staiger, Jeff Day, Diana Diamond, Laura Bajuk and Jon Graves. Jeff Day and Yeaman Auto Body volunteered to cut open the capsule that was sealed with a welded cover. It was one of four capsules that were installed during the 1994 Centennial celebration. As far as we know, each capsule contains different items. Capsules are to be unsealed at 25-year intervals. The 2019 capsule is the first to be opened.

PAHA is also updating the "Creators of the Legacy" list established in 1994. We will be researching possible candidates who deserve to be recognized for their contributions to Palo Alto. The original list had 54 names and each person had a framed photo that was part of a Centennial exhibit. The new names and photos, along with the originals, will be displayed at the Rinconada Library in August.

Another PAHA project, in cooperation with the Palo Alto City Library, is the digitization of our Centennial book so it can be placed online. The book, published in 1993, was a PAHA project that created an in-depth resource on Palo Alto history. The book is now out of print, so the digitization will allow continued access.



Plaque denoting placement of the four time capsules in City Hall in 1994

Last is PAHA's publication of a new book on Mayfield by Raye Ringholz. Her book provides a concise history of Mayfield from 1850 to 2018. The goal is to have this book available in the fall.

These and all 2019 anniversary events will be listed on a web site, [www.paloalto125.org](http://www.paloalto125.org), currently under construction.

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(Continued from page 2)

Travel by sea or overland was long, arduous, and dangerous. The railroad greatly reduced (though never eliminated) all three difficulties of cross-country travel.

Travel to California was still an adventure, but far less dangerous and far more enticing to a new kind of traveler. Travelers included Easterners looking for business opportunities and Europeans looking for adventure, plus thousands of emigrants looking for a new home with good opportunities. Jules Verne's Phileas Fogg could not have made it around the world in eighty days without the railroad



The Golden Spike, 1869. Provided by the Stanford University Libraries.

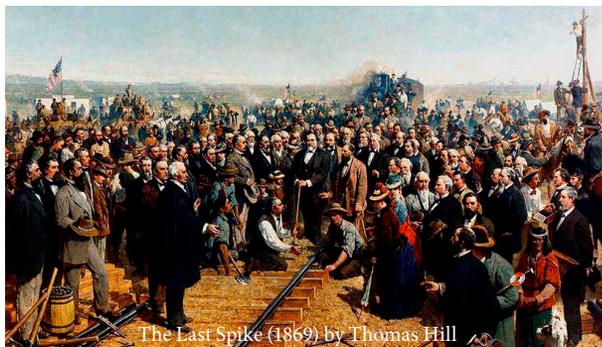
linking the Pacific Coast with the Eastern Seaboard.

California is recognizing the historic significance of this 150th anniversary with a series of observances by the Governor and others. There is also a local historic significance to this sesquicentennial celebration—

Leland Stanford was at Promontory Summit on that day in 1869. As the President of the Central Pacific Railroad, it was his honor to drive one of the gold spikes. It was the wealth he derived from the Central Pacific that gave him the fortune he and his wife Jane used to build and endow the Leland Stanford Junior University.

# History Jaunts for the Spring

The Stanford Historical Society celebrates the 150th anniversary of the completion of the Transcontinental Railroad with a film series this spring called “**Images of the West**”. The series is free and open to the public and will feature such classics as *Union Pacific*, a 1939 DeMille epic starring Barbara Stanwyck and Joel McCrea (April 22); *Iron Road*, a 2009 Canadian documentary on the role of Chinese workers (April 29); *The Transcontinental Railroad*, a 2007 “American Experience” documentary (May 6); *Once upon a Time in the West*, a 1968 movie directed by Sergio Leone (May 13). For locations and times, call (650) 725-3332 or visit: <https://historicalsociety.stanford.edu>



The Last Spike (1869) by Thomas Hill

If you haven't been here, GO! **The Computer History Museum** is a must-see. This “one-of-a-kind, 25,000 sq. ft. exhibition” space encompasses 19 galleries, 1100 objects, and an array of multimedia experiences,” tracing technology and computing from the abacus to the smartphone. I make sure that all of my out-of-town visitors go to the Computer Museum, located at 1401 N. Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View. The museum is open Wednesday through Sunday. For hours or to schedule a docent tour, visit <https://www.computerhistory.org/visit/> or call (650) 810-1010.

**Sausalito** in the Spring—ocean front, “whimsical shops, sleek galleries,” and a myriad of activities. Check out the Bridgeway Promenade and some of its attractions, such as the Marinship Exhibit—once a thriving WWII shipyard, now filled with art studios and restaurants. Look up the Bay Model Visitor Center to find out about free tours of the Matthew Turner educational tall ship. If you haven't taken this jaunt, be advised, it's worth the trip! Call (415) 332-3871 or visit <https://www.spn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/Bay-Model-Visitor-Center>.



## Happy 125th Birthday, Palo Alto!



**Peninsula Creamery**  
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**650-323-3175 [peninsulacreamery.com](http://peninsulacreamery.com)**



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### Welcome New Members!

Amanda Brown  
Irene Kane

### PAHA Upcoming Programs

#### Get tickets NOW!

Wednesday, June 5 will be the last program until the Fall. Join us for our Annual Celebration Dinner featuring Bo Crane who will be speaking on the history of rock and roll in Palo Alto.

Order your tickets with Eventbrite or the enclosed form by May 29.

[www.eventbrite.com/e/paha-annual-dinner-tickets-60003480024](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/paha-annual-dinner-tickets-60003480024)

### The Heritage Program

for June 2019 will feature PAHA's April 2019 program, “Tales of Timothy Hopkins: City Father and University Godfather” by historian Steve Staiger  
Airs on Channels 28 or 30 on various days and times. It is simultaneously streamed on the Media Center website [www.midpenmedia.org](http://www.midpenmedia.org)  
Check website for schedule

DVDs available from the Guy Miller Archives, Cubberley Community Center, K-7

Tues. 4-8 pm, Thurs. 1-5 pm

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