

Since 1913

# The Tall Tree Newsletter

of the PALO ALTO HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

November 2019 Volume 43, No 2

The Palo Alto Historical Association presents

## Jane Richter Horton's The 50/60 Kid: A Palo Alto Dreamer



Louis Road, 1955  
Photo courtesy of Jane Horton

**Sunday, November 3, 2019 2:00 – 4:00 pm**  
**Palo Alto Art Center – 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto**



**Jane Richter Horton**  
Author

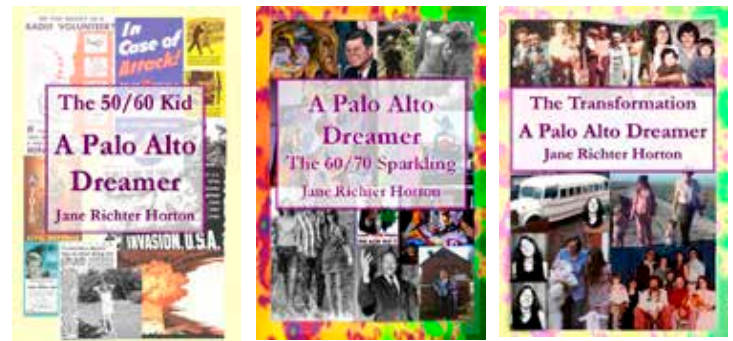
Intrigued by the history of Palo Alto and its surrounding areas, Jane Horton has written a series of books titled “A Palo Alto Dreamer.” This series explores Jane’s recollections of growing up in Palo Alto, tales of Palo Alto’s past, and the local changes she and her family experienced while living here.

A long time Palo Alto resident, Jane was three years old when her family moved into their newly purchased home on Louis Road in 1953. The Richter family owned this home until 2015, when it was sold following the death of her father, Wayne. Jane attended Palo Verde Elementary School, Wilbur Jr. High School, and graduated from Cubberley High School in 1968.

Jane’s presentation will include photos, facts, and personal stories. With her presentation, she hopes to inspire those

in attendance with new information or remembered experiences, and to motivate others to keep their own stories alive by recording their own histories.

The Palo Alto Dreamer book series includes “The 50/60 Kid,” covering the decade of the 1950s; “The 60/70 Sparkling,” about the tumultuous 1960s; and “The Transformation,” which covers the 1970s. Jane’s books will be available for sale following the presentation.



Free and Open to the Public ~ Refreshments Served



**Darla Secor**  
**City Historian**

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*The Palo Alto Historical Association, a 501(c)(3) charitable 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.*

# Message from Darla - PAHA's New Historian

In the October Tall Tree, Steve introduced me as his successor as Historian of PAHA. Like many current Palo Alto residents, I am a transplant to Palo Alto, moving here in 2013 after living a decade in Pittsburgh, PA. I currently live in an Eichler in the Greenmeadow neighborhood with my husband and three boys. This past summer, I finished my Masters of Archives and Record Administration degree from San Jose State University. I started volunteering at the Archives in 2015 after writing a paper about it and subsequently was hooked! In 2017, I became a PAHA Board member and have worked on the PAHA Membership and Social Media Committee since then.

Those of you who know Steve know I have very big shoes to fill. I am thankful there will be an extended overlap period this next year where I will be working alongside him and absorbing as much of his wisdom and knowledge as I can. My focus may

be somewhat different from Steve's, but I think it will complement PAHA and the Archives. Mainly, I want to add Archivist to my job description along with Historian. I have two goals that focus on our fantastic collection—the first is to make sure we are preserving our materials the best we can, and the second is to make our collection more accessible to the public. This means I will be working on inventorying and cataloging our materials to make sure we know what we have and how to find it.

One of my favorite projects I've been involved with at PAHA is working with Brian George to put our photo collection online. As of this month, we have 14,000 photos online—a huge accomplishment! I hope to continue to build this resource as well as add other online materials for everyone to use. I currently work the Archives desk at Cubberley Center Room K-7 on Tuesday evenings from 4-8pm, and welcome all visitors!

## Strike Up the Band!

**(Remembrances of the Palo Alto Military Academy in the 1950s and 60s)**  
**By PAHA Board member, Anita Delaney**

In the 1950s, my family lived about one block from the Palo Alto Military Academy (located at 1129 Parkinson Avenue). When the band played for special events on the parade field, many neighborhood kids headed to the sidewalks facing the field to watch the cadets. You could view the parade ground from Harker, Harriet, and Parkinson streets. For the neighborhood folks, this added color and excitement to an ordinary day.

The Palo Alto Military Academy has a long and honorable history. It was founded in 1893 by Frank Cramer, reorganized as the Palo Alto Military Academy in 1919 by Col. Richard P. Kelly, and again in 1950 by Major Donald L. Nichols, former student.



Palo Alto Military Academy Cadets

When I was in fifth grade (in the mid-1950s), my dad was a fifth grade teacher at the Palo Alto Military Academy. He taught there for a year before he transitioned into his next career as a Palo Alto real estate broker. During that year, my family was frequently a guest at the Sunday noon meal in the dining hall at the Academy. Fried chicken was usually on the menu. It was at

this time that I learned a more refined way to eat chicken by watching Mrs. Torcellini (wife of Captain Torcellini, commandant). She would delicately cut the chicken off the bone. At that point in my life, I went from eating chicken in a Flintstone style to eating chicken in a more ladylike fashion!

(Continued on page 3)

## The Making of Antonio's Nut House

#1 in a series by PAHA Board member, Jeff Day



out of fashion and favor with the times. Fortunately, Antonio's Nut House has survived on California Avenue since its opening in 1972.

The founder, Tony Montooth was raised in San Francisco. His parents opened Tennessee Grill in the Sunset District, and Tony got his business skills from his family. He started out on his own with Tony's Coffee Shop in Burlingame, ran The Skylark in Foster City, and eventually came to open a business in Palo Alto. He leased 321 California Avenue in December of 1972. He had a business partner at the time, but the bar was not the focal point of their operation. It hosted Hofbrau style meals, French cuisine, and Italian sit-down dinners with his signature minestrone soup on the menu. This was when he called the place "Antonio's". No peanuts were in the picture yet.

The business model began to change one night when a rugby team came in. They didn't come in for dinner, but just to have drinks and fun. Tony had a great night and an idea came to him—downsize the restaurant and expand the bar. Pool tables, dartboards, and card games

Many of the old businesses we knew of and grew up with have disappeared from Palo Alto. Many restaurants and bars in particular have come and gone, going in and

soon followed. Peanuts were in baskets and passed out from behind the bar. Soon the gorilla showed himself and the place became Antonio's Nut House—a public house for locals, Stanford students and faculty, and people who worked nearby to share a drink and a story.

Tony's business became what it is today. He hosted many offsite BBQ's and picnics to show appreciation for his patrons who would become longtime friends. Today, you can sit at the bar next to a Stanford professor



Tony Montooth, founder of Antonio's

on one side, a guy down on his luck on the other, and all have a conversation about life. Many local startup companies meet there after work to share what's going on in their future. There is often a birthday party in the back room, and the TVs have different sports to watch. The Nut House shares one side with Taqueria Azteca, making all kinds of food for hungry patrons. The place gets packed on some evenings into the night!

Antonio's Nut House is a non-pretentious "dive bar" and may not be everyone's cup of tea, but it is time tested and true in the middle of old Mayfield. Tony knew how to have fun and he wanted everyone else to have fun too.



(Continued from page 2) Around this time, the Palo Alto Military Academy purchased new dining room dishes. The school was discarding its old set, and my dad said he would take them. My family replaced its worn everyday dish set with the heavy duty, very serviceable dishes from Palo Alto Military Academy and used these dishes until the early 90s.

As you can imagine, there were a lot of dishes! The extra ones were stored in a shed at our house. When our church needed housewares to support new immigrant families, my family gave out sets of Palo Alto Military Academy dishes.



Palo Alto Military Academy  
Manzanita Hall, 1972

My husband's family came to Palo Alto in the mid-1960s. My father-in-law, Colonel (ret.) William Delaney, taught social studies at the Academy for several years. He was a career Army officer who had attended West Point. The Palo Alto Military Academy was a perfect fit for him.

The Palo Alto Military Academy is no longer in Palo Alto. It merged and changed to become Harker Academy in San Jose.

But you can still see a remnant of the Palo Alto Military Academy on Parkinson Avenue. The large palm which stood outside of Manzanita Hall can still be seen at 1131 Parkinson Avenue.

## History Jaunts for the Winter

If you missed the Palo Alto Garden Club and Gamble Garden celebration of Monarch butterflies earlier this month, it's not too late to take a "Butterfly Walk." Bring your binoculars and join docents on a tour through **UC Berkeley's Botanical Gardens**, 200 Centennial Drive. Tours scheduled for Tuesday, October 22, 1:30-2:30 pm or 3:00-4:00 pm. For more information including registration and cost, visit <https://botanicalgarden.berkeley.edu/>.



Fiery Skippers photo by Sarab Seth  
Courtesy of UC Botanical Garden

On Wed., Oct. 30 from 5:00 – 6:30 pm, join Stanford Historical Society for a talk on **Stanford Athletics: Return of Sports – 1919**. Ray Purpur, Stanford Deputy Director of Athletics, will be speaking on the important history of Stanford athletics after the Great World War. The event is free and open to the public. For more information and registration, visit <https://historicalsociety.stanford.edu/events/stanford-athletics-return-sports-1919>

**Palo Alto Stanford Heritage (PAST)** continues its schedule of docent-led walking tours. Mark your calendar! All tours begin promptly at 10:00 am.

Sunday, October 27 – Tour Professorville with Kris Zavoli and Anne Gregor. Meet at 1005 Bryant Street.

Saturday, November 11 – Tour Homer Avenue with Steve Emslie. Meet at The Woman's Club, 475 Homer Ave.



Photo courtesy of PAST

Don't miss the current exhibit at **Palo Alto's Museum of American Heritage (MOAH)** – "Contraptions: Classic Coin-Operated Machines." Travel back in time to the early 1900s when children and adults dropped pennies, nickels, and dimes into slots for an expected outcome. Coin-operated machines were widely used in places of businesses such as general stores, toy stores, parlors, restaurants, bars, casinos and gas stops. Businesses across America flourished before the era of the credit card! MOAH is located at 351 Homer Ave. in Palo Alto. The museum is free and open to the public 11:00 am – 4:00 pm, Friday through Sunday. For more information, visit their website, [www.moah.org](http://www.moah.org).

Welcome New Member!

Nancy Reynolds

### PAHA Upcoming Program

Dec. 1 - Karen Holman's Vignettes

### The Heritage Program

for November 2019 will feature PAHA's October program "Mayfield: The Town that Wouldn't Go Away" with PAHA member and author Raye C. Ringholz.

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



### In Memoriam

Jim Drake  
Terry Hogan, Life Member

The Tall Tree is published eight times a year by the  
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