

The Palo Alto Historical Association presents

# Vignettes: Opportunity Realized



Palo Alto's first high school building in 1898



Thomas Foon Chew (center) with two cannery foremen at Chew's Alviso cannery. Courtesy Palo Alto Online



Eichler home at 3454 Greer Road, Palo Alto

**Sunday, December 8, 2019**

**Mitchell Park Community Center, El Palo Alto Room**

**3700 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto**

**4:00 to 6:00 pm**

**Please note later than usual time**



**Karen Holman,  
Moderator,  
Former Palo Alto  
City Council  
Member and Mayor**

It's not unusual to mention Palo Alto and invention in the same breath. Call them entrepreneurs, visionaries, risk takers—whatever word you choose to describe individuals who make a difference in the lives of many—they have been in our midst since the early times.

The times have not always welcomed new ideas, but during this December's Vignettes program, moderated again by Karen Holman, we'll learn how several innovators seized the opportunity and overcame the obstacles.

Gloria Hom, one of the panelists, will speak about her grandfather, Thomas Foon Chew, a successful Chinese immigrant who built his cannery (the current Fry's building) into the third largest in the world behind Del Monte and Libby.

Former mayor Lanie Wheeler, who has long lived in Greenmeadow neighborhood, will describe how Joseph Eichler forged a new, broader path to achieve home ownership in Palo Alto.

Panelists will explain how pioneer resident Anna Zschokke's commitment to education brought the first public school to Palo Alto and led her to mortgage her own home to create the first high school.

The panelists and Karen will discuss what motivated these individuals and the challenges they faced in realizing their goals for Palo Alto.

PAHA offers these stories to inspire your holiday season. Join us for a special day and special presentation.

As a fun holiday treat, we will be serving Zombies, a candy re-creation based on an old recipe from "Sticky" Wilson's candy shop! Wilson's was a mainstay for adults and kids in downtown Palo Alto from the early- to mid-1900s.

**Free and Open to the Public ~ Refreshments Served**



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

**2019 PALO ALTO  
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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# With your support, we can get this done...

Many of us have been working for a long time to create a history museum for Palo Alto. While we have worked hard and have had some success—raising more than \$9 million—we still have a ways to go. We need an additional \$800,000 before the City of Palo Alto will sign the lease for the historic Roth Building on Homer Avenue so we can begin construction.

Recently a friend asked me why this project has been so difficult to complete. Palo Alto certainly has a history worth preserving and sharing with new residents, visitors, and even those of us who consider ourselves “old-timers.”

Nearby communities have had their success with funding and building their local history museums. The San Mateo County History Museum in the old county courthouse in Redwood City is a wonderful example of what a community can do with an old historic building. The Los Altos History Museum, in a modern building near the original apricot orchard farm house, features permanent and temporary exhibits and is a popular site for weddings and other community events that help support the ongoing operations of the museum.

In Palo Alto, we are constantly asked why we have not attracted support from the

extremely wealthy residents who “could easily fund our museum.” I do not have a good answer for that question, but I believe we need to complete this funding goal ourselves. Big-money funding may come in some day, but in order to open the doors, we, the community, need to step up and do it ourselves.

The time is now for us, the community members, to donate or pledge the funds required to get the construction underway. The museum has architectural plans for the building, a building permit approved by the City, and our contractor (Vance Brown) ready to get to work.

My wife and I have decided to double our previous pledge. This is the largest charitable gift we have ever made. I am hoping many of you will join us and help get this museum underway. We have a great building and wonderful stories to share with future visitors to the museum. With help from enough of you, your family, friends and neighbors, we can finally open the doors to a much-needed community treasure.

Please visit the Palo Alto History Museum website: [www.paloaltohistorymuseum.org](http://www.paloaltohistorymuseum.org) to learn more and to donate. Donations are fully tax deductible.

*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.*

## Creators of Palo Alto's Legacy Exhibit

As part of PAHA's celebration of Palo Alto's 125th anniversary, in September we exhibited the original 1994 collection of 54 photos and their captions. This was the first time since the Palo Alto Centennial that the material was shown to the public. The Legacy project provided public recognition of the people who made significant contributions to the development of Palo Alto from 1894 to 1994. This year's exhibit at Rinconada Library was a popular attraction.



Creators of Palo Alto's Legacy exhibit at Rinconada Library, September 2019

Our next event will be a December exhibit of about a dozen additions of photos and captions to the original Legacy list. These new names will reflect other important contributions of community members to Palo Alto life. We will decide on the finalists by early November.

Until December 1, PAHA will also display selected images from our photo archive to publicize the importance of our collection of over 15,000 historic photos. The display will be open to the public at Rinconada Library.

## *A Toast to Palo Alto: A look at favorite gathering spots over the years*

### **The Making of The Old Pro**

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



Original door to The Old Pro

Another time tested and true “watering hole” in Palo Alto is The Old Pro. In 1964, The Old Pro started out at 2865 El Camino Real, close to Polly and Jake’s antique shop.

The Quonset hut was a couple of different businesses before it became The Old Pro. According to the city’s directory, it was previously Mead’s Sheet Metal Shop and

Jack’s Furniture Mart. Corrugated metal Quonset huts were designed in Quonset, Rhode Island and primarily used by the military during World War II. After the war, they were sold as surplus buildings throughout the country and several were erected in Palo Alto.

Originally owned by Bob Pederson and Jim Verwitz, the bar in the Quonset hut was later sold to Steve Sincheck and Dan Brown in 1994. They ran the place until the landowners wanted to redevelop the land and The Old Pro moved to 541 Ramona Street in downtown Palo Alto in 2003. It was on April 13, 2003, that the Quonset hut location had a “Last Call!” after 39 great years.

The new location is much more upscale. The walls are adorned with vintage local and national sports memorabilia. In the corner is a mechanical bull that

waits for you take a ride on its back if you dare. There are plenty of food options and drinks to make your stay fun while watching numerous sports on the many TVs or have a social gathering with friends.

A former partial owner of The Old Pro was Bill “Coach” Campbell. Bill would have pizza and beer sessions to “coach” young and older entrepreneurs on how to succeed with their businesses. His big hugs were an encouragement for all.



The Old Pro’s original location on El Camino Real

The Old Pro sponsored the batting cages at the Palo Alto Little League Field on Middlefield Road. They also sponsor teams for the Babe Ruth League. If you go to a Stanford home game tailgate, there’s a good chance the kegs of beer you’re tapping from are from The Old Pro too. In Palo Alto, The Old Pro wins as the city’s sports bar!

## **Need holiday gift ideas? How about Palo Alto history?**

Two recent publications are still available for purchase and would make great holiday stocking gifts.

“Ticket to Rock” by Bo Crane is a booklet profiling many of Palo Alto’s rock and rollers and where they lived. Bo is a PAHA member and lifelong Palo Alto resident, and was the featured speaker at PAHA’s June annual dinner where he spoke about this book. The booklet can be ordered directly from Bo at [orders@dennismartin.net](mailto:orders@dennismartin.net). Copies can also be purchased at Bell’s Books on Emerson Street or by picking up a copy at the PAHA Archives at Cubberley Center, room K-7 (Tues 4-8pm, Th 1-5pm). The cost is \$10.00, tax included, or \$12.00 to mail.

“Mayfield: The Town That Wouldn’t Go Away” by Raye Ringholz is our latest publication. The booklet showcases the many fascinating characters and events that shaped Mayfield and contributed to the character of the community today. The booklet is available from Books Inc. in Town & Country Village, Bell’s Books on Emerson Street, and the PAHA Archives.

PAHA’s 2019 membership drive is also underway: Please renew before the end of the year. Consider upgrading to a Lifetime Membership, or giving a PAHA membership as a gift. To join or to renew, visit [pahistory.org/membership](http://pahistory.org/membership) for your tax-deductible membership!





## History Jaunts for the Winter

Don't miss "Encounters: Honoring the Animal in Ourselves." now at the **Palo Alto Art Center** through Dec 29. This provocative, whimsical and charming multimedia exhibit is accessible to all ages and well worth a visit. Children are encouraged to engage in a variety of activities designed to spark their interest in both nature and art. The Art Center is free and open to the public Tues – Sun. Located at 1313 Newell Road. Call (650) 329-2366 for hours.

**The Pace Gallery** presents "Seeing Picasso: Maker of the Modern," a chronological survey of Pablo Picasso's genius showcasing 35 of his masterpieces in a variety of media. The exhibit runs Nov 2 - Feb 16, 2020. The Pace Gallery is free and open to the public, Tues - Sat, 11am - 7pm, Sun, 11am - 5pm. Located at 229 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto. For more information, call (650) 561-4076 or visit [www.pacegallery.com](http://www.pacegallery.com).



If you have not been there, you should visit the **San Jose Museum of Quilts & Textiles**, the first museum in the United States devoted solely to quilts and textiles as art. From Oct 20 – Jan 12, 2020, the Museum features "Stories of West Africa" by Hollis Chatelain, an artist who photographed community life in Togo, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Benin. Hollis made drawings derived from her photographs, which were then digitally reproduced, printed on to cotton fabric, and machine quilted. Each quilt in the exhibit "tells a story showing the strength of family and community, while the backgrounds show lively African fabrics which play an important role" in the daily life of West Africans. The Quilt Museum is located at 520 1st Street, San Jose. It is open Tues – Sat, 11am – 7pm, Sun, 11am – 5pm. Admission is \$8.00 with discounts for seniors and students, with "pay what you can on 'First Fridays.'" Visit <https://www.sjqmusem.org> for more information.



Courtesy of the Quilt Museum

If you haven't wended your way to the **Pulgas Water Temple**, 80 Canada Road, Redwood City, do so while the pleasant weather holds. The Beaux Arts confection was constructed by the San Francisco Water District in the 1930s to celebrate the completion of the Hetch Hetchy Aqueduct. It is free and open to the public weekdays, 9am – 3pm.

### Welcome New Member!

Jane Horton

### PAHA Upcoming Programs

January 26 – Join us to hear Dave Newhouse, award winning sportswriter and former columnist at the Oakland Tribune, share his stories of local sports figures. Dave was born in Menlo Park and went to M-A. Save the date for the upcoming meeting on Mar 8. Program to be announced.

### The Heritage Program

for December 2019 will feature PAHA's November program "The 50/60 Kid: A Palo Alto Dreamer" with author Jane Richter Horton.

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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